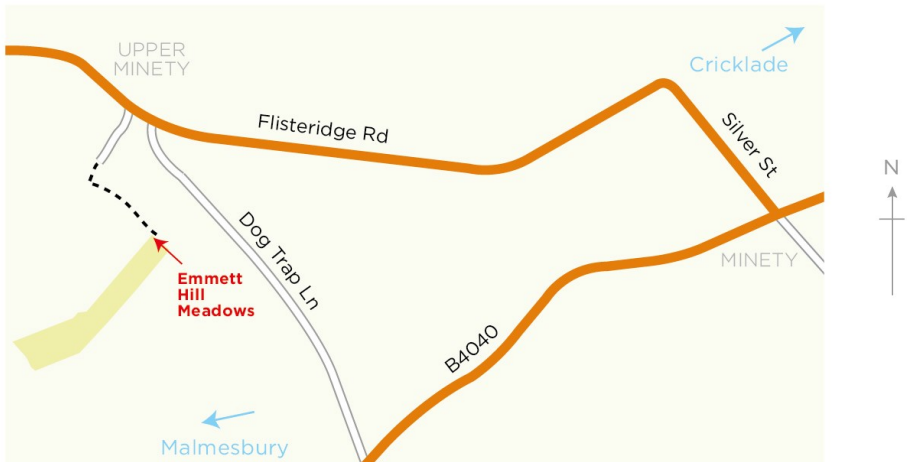# Emmett Hill Meadows

Location

Minety
Postcode SN16 9PP
Grid Ref – SU008900

Access - Not suitable for pushchairs or wheelchairs. Dogs on leads are welcome.

Directions

If driving - take the B4040 Cricklade to Malmesbury Road. Turn into Dog Trap Lane signposted Upper Minety. Follow Dog Trap Lane to the end and turn left at junction signposted Minety Church and Oaksey. Park on nearby verge and walk up well-used track on left, located about 50m from Dog Trap Lane junction. Follow this track past several houses until you reach end of lane, marked by field gate. Pass through gate into field and turn left, following boundary hedgerow. At corner of field, continue forward through gate or over stile onto tree-lined path. Entrance to reserve is on right-hand side after about 100m.

If using bus – bus 52 Swindon to Minety and bus 93 from Malmesbury to Cirencester via Upper Minety. Visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/parkingtransportandstreets

If cycling – The National Byway/Wiltshire Cycleway runs through Minety. Visit www.sustrans.org.uk

Nearby reserves – Distillery Meadows, Blakehill Farm

About Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Our vision is to create a county rich in wildlife and help people live sustainable lifestyles that protect the environment for the benefit of everyone.

We have about 18,500 members, look after almost 40 nature reserves, are supported by hundreds of volunteers, and work with local communities, schools, businesses and public bodies to achieve our aims. To do all this we rely on the support of our members.

If you would like to join us, or to find out about how you can help the environment, please visit www.wiltshirewildlife.org

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Registered charity no. 266202

Cover Photo: Garden tiger moth, Alan Price Gatehouse Studio

Emmett Hill Meadows

5.01 hectares

The local landscape of big hedges and small wildflower meadows is one of the most threatened in Britain. Together they form a dazzling patchwork of colour that vividly contrasts with the uniform green of modern fields.

Wildlife

These three hay meadows with countless wildflowers form a **Site of Special Scientific Interest** and have come about because of their long history of traditional farming.

In summer, **devil's-bit scabious** turns Long Meadow into a haze of purple, peppered with betony, saw-wort, sneezewort and heath spotted orchids. Listen for the shivering rustle of **yellow rattle seedpods** when you brush past them.

Long Meadow has clearly visible ridges and furrows running its length – evidence of an ancient farming system. Look in the damper furrows for **ragged robin** and creeping Jenny.

Pignut Meadow contains an old banked enclosure that was perhaps a cattle pen when the area was open common land. It has more acidic, well-drained soil than the other meadows and here you will find plants that prefer these conditions.

White **pignut** flowers in May and June. Its underground tubers are a delicacy for pigs and its flowers feed the larvae of the uncommon chimney-sweeper moth.
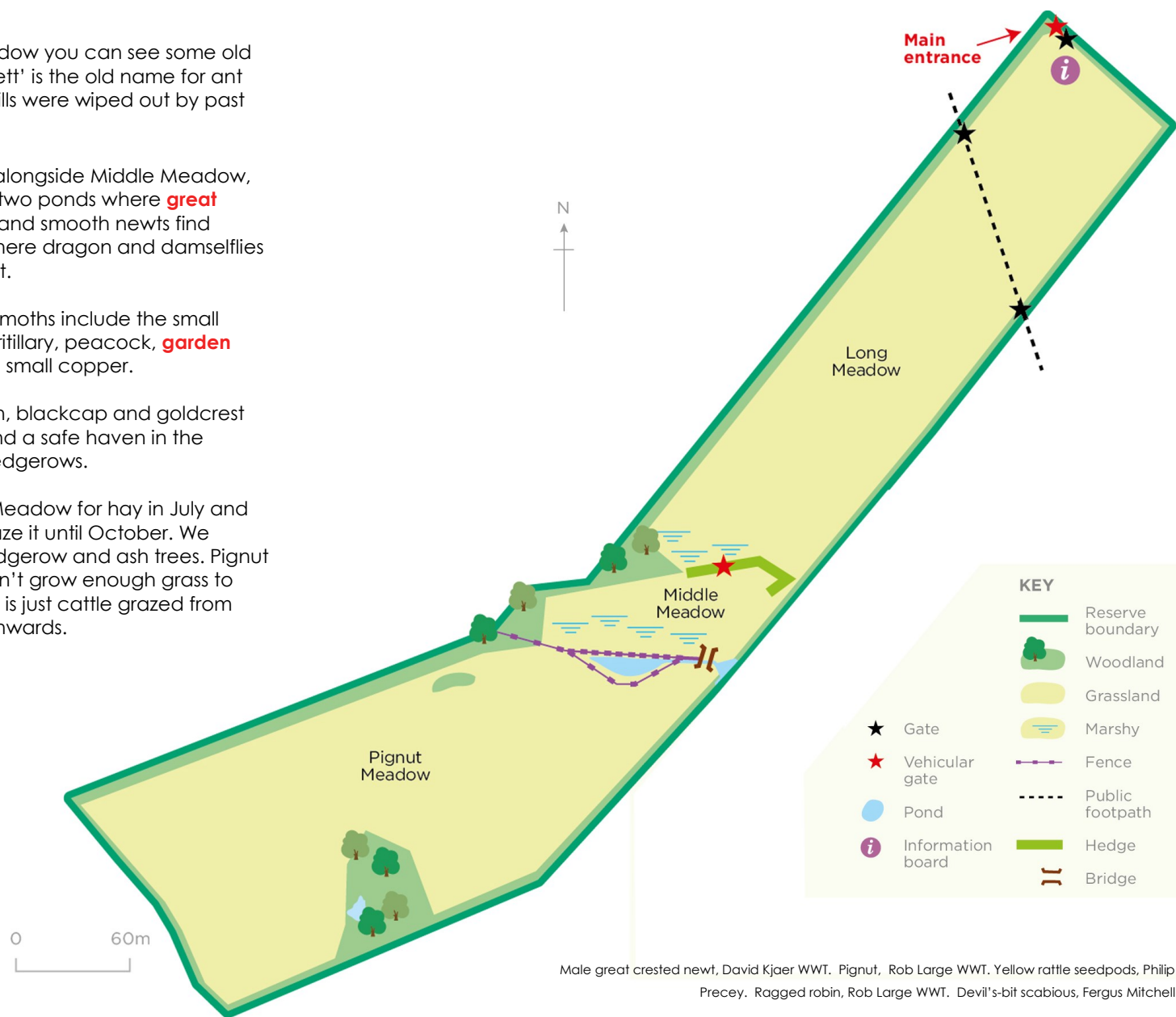
In Middle Meadow you can see some old ant hills. 'Emmett' is the old name for ant but most ant hills were wiped out by past ploughing.

A stream runs alongside Middle Meadow, and there are two ponds where **great crested newts** and smooth newts find refuge, and where dragon and damselflies hover and hunt.

Butterflies and moths include the small heath, marsh fritillary, peacock, **garden tiger moth** and small copper.

The song thrush, blackcap and goldcrest all find food and a safe haven in the species-rich hedgerows.

We cut Long Meadow for hay in July and then cattle graze it until October. We pollard the hedgerow and ash trees. Pignut Meadow doesn't grow enough grass to make hay and is just cattle grazed from mid summer onwards.

Main entrance

Long Meadow

Middle Meadow

Pignut Meadow

N

0   60m

KEY

★ Gate	Reserve boundary
★ Vehicular gate	Woodland
Pond	Grassland
ⓘ Information board	Marshy
	Fence
	Public footpath
	Hedge
	Bridge

Male great crested newt, David Kjaer WWT. Pignut, Rob Large WWT. Yellow rattle seedpods, Philip Precey. Ragged robin, Rob Large WWT. Devil's-bit scabious, Fergus Mitchell