



Location

Marlborough, Postcode SN11 8PZ
Grid Ref SU273714

Access - Circular path with boardwalks.
 Can be muddy in winter. Dogs on leads are welcome.

Nearby reserves - Jones's Mill, Ham Hill, Hat Gate

Directions

If driving - Reserve is situated about 6.5 miles from Marlborough. In Ramsbury, follow road round to right (High Street). Fire Station is on right halfway along High Street. Park on High Street, taking care not to obstruct access. Take path on left of Fire Station leading to reserve entrance.

If using bus - Bus 46/48 Marlborough to Swindon stops in Ramsbury. Visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/parkingtransportandstreets

If cycling - Visit www.sustrans.org.uk

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: Moorhen, Gillian Day

A sustainable future for wildlife and people
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust **Nature reserves**

Ramsbury Meadow



Ramsbury Meadow

1.2 hectares

This nature reserve is located on the flood plain of the River Kennet and for hundreds of years provided grazing for sheep.

During the 17th and 18th centuries it was part of a series of **water-meadows**.

The meadows were flushed with nutrient-rich and relatively warm water from the clear chalk stream during the winter. This encouraged an early growth of grass for grazing. You can still see traces of the old ditches used for this irrigation.

Over time regular grazing stopped and the meadow became swamped by tall, coarse vegetation. Since 1980 we have been restoring it to a pretty reserve full of wetland plants and wildlife. The site is managed by Ramsbury Parish Council and volunteers who keep the path and ditches clear from vegetation.

Boardwalks, a dipping platform and bridges form part of the circular path through the meadow. The ground is very wet so stay on the path, and away from poisonous **hemlock water dropwort**.

Wildlife

Here you will find wild plants typical of wetland habitats. Greater and lesser pond-sedges form patches of blue-green leaves and produce tufty heads from the end of May. Meadowsweet, wild angelica and **hemp agrimony** attract colourful beetles and butterflies such as the small

tortoiseshell. Hairy-leaved pink-flowered comfrey was used to heal wounds and broken limbs, hence its old name 'bone-set'.

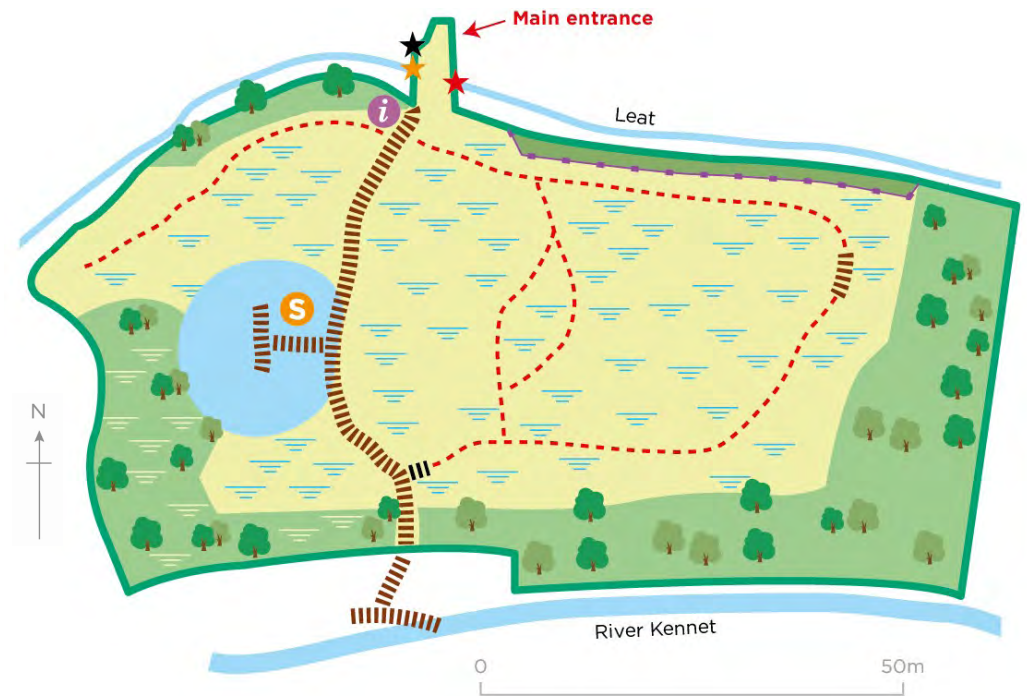
In spring look for the golden-yellow flowers of **marsh marigold** along the silted up ditch, and the yellow flag iris atop its flat blue-green leaves from May to July.

The emperor dragonfly and **blue-tailed damselfly** breed in the pond and there is a thriving frog population.

Pond skaters, whirligig beetles and water boatmen are busy on the water's surface and sticklebacks, caddis fly larvae, water beetles and water spiders live beneath it.

The reserve is fringed with different trees and shrubs, mostly willow, blackthorn and hawthorn.

On the pretty River Kennet you can watch **mute swans**, mallards, **coots** and **moorhens**. Swifts and swallows fly low over the river and meadows in summer, feeding on insects.



KEY

	Reserve boundary		Footpath		Information board
	Woodland		Boardwalk		Seat
	Wet woodland		Gate		Steps
	Marshy		Vehicular gate		Fence
	Pond		Stile		

Ramsbury meadow wetland, Steve Day WWT. Bridges over leat, Steve Day WWT. Hemp agrimony, Rob Large WWT. Blue-tailed damselfly, Richard Burkmar. Mute swan, Alan Price Gatehouse Studios. Marsh marigold, Richard Burkmar. Coot, Paul McCrae WWT

