

Location

To get to the entrance from Barnfield Road - park on Barnfield Road and follow footpath along the edge of the Sewage Treatment Works, over the River Ray footbridge and along to the footpath junction. At the junction turn right on to National Cycle Route 45 (the old railway track) and follow for 0.5 mile until you come to the entrance gates on the right hand side.

Alternatively, park in the Shaw Forest Park car park and follow the path through the woodland to the viewpoint and then drop down onto National Cycle Route 45. The entrance is in front of you. Grid ref SU 12429 85928

Dogs are not allowed on site.



A sustainable future for wildlife and people

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Nature reserves

Swindon Lagoons



Otter
Darín Smith WWT



Tufted duck
Tina Townend

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 more than 18,000 members, look after over 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, 'like' us on [facebook.com/WiltsWild](https://www.facebook.com/WiltsWild) and follow [@WiltsWildlife](https://twitter.com/WiltsWildlife) on Twitter. You can also call us on (01380) 725670, or write to us at: Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Elm Tree Court, Long Street, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1NJ.

Front cover photo: Little egret, Tina Townend
Registered Charity No. 266202

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Swindon Lagoons

This fabulous nature reserve offers a mosaic of habitats: big areas of grassland, open water lagoons, reed beds, wet grassland, marshland and the River Ray. And wildlife loves it! More than 150 different species of birds, 24 species of butterflies and 14 species of damsel and dragonflies have been identified here.

It also offers animals and birds a green space that they can use like a stepping stone as they travel across town and out into the wider countryside. It is a link in the chain of green spaces that connects Mannington Recreation Ground, the community nature reserve at Rivermead, Shaw Forest Park and Mouldon Hill Country Park.

Reconnecting town and country in this way helps create living landscapes. It brings nature to our doorsteps, so that we can see it, understand it and look after it.

History

The 15 lagoons that make up this site were once part of the Thames Water Sewage Treatment Works. Until 1985 they were used for storing the sludge, fat and other unwanted leftovers filtered out of the sewage. Since then Thames Water has cleared them out and landscaped them and, working with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and volunteers, planted them with reeds to create a haven for wildlife.

In 2010 Wiltshire Wildlife Trust took a license to manage the site on behalf of Thames Water.

Wildlife

This is a reserve for all seasons – there is always something to enjoy. In the summer you can spot dragonflies like the common darter and emperor, as well as dainty damselflies such as the banded demoiselle. Also watch for sand martins, swallows and reed buntings streaking over the water as they hunt for insects.

In the winter you could see shoveler duck, coot and tufted duck on the water, along with garganey, little grebe and teal – just some of the many species of wildfowl here. Paddling in the mud are snipe and sandpipers seeking insects to eat.

Butterflies flutter above the grasslands, including common blues and the occasional migrant clouded yellow. Harmless grass snakes and slow worms sunbathe on a warm day.

Look out for tennis ball-sized knots of woven grasses at the tops of long grass – the nests of harvest mice. Great crested newts, frogs and toads are found in most lagoons. You would be lucky to see an otter or water vole in the river, but they are there!

Visit in the evenings and you might spot shy roe deer, foxes, badgers and bats.

Please record all wildlife sightings and tell Wiltshire Wildlife Trust about them. If you want to get involved in more detailed surveying please phone (01380) 725670 or email to info@wiltshirewildlife.org Visit www.wiltshirewildlife.org



Access

The lagoons have always been relatively isolated, almost hidden behind the large security fence. This gives them special significance for animals and birds as they can go about their lives uninterrupted. We are not seeking to disturb this peaceful atmosphere and site visits will be limited to guided tours and occasional open days.

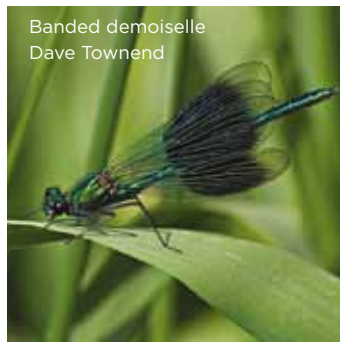
Shelter on the reserve: Bird hide

Nearest hospital casualty unit: Great Western Hospital, Swindon

Warden: Simon Wickes



Clouded yellow butterfly
John Notman WSBC



Banded demoiselle
Dave Townend



Teal
Tina Townend



Young roe deer
Chris Godfrey