

WALKING AND WILDLIFE WITH CHILDREN

TRAFFIC FREE WALKS IN SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

brilliant fun for the kids

- explore nature reserves
- learn about wildlife
- picnic in the park
- go walking in the woods
- visit pocket parks

*discover
wildlife with
Chloe, Henry
and Angus*



From the series of Award Winning Travel Guides



GLOBAL MAPPING



Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Northamptonshire



South
Northamptonshire
Council

INTRODUCTION

The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire works to make their three counties a place where nature matters, where wildlife can flourish and enrich the lives of the people who live there. They care for local wildlife – it's in their nature. Ninety five per cent of the local population lives within five miles of one of their reserves and contributions of time or money will directly benefit local wildlife.

Children, keep your eyes peeled for wildlife and when you see something tick the box and add up the total number of points you score. There are Gold, Silver or Bronze Certificates for you to download from the **Brackley online Post** website www.globalmapping.uk.com/brackley.asp

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CONTENTS

pg	
2	Bell Plantation
3	Introduction
4	Boddington Meadow & Byfield Pond Nature Reserves
6	Bugbrooke Meadow Nature Reserve
7	Farthinghoe Nature Reserve
8	Mill Crook and Grafton Regis Meadow Nature Reserves
9	Stoke Bruerne Pits Nature Reserve
10	Pocket Parks in South Northamptonshire
12	Wildlife Sites in South Northamptonshire
14	Whittlewood Forest - Hazelborough and Farthing Woods
16	Bucknell Wood
17	Whistley Wood
18	Plumpton Wood
19	Salcey Forest
20	Evenley Wood Garden and Steane Park Garden
21	Limes Farm, Farthinghoe
22	Grendon Quarter Pond
23	Towcester Bury Mount and Watermeadows
24	St James' Lake, Brackley

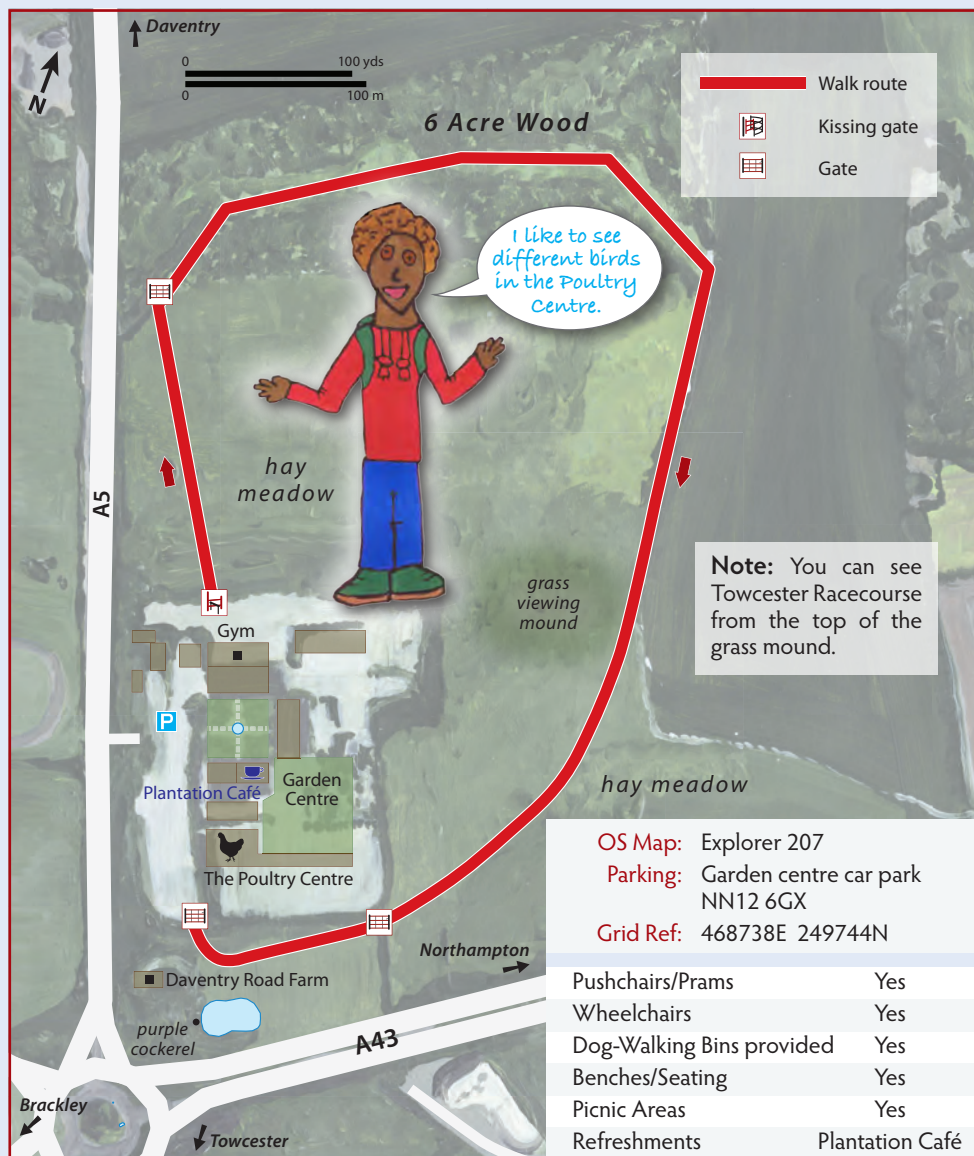


Bee

2pts

BELL PLANTATION, TOWCESTER

This family-friendly garden centre has lots for children to enjoy, not least the Poultry Centre, one of the largest in the Midlands, which offers a whole range of different breeds. Within the grounds is a delightful walk that starts over a stile by the car park, heads across the field to a newly established woodland and then follows the boundary to return at the far end of the car park. The centre also includes a number of local independent traders plus the excellent Plantation Café.



BODDINGTON MEADOW AND BYFIELD POOL NATURE RESERVES

OS Map:	Explorer 206
Parking:	Car park, Boddington Reservoir
Grid Ref:	449920E 253200N
Pushchairs/Prams	Around lake
Wheelchairs	Around lake
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	No
Refreshments	The Plough, Upper Boddington

Boddington Reservoir, although not a Nature Reserve itself offers a home to many migrant birds and can be circumnavigated by a well maintained path.

Boddington Meadow is a rich meadow full of wildflowers and butterflies; a real joy to visit. This meadow has never been ploughed and as a result retains much of its original wildlife. It is managed in a traditional way to encourage many less common species of plants, such as **great burnet**, **pepper-saxifrage** and **pignut**. In July, **betony** provides an impressive display

Oxtail daisy **2pts**

Marbled white butterfly **4pts**



of colour, while **devil's-bit scabious** exhibits its purple-blue flowers throughout the summer. The varied flora attracts a wide range of butterflies and insects.

Other species to look out for include **blackcap**, **green woodpecker**, **common frog**, **common toad**, **grass snake**, **meadow brown**, **orange-tip**, **peacock**, **ringlet**, **small tortoiseshell**, **red-headed cardinal beetle**, **cowslip**, **dog-rose**, **dogwood**, **lesser celandine**, **meadowsweet**.

Byfield Pool is secluded surrounded by **reed beds** and **willow**, providing an important refuge for wildlife.

This tranquil reserve is a delightful place to see and hear **warblers** and **wildfowl**. It provides wildlife with a much-needed refuge from the activities taking place on the

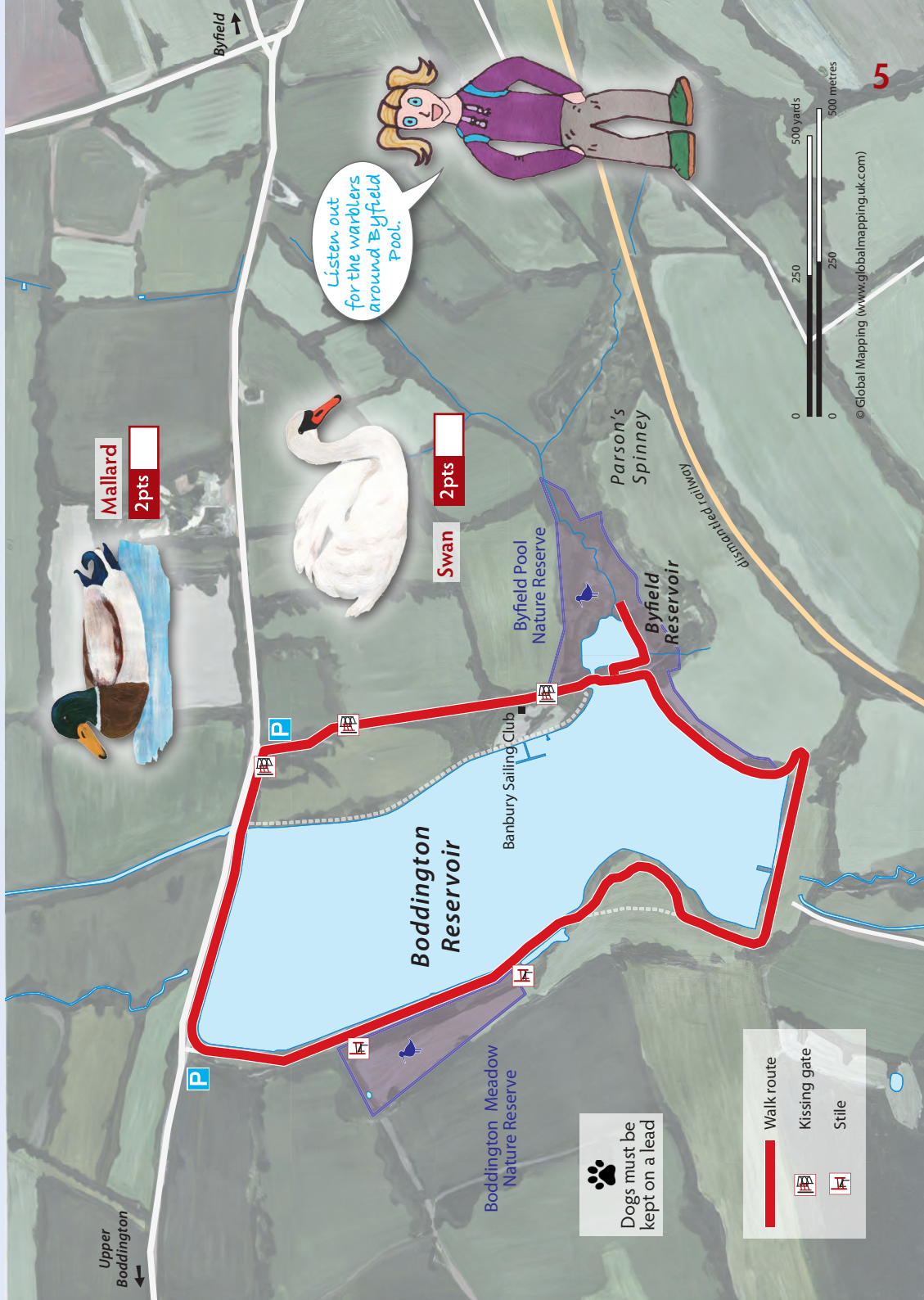
4 adjacent Boddington Reservoir. The pool was constructed as a water supply for the Oxford Canal in the 1790s, while the reservoir was built some hundred years later. **Water rail** and **tufted duck** breed on the pool, whilst other ducks rest and feed here. Many other birds nest in the abundant scrub and wooded areas around. Listen out for **chiffchaffs** and **sedge warblers**. The quiet waters and surrounding reed bed make this secluded area an excellent site for **dragonflies** and **damselflies**, as well as large numbers of **frogs** and other amphibians.

You might also see **rabbit**, **red fox**, **coot**, **great crested grebe**, **moorhen**, **nuthatch**, **willow warbler**, **common frog**, **common toad**, **grass snake**, **bird's-foot-trefoil**, **common reed**, **germander speedwell**, **selfheal** and **yellow iris**.

Be warned, the wooden walkway is poorly maintained in places so care should be taken.



Moorhen **3pts**



BUGBROOKE MEADOW NATURE RESERVE

OS Map: Explorer 207

Parking: Watery Lane,
Nether Heyford

Grid Ref: 466100E 258500N

Pushchairs/Prams	No
Wheelchairs	No
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	No
Refreshments	The Olde Sun and The Foresters Arms in Nether Heyford

Possibly the most diverse meadow in the county, rich in wildflowers and insects. This small secluded reserve is a remnant of the grassland once common along the banks of the River Nene. Much of the southern half of the site is spring-fed flush (mire) wet all year round, while the northern half next to the river is winter flooded. Much of the



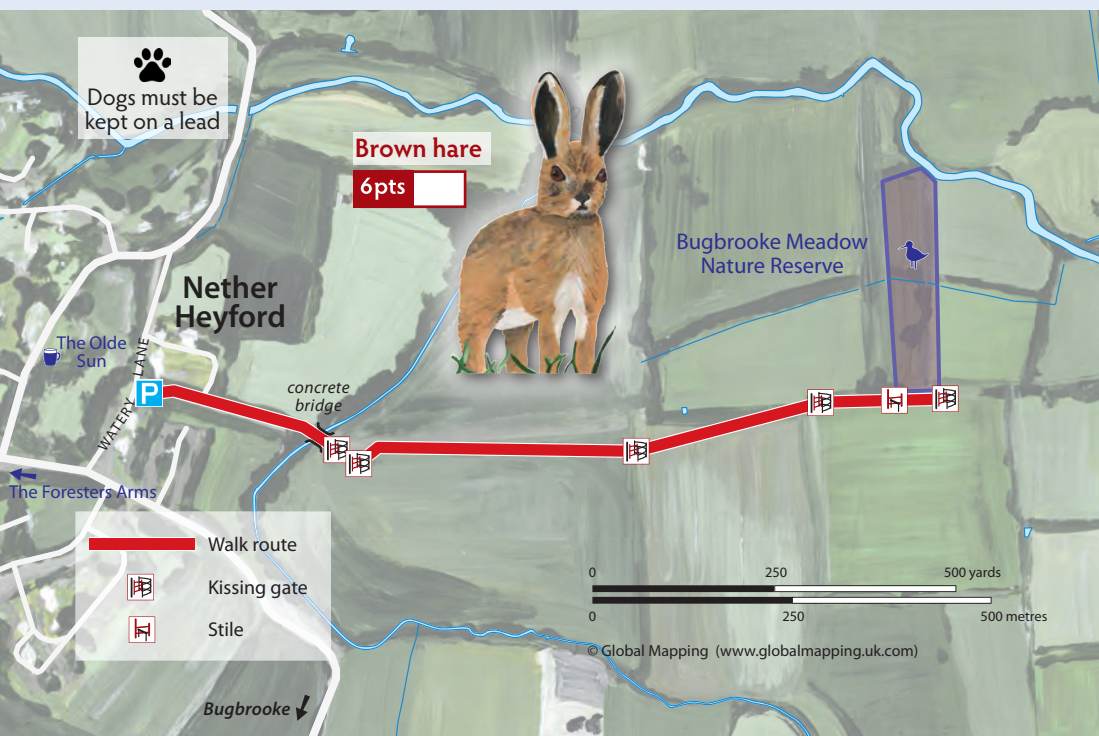
Canada goose

2pts

botanical richness is a consequence of these two distinct types of water source.

The main ditch supports a number of water plants including **lesser spearwort** and **common spikerush** and there are patches of bright yellow **marsh-marigold** in spring. Also in spring, the small pink flowers of **marsh valerian** can also be found throughout the meadow, often in large numbers. In early summer, there is a fine display of **southern marsh-orchids**, over 200 plants, a real treat to see in full flower.

You're also likely to see **chiffchaff**, **yellow-hammer**, **spike-rush**, **cuckooflower**, **marsh-marigold**, **meadowsweet** and **wild angelica**.



FARTHINGHOE NATURE RESERVE

OS Map: Explorer 206

Parking: Old railway bridge on Purston road

Grid Ref: 451842E 240327N

Pushchairs/Prams	No
Wheelchairs	No
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	Yes
Refreshments	The Fox and Limes Farm in Farthinghoe

Take the Purston road off the A422 and park on the old railway bridge. Entry is via the kissing gate and the well-kept path is easy to follow.

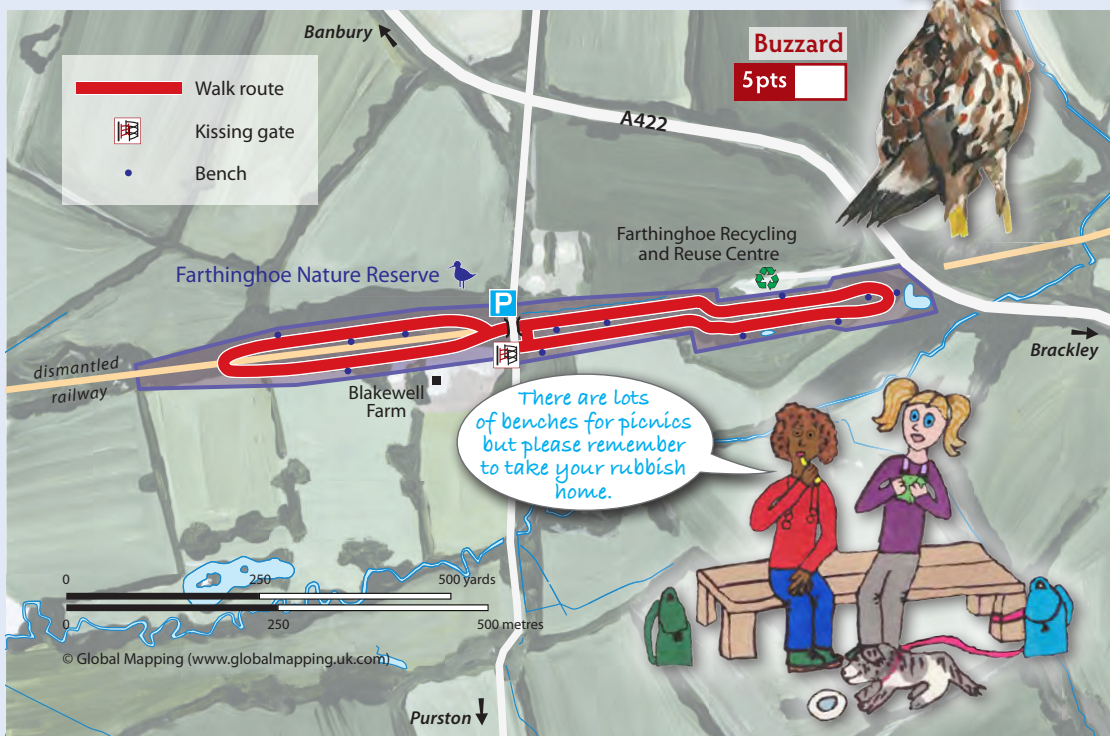
A former landfill site now transformed into an oasis of wildflowers and insects. This small, amazingly diverse site is now a mosaic of developing woodland, open grassland and ponds with numerous seats and stunning views over the surrounding countryside.

Some of the old meadow flowers such as **lady's bedstraw**, **meadow vetchling**, **knapweed**, **cowslip**, **primrose**, **yellow rattle** and **snake's-head fritillary** and **bee orchid** can all be found.

The ponds and wet areas attract **dragonflies** and **damselflies** from the nearby lake and stream and in late May and June it is possible to find **beautiful demoiselle damselflies** in good numbers. Plenty of butterflies grace the meadows with **comma**, **common blue**, **green-veined white**, **marbled white**, **orange-tip**, **small tortoiseshell**, **speckled wood**, **meadow brown** and **ringlet**.

Common toad and **frogs** as well as **grass snakes** all frequent the meadows and ponds.

Common and **soprano pipistrelle** and **whiskered/brandts bats** find an ideal hunting ground here. Among the birds are **buzzard**, **raven**, **jay**, **treecreeper**, **bullfinch**, **sparrowhawk**, **blackcaps**, **chiffchaff**, **long-tailed tit**, **fieldfare**, **goldfinch**, **redwing** and **siskin**.



MILL CROOK AND GRAFTON REGIS MEADOW NATURE RESERVES

OS Map: Explorer 207

Parking: Off-road by canal bridge

Grid Ref: 476200E 247300N

Pushchairs/Prams	No
Wheelchairs	No
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	No
Refreshments	White Hart, Grafton Regis

Access to both of these reserves is restricted. Contact Northamptonshire Reserves Manager on 01604 405285 before your planned visit to obtain advice and details on access.

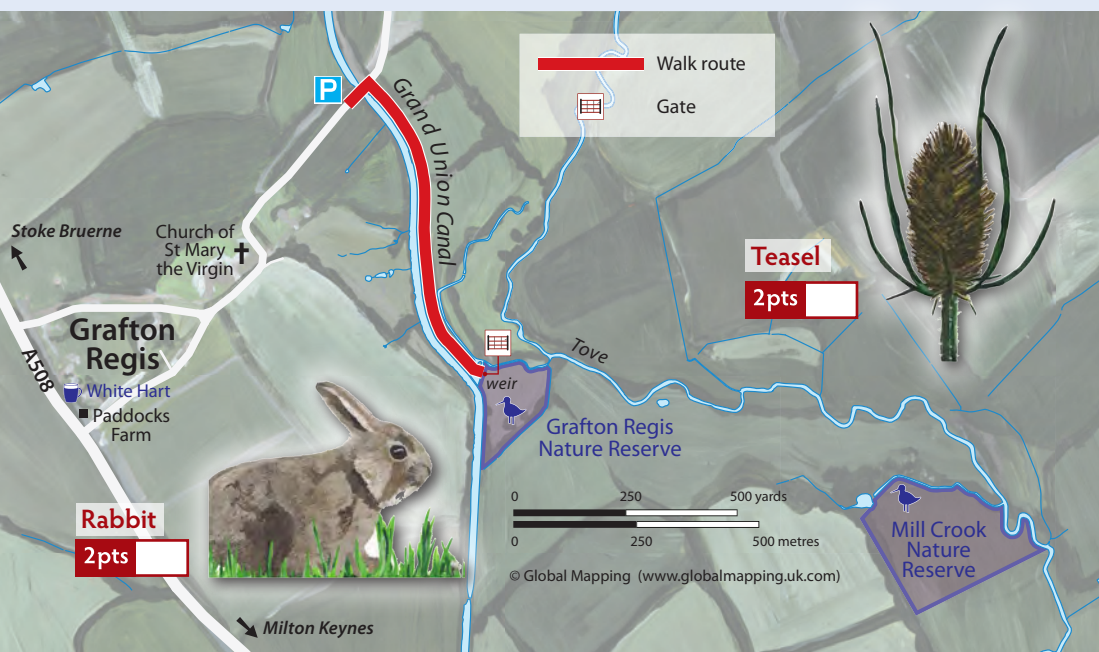
Grafton Regis: park on grass verge on left near canal bridge and walk along towpath where you are able to view the reserve from the towpath. You may wish to park in this historic village and walk past the church and down to the canal.

These meadows are an oasis for wildlife in a

sea of agriculture. They are the last fragments of traditional hay meadows in this part of the Tove valley and were created as nature reserves to protect them from modern intensive farming. Still showing evidence of medieval ridge and furrow farming, Mill Crook in summer is a sea of wildflowers, including **pepper-saxifrage**, **meadowsweet**, **bog stitchwort**, **meadow vetchling** and **great burnet**. It is also alive with insects including **orange-tip** and **meadow brown butterflies** and **five-spot burnet moth**.

Among the attractive grasses, such as **quaking-grass** and **meadow foxtail**, you will find **yellow rattle**, an indicator species of old grassland. This semi-parasite attaches itself to the roots of other species and its ripe seeds rattle inside the fruiting head, hence its name. Look out for **kingfishers**, nesting along the banks of the River Tove, and listen for the distinctive 'coo-loo' calls of **curlews**. **Lapwing**, **long-tailed tit**, **bullfinch**, **yellowhammer** and **wren** are frequent visitors to these reserves.

Brown hare, **buzzard**, **yellowhammer**, **banded demoiselle**, **great burnet** and **meadowsweet** can also be seen.



STOKE BRUERNE PITS NATURE RESERVE

OS Map: Explorer 207
Parking: Church car park
Grid Ref: 474390E 249610N

Pushchairs/Prams	Yes
Wheelchairs	Yes
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	Yes
Refreshments	Stoke Bruerne

Parking is limited in Stoke Bruerne but the church has a large car park where donations are requested. It's a short 10 minute walk to the reserve either through the kissing gate by the

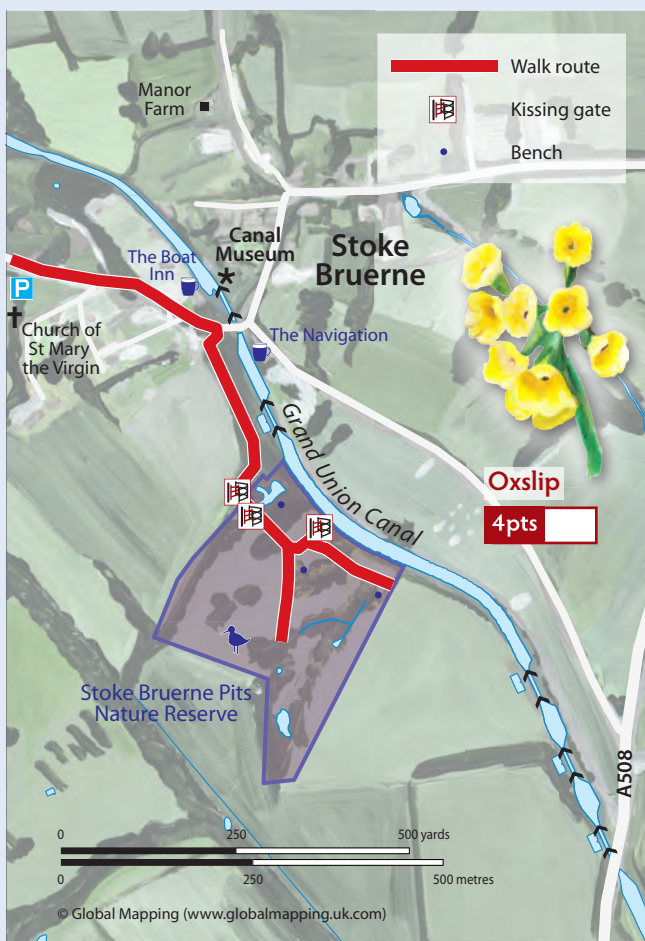
canal bridge or along the towpath.

A peaceful haven for wildlife next to the Grand Union Canal. There is an indistinct circular path with benches to sit and enjoy the surroundings. This reserve is an old brick works started after 1792 by the Grand Junction Canal Company to provide material for the canal locks, walls and the Blisworth Tunnel. The demise of the brickworks has left a site of considerable variety, with a reed bed, rough and damp grassland, a number of ponds and the redundant side arm of the canal. As well as a variety of plant life, the ponds provide an important habitat for invertebrates, and a number of dragonfly species occur on the reserve. **White-legged damselflies** have been recorded here, a species which has a very limited distribution in Northamptonshire.

The grassland provides cover for a range of small mammals, which also makes it an ideal feeding ground for **barn owls**.

Other species to look out for include **field vole**, **red fox**, **redwing**, **fieldfare**, **reed warbler**, **sedge warbler**, **reed bunting**, **grass snake**, **common frog**, **common toad**, **great crested newt**, **orange-tip**, **ringlet**, **marsh-marigold**, **water mint**, **water forget-me-not**, **great Reedmace**, **blackthorn** and **hawthorn**.

Be careful
near the canal
as the water
is deep



POCKET PARKS IN SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Aston-le-Walls

Entrances can be found at each end of the site off Welsh Road towards Boddington. There is plenty of seating to sit and enjoy the views. There are swings for the children and a picnic area for the family. Not suitable for wheelchair users.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **alders, damselflies**

Blakesley Old Cemetery

Access is through the metal gates opposite St Mary's Church on Church Street. Cars can be parked on the road. Mown pathways only with benches. Access difficult for wheelchair users.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **primrose, cowslip, snowdrop, meadowsweet, jack-by-the-hedge, bank vole, badger, frog, newt, brimstone and peacock butterflies**

Brackley Pocket Park

Park in Hinton Road near southeast entrance, also entry from Banbury Road. The delightful linear walk adjacent to St James' Lake on the southern edge of Brackley shows an excellent example of natural succession. Suitable for wheelchair users up to the first pond.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **muntyjac, fox, meadowsweet, great willowherb, speckled wood butterfly, thrush, willow warbler, sedge warbler**

Cogenhoe Pocket Park

Access via Short Lane. Contains a ford and the remains of the old ironstone railway. The wooded area is suitable for wheelchair users in parts.
FLORA AND FAUNA - Butterflies including **speckled wood**. Fungi: **jew's ear, stag's horn and shaggy marasol**. Two nationally rare beetles: **magdalis barbicornis** and **kissophagus hederæ**.

Croughton Old Allotments Pocket Park

Pedestrian access is from the High Street, past the existing allotments and through the kissing gate. Suitable for both wheelchairs and pushchairs. Parking is available at the Village Hall adjacent to playing fields. Light recreational activities have been installed including a 'Trim Trail'.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **fieldfares, redwings, buzzards, kestrels, shrews and voles**

Croughton Pocket Park

Access is from the main Brackley to Banbury road; turn into Portway and then into Portway Drive where the Pocket Park is at the end on the left. Facilities for barbeque picnics have been introduced and the grass is kept short to provide a safe place for children to play. Accessible to wheelchairs when the ground is not wet.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **kingfisher** (by adjacent stream), **woodpecker, cowslips**

Deanshanger Pocket Park

Access is via Stratford Road. The site contains areas of medieval ridge and furrow and nearby the remains of a Roman settlement. A large pond contains great crested newts and a dipping platform. Main routes accessible to wheelchair users. Picnic tables and benches available.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **barn owl, green woodpecker, kingfisher, lady's smock, little egret, muntjac, smooth newt, spindle, tree creeper, water mint**

Evenley Pocket Park

Access at both ends of site off Bicester Hill. The grassland is actively managed to prevent the growth of tall herbs and scrub and to benefit the marbled white butterfly.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **knapweed broomrape, dark mullein, fox, muntjac, grass snake**

Greens Norton Pocket Park

Situated at the end of Bengal Lane on the edge of the village. Access is also available from Bradden Road at Kingthorn Mill. A boardwalk has been installed on one side of the extensive pond so that aquatic creatures and plants can be observed. Access for wheelchair users in parts from both directions
FLORA AND FAUNA - **barn owl, green woodpecker, great crested newt, grass snake**

Hackleton Pocket Park

Access is from Piddington Lane, St John's Way Piddington or from the footpath leading southwards from the Village Hall in Hackleton accessed via Chapel Lane. Access for wheelchair users is possible but paths are not surfaced and in places may be somewhat uneven.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **tree sparrow, buzzard, tawny owl, little owl, green woodpecker, bulbous buttercup, lady's smock, water starwort, brooklime, water crowfoot, frog, bank vole, pipistrelle bat**

Hartwell Pocket Park

Ashwood Acre is on a former pasture field next to the village cemetery. It is on the bridleway (known as Rowley Wood Lane and Ashwood Lane) which runs northwards from Ashton Road in Hartwell towards Quinton. The park is accessible to wheelchairs users through the pedestrian gate.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **young woodland, wild flower meadow, bee and butterfly garden, buzzard, red kite, barn owl**

Old Stratford Pocket Park

The site features a length of the disused Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal which runs adjacent to the Community Hall on Deanshanger Road where the entrance is located. The main point of entry to the wood

is off Dickens Drive. There are seats; access for wheelchair users to view the water-filled part of the canal is possible at the car park.

FLORA AND FAUNA - **goldfinch, linnet, yellowhammer, siskin, dunnock, wren, kestrel, song and mistle thrush, long-tailed tit, mallard, coot, moorhen, frog, toad, newt, emperor dragonfly**

Silverstone - Brickle Pocket Park

Access is from Church Street, turn into West End just after the sports field. Brickle is immediately on your left. Note in some parts the undulating terrain is not suitable for wheelchair users. A picnic bench provides a superb view across a large pond and marshland surrounded by beautiful mature **willows** and **ash** trees.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **muntyjac, fox, treecreeper, willow warbler, great crested newt**

Silverstone - Olney Meadow Pocket Park

Situated down Graham Hill adjacent to Stewart Drive, Accessible to wheelchair users. There is a small pond with a hazel copse.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **meadow saxifrage, lady's smock, frog, toad, newt**

Sulgrave Pocket Park

Located not far from the famous Sulgrave Manor, access is from Manor Road. Turn into Towrise and keep to the right until you reach the end of the road. There are no formal surfaced pathways for wheelchair users but the ground is fairly level. Rustic play equipment has been installed for children with benches nearby.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **black knapweed, lady's smock, meadowsweet, bugle, butterbur, cowslip, red campion, meadow cranesbill, ragged robin, grass snake, smooth newt, broad-bodied chaser dragonfly**

Syresham Pocket Park

The park is located at the Kingshill lay-by, just off the A43, unfortunately not suitable for wheelchairs. There is a circular path all the way around the site with a woodlands walk, a dipping platform and, at the centre of the park, a wildflower meadow that is managed for the benefit of the flowers and insects by cutting and raking of hay. Benches and tables for picnics are available.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **cuckooflower, water figwort, southern marsh orchid, snipe**

Tiffeld Pocket Park

Access is from the northwest corner of Claydons Field playing area, off the Eastcote Road, and is suitable for wheelchairs. An old balancing pond adjacent to the track has been cleared and a dipping platform erected.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **blackthorn, hawthorn, crab-apple and ash, foxglove and cowslips, great spotted woodpecker, jay, barn owl, common spotted orchid, twayblade, salad burnet, grass snake, frog, stoat,**

dragonfly and damselfly, butterfly species

Tove Wetland

The Pocket Park can be accessed from the A5 at the northern end of Towcester or from Belle Baulk. The main path running through the park is concreted and accessible to all. South of the river is a landscaped area surrounding a balancing pond and some children's play equipment.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **cuckooflower, dragonfly, orange tip butterfly**

Towcester Pocket Park

Adjacent to the Nicholas Hawksmoor Primary School, access is from Buckingham Way - walk along the southern bank of Silverstone Brook to the entrance. Accessible to wheelchair users.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **frog, ramshorn snail, broad-bodied chaser dragonfly, meadow cranesbill, snowdrop, meadowsweet, goldfinch, kingfisher, mole, hedgehog, shrew**

Wootton Pocket Park

Access to the park is from Thrupp Bridge (via a bridge which crosses the stream). Not suitable for wheelchairs.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **speckled wood butterfly, celandine, cuckoo pint, primrose, bluebell, King Alfred's cakes fungi, death cap fungi**

Yardley Gobion Pocket Park

Access is via a gate from the public footpath off High Street near the Post Office. Suitable for wheelchair users. Principal feature of this site is the orchard although a herb garden is being restored and managed to attract **butterflies, bees and hoverflies** and to provide sensory experience for people with disabilities.
FLORA AND FAUNA - older native varieties of **apple** trees, the **harvest plum** tree, large **walnut** tree, **yardley plum**, **red admiral**

Yardley Hastings Pocket Park

Access is from the High Street. No disabled access. Wild roses are planted on the bankside to help butterflies, birds and small mammals.
FLORA AND FAUNA - **hedgehogs, small mollusks, frog, toad, newt**

Yardley Hastings - Wilsons Wood Pocket Park

Access is between Castle Ashby Road and Rectory Lane. Not suitable for wheelchairs. The site is made up of mostly sycamore trees. Ground flora is mostly **ivy, nettle, cow parsley, wood aven, and celandine**. 22 different types of **moss** have been recorded and seven **lichens**
FLORA AND FAUNA - **bullheads** (fish), **meadowsweet, brooklime**

More details on all these pocket parks can be found at www.globalmapping.uk.com/PocketParks

WILDLIFE SITES IN SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

- ★ Pocket Park
see pg 10-11 for details
- ★ Wood or Garden
- ★ Nature Reserve
- ★ Picnic Site



WHITTLEWOOD FOREST

In medieval times much of South Northamptonshire was a hunting forest known as Whittlewood Forest. The largest remnant is in the shape of Hazelborough Forest (although that has been dissected by the A43 dual carriageway) which can be found just southwest of Silverstone village. Smaller areas of this ancient forest include Plumpton, Bucknell and Whistley Woods. There are a number of entrances into the Forest by footpath although there are few parking options, Hazelborough Wood having the only car park, the other woods relying on a small lay-by which can generally take less than 10 vehicles at a time.

HAZELBOROUGH WOOD

OS Map: Explorer 207
Parking: Northbound slip road off A43
Grid Ref: 465922E 243089N

Pushchairs/Prams	Yes
Wheelchairs	Yes
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	Yes
Refreshments	No



As you leave the A43 look for the car park entrance after approx 200 yards on the left. Follow track round to right to parking area. There are a number of paths you can take from here; there is a main forest track near the entrance to the car park which snakes around the wood and can be used in wet weather. As an ancient woodland site you'll see both majestic **oak** and younger **conifer** plantations. Lots of ancient ditchwork to see and flora and fauna. Look for evidence of **badgers** and **rabbits** as well as **roe**, **fallow** and **muntjac deer**. You'll do well to spot a rare protected species of **dormouse**.

FARTHING WOOD

OS Map: Explorer 207
Parking: Lay-by south of Silverstone Circuit
Grid Ref: 466805E 241075N

Pushchairs/Prams	Yes
Wheelchairs	Yes
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	No
Refreshments	No

Leave A43 following signs for Silverstone Circuit. Follow dual carriageway past main entrance to circuit. Look for lay-by on right after road reverts to single carriageway. Parking space limited. There is an alternative entrance off the A43 southbound 100 yards past speed camera. The lay-by isn't signposted and parking is limited here also.

Most forest roads are either flint and cinder or old concrete roads that have almost been covered by moss and grass but can be walked even after heavy rainfall. The **wood white butterfly** recovery project is encouraging this beautiful butterfly which recently became one of our most endangered butterflies.

Wood white butterfly
2pts ☐



BUCKNELL WOOD

OS Map: Explorer 207
Parking: North of Silverstone
Grid Ref: 466000E 245093N

Pushchairs/Prams	Yes
Wheelchairs	Yes
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	No
Refreshments	No

Parking is limited to a small lay-by ½ mile north of Silverstone on road to Abthorpe/Blakesley. In mid-spring Bucknell Wood has a beautiful area for bluebells to the north. There are stands of beech and oak interspersed with hazel coppice as well as **conifer** plantations within the forest. The **conifer** plantations are slowly being removed as a part of a national policy to restore ancient woodland. They will be replaced with native hardwoods such as **oak** and **beech**.



Muntjac

7pts

Large mammals include **red** and **roe deer** as well as **muntjacs** along with **foxes** and **badgers**. Birds include **buzzards**, **red kite** and **blue tits**. Bucknell Wood, also part of the **wood white butterfly** recovery project where the ride system and wood edge is one of the most important features of the wood providing some of the best sites. Hazelborough and Earl's Wood (Brackley Hatch) together with Bucknell are considered Grade A butterfly sites by Butterfly Conservation. Other notable butterfly species found in this collection of woods include **white admiral** and **purple emperor**.



English bluebell

2pts

WHISTLEY WOOD

OS Map: Explorer 207
Parking: Just south of Crowfield
Grid Ref: 461525E 241532N

Pushchairs/Prams	Yes
Wheelchairs	Yes
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	No
Refreshments	No

Entrance is a lay-by just off the B4525 at Crowfield, 1 mile from the junction with the A43. A fairly flat, straight path to the centre of the wood. **Fallow** and **roe deer** as well as **muntjacs** are in evidence along with **foxes**, **rabbits** and **badgers**.

Meadow brown butterfly

3pts



Birds include **buzzards**, **lesser spotted woodpeckers** and **blue tits**. The value of rides for birds and species of bats is well documented, particularly those with a wide open sunny aspects and shrubby margin which are attractive to breeding birds, in particular summer visitors such as **whitethroat**, **blackcap**, **chiffchaff** and **nightingale**. Of the 45 birds currently listed as at risk, 24 have been recorded in these woods.

Shh! Keep quiet and listen to the birds singing.



17



PLUMPTON WOOD

OS Map: Explorer 207

Parking: Off road between Woodend and Weston

Grid Ref: 460452E 249010N

Pushchairs/Prams	No
Wheelchairs	No
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	No
Refreshments	No

Forestry Commission owned woodland midway between Blakesley and Moreton Pinkney. Parking is in a small lay-by off the road between Woodend and Weston. A lovely variety of wild flowers near the paths of this wood support populations of butterflies and invertebrates and include creeping thistle, common birds-foot-trefoil, black medick, tufted vetch, common nettle, common sorrel and occasionally teasel, greater birds'-foot-trefoil and bitter vetch.



Squirrel

2pts

Rides managed with tall grass and herbaceous edges, which graduate into a shrubby coppice fringe, also attract high populations of small mammals, which in turn attract predators such as tawny owl and kestrel. Rides also contain semi-natural neutral grassland flora and are known to support various rare or uncommon plants that provide both a habitat and food source for reptiles and a range of other invertebrates.



Woodpecker

5pts



Protect the Woods you Visit

- Use only proper access points to the woods and close any gates that you walk through.
- Don't leave litter.
- As far as practical, minimize noise.
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees.
- Stones or logs should be replaced if they are turned over.
- If small invertebrates are removed from their habitat, ensure they are treated with care and returned as soon as possible..

SALCEY FOREST

OS Map: Explorer 207

Parking: Large paying car park

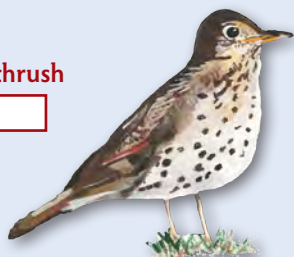
Grid Ref: 479430E 516300N

Pushchairs/Prams	Yes
Wheelchairs	Yes
Dog-Walking Bins provided	Yes
Benches/Seating	Yes
Refreshments	Forest Café

Start from the Forest Café where there is plenty of parking as well as a natural wood

Song thrush

6pts



play area and boasts the **Tree Top Walk** with an 18 metre viewing platform. Salcey Forest is a magnificent ancient woodland which is a remnant of the medieval Royal hunting forest. It has many miles of ancient wood banks, building remains and ancient trees. The 'druids', or veteran oaks in Salcey are rare and amazing wildlife habitats, and some of the oaks are over 600 years old.

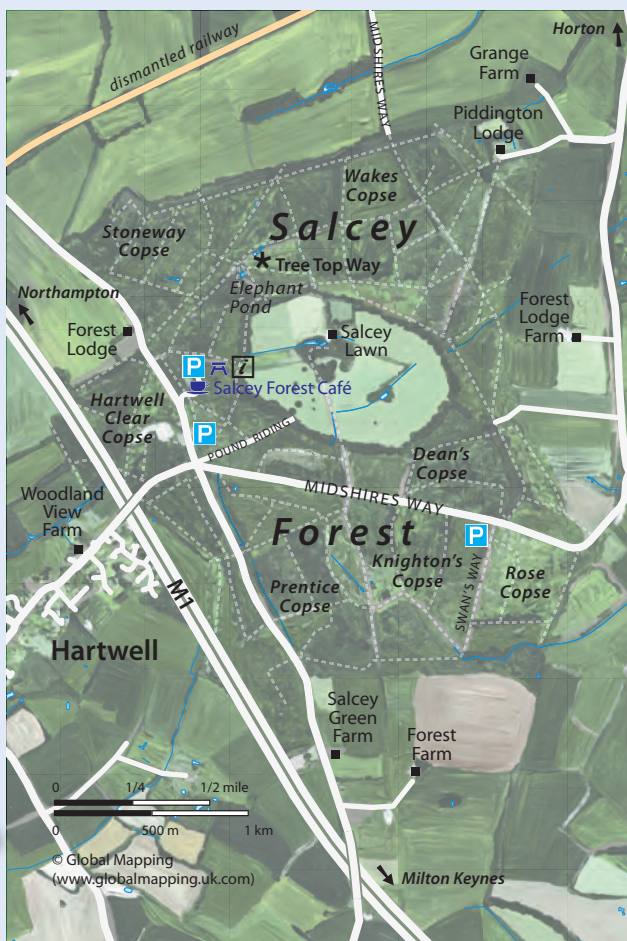
Please keep me under control and clean up after me.



Peacock butterfly

3pts

Mammals include **fallow deer**, **foxes** and **dormice**. In spring, carpets of **bluebells** are spread under native trees including **ash** and **field maple**. Part of the wood has been made a Site of Special Scientific Interest, due to the rarity of its wildlife habitats and is a haven for the rare **wood white butterfly**. The forest has 3 signposted walks (ranging from 1 mile to 6 miles) plus a 5 mile cycle trail.



EVENLEY WOOD GARDEN NN13 5SH

OS Map: Explorer 191

Parking: Car Park, follow green signs

Grid Ref: 459529E 234968N

With an extensive network of paths giving the opportunity for hours of exploration, you can also take a break from your walk and enjoy light refreshments in the woodland pavilion or bring a picnic and enjoy a day with the whole family in Evenley Wood. Evenley Wood is also home to huge array of wildlife. Over the past 15 years, 80 species of birds have been spotted including **yellow hammer**, **reed bunting**, **red kite**, **pheasant**, **green woodpecker** and **hobby**. Butterflies include **large white**, **orange tip**, **red admiral**, **holly blue**, **ringlet** and **small skipper**. Extensive surveys of moths, butterflies, mosses and liverworts have also been carried out, the details of which can be seen on the website www.evenleywoodgarden.co.uk along with opening hours and admission charges which are payable on entry to the garden.



STEANE PARK GARDEN NN13 6DP

OS Map: Explorer 191

Parking: Car Park, follow brown signs

Grid Ref: 455350E 239100N

Steane Park Garden is situated adjacent to the site of the old medieval village of Steane which is mentioned in the Domesday book. You will approach via parkland with an abundance of classic trees and a smattering of wild flowers. The sense of history is strong with a beautiful church built by Thomas Crewe in 1620 adjacent to the lake and ancient stew ponds. The attractive formal gardens, governed by a stunning **copper beech** and a classic **cedar** of Lebanon leads to a more relaxed wooded area next to the lake with wandering paths and wild flowers. Visit the website www.steane-park.co.uk for details of open days or to arrange a private garden visit.

NB Both Evenley Wood Garden and Steane Park Garden have limited opening hours.



LIMES FARM FARTHINGHOE

A popular farm shop in Farthinghoe offering teas and light lunches.

Distance: 3 miles
Time: 1 hour
OS Map: Explorer 191 & 206
Parking: Limes Farm, Farthinghoe
Grid Ref: 453450E 239850N

Pushchairs/Prams	Farm only
Wheelchairs	Farm only
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	Yes
Picnic Areas	Yes

There are gentle walks around the farm to picnic areas and two small lakes. Alternatively, a tougher walk (wear appropriate footwear) from the picnic area.

- 1 Pass through two gates and head down hill following line of electricity poles. Cross stile in corner of field, up to double set of gates. Path is indistinct so aim for transmitter tower.
- 2 Cross shallow railway cutting (full of wildflowers in summer), cross stream aiming for Marston Church Tower.
- 3 At stile turn sharp left and follow footpath in southwest direction for 1km.



Pheasants 21

Female

1pt

Male

1pt

4 Turn left onto bridgeway and follow it back towards Farthinghoe almost as far as the main road.

5 Go through gate on left and downhill to allotment. Pass through trees on right, round lakes and back to start. There is an option of a short-cut back on reaching the railway cutting at 2.

Animals to see on the farm include **sheep** and **cattle**. The lakes host a variety of wildlife including **moorhens**, **mallards** and **frogs**.



GRENDON QUARTER POND

Just north of Castle Ashby, the lakes are a popular spot for angling. There is a footpath all round the lakes (about 1½ miles) and a café by Scotland Pond. The lakes are not natural having been formed by quarrying.



OS Map: Explorer 207

Parking: Small car parks along north edge

Grid Ref: 486500E 260150N

Pushchairs/Prams	Yes
Wheelchairs	Yes
Dog-Walking Bins provided	No
Benches/Seating	No
Picnic Areas	Yes
Refreshments	Lakeside Lodge Café

Grendon Quarter Pond, Scotland Pond and Brickyard Pond all have large **carp** as well as **roach**, **perch** and **bream**. Waterfowl include **moorhens**, **little egrets**, **mallards** and **kingfishers**.



Cedar

2pts



Grey heron

4pts

TOWCESTER BURY MOUNT AND WATERMEADOWS

Located in the centre of Towcester since medieval times, Bury Mount is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is thought that the original motte and bailey castle were constructed by the Crown in the late 11th early 12th century as a strategic fortification. The castle was a symbol of power and would have had a number of uses including acting as the residence of the lord of the manor's bailiff and as an encampment for troops.

Watermeadows is part of the flood plain of the River Tove, is bounded by the River Tove, the Mill Stream and Silverstone Brook, and offers plenty of space to play and explore although please be aware of the steep river banks.

OS Map: Explorer 207

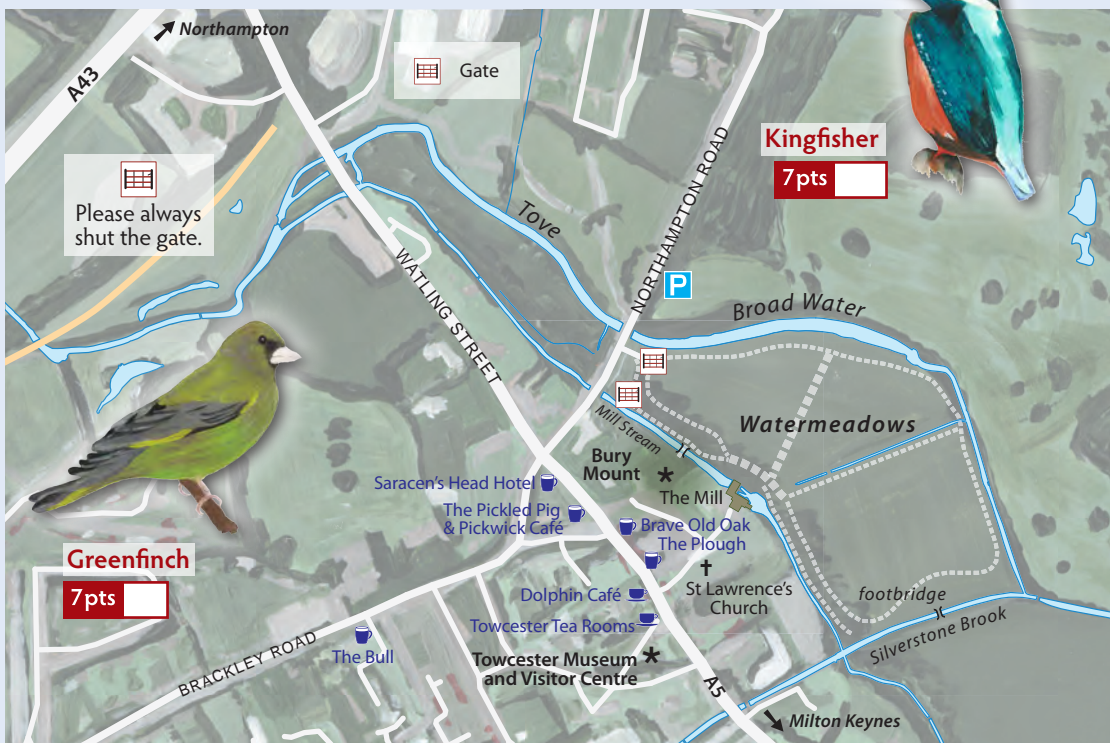
Parking: Northampton Road or car parks in town centre

Grid Ref: 469420E 248720N

Pushchairs/Prams	Yes
Wheelchairs	Yes
Dog-Walking Bins provided	Yes
Benches/Seating	Yes
Picnic Areas	Yes
Refreshments	Towcester

The watercourses surrounding the site are home to **dragonfly** and **demoiselle** and species such as **water mint**, **meadowsweet**, **purple loosestrife**, **water forget-me-not**, **yellow flag iris**, **angelica**, **canary grass** and **sedges**. The grassland areas include species such as **red fescue** and **yorkshire fog**. The site is also home to many mature trees such as **oak**, **scots pine** and **horse chestnut**.

Keep an eye out for **kingfishers**, **little egrets**, and **barn owls**.



ST JAMES' LAKE BRACKLEY

Around St James' Lake and the Pocket Park

Distance: ½ mile
Time: 30 mins
OS Map: Explorer 191
Parking: Hinton Road
Grid Ref: 458183E 236520N

Pushchairs/Prams	Yes
Wheelchairs	Yes
Dog Walking-Bins provided	Yes
Benches/Seating	Yes
Picnic Areas	Yes
Refreshments	Brackley

All walks in this guide are based on official footpaths or bridleways. The publishers accept no responsibility for any loss, injury or inconvenience sustained by anyone using this guide.

Walking Tips

Warm up before setting off with a few stretches.
 Wear suitable footwear.
 Wear layers to keep a comfortable temperature.
 Carry a water bottle.

GLOBAL MAPPING

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For further information on what to see and do in South Northamptonshire please visit
www.southnorthants.gov.uk/2633.htm

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Created in 1977, St James' Lake is a delightful small lake, with an island at one end, set in a beautiful park of around five acres. The park is open to the public to enjoy the wildlife and scenery; wildfowl on the lake includes **moorhens, Canada geese, coots, grebes, and kingfishers**. A footpath encircles the lake and there are picnic benches. The lake is popular for angling. The adjacent Pocket Park follows the line of a dismantled railway and includes a dipping lake.

The Pocket Park stretches for ¾ mile and gives you an optional extra walk in either direction. To the south it joins Hinton Road and to the north passes under an old railway bridge before linking up with Banbury Road. The habitat is ideal for **water voles**.

