

Please complete this form and send to:

The Wildlife Trust
FREEPOST ANG10646
Cambridge
CB23 6BR



I/we would like to join The Wildlife Trust.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Name and ages of children under 16 for WATCH
(junior) membership (please list):

The fees suggested are minimum annual rates – if possible please give more.

Family & WATCH **£42** Joint **£33**

Individual **£27** Donation **£** _____

I/we enclose a cheque for **£** _____
made payable to **The Wildlife Trust.**

Please debit my/our credit/debit card.

Card number:

□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□

Valid from: _____ Expiry date: _____

□□ □□ □□ □□

Signature: _____

Or I/we wish to pay by direct debit, please send a form for completion.

If you would like more information about Trust membership, please call: **01954 713543**
or email: **cambridgeshire@wildlifebcnp.org**



Want to know more about Anglian Water?
Visit www.anglianwater.co.uk to see the full range of services.

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AW039/02/08

Pitsford Water Nature Reserve walk

This self-guided walk around Pitsford Water Nature Reserve has been designed to introduce to you some of the main landscape, historical and wildlife features of the area. Don't forget you will need to get an entry permit from the Lodge.

From the main car park, cross the causeway road and enter the reserve proper by the small footbridge. Turning left, the path will lead you alongside the meadow **1**, and after a short walk, to the Maytrees Hide. Note: You will cross the old road that now runs under the reservoir. In this area is the main bird feeding station of the reserve. Feeding is maintained throughout the year but the winter time is best. Large flocks of finches are present including many tree sparrows and sometimes corn buntings. Both of these are nationally declining species, but still common here.

Bird ringing is carried out in this area and you will see one of the duck traps at the water's edge. Ringing is an important conservation tool that helps us to monitor our bird populations.

Continue to walk through the meadow. This area contains a wide range of plants including many of the 40 plus species of grass found on the reserve, and is much favoured by butterflies. After the gate you can turn right towards the Birdclub Hide or follow the perimeter path at the back of the plantation.

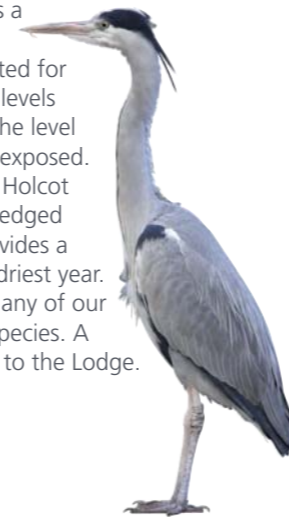
These plantations are a feature of the reserve. They were planted in the late 1950's but unfortunately with many non-native tree species. The thinning of some of these is an ongoing part of the reserve management. In front of the Birdclub Hide are three floating rafts that provide nest sites for common terns which arrive each spring from Africa.

Continuing along the paths you will come to Scaldwell Stream which feeds the man-made lagoons **2**. At certain times of the year this corner is a haven for many water-birds as the shallow waters are ideal for them. You will notice as you approach the Scaldwell Hides that the path undulates over the remains of the medieval ridge and furrow field system.

The Scaldwell Arm **3** is an extensive area of reed grasses that are full of bird song in spring and summer. The eastern side has a developing dry scrub area that is attractive to many warblers and a wide range of butterflies. The point **4** contains a mature conifer plantation with our heronry in the tree tops. Turning north again you will come to West Hide, at the end of a small path and boardwalk. The shallow bay in front of the hide is an ideal spot for great crested grebe, ruddy duck and other waterfowl. In summer the water surface is covered in the pink flowers of amphibious bistort, often covered in brightly coloured damselflies.

Continuing north the path skirts around a large dense area of scrubland **5** that has been partly cleared to provide glades for insects and hopefully nightingales. The path will now lead you to an area of woodland that has been extensively thinned **6**. The removal of non-native trees has enabled the native broadleaf trees present to grow on. This area will, in time, become some of the best woodland on the reserve. At the edge of the block are the remains of an ancient hedgerow **7** with some superb oak trees. The path continues along the Walgrave Arm with its areas of developing alder carr until you reach a major bridge over the stream.

Continuing down this arm will bring you to the Cover **8**. This area contains the most mature woodland on the reserve with many old oak trees supporting a large rookery. Again a programme of removing conifers etc. is in progress. Crossing the old road leads you into the Holcot Arm where there is a bird hide which overlooks several lagoons, **9** excavated for waterfowl. At high water levels these are covered but as the level falls a series of lagoons is exposed. At the head of this arm is Holcot Pond **10**, an artificially dredged and bunded area that provides a wetland area in even the driest year. This area is favoured by many of our dragonfly and damselfly species. A short walk now leads you to the Lodge.



Pitsford Water Nature Reserve walk



wild honeysuckle



Enjoy the peaceful sights and sounds at Pitsford Water Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest jointly managed by The Wildlife Trust and **anglianwater**

Welcome to Pitsford Water Nature Reserve

Pitsford Water was built to supply Northampton with water and it was filled in 1955.

An agreement was reached in 1969 between the then Mid Northants Water Board (now Anglian Water) and The Wildlife Trust to manage all of the area north of the causeway (194 hectares) as a Nature Reserve. The whole reservoir was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1970, principally because of the large numbers of wintering wildfowl.

Four main streams enter the reserve and their valleys form large bays of shallow water. During winter these provide excellent feeding and sheltering areas for wildfowl. As the water level drops in summer and autumn stretches of mud offer feeding areas for migrating waders. These areas are quickly colonised by unusual plants not found elsewhere on the reserve.

Part of the reserve is fished in season. The large Scaldwell and Walgrave Bays are closed to provide wildlife havens free from disturbance.



Front cover: grey heron
Opposite: germander speedwell



great crested grebe © Tim Appleton

Good general views of the reserve can be obtained from the causeway that carries the road between Brixworth and Holcot. To explore in more detail you will need to follow some of the 15 miles of paths.

It is necessary to buy a permit from the Lodge that is situated at the eastern end of the causeway. This is not to discourage visitors but to help cover the costs of the paths, hides, bridges and interpretation boards provided for your benefit. Toilets and a small shop (mainly fishing goods) are also in the Lodge. The Reserve Warden's office is here and he can provide further details about the reserve, or contact him on 01604 780148, or phone The Wildlife Trust on 01604 405285.

Excellent parking facilities are available at the western end of the causeway and there is limited parking at the Lodge. A complete walk around the reserve is seven miles and will take between three and four hours walking. There are eight hides provided to observe the wildlife. The only toilets are at the Lodge. **In the interest of wildlife, dogs and cycles are not allowed. Please keep to the mown paths and take your litter home.**

The most conspicuous animals on the reserve are the birds. In winter up to 10,000 wildfowl can be present, including wigeon, gadwall, pintail and teal. Over 25 species of duck have been recorded as well as three species of diver and five of grebe.



song thrush

The scrub areas attract winter flocks of thrushes to their berry crop and over 60 species of birds are known to breed here in the spring and summer, varying in size from heron to goldcrest.

The wide range of habitats allows a tremendous variety of other wildlife to flourish. Apart from the permanent areas of trees, scrub and grassland some of the plants which annually colonise the exposed mud of the draw down zone are unusual, including orange foxtail, mudwort and golden dock. On the fringes celery-leaved buttercup and beds of water mint add to the interest.

Dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies are abundant in summer and early autumn throughout the reserve. Closer inspection of tracks may confirm the presence of many mammals including badger, brown hare, water shrew and otter as well as numerous other small mammals.

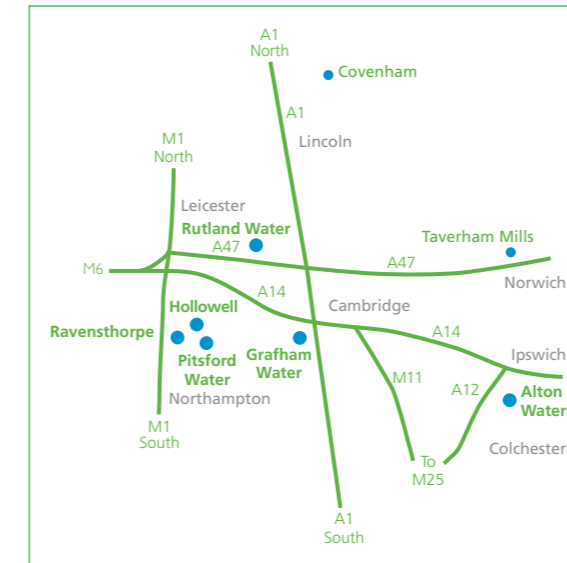
Management
Ongoing management includes the mowing of the paths, control of some scrub areas, removal of non-native trees to improve the woodland and by managing the grasslands with a late season hay cut. All of these will improve the diversity of the site and benefit the wildlife. The provision of hides, bridges, paths and information boards will be of benefit to our human visitors.

Enjoying Anglian Water reservoirs

We hope you enjoy your visit to Pitsford Water.

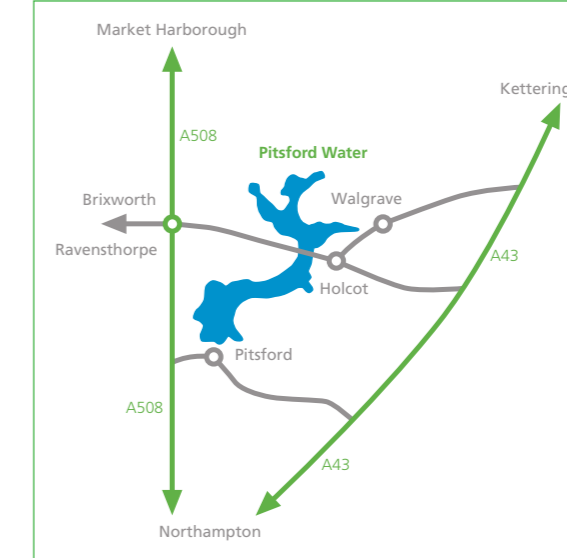
Why not explore the countryside and drop in at one of Anglian Water's other reservoirs around the region?

For more information on any of our reservoirs please visit Anglian Water's website: www.anglianwater.co.uk.



Please note: Permits are required for Pitsford Water and Rutland Water (Rutland) Nature Reserves but only car parking charges apply to Alton Water (Suffolk) and Grafham Water (Cambridgeshire).

An Anglian Water Activities Pass is available giving access to all these reserves and free parking at the reservoirs, plus free admission and discounts on other attractions for a family for 12 months for just £50 available from Anglian Water visitor centres at these reservoirs or by post from Anglian Water, Freepost MID20368, Oakham LE15 6BR.



Pitsford Water Nature Reserve
OS grid reference SP 780708.

The reserve is situated 5 miles north of Northampton. Main access is from the Holcot to Brixworth Road, from either the A43 or A508. The main car park is at the western end of the causeway that runs across the reservoir.

Support The Trust by becoming a member

You can help to protect this and other important sites by joining The Wildlife Trust. If you would like more information about this or other reserves in Northamptonshire, please contact:

Reserves Manager
The Wildlife Trust
Lings House
Billing Lings
Northampton NN3 8BE
Tel: 01604 405285
www.wildlifecbp.org
Registered Charity No. 1000412



Make a difference and join us

The Wildlife Trust aims to...

- Save important wildlife areas in the countryside and manage nature reserves.
- Safeguard threatened species and habitats while involving people in our work.
- Educate children about their natural environment.
- Give everyone a chance to enjoy wildlife and wild places in towns and countryside.
- Work with individuals, landowners and community groups on all aspects of wildlife conservation.

And we...

- Work to protect and save rare species such as the barn owl, otter and dormouse.
- Screen planning applications and fight to save sites where wildlife and countryside are threatened.
- Work with farmers, landowners, local authorities, businesses, community groups and schools for the benefit of wildlife and people's enjoyment.
- Manage 130 nature reserves totalling over 4500 acres in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire.

Your subscription would help us...

To care for:

- Spectacular wetlands for wintering and breeding birds.
- Urban areas – wildlife on your doorstep.
- Meadows brimming with butterflies and wildflowers.
- Ancient woodlands full of birdsong.