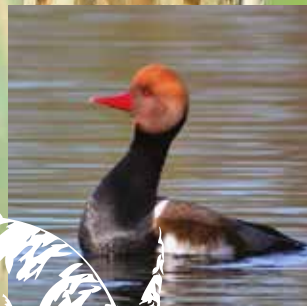




Cotswold Water Park

NATURE RESERVE

guide



Explore the wildlife sites within
the Cotswold Water Park...

Cotswold Water Park Nature Reserve Locations



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The Cotswold Water Park...

is a stunning wetland landscape with over 180 lakes covering an area of 42 square miles. It has received national recognition for its importance for wetland wildlife with thousands of water birds visiting each winter. It is a place that acts as a carbon sink; its reedbeds, woodlands and wetlands absorbing and storing carbon from human activities; a place where local people and visitors can enjoy this unique natural setting.



Cokes Pit

A designated Local Nature Reserve (LNR), numerous islands at Cokes Pit provide nesting habitat for many species of birds. Black-headed Gull, Common Tern, and Oystercatcher use the bare islands with Tufted Duck, Greylag Goose, Coot and Great Crested Grebe using the more vegetated islands and reed fringes. At dusk Daubenton's and other bats hunt midges and caddisflies above the surface of the lake.

Water Vole and Water Shrew inhabit the site with plenty of vegetation in the lake margins and edges of islands for them to feed on. Dragonflies and damselflies also use marginal plants like Iris and Purple Loosestrife to emerge. The lake contains the rare aquatic plant, the Lesser Bearded Stonewort.

Two miniature meadows, located at each end of the footpath, come alive in the spring with Cuckoo

Flower, Meadowsweet, Yellow Rattle, Common Spotted Orchid, Cowslip and Bird's-foot Trefoil. The wildflowers attract Orange Tip, Green Veined White and Brimstone butterflies.



3



MANAGED BY:
Cotswold Lakes Trust.

LOCATION:
500m east of Somerford Keynes.

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 02625 95224

WHAT3WORDS:
list.seated.ecologist

LAKE NUMBER:
CWP34

ACCESS:
Permissive footpath entrances via Spratsgate Lane. Undulating and seasonally flooded ground unsuitable for wheelchairs or buggies.

FACILITIES:
1 bird hide.

DOGS:
No dogs permitted.

NEAREST PARKING:
Neigh Bridge Country Park car park, Somerford Keynes (GL7 6DU).

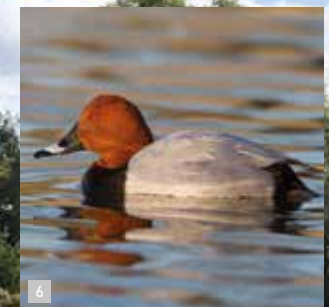
NOTABLE WILDLIFE FEATURES OR HABITATS:
Lakes, reedbeds.
Water Vole, Otter, Water Shrew, bats, Tufted Duck, Great Crested Grebe, geese, gulls, terns, dragonflies, stoneworts, orchids, wildflowers.



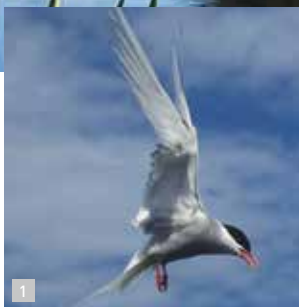
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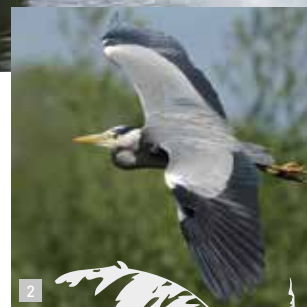
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6



1



2

PHOTOS:

- 1: Common Tern.
- 2: Grey Heron.
- 3: Cetti's Warbler.
- 4: Teal.
- 5: Orange Tip butterfly.
- 6: Pochard.



CWP34

- Bird hide
- Permissive footpath
- Road access
- Neigh Bridge car park

Lower Moor Clattinger Farm Sandpool Farm

The reserve is a mosaic of three lakes, two brooks, ponds and wetland scrapes linked together by boardwalks, ancient hedges, woodland and meadows. A number of wildfowl species swim in the lakes - Great Crested Grebe, Teal, Shoveler, and Goosander to name a few. Water Voles and Otters use the Flagham Brook and can sometimes also be seen from the hides overlooking the lakes. On sunny days you may spot Emperor, Southern Hawker and Downy Emerald dragonflies.

A fine example of enclosed lowland grassland, Clattinger Farm is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its fabulous wildflowers and is part of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It lies on the River Thames floodplain and its hay meadows drain into the Swill Brook. In late April see thousands of delicately patterned Snakes-head Fritillaries. Walk through the meadows in June to see

wildflowers such as Meadow Saffron, Tubular Water-dropwort, orchids, and Downy-fruited Sedge. In winter, wading birds such as Lapwing and Snipe forage on the wet meadows.

Most of the Sandpool Farm reserve features lush grass for grazing. A grassy path leads into wet woodland full of bees and birds such as Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff. Come at dusk and you may spot Barn Owl and bats.

MANAGED BY:
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

LOCATION:
1.6 km east of Oaksey.

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 00800 93801

WHAT3WORDS:
grinning.slimmer.mainly

LAKE NUMBER/S:
CWP52, CWP53

ACCESS:
Level car park and disabled parking bays. Wheelchair access to one bird hide and across the boardwalk to Mallard Lake. From this point footpath can be muddy.

FACILITIES:
2 bird hides and café.

DOGS:
Dogs on leads.

NEAREST PARKING:
Parking on site.

NOTABLE WILDLIFE FEATURES OR HABITATS:
Lakes, river, meadow.
Otter, bats, Great Crested Grebe, Teal, Shoveler, Goosander, Lapwing, Snipe, Chiffchaff, Barn Owl, herons, dragonflies, Snakes-head Fritillary, orchids, Black Poplar, wildflowers.



1



2

PHOTOS:
1: Great Crested Grebe.
2: Snakes-head Fritillary.
3: Common Spotted orchid.
4: Emperor dragonfly.
5: Otter.



3



4



5



Shorncliffe Reedbeds

The first lake to be restored specifically as a nature reserve in the CWP, it is home to almost 6 hectares of reedbed. Lake 85B was designed with multiple long thin islands to maximise the amount of reed fringe habitat. Herons, egrets, and the elusive Bittern hunt for fish and amphibians in these fringes and they provide nesting opportunities for the latter as well as for Cetti's Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Reed Bunting, Coot, Little Grebe and Great Crested Grebe.

MANAGED BY:

Cotswold Lakes Trust.

LOCATION:

650m west of South Cerney.

GRID REFERENCE:

SU 03579 96797

WHAT3WORDS:

hospitals.sharp.hires

LAKE NUMBER/S:

CWP84, CWP85A, CWP85B

ACCESS:

Public footpath west from South Cerney. Mostly level ground but with stepped access and restricted width, so unsuitable for wheelchairs or buggies. Subject to winter flooding and muddy in sections.

FACILITIES:

2 bird hides with gravel access ramps.

DOGS:

Keep on a short lead and stick to marked footpaths.

NEAREST PARKING:

Upper Up Playing Field car park in South Cerney (GL7 5UT).

NOTABLE WILDLIFE

FEATURES OR HABITATS:

Lakes, reedbeds, stream.

Water Vole, Otter, bats, Barn Owl, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Water Rail, Siberian Chiffchaff, Hobby, Marsh Harrier, herons, egrets, hirundines, terns.



PHOTOS:

- 1: Great Crested Grebe.
- 2: Reed Warbler.
- 3: Wigeon.
- 4: Hobby.
- 5: Coot.

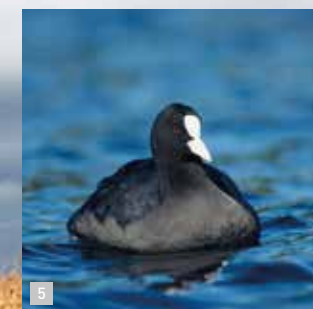
Good amounts of wildfowl use all three lakes throughout the year. Shoveler, Teal, Pochard, Wigeon during the winter and Tufted Duck and Gadwall in the summer. Marsh Harrier are often seen in the winter hunting over the reeds and water looking for unsuspecting prey.

The plentiful fish numbers provide a rich food source for Otters and the migratory Common Terns who use the bare island on Lake 85A to

nest alongside Lapwing and Black-headed Gulls during the summer.

The dense native hedgerows and bramble patches are full of insects in the summer and provide cover and food for Garden Warbler, Grasshopper Warbler, Blackcap, Whitethroat, and an occasional Nightingale. In the autumn when they are full of fruit Fieldfare and Redwing take full advantage of their bounty.

In winter, when walking along the damp footpath, listen out for the piglet-like squeal of a Water Rail as it scurries from one side of the path to the other. While in the lake margins and flooded grassland, Snipe are often seen searching for invertebrates, with the occasional Green Sandpiper too. Barn Owls are often seen hunting for voles over the rough grassland alongside the footpaths around the reserve.



Cleveland Lakes

MANAGED BY:
Cotswold Lakes Trust.

LOCATION:
1km east of Ashton Keynes.

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 06746 94066

WHAT3WORDS:
diets.posed.umbrellas

LAKE NUMBER/S:
CWP68AB, CWP68C/D, CWP74

ACCESS:
Public bridleway from Waterhay Car Park and then onto the permissive path. Level ground but subject to winter flooding and muddy in sections so may be unsuitable for wheelchairs or buggies. Radar key kissing gates at west and east access points.

FACILITIES:
2 bird hides & 2 bird watching screens.

DOGS:
Keep on a short lead and stick to marked footpaths.

NEAREST PARKING:
Waterhay Car Park (SN6 6QY).

NOTABLE WILDLIFE FEATURES OR HABITATS:
Lakes, reedbeds, river.
Water Vole, Otter, bats, Great Crested Grebe, Goldeneye, Lapwing, Gadwall, Garganey, Pochard, Red-crested Pochard, Shoveler, Pintail, Wigeon, Teal, Tufted Duck, Reed Warbler, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Sedge Warbler, Reed Bunting, Hobby, Marsh Harrier, herons, egrets, hirundines, gulls, terns, dragonflies, damselflies, butterflies, orchids, Black Poplar.

Two of the largest lakes in the Cotswold Water Park make up the majority of Cleveland Lakes which provides an invaluable habitat for the large concentration of wildfowl that arrive in the winter when Pochard, Gadwall, Goldeneye, Pintail, Shoveler, Wigeon and Teal can all be found. The numbers of wildfowl attract predators like Peregrine and Marsh Harrier which regularly hunt here during the winter.

The wet margins of the lakes and the Cerney Wick Brook are home to Water Voles, as well as an array of damselflies and dragonflies, such as the Hairy Dragonfly, Emperor, and Four-spotted Chaser. Fish such as Roach, Perch, Tench, and Pike are in abundance, with Otters, Cormorant, Great Crested Grebe and Common Tern their primary predators.

From January, Grey Heron, Little Egret and Great White Egret can be seen nest-building from the Reed

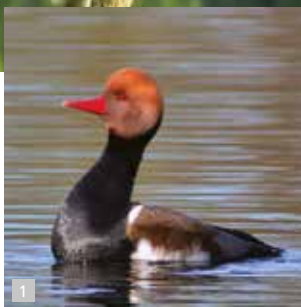
Hide, and by spring the young are exploring their surroundings to hunt alongside Bittern as they search for fish and amphibians.

Swallows, Sand Martins, House Martins and Swifts can be seen hunting insects above the lakes during the spring and summer. Hobbies make the most of the abundant insects as well and can be seen eating dragonflies while in flight. Grasshopper Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Cetti's Warbler and Willow Warbler can all

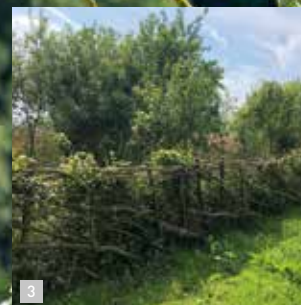
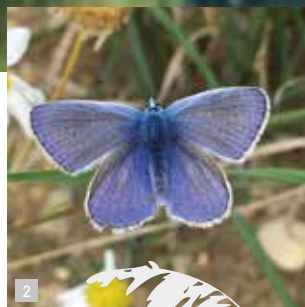
be heard singing as they search for suitable mates in the vegetated lake edges and reeds, while Lesser and Common Whitethroats are heard in thick thorny scrub. Cuckoos make use of the abundant warbler nests to lay their own eggs too.

Wildflowers like Common Spotted Orchid, Pyramidal Orchid, Cowslip, Meadowsweet, and Willowherb can be found along the paths during the summer. The plant diversity supports large numbers of butterflies including common species such as Orange Tip, Small Tortoiseshell and Common Blue, and rarer species like Grizzled Skipper and Clouded Yellow.

Along the north-eastern edge of the reserve there are mature Black Poplars, Britain's rarest native timber tree. Several younger trees, which were cultivated from mature specimens in the water park, were planted along the edge of the permissive path to create a clone bank for future cuttings.



PHOTOS:
1: Red-crested Pochard.
2: Common Blue butterfly.
3: Hedge-laying.
4: Marsh Harrier.



North Meadow NNR

North Meadow National Nature Reserve (NNR) is an old flower-rich hay meadow that has a great variety of wildflowers and is of international importance as one of the finest examples of a lowland hay meadow in Europe.



MANAGED BY:
Natural England.

LOCATION:
500m north of Cricklade.

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 09451 94530

WHAT3WORDS:
postage.human.originate

ACCESS:
Public footpaths from Cricklade and Latton. Disabled access gate at the site, although the reserve can become very wet, so access is not advised at these times. Access is restricted to the public footpaths. Subject to winter and spring flooding.

FACILITIES:
None.

DOGS:
Keep dogs under close control at all times.

NEAREST PARKING:
Cricklade town centre or roadside parking within 300m of the reserve.

NOTABLE WILDLIFE FEATURES OR HABITATS:
Meadow, river.
Water Vole, Otter, Snakes-head Fritillary, herons, egrets wildflowers.



PHOTOS:

1: Yellow Iris. 2: Water Vole. 3: Snakes-head Fritillary. 4: Ox-eye Daisy. 5: Little Egret.

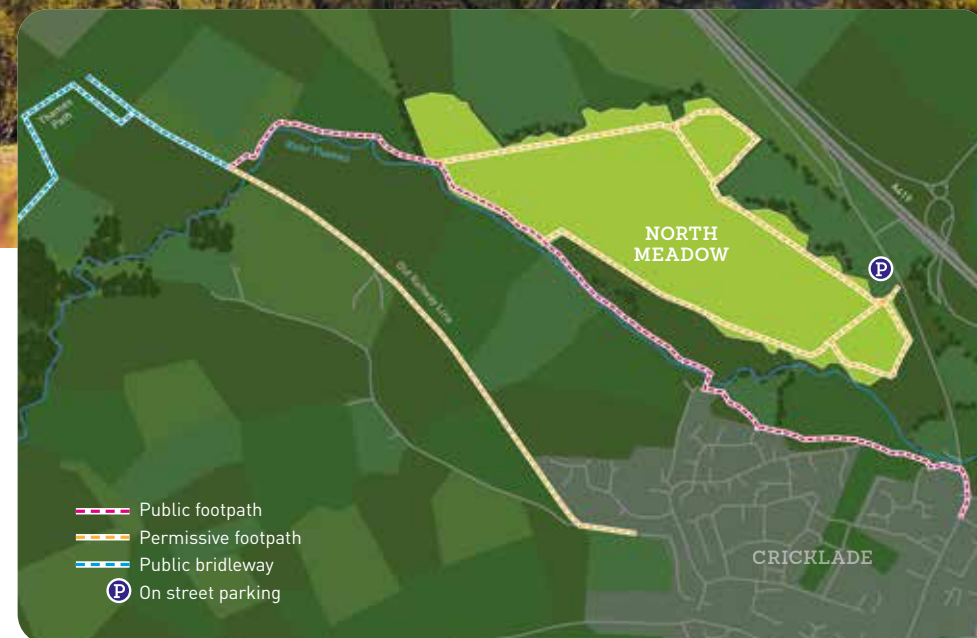
The meadow supports Britain's largest population of the Snake's-head Fritillary which flowers in the spring. At this time of year, you will also see Marsh Marigold, Cuckoo Flower and maybe the increasingly rare Adder's Tongue Fern.

Greater Burnet, Common Knapweed, Cowslip, Meadow Buttercup and Yellow Rattle, Ox-eye Daisy, Meadow Rue and Meadowsweet may be seen in

the summer months. There are also over 20 species of grass, including Crested Dog's-tail and Yellow Oatgrass.

During the winter when the meadow is in flood, Grey Heron, Little Egret and Great White Egret can be seen stalking the fields for stranded fish and amphibians. In the summer months, Skylarks sing in the long grass while Reed Warbler and Sedge Warbler can be heard in

the vegetation alongside the River Thames.



Old Railway Line

Since closing, the Old Railway Line has become an important corridor for wildlife. The mature willow and Ash trees provide nesting and roosting opportunities for many birds including Treecreeper, Goldcrest, Greater Spotted Woodpecker and Green Woodpecker.



MANAGED BY:
Cotswold Lakes Trust.

LOCATION:
Between South Cerney and Cricklade.

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 06379 96248

WHAT3WORDS:
liquid.ticked.influence

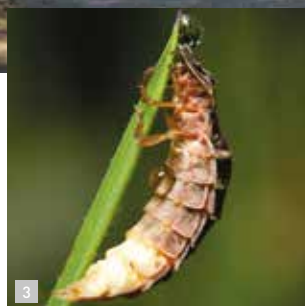
ACCESS:
Level ground throughout, however may be unsuitable for wheelchairs/buggies during or following wet weather.

FACILITIES:
Kids nature trail.

DOGS:
Dogs on leads.

NEAREST PARKING:
Bridge Car Park (GL7 6TL) or in South Cerney or Cricklade.

NOTABLE WILDLIFE FEATURES OR HABITATS:
Woodland, coppice, ponds. Bats, Badger, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Green Woodpecker, Jay, Tawny Owl, Redwing, Fieldfare, Goldcrest, Treecreeper, Glow Worm.



PHOTOS:
1: Fieldfare.
2: Old railway arches.
3: Glow Worm.
4: Redwing.
5: Rubbing plaque.

Cracks in trunks and gaps beneath peeling bark offer roosting opportunities for many bat species too, most commonly Soprano Pipistrelle and Natterer's. The cracks and gaps in the brickwork of the old railway bridges are also used by Daubenton's bats for roosting.

Badgers have dug into the steep sides of the embankments and during the summer you may see them leaving their setts at dusk to forage for food and fresh

bedding. Similarly, Roe Deer can be seen at dusk browsing the hedgerows and using the adjacent fields to graze.

The grassy verges are home to the increasingly rare Glow Worm, best seen on warm July evenings when the females climb grass stems and emit their famous glow to attract males. They primarily feed on the snails found amongst the railway pilings and rotting detritus.



Whelford Pools

This nature reserve is a freshwater haven for all sorts of wildlife. Whelford Pools and the surrounding lakes attract good numbers of wintering wildfowl, including Wigeon, Red-crested Pochard, Goldeneye, Pochard, Tufted Duck and Little Grebe. In springtime you can watch Great Crested Grebes do their courtship 'weed dance' and get great views from the hide and viewing screen of the Cormorant colony. Along with Sedge Warbler and Reed Bunting, Common Terns can be spotted, as well as Pike, Otters and clouds of dragonflies and damselflies.

MANAGED BY:
Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.

LOCATION:
500m north of Whelford.

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 17308 99501

WHAT3WORDS:
guardian.postcard.loitering

LAKE NUMBER/S:
CWP111, CWP111B

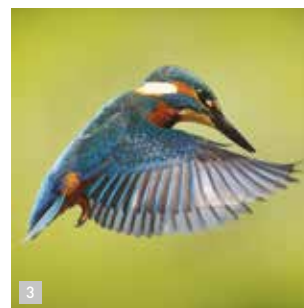
ACCESS:
Level car park but some uneven surfaces and paths beyond that. The hide has a wheelchair-friendly access ramp and turning circle. Public footpaths from Lechlade and Fairford.

FACILITIES:
1 bird hide.

DOGS:
Dogs on leads.

NEAREST PARKING:
Parking on site.

NOTABLE WILDLIFE FEATURES OR HABITATS:
Lakes, ponds.
Otter, bats, Pochard, Tufted Duck, Wigeon, Great Crested Grebe, herons, terns, Sedge Warbler, Reed Bunting, dragonflies, orchids.



PHOTOS:
1: Downy Emerald dragonfly. 2: Bee Orchid. 3: Kingfisher. 4: Goldeneye.

Roundhouse Lake nature reserve is a fine example of the purity of habitat that can be achieved through the careful and sympathetic restoration of gravel pits. The large open lake plays host to many wintering wildfowl, including Wigeon, Red-crested Pochard, Goldeneye, Pochard and Tufted Duck. Great Crested Grebe and Little Grebe are also frequently found on the lake, and sightings of Kingfisher are not unlikely.

Otters are also known to visit the lake regularly.

Roundhouse Lake

MANAGED BY:
Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.

LOCATION:
1 km west of Lechlade.

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 19812 99422

WHAT3WORDS:
wildfires.nutty.slippery

LAKE NUMBER:
CWP116

ACCESS:
Pedestrian and cycle access along single lane track from A417 west of Lechlade (not suitable for vehicles), or along public footpaths/bridleways from Fairford and Whelford. Unsuitable for wheelchairs and buggies during or following wet weather.

FACILITIES:
1 bird hide.

DOGS:
No dogs permitted.

NEAREST PARKING:
Lechlade town centre or Riverside Park (GL7 3AQ).

NOTABLE WILDLIFE FEATURES OR HABITATS:
Lakes, grassland.
Otter, bats, Tufted Duck, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Goldeneye, Teal, Pochard, Hobby, gulls, terns, orchids.

Other areas to visit

Explore beyond the main nature reserves and you can find other wildlife-rich sites via an extensive network of public and permissive footpaths. We've highlighted a few key sites but there will be many more.

Eysey

LOCATION:
Between Cricklade and Down Ampney

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 10737 94889

WHAT3WORDS:
roost.blazers.pixies

Current gravel workings and restoration activity result in good views of a variety of waterbirds. Large numbers of dragonflies and damselflies along the River Thames and Ampney Brook. Access on public footpaths from Cricklade.



Coln Country Park

LOCATION:
Between Lechlade and Fairford (CWP125)

GRID REFERENCE:
SP 18638 00057

WHAT3WORDS:
redeemed.angel.formal

Circular footpath around a large reed-fringed sailing lake provides good views of a variety of waterbirds and warblers. Small free car park and links to wider network of footpaths.



Edward Richards and Phyllis Amey (ERPA) Nature Reserve

LOCATION:
North of Lechlade (CWP 119/119B)

GRID REFERENCE:
SP 21573 00812

WHAT3WORDS:
unsightly.drift.good

A small reserve with wet woodland, scrub and open water attracting a good range of waterbirds and passerines throughout the year. There is a permissive footpath around the southern lake.

PHOTOS:
Main photo: Marsh Harrier. 1: Snipe. 2: Smooth Newt. 3: Goldcrest.

Bryworth Lane Nature Reserve

LOCATION:
Between Fairford and Lechlade

GRID REFERENCE:
SP 20020 00747

WHAT3WORDS:
seagulls.ruin.highs

An area of old railway corridor, now returned to farmland, hosting a wide diversity of calcareous grassland species plus Slow Worm, Common Toad, Smooth Newt and Great Crested Newt.



Riverside Park

LOCATION:
South of Lechlade

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 21112 98984

WHAT3WORDS:
vegetable.panics.dame

Good access to the Thames Path National Trail at Lechlade where you can walk upstream towards Castle Eaton to a more juvenile River Thames where warblers, hirundines and damselflies are numerous during the summer.

Follow footpaths west to Roundhouse Lake (2km) and beyond to Whelford Pools (5km).

River Coln at Fairford

LOCATION:
South of Fairford

GRID REFERENCE:
SP 15149 00775

WHAT3WORDS:
nourished.defected.shredder

Excellent riverine habitat that has a good population of Water Voles which are regularly seen from the footbridge over the river. Accessible along Gas Lane from the Market Place in Fairford town centre.



Elmlea SSSI

LOCATION:
Between Old Railway Line and Cleveland Lakes

GRID REFERENCE:
SU 07807 94956

WHAT3WORDS:
hoping.awestruck.cubic

Located just off the Old Railway Line it received SSSI designation for the Downy-Fruited Sedge present in the small plot of land. Also contains impressive Greater Tussock Sedge which form dense pillars up to 1.5m tall. No public access on to the sites themselves but can be viewed from the adjacent paths.





Cotswold Lakes Trust is a charity dedicated to the conservation and enhancement of the Cotswold Water Park for the benefit of wildlife and people.

Find out more at: www.cotswoldlakestrust.org

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Thank you to The Hills Group for their support in producing this guide.

