

Skylarks

Nature Reserve



All about Skylarks

Skylarks Nature Reserve, located next to the famous National Watersports Centre at Holme Pierrepont, is an example of a former gravel pit that has been transformed into an attractive reserve with much to see all year round. It was the first reserve in the country to be designed with wheelchair users in mind!

In the twenty years since commercial gravel extraction ended at the location, Skylarks has been transformed into such a rich reserve for plants and wildlife you would never guess at its former purpose. Primarily a wetland site, it is a home for flora such as marsh marigold, cowslip and common twayblade. Orchids are also to be found, including the spotted orchid and the southern marsh orchid with its imperial purple flowers. Trees to be found on the reserve include willow, alder, ash, rowan and birch. Watch out for frogs, toads and newts amongst the reeds, especially during the spring breeding season when you may see them entwined in the water.

As you might expect on a wetland site, waterfowl and wetland birds are plentiful in number and include such species as grey herons, prehistoric-looking cormorants and great crested grebes with their elaborate courting dance upon the water, and if you are lucky you may catch a glimpse of dazzling red and blue kingfishers. In the skies, listen for the piercing "Pee-Wit" cry of the lapwing. Winter brings redwing and fieldfare, and in summer warblers like the reed warbler, sedge warbler and grasshopper warbler, with its bizarre mechanical churring call, may be found.

The water attracts many damselflies and dragonflies. Butterflies often seen at the reserve include meadow brown, common blue, orange tip and the increasingly uncommon small heath.



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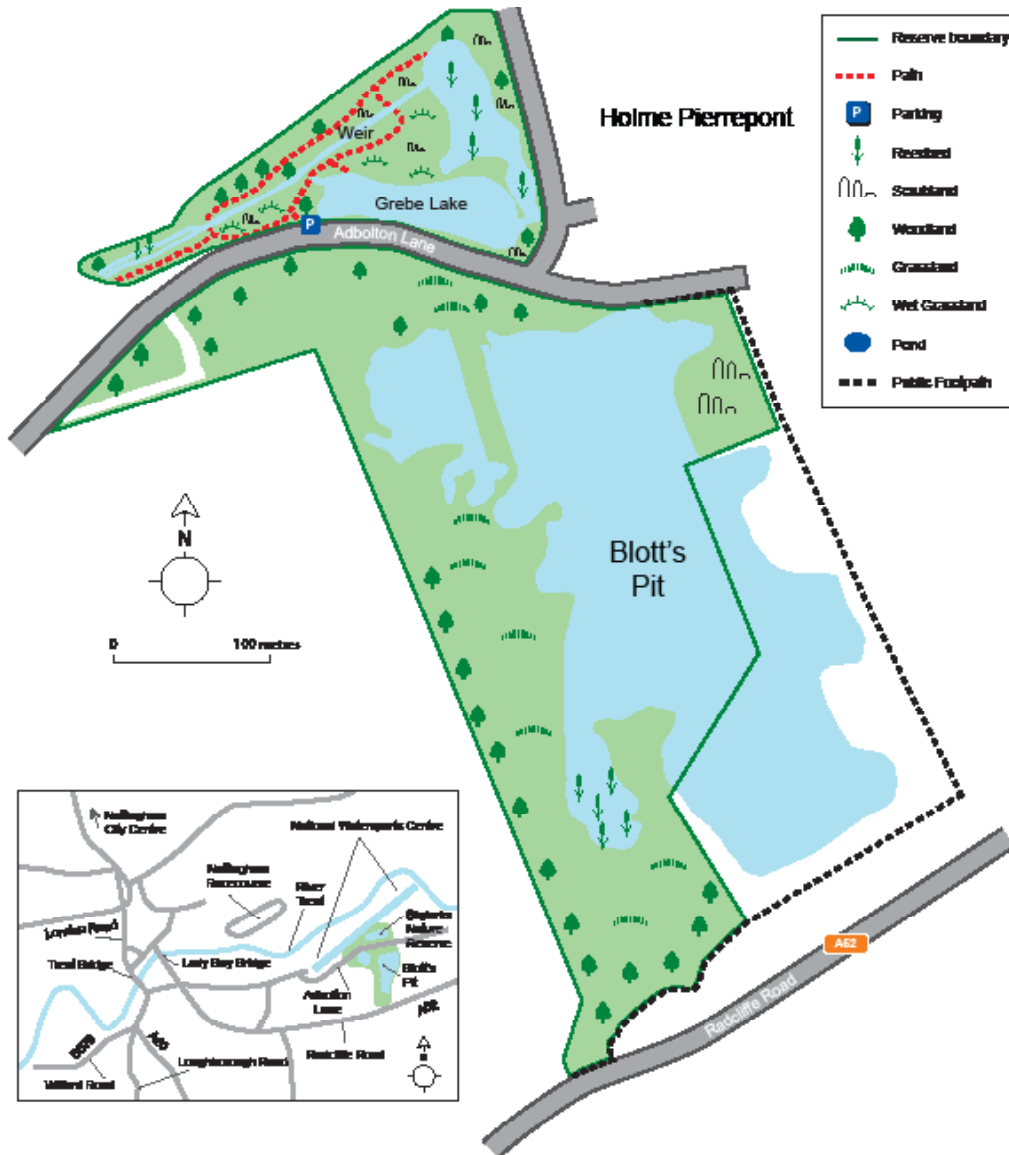
When to go

In winter, look out for flocks of redwing and fieldfare, while spring brings frogs, toads and newts to the water. The pretty grey wagtail visits in summer, and that's also the time of the year to watch out for common terns, with their deeply forked tails, scything down from the sky for fish and insects.



How to get there

From the A52 Gamston roundabout follow signs for the Watersports Centre onto Adbolton Lane. The reserve lies to the north of Adbolton Lane approximately 500 yards past the entrance to the Watersports Centre (grid reference SK619390). If using satnav, enter NG12 2LU this will take you to a point on Adbolton Lane. You then need to continue driving along Adbolton Lane a little further. There is a small layby on the left-hand side where you can park, adjacent to the reserve entrance.



Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

We are Nottinghamshire's largest environmental charity. We look after over 70 wonderful nature reserves across the county. We also work with families, schools and our network of Wildlife Watch Groups to inspire and educate people about the natural world. By working with farmers and landowners we help to restore habitats and species across Nottinghamshire. Our work to protect wildlife would not be possible without the support of nearly 11,000 members. You can make a real difference by becoming a member today.



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