

How the Trust cares for this reserve

The meadows are cut for hay in September in order to keep the soil fertility low and encourage the return of the meadow flowers the following year. The scrub adjacent to the woodland is cut on rotation each year to create a natural edge to the woodland as it merges into the grassland and the rides through the woodland are regularly cut to encourage the woodland flora. Hedge-laying and hazel coppicing also take place on site.



Cowslip

Access

The reserve is open to visitors at all times. It is requested that all dogs be kept on leads.

How to find the reserve

OS grid reference SP518403

The reserve is four and a half miles west of Brackley.

South of the A422, midway between Middleton

Cheney and Farthinghoe, turn into Purston Lane.

Where the Purston road

crosses the old railway

line there is a

kissing gate

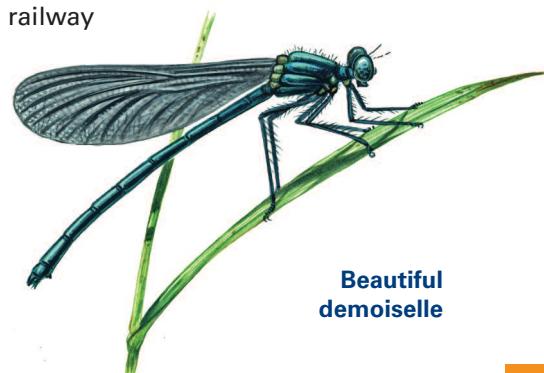
leading to the

reserve. There

is limited

parking space

on the bridge



Beautiful
demoiselle

We hope you enjoy your visit

Further information

To contact us about this reserve or about how you can support us please write to
The Wildlife Trust, Lings House, Billing Lings,
Northampton NN3 8BE,
or telephone: 01604 405285.
E-mail: northamptonshire@wildlifebcnp.org

To join the Wildlife Trust please contact
Membership at
The Wildlife Trust, The Manor House,
Broad Street, Cambourne CB23 6DH.
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Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Northamptonshire
Peterborough

Welcome to Farthinghoe

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Protecting wildlife
close to home

Farthinghoe is a small site that is a mosaic of developing woodland, open grassland and ponds.

Before the site became a nature reserve it formed part of the London North Western Railway which was opened in 1856. The reserve which covers about 4 hectares was established in November 1984 in agreement with Northamptonshire County Council and is now managed by the Wildlife Trust.

Farthinghoe was recognised as being of importance for wildlife and people in 1993 and was declared a Local Nature Reserve by the County Council.

The reserve now consists of a patchwork of maturing woodland with rides linking the meadows and glades and is specifically managed to achieve this diversity of habitats for wildlife. There are seats every 100 metres or so providing vantage points with stunning views over the surrounding countryside.



Marbled white

What to look for

Flowers

Many of the flowers found at Farthinghoe are unique to the area. Fragrant agrimony is found in only a few locations in the county. Several species, such as yellow loosestrife, bluebells, snowdrops and fritillary, probably originated in the station master's garden and orchard which was once located on the east side of the reserve. In spring, sweet violets, primroses and cowslips are in bloom everywhere and ragged robin can be found on the damp meadow with sneezewort, trefoils and vetches. In summer the meadows are coloured with knapweed, ox-eye daisy and St-John's wort.

Birds

Over 100 species of bird have been recorded on the reserve. In summer the air is filled with warblers including blackcap, garden warbler, willow warbler and chiffchaff. Coal tit, marsh tit and long-tailed tit are resident and are joined in winter by a regular flock of siskin and good numbers of finches and buntings. Great spotted and green woodpeckers can be found feeding amongst the trees and meadows. If you are lucky, you might spot a hawfinch in the Cherry Wood. Sparrowhawk, buzzard, red kite and raven can be seen regularly overhead.



Great spotted woodpecker

Insects

During the summer months the meadows and rides are filled with butterflies including a colony of marbled whites. 27 species of butterflies have been recorded with 22 regularly seen. Dragonflies and damselflies can also be seen through the summer. The most notable is the beautiful demoiselle which can be seen during June and July feeding and resting on the sunny side of the shrubbery. Migrant hawker and common darter dragonflies patrol the meadows and rides in late summer feeding on smaller insects.

Grass snakes

On warm days Farthinghoe is one of the best places to see grass snakes basking in the sun. They breed successfully in the compost heaps that have been created for them. They can also be seen hunting for grasshoppers on the meadows and stalking frogs in the pond.



Mammals

There are obvious signs of mammals, especially badgers who have taken to digging up the paths looking for food. Pipistrelle and long-eared bats find an ideal hunting ground here. Field voles, wood mice, common and pygmy shrews thrive in the meadows and woodlands. Muntjac and roe deer are regular visitors.

