

Tring Park Wild Walk

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



Explore Tring: enjoy scenic views, wooded valleys and ancient parkland on this walk through the Chilterns

Starting in Tring, this 10.4km circular walk takes in the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust's (BBOWT) Dancersend nature reserve and the Ridgeway National Trail.

- 10.4 km/6.5 miles (about 3 hours)
- To start the walk from Tring train station, allow an extra 1.5 hours
- There are additional paths through Dancersend nature reserve to explore it further
- BBOWT's Aston Clinton Ragpits and College Lake nature reserves are near to this walk

How to get to the start

Postcode: HP23 5QR (Tring train station) **Grid ref:** SP 951 122

By bus: Check www.traveline.info for information about local buses

By train: The walk can start at Tring train station, check www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times

By car: There is parking at Tring train station, in Tring town centre and limited parking at Water Works at Dancersend

By bike: There is cycle storage at Tring train station



Please help us look after wildlife by keeping dogs on short leads at Dancersend and picking up after them.

Dancersend Nature Reserve

Nestling in a sheltered Chiltern valley, this ancient woodland site was clear-felled in WWII, and replanted with beech, oak, ash and cherry interspersed with conifers. Despite this disturbance, many old woodland plants, such as yellow archangel, bluebell and stinking hellebore, have survived.

Fly orchid and white helleborine can be found under the beech canopy, and fungi, including the unusual collared earth star, punctuate the woodland floor each autumn. At the heart of the site is an area of flower-rich chalk grassland fringed with hawthorn, wayfaring-tree and dogwood. Chiltern gentian, greater butterfly-orchid and meadow clary are the stars of the annual floral display. Many butterflies, such as marbled white, ringlet and dark green fritillary, utilise the rich nectar source of these herbs.

Most of the woodland is leased to the Forestry Commission, which is gradually reducing the number of conifers to eventually recreate broadleaved woodland. The chalk grassland is grazed with a mix of hardy sheep, cattle and ponies.

Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)

BBOWT relies on the support of our members to help us look after local wildlife. By joining BBOWT you can help to secure the future of special landscapes like Dancersend. [Join us today!](#)

NATURE NOTES



Whitethroats

arrive in Britain from Africa in May and stay for the summer, returning in early autumn. The male constructs a deep, cup-shaped nest of grass and roots in a hedge or bush, the female then lines the nest with hair, down or wool, before laying 3-7 pale blue/green eggs. The parents share the incubation, feeding the young on insects. Listen out for the 'scratchy' song of this warbler in spring.



Silver-washed fritillaries

are large orange butterflies with black markings that are found in woodland. Look out for them flying from late June until the end of August. Their name comes from the silver streaks on the underside of their wings. The adults feed on bramble in the sunny woodland rides and the males have a strong, fast flight. Their caterpillars feed on violets, particularly common dog-violets, growing on the woodland floor.



Goldcrests

are the smallest birds in Europe, weighing just 5g. The bird is named after their brightly coloured head stripe. These tiny birds can be hard to spot as they flit among the branches in trees and shrubs looking for insects. They favour coniferous woodland, building a nest of moss held together by woven cobwebs, which is suspended hammock-like in the fork of two twigs. Their song is very high-pitched.



Beech is one of our most iconic trees, particularly in the woodlands of southern England such as

those here in the Chilterns. Trees grow tall and broad, with leaves turning a shining, golden brown in autumn. The woodland floor becomes littered with its nuts, known as 'mast'. Beech wood is used for furniture, and, from the 18th century onwards straight-trunked, uncoppiced trees became a more frequent sight in woods and parks – ideal for timber.

From Tring train station

If starting the walk at the train station, follow Station Road, then High Street into Tring town centre and then follow the main route.

STAGE 1

Start to Dancersend nature reserve

From the High Street in Tring town centre, turn on to Akeman Street, then right on to Park Road. Staying on Park Road, 100 metres after church turn left on to footpath past back gardens. After a small area of beech (Woodland Close Wood), bear right across rough grass and turn left at road, passing under A41 bridge. Follow road for ¾ mile to sunken lane at Dancersend. As the road bends left around a small pond, turn right on to the track beside the cottage.

In the roadside hedges, look for wayfaring-tree and field maple, and listen for whitethroat and dunnock singing from the hedge tops.

STAGE 2

Dancersend nature reserve to Water Works

At gate, 300 metres from road, continue straight on to explore the chalk grassland clearings in DANCERSEND NATURE RESERVE, then return to gate and turn right on footpath through beech. After 100 metres, bear left on to grassy ride through the beech, larch and spruce of Bittam's Wood. After steep climb, pause at bench before turning left on to footpath. Descend through the wood to Crong Meadow, following the worn path to the left (under power lines) all the way to road.

In summer, look for the many orchids and butterflies on the chalk grassland, and listen for the thin short call of goldcrest among the conifers.

STAGE 4

Tring Park to Tring town centre and train station

Follow the broad track through beech wood, on to King Charles' Ride, lined with mature beech and lime trees. Pause to take in the views over Tring and Ivinghoe Beacon. After ¾ mile, bear left on footpath down slope to the obelisk. Turn left to continue down slope to parkland. Turn right, crossing open grassland, to cross the footbridge over the A41. Follow the footpath, turn left on to Park Street and right on to Akeman Street past the Natural History Museum to the town centre. Follow High Street and then Station Road to return to the train station.

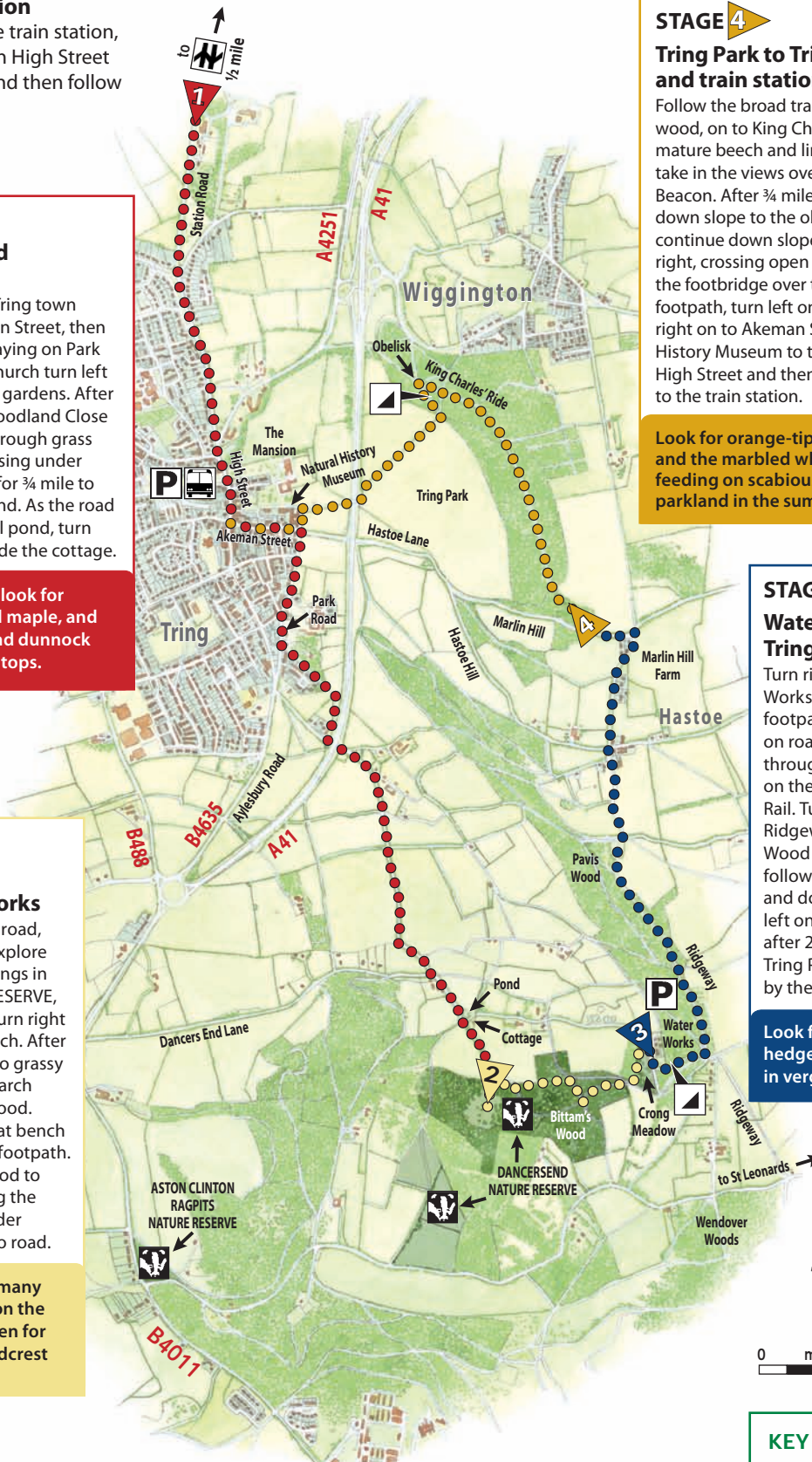
Look for orange-tip butterflies in spring, and the marbled white butterflies feeding on scabious and thyme in parkland in the summer.

STAGE 3

Water Works to Tring Park

Turn right, past the Water Works and turn left on to footpath. (If wet, continue on road up this slope.) Climb through wood to radio mast on the Ridgeway National Rail. Turn left and follow the Ridgeway through Pavis Wood to road. Bear left and follow road through Hastoe and down Church Lane. Turn left onto Marlin Hill, then after 200 metres right into Tring Park, which is managed by the Woodland Trust.

Look for evergreen holly in hedges, and wood sorrel in verges.



WILDLIFE HIGHLIGHTS

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Orchids and butterflies in the clearings, Dancersend					✓	✓	✓					
Chiltern gentian, Dancersend								✓	✓			
Chorus of bird song			✓	✓	✓							
Autumn colour and fungi at Dancersend									✓	✓	✓	
Specimen oaks at Tring Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

KEY

- BBOWT Nature Reserve
- Steep gradient
- Train station
- Bus stop
- Parking