

A Wetland Wonderland

Welcome to our picturesque bird hide overlooking the breathtaking ecosystem of Bittesby Country Parks primary lake and wetland. Get ready to embark on a thrilling adventure as we uncover the enchanting inhabitants of this vibrant natural sanctuary. With a pair of trusty binoculars in hand, prepare to be amazed by the diverse array of wildlife that calls this haven home.

As you gaze across the shimmering waters, keep an eye out for the graceful dance of a variety of birds, both on the water and in the trees and woodlands. Not just confined to the skies, delve deeper into the secrets of this wetland wonderland, where the surface teems with mysterious invertebrates weaving their intricate stories through the water.

But wait, there's more! Peer closely into the marshy edges and discover the secretive world of amphibians, skipping through the reeds and rushes in their lively aquatic ballet. Don't be surprised if you catch a glimpse of a small furry friend scurrying along the edges, as the undergrowth conceals an array of elusive small mammals going about their bustling lives. Take a moment to appreciate the lush tapestry of plants and trees, each playing their crucial role in this delicate wetland ecosystem.

Bats

Common and widespread species of bat have previously been observed across the Bittesby Country Park area:

- common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*
- soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, *Myotis sp.*
- brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*.

The woodland corridor along the former dismantled railway corridor was found to be a regularly used commuting corridor and foraging route.



Brown long-eared bat
Plecotus auritus



Soprano pipistrelle
Pipistrellus pygmaeus



Banded Demoiselle Dragonfly
Calopteryx splendens



Invertebrates

The disused railway south of the A5 is a valuable linear habitat with locally rare species of flora and fauna. Hopefully over time these will migrate into Bittesby Country Park. There are records for a range of invertebrates, including grizzled skipper *Pyrgus malvae* and dingy skipper *Erynnis tages*.

You may also be able to spot a rich variety of invertebrates across the surface of the water - Dragon flies, Whirligig beetle, Pond skater, Backswimmer, Water scorpion, Lesser water boatman.



Barn owl
Tyto alba



Marsh harrier
Circus Aeruginosus



Birds

Six species of birds currently listed on Schedule 1 were recorded within 3 km of the Bittesby Country Park in the past 10 years

- Barn owl *Tyto alba*
- Marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus*
- Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
- Quail *Coturnix coturnix*
- Cetti's warbler *Cettia cetti*

All of which may use the habitats across Bittesby Country Park, those that are suitable for nesting birds include the woodland, hedgerows, scattered trees, and arable land which have been left to fallow.



Spring and summer visitors

Local birds that could use site for breeding assessed during 2020 survey

Species	Conservation status	Conservation value
Skylark	Red list/ EBP	Common resident breeder, autumn migrant and winter visitor
Yellow wagtail	Red list/ EBP	Uncommon migrant breeder, fairly common passage migrant
Dunnoek	Amber list	Abundant resident breeder, passage migrant
Song thrush	Red list/ EBP	Common resident breeder, recent decline; winter visitor
Willow warbler	Amber list	Common migrant breeder
Willow tit	Red list/ EBP	Abundant resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor
Tree sparrow	Red list/ EBP	Fairly common resident breeder, recent decline
Bullfinch	Amber list/EBP	Common resident breeder
Yellowhammer	Red list/ EBP	Common resident breeder, recent decline
Reed bunting	Amber list/EBP	Common resident breeder, recent decline



Winter visitors

Local birds that could use site for wintering assessed during 2020 survey

Species	Conservation status	Conservation value
Kestrel Falco	Amber list	Fairly common resident breeder
Snipe	Amber list	Fairly common passage and winter visitor, rare breeder
Black-headed gull	Amber list	Present all year, abundant in winter, fairly common breeder
Lesser black-backed gull	Amber list	Common passage and winter visitor, recent colonist
Skylark	Red list/ EBP	Common resident breeder, autumn migrant and winter visitor
Dunnoek	Amber list	Abundant resident breeder, passage migrant
Fieldfare Turdus	Schedule 1/Red list	Common winter visitor, rare in summer
Song thrush	Red list/ EBP	Common resident breeder, recent decline; winter visitor
Redwing	Schedule 1/Red list	Common winter visitor
Starling	Red list/ EBP	Abundant resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor
House sparrow	Red list/ EBP	Common resident breeder, recent decline
Tree sparrow	Red list/ EBP	Fairly common resident breeder, recent decline
Brambling	Schedule 1	Uncommon to fairly common, irruptive, winter visitor
Linnet	Red list/ EBP	Common resident breeder and passage migrant, less common in winter
Yellowhammer	Red list/ EBP	Common resident breeder, recent decline
Reed bunting	Amber list/EBP	Common resident breeder, recent decline