



Blithfield

Reservoir Walks



Blithfield reservoir was opened in 1953 and the area was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1987 in recognition of its importance as a wildfowl habitat. Now, by providing permissive walks and viewing facilities, we hope visitors will share in seeing the huge range of wildlife that is to be found here.

The landowner, South Staffs Water, has worked closely with Natural England on a development plan for the site, as well as taking advice from organisations such as the West Midland Bird Club and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, in order to provide the best habitat possible for the flora and fauna that is found here. All of the flowers and plants you will see on the walks are local to Staffordshire.

We hope you will take time to look out for the creatures, trees and plants that live here as you walk along the paths and enjoy stunning views across the reservoir. The paths include both easy walking and more challenging areas. You are welcome to bring dogs, but please keep them on a lead and clear up after them.





Walk One

Approximate time to walk: 40 minutes

This walk is partially suitable for wheelchairs.

Walk One will take you through broadleaf woodland planted during the early 1960s and including English oak, sycamore, maple and birch. Listen for the tapping of woodpeckers or the cry of a pheasant. In the winter, redwings, fieldfares, siskins and crossbills are to be found here. Look out for plants such as yellow rattle, golden dock and orange foxtail.

Wander to The Dell, at the far end of the walk, and you will find a bird feeder station and hide where you can spend time watching the many varieties of birds as they feed.



Walk Two

Approximate time to walk: One hour

Walk Two begins in broadleaf woodland before traversing a field and over the Tad Brook Bridge where it crosses the Tad Arm – a main feed into the reservoir. From there the boardwalk goes through wetland, which has become home to more than 50 types of plant such as mugwort, tufted vetch and black medick, as well as being a popular haunt for colourful dragonflies, thanks to specially created dragonfly ponds.

At the end of the boardwalk you enter Broompit plantation, where another bird feeder station and hide are to be found, along with the remains of the old marl pits used in the building of the reservoir dam. Springtime visitors will also be greeted with the site of a natural blue carpet in the bluebell wood.



Walk Three

Approximate time to walk: 90 minutes

Walk Three continues on from Walk One as it crosses the drive at the stone trough. The walk branches off into a wildflower meadow, cutting through its centre down to Stansley Wood. The woodland is carpeted with bluebells in spring - the path looping through the trees for the best view. The scenery changes dramatically past "the petrified pond" as the reservoir comes into sight. Here walkers are directed into a field, as the reservoir track has no public access. On reaching Beech Tree Point, there is a bird hide and toilet.

Re-entering Stansley Wood, the path returns to the wildflower meadow. At the stone trough, the second half of Walk One can be used to return to the car park along the wheelchair-friendly path (via the Dell hide and feeder station) adding 20 minutes to the walk.





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Key:



Blue Route

(solid blue line = wheelchair access)

- 1 The Dell bird feeder station & hide
- S Stile



Red Route

(solid red line = boardwalk)

- 1 Bird feeder station & hide
- 2 Bridge over Tad Brook
- 3 Dragonfly ponds
- 4 Bluebell wood
- 5 Bird feeder station & hide
- 6 Old marl pits



Yellow Route

- 1 Wildflower meadow
- 2 Petrified ponds
- 3 Bird hide & toilet
- 4 Bench and viewing point
- S Stile

Facilities

Toilets, FREE car park.

Opening times

Daylight hours depending on the season (see notice display boards in the car park.) Please note: There is no overnight parking or camping allowed.

Directions

From Abbots Bromley High Street head north towards Uttoxeter. Take the second left into Newton Hurst Lane, then after approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, turn left into a drive signposted Blithfield Education Centre and walks.

Refreshments

There are a number of good pubs in Abbots Bromley.

Contact (office hours only)

Blithfield Estate Office
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