

Join NHSN  
today!



Discover  
Gosforth  
Nature Reserve



# Welcome

Gosforth Nature Reserve helps you imagine what most of our region once looked like

You will see one of the largest areas of woodland and wetland in Tyneside. The reserve is home to over 1,600 types of wildflowers and animals. Some live here all year round and some only visit at certain times of year. The nature reserve is an important highway for wildlife which passes through from nearby parks and gardens in the day and night. What will you enjoy most from your visit?

Please keep to the paths for your own safety and to avoid disturbing wildlife.



# An Urban Oasis

Relax, unwind and experience wilderness in urban Tyneside

The nature reserve is special because of its large size and its variety of wildlife. In fact, it is so important it is called a Site of Special Scientific Interest, or SSSI. Connected to the surrounding fields, verges and gardens, it provides a home for nature throughout the seasons. The reserve is important to people as well, and thousands visit each year to enjoy local nature. Schools, community groups and families are all welcome to experience and protect nature. What memories will you make during your visit?

Blue Tits are one bird you're likely to see when visiting Gosforth Nature Reserve.



Close to a number of homes, wildlife from the nature reserve can be seen in local gardens too.



## History

One person can make a positive difference for nature

The area we now call Gosforth Nature Reserve was once part of the Brandling Estate. In 1924, William E. Beck was a local naturalist. He bought the shooting rights to create a nature reserve. In 1929, Beck passed the rights to NHSN to protect wildlife for future generations. Today, Newcastle Racecourse lease the reserve to NHSN. The nature reserve is a fragment of the woodlands and wetlands that covered much of the area in the past. Can you imagine what the view was once like?

Come rain or shine,  
no task is too big for NHSN's  
fantastic volunteers.

This 1865 map shows the nature reserve area with a larger lake and boathouse. Much has changed in the years since it was created. What differences can you spot?



## People Power

Your support protects the nature reserve for people and wildlife

As a visitor to the reserve, you are part of a bigger community of people that support and protect its future. You can help further in a number of ways. You can volunteer, join NHSN or leave a donation. You can introduce friends, family, your employer or community groups to visit. There are lots of different volunteer roles. They include welcoming visitors, practical conservation, helping with events and surveying wildlife. Which of these is the one extra thing you could offer today to protect the nature reserve?





**Red Fox**  
Bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, foxes are a familiar sight at Gosforth Nature Reserve.

## Woodland

Lose yourself in the beauty of the woodland

The sights and sounds of the woodland will change by the season. You can always hear trees moving or birds calling. You might see or hear Roe Deer. Mostly at night, the Badgers and Foxes use the tracks you walk on, so look out for paw prints. In warmer months, you can see more birds, insects, and flowers. Remember, you are being watched too. Tawny Owls may be looking down at you from high in the trees. Make sure you take the time to stop, relax and unwind. How does the woodland make you feel?

## Look out for

Can you spot these woodland inhabitants on your next visit?



**Comma**  
With its crinkly wing dotted with black, the Comma is one woodland butterfly you're likely to see in spring and summer.

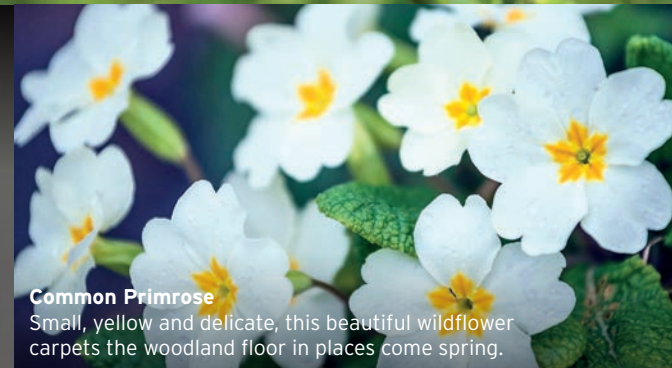


From mighty oaks to tiny mosses, the reserve is at its greenest during summer. How many different plants can you discover?

**Great Spotted Woodpecker**  
The noisiest of the woodland's birds, listen for the distinctive drumming of woodpeckers.



© Chris Castling



**Common Primrose**  
Small, yellow and delicate, this beautiful wildflower carpets the woodland floor in places come spring.

© Chris Castling



**Roe Deer**  
The largest of the reserve's animals, the woodland is home to a thriving population of Roe Deer.



# Wetland

The lake helps reduce flooding in the community

The wetlands include a mix of open water, ponds and reedbed. Storing water here helps reduces local flooding. The wildlife changes with each month and season. The sound of rustling reeds is something to enjoy all year round. In spring and summer, listen to the variety of birdsong and look for damsel and dragonflies. In autumn and winter, more ducks and geese arrive. Three wildlife viewing hides help you enjoy the wetland. Be patient and you might be in for a treat such as an Otter or Kingfisher. What do you enjoy most about the wetland?



**Little Egret**  
A new arrival to the reserve, Little Egrets only started breeding in the UK during 1996.

© Chris Castling

# Look out for

Can you spot these wetland residents?

© Ann Chapman



© Chris Castling

**Grey Heron**  
This tall bird is a regular sight and features on NHSN's logo.



**Common Reed**  
Reedbeds are an important habitat for a whole host of wildlife.



© Chris Wren

**Broad-bodied Chaser**  
Gosforth Nature Reserve is home to 17 species of dragonfly and damselfly.



The wetland provides the perfect habitat for a host of wonderful wildlife.



© Chris Castling

**Otter**  
Of all the animals to be found at the reserve, few capture the imagination quite like the Otter.



# Welcome to Gosforth Nature Reserve

Look, sniff, listen, what kind of wildlife will you see?

## KEY

-  Mixed Woodland
-  Wet Woodland
-  Conifer Plantation
-  Reedbed
-  Open Water
-  Meadow
-  Boardwalks
-  Waymarkers
-  Toilets
-  Reserve Boundary

-  (A) Field Studies Room
-  (B) Lawrence Hide
-  (C) Eco Loo
-  (D) Ridley Hide
-  (E) Beck Hide
-  (F) Meadow Screen
-  (G) Pearce Hide
-  (H) Boathouse Ruin
-  (i) Information Hut

Wildlife is sensitive to disturbance by people.  
Please keep to the paths

### Reedbed Trail (1.4 miles)

A short walk to the lake and to enjoy the view from two bird hides.

### Meadow Trail (1.4 miles)

Explore a tranquil meadow and ponds on this relaxing circular walk.

### Woodland Trail (1.6 miles)

Explore peaceful areas among the trees.





# Plants

From mighty trees to tiny mosses, there are plants to see all year round

Gosforth Nature Reserve is home to over 300 types of wild plant. Spring and summer offer a great choice of woodland, wetland and meadow plants. Highlights include Bluebells, Water Thyme, Common Spotted Orchids and Yellow Rattle. In the woodland look out for climbing plants such as Honeysuckle. Autumn and winter are good times of the year to notice ferns, mosses, and tree bark. Can you see ferns growing high up in the trees?

© Alan Todd



**Common Spotted Orchid**  
The reserve's meadow is home to the beautiful Common Spotted Orchid.



**English Bluebell**  
Thanks to planting by dedicated volunteers, this striking flower is now a familiar sight.



**Male Fern**  
Ferns remain green in winter even when other plants have faded.

© Martin Price



**Red Fox**  
One of the reserve's most secretive mammals, any encounter with a fox is one to be cherished.

© Edward Appleby



**Weasel**  
Small and sleek, the Weasel is a fearsome sight for a mouse or vole.

© Chris Castling



**Roe Deer**  
Roe Deer feed on flowers and leaves and can often be seen grazing in the meadow.

# Mammals

They are always around but can be hard to see

Lots of mammals live in or visit the reserve. They can be difficult to see because they are sensitive to disturbance from people. So be patient. Roe Deer and Otter are seen more than others. Keep quiet and with a little luck you might encounter a Weasel, Stoat or even a Water Vole. Foxes and Badgers live here too but are more active after dark. Seven types of bat live in hollows in trees. You might see them flying around at dusk. Which mammal would you like to see the most?



### Swallow

A graceful sight, Swallows arrive back to the reserve from Africa in spring.



© Chris Castling

### Coot

Have you heard the saying 'bald as a Coot'? This comes from the bird's distinctive white face.



© Chris Castling

## Birds

They are on the water, in the air and among reeds and trees

There are birds here that you will recognise from your garden or park. There are also lesser seen delights, such as Kingfisher and Barn Owl. A total of 189 types of birds have visited the nature reserve. The variety and number changes through the seasons. There is always something to see and hear. On the wetlands you can see ducks, geese, and heron. In woodlands, listen for hooting owls, drumming woodpeckers and chirps of smaller birds. How many bird calls can you hear?

© Chris Castling



### Jay

In autumn Jays can be spotted hiding acorns in holes on the woodland floor.

## Insects

Discover all things small and beautiful

Insects are vital for the health of the nature reserve. They are present here all year round. Most are in the soil, under leaves or in dead trees. In fact, it's the number and variety of insects that makes the nature reserve so special. Spring and summer are the best times to see insects. A variety of butterflies, bees, and dragonflies can be enjoyed. What's your favourite insect?

© Philip Jordan

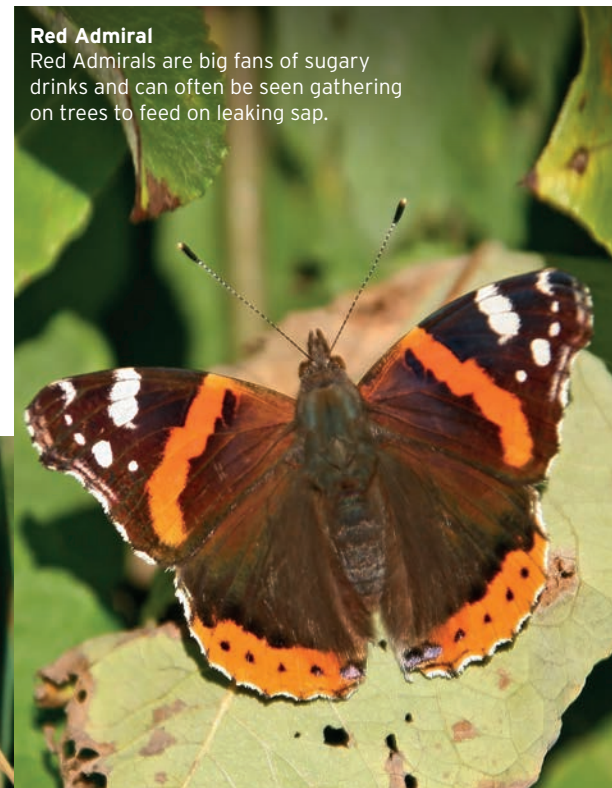


### Emperor

The Emperor is the largest dragonfly you'll encounter at the reserve.

### Red Admiral

Red Admirals are big fans of sugary drinks and can often be seen gathering on trees to feed on leaking sap.



### White-tailed Bumblebee

In spring and summer, a range of bees can be seen visiting flowers across the reserve.



© Chris Barlow





## Support your local wildlife charity by:

### Hire the Field Studies Room today

Gosforth Nature Reserve's Field Studies Room is the perfect space for your meetings, courses, and events. Available to hire year-round, it is equipped to welcome visitors of all ages. Located in tranquil woodland, it is perfect for groups of up to thirty adults, or forty children, and includes toilets, a kitchenette and even an outdoor space with a raised pond.

Find out more using  
the QR code.



### Join NHSN today and discover local nature

Enjoy the peace and wilderness of Gosforth Nature Reserve as often as you like by becoming an NHSN member today.

Membership covers your whole household with lots of other great benefits too.

Find out more using  
the QR code.



Keep up to date with happenings at NHSN by following us on

@NEE\_Naturalist @naturalhistorynorthumbria

@nee\_naturalist

NaturalHistorySocietyOfNorthumbria

natural-history-society-of-northumbria

0191 208 2790 | [nhsn@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:nhsn@ncl.ac.uk) | [www.nhsn.org.uk](http://www.nhsn.org.uk)

