

# Netherfield Lagoons – A Local Nature Reserve

This walk is mainly designed for keen bird-lovers

**Location** – south of Netherfield, between the Victoria Retail Park and the Trent, reached by turning south off the Colwick Loop Road. **Distance** – about 3 miles. **Time** – depends how long you want - non-stop 1 hour. Generally flat on good paths. May be muddy after rain. (See note at the top of page 2). **Public Transport** – Shoppers’ bus service to the Retail Park. Teal Close is near a bus stop. **Car parking** – park at the roadside on Teal Close. **Nearest refreshments and toilets** at Morrison’s in the Retail Park. **Dogs must be on a lead at all times. Don’t forget your binoculars!**



**The lagoons** are situated on the flood plain of the River Trent, the river now flowing past the site on its west. Much earlier, its course took it further to the east so that the lagoons were originally in the parish of Radcliffe. The site was most recently used as settling pools for slurry pumped to the site from Gedling Colliery and became redundant when the colliery was shut down in 1991. Gedling Conservation Trust Now owns the site and manages it as a wildlife refuge with a very impressive bird list of over 230 species. See their web-site [www.gedlingconservationtrust.org](http://www.gedlingconservationtrust.org) See Page 4 for an aerial photograph and a map.

**Start** At the end of Teal Close, cross the Ouse Dyke opposite the CEM factory. Turn right along the dyke and follow the path for about ¼ mile to the footbridge. Cross it and enter the nature reserve. The path splits in two, one up the bank and the other, Willow Walk, runs along the northwest edge of the reserve. Follow Willow Walk to the right. (See note page 2.)



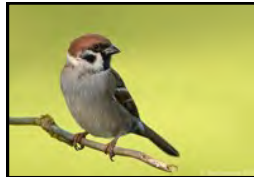
Entrance on Teal Close



Footbridge across the Ouse Dyke



Right to Willow Walk



Tree Sparrow



Greenfinch



Redwing

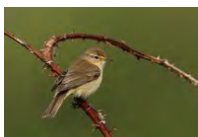


Sparrowhawk

In winter the scrubland on our left usually holds good numbers of Redwings and is often used as a refuge by Tree Sparrows and Finches when a Sparrowhawk is about. Further along there are several old willows with their



Tawny Owl



Chiff Chaff

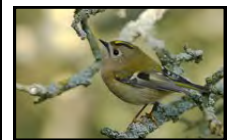


Willow Warbler

branches spread-eagled over the ground. Here you may see a Tawny Owl roosting among the thicker cover and there may be Goldcrests and Tree Creepers.



Tree-creeper



Goldcrest

In the summer the scrub is good for Willow Warblers, Chiff Chaffs and Lesser Whitethroats. At the end of Willow Walk you will reach a more open area. Cross this, go through the cycle trap and turn left.



Whitethroat



Blackcap

You are now on the Lower Path, which runs by the railway embankment to the river. In summer it’s a good place to find Whitethroat, Blackcap and Chiff-chaff, and perhaps Willow Tits. The banks can be alive with small birds. Autumn brings large flocks of warblers and tits, who especially like the flower heads of Angelica that



Willow Tit

abounds along this path, for its attendant pollinating insects.



Through the cycle trap

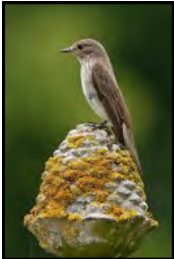


The ford in flood

**NOTE** Along this path is a small ford which is normally dry and easily passable but can be flooded in wet conditions. It is quite deep then, and difficult to cross without boots. In these circumstances, it may be better to go up the steps at the start by the display board, turn right and make your way above Willow Walk.



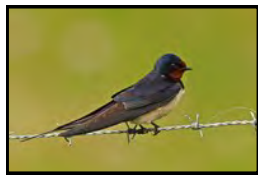
Kingfisher



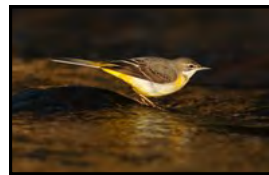
Spotted fly-catcher

The ford is a good site for Water Shrews and, on the pool to your right, maybe Kingfishers. In autumn the trees to the right on the railway embankment sometimes hold Spotted Flycatchers. Continue on this path until you reach the river.

To the right is the railway bridge, which, in summer, has a small colony of Swallows nesting under it. Grey Wagtails nest below the walkway.



Swallow



Grey Wagtail



Reach the River Trent



Hobby

This is also a likely place to see a Hobby, normally given away by the alarm calls of the Swallows. In October 2007 a Dusky Warbler was found on the other side of the bridge and in May 2001 a Little Swift spent three nights roosting on its brickwork. Retrace your steps and make your way up



Up the steps to the Deep Pit

the steps on the bank to look down on the Deep Pit in front of you.



Common Tern



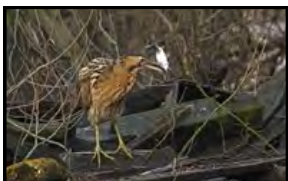
Rafts on the Deep Pit

Turn right and walk east along the Deep pit bank top. In summer a colony of Common Terns nests in the Deep Pit on the rafts placed there for them.

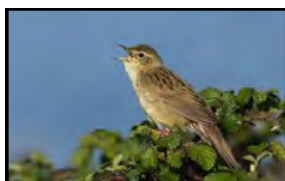


Cormorant

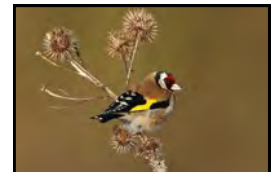
In winter the Cormorants like to sit on them and winter the reed beds may hold a Bittern. As you walk along the bank look for Goldfinches on the Teasels and Stonechats in winter. In summer the reeling of Grasshopper Warblers can be heard at several points here (the site has held up to twelve singing males).



Bittern



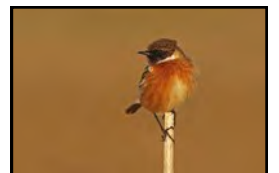
Grasshopper Warbler



Goldfinch



As you walk along the path turns more to the north, parallel to the power lines, and, in the right seasons, Grasshopper Warblers and Stonechats can be found anywhere along its length. To the right or east, are the Large and Small Gravel Pits with patches of scrubby grassland. Please avoid disturbing the wildlife here.

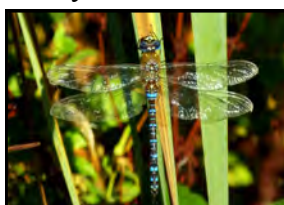


Stonechat

In summer the pits are very attractive to dragonflies and damselflies. Up to ten species can easily be observed.



Top View of Small Gravel Pit



Dragonfly



Damselfly

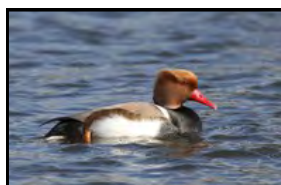


Viewing Platform and display at the Small Gravel Pit



Male & female wigeon

In winter the Large Gravel Pit is host to a flock of Wigeon and sometimes several Red-crested Pochard or Smew. On passage the area can turn up Whinchat and Redstart. A Marsh Warbler spent two



Red-crested Pochard



Smew



Causeway joins from the left

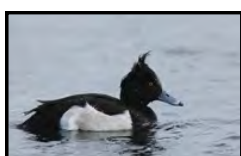
days here in June 1997. There is no adequate path down to the Large Gravel Pit.

The path goes to the left along the northern end of the Deep Pit, then the Causeway joins it on the left.

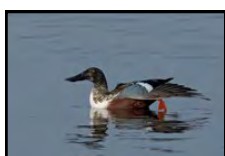
Go left along the Causeway. On your left is still the Deep Pit and on the right is the Slurry Lagoon. The Slurry Lagoon holds good numbers of breeding ducks, including Mallard, Gadwall, Tufted Duck and more recently Pochard. In winter immigrants as well as Teal, Shoveler and Golden-eye swell their numbers and there is an impressive gull roost, which may contain a Glaucous or Iceland Gull. Halfway



Whinchat

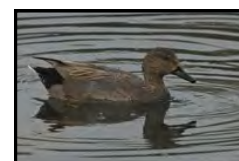


Tufted Duck

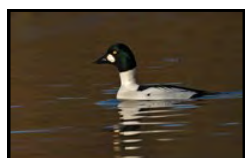


Shoveler

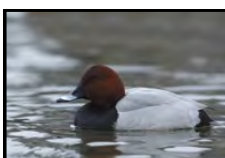
along the Causeway is a seat, which is a good spot to scan the water for more unusual species such as Garganey, Black-necked Grebe, Mediterranean Gull or waders. A Buff-breasted Sandpiper was found here in 1992, a Purple Sandpiper in 2004 and a Spoonbill in 2006. From here you could expect to hear Cetti's Warbler and Water Rail.



Gadwall



Goldeneye



Pochard

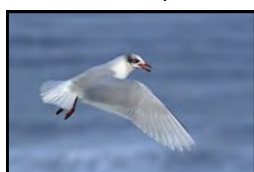
Scanning the skies you might spot a Buzzard or Peregrine. During migration passage this is the best place to catch any waders, gulls, terns and raptors going through. This has also been a good place from where to see a Bittern and a Bearded Tit during the last few years. In June 1997 the reed bed of the Deep Pit behind you held a Great Reed Warbler that stayed for nearly three weeks. Retrace your steps then turn left to walk beside the Slurry Lagoon. In spring it is alive with Reed Warblers, Sedge Warblers, Grasshopper Warblers and White-throats, with many quite large colonies of Marsh, Spotted and Bee Orchids. This lagoon has held some Grey Phalaropes on two occasions, as well as an Avocet and in 1997 a Stone Curlew.



Glaucous Gull



Iceland Gull



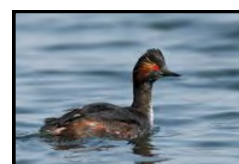
Mediterranean Gull



Buff-breasted sandpiper



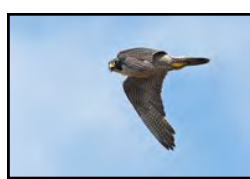
Purple Sandpiper



Black-necked grebe



Common Buzzard



Peregrine



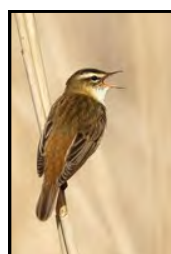
Spoonbill



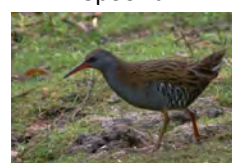
Cetti's Warbler



Reed Warbler



Sedge Warbler



Water rail



Bearded Tit



Avocet



Stone Curlew



Grey Phalarope



Bee Orchid



Wheatear

Further along, the Slurry Lagoon on your left dries out and is worth checking for Little Ringed Plovers in the spring and Wheatears on passage. The dead ash trees on the right have held Spotted Flycatchers and Redstarts, whilst the thick scrub harbours several pairs of Garden Warblers in summer.



Garden Warbler

At the end of the path are the steps that take you down to the footbridge and the Ouse Dyke path back to Teal Close. Pause at the top and scan the scrub below you. In autumn this area is good for warblers fattening up on elderberries before they migrate. Lesser Whitethroats are also commonly seen here.



End of the path

Around November/December you may view flocks of starlings, rooks and jackdaws in their thousands, whirling hypnotically in the sky. It's a sight you'll not forget.



**The vast majority of the bird images were kindly supplied by Sean Browne of Chilwell. The Guided Walks Partnership is deeply indebted to him for his skill and patience in creating these beautiful photographs. We regret we could not include images of every bird.**

**Peter Smith, the manager of the site, kindly supplied the informative text for this production—with a few minor amendments to update and fit the space available. Please check**

**[www.gedlingconservationtrust.org](http://www.gedlingconservationtrust.org)**

**for their latest wildlife sightings**



If you are aware of any significant changes to this walk, please notify [briancluff@talktalk.net](mailto:briancluff@talktalk.net). That would be very helpful to everyone. If you enjoyed the walk - or not - please let me have any useful comments.