

Seasonal Wildlife Guide

SPRING



Common spotted orchid



Otter



Kingfisher



Common darter



Reed warbler



Daubenton's bat

SUMMER

AUTUMN



Burnet rose



Salmon



Fungi

WINTER



Starling



Bittern



Snipe

Support our work

Durham Wildlife Trust is the leading environmental charity dedicated to our local area.

Led by and funded by supporters, the Trust's work remains rooted in the community and in local action. The Trust is a membership organisation and relies on fundraising to restore nature across the North East. A small, regular contribution through membership will make a big difference and directly support wilder places, including Low Barns.

PLEASE JOIN TODAY



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Low Barns Nature Reserve

Witton-le-Wear, DL14 0AG.

Opening hours: 10am - 4pm, every day

✉ mail@durhamwt.co.uk

☎ 0191 584 3112

www.durhamwt.com Charity number: 501038

Access & Parking

Parking is available on site. Buses from Durham and Bishop Auckland run to Crook, with local connections to Witton-le-Wear. Durham Wildlife Trust members are able to purchase a barrier key so that they can access the site out of hours.

Visitor Centre

The visitor centre is wheelchair accessible and houses a coffee shop, gift shop and toilet facilities. There is a donation box inside for those able to make a contribution. A mobility scooter is available to hire, this can be done via the website or over the phone.

Dogs

Dogs are welcome but must be kept on a lead and under close control at all times around the entire reserve.

Low Barns



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One of our region's most important wildlife sites, this wetland reserve, bordered by the River Wear, also contains mixed woodlands and species-rich grasslands. Previously farmland and gravel pits, Low Barns is now a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).



Martin Fairburn

River Wear

The River Wear forms the southern boundary of Low Barns. In places the bank is gently sloped, forming cobbled banks, and in others there is a steep drop. The River Wear supports both salmon and trout and is a good place to spot great crested grebe and goosander. Keep an eye out for otter footprints in the soft mud on the river banks. Otter spraint (droppings) is regularly left on large stones and tree roots along the river. Daubenton's bats can regularly be seen hunting over the river at night and occasionally you may be lucky enough to spot one during the day.

Alder Wood

The Alder Wood is an area of wet woodland that lies in what was once the channel of the Wear. The river dramatically shifted its course during the great flood of November 17th 1771, and alder, a tree species that thrives in wet areas, became established. Wet woodlands are rare in the Durham area and this habitat, also known as alder carr, is one of the things that makes Low Barns so special. It is important for a wide range of animals and plants, particularly invertebrates, bryophytes (liverworts and mosses) and birds.



Wildlife Hides

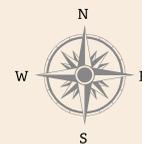
There are several well-appointed hides across the reserve that are open to all visitors.

West Pasture

The West Pasture is the most extensive area of grassland on site. The re-landscaping of this feature with scrapes and pools has created a wet grassland that supports a number of breeding wading bird species. The West Pasture hide looks over the West Lake and patient visitors can be rewarded with views of birds including snipe, curlew and kingfisher.

Reedbed

Reedbeds are among the most important habitats for birds in the UK. Numerous species use this habitat, whether for breeding or overwintering. Breeding birds include reed bunting, sedge warbler and reed warbler. In the winter months large flocks of starlings periodically roost in the reedbeds and the highly secretive bittern can also be found if you're lucky. You can experience life in the reedbed first hand by taking a stroll along the reedbed boardwalk.



Key

- ⋯ Footpath
- Boardwalk
- Bird Hides
- Butterfly Garden
- Visitor Centre
- Parking



Learn more about Low Barns

www.durhamwt.com