

# Seasonal Wildlife Guide

## SPRING



Sand martins



Northern marsh orchid



Tree sparrow



Little ringed plover



Ringlet butterfly



Great crested grebe

## AUTUMN



Lapwing



Common darter



Curlew



Long eared owl



Roe deer



Stoat

## WINTER

## 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 Rainton Meadows.

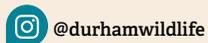
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**Durham  
Wildlife Trust**  
From Tees to Tyne



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**Rainton Meadows Nature Reserve**  
Houghton-le-Spring, DH4 6PU.

Opening hours: **10am - 4pm, every day**

✉ [mail@durhamwt.co.uk](mailto:mail@durhamwt.co.uk)

☎ **0191 584 3112**

[www.durhamwt.com](http://www.durhamwt.com) Charity number: **501038**

### Access & Parking

Ample parking is available on site. Buses from Sunderland and Durham stop at Rainton Bridge Business Park, leaving a short walk to the reserve.

### Visitor Centre

The visitor centre is wheelchair accessible and houses a coffee shop, gift shop and toilet facilities. There is a Wild Play area to the rear of the building and the centre is also home to the Durham Wildlife Trust offices. There is a donation box inside for those able to make a contribution.

### Dogs

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

# Rainton Meadows & Joe's Pond



**Durham  
Wildlife Trust**  
From Tees to Tyne



[www.durhamwt.com](http://www.durhamwt.com)

# Rainton Meadows was created when the Rye Hill opencast coal mine was restored by Durham Wildlife Trust.

## Wildlife hide

The hide at Pond 2 looks out over the largest open water body on the nature reserve and offers year-round activity, including migrant wildfowl and waders in spring and autumn. Keys for the hide are available from the visitor centre.

## Grassland and grazing

The meadows are at their best in the summer months when swathes of wildflowers provide a home for a variety of pollinators. In winter and spring, the Trust's Exmoor ponies are often on the reserve. These semi-wild ponies carry out conservation work 24/7, grazing vegetation and gently breaking up the surface to allow seeds to germinate.



## Joe's Pond

Joe's Pond is a flooded clay pit, named after previous custodian Joe Wilson. The pond (now a Site of Special Scientific Interest) is relatively deep and fringed with swamp and fen – ideal habitat for a wide range of invertebrates, from water scorpions to dragonflies.

## Nicholson's Hill

Those making the climb to the top of Nicholson's Hill are rewarded with views across Sunderland and County Durham. The hill itself is man-made; all that remains of the spoil heap of Nicholson's Pit.

Learn more about Rainton Meadows:  
[www.durhamwt.com](http://www.durhamwt.com)



Follow the marked walking routes to explore the reserve.

## Key

### Access routes

- Dragonfly route – 1km
- Shrew route – 1.5km
- Heron route – 2km
- Other footpaths
- Roads

### Facilities

- Visitor centre
- Wild play
- P Parking areas
- Bird hide
- Observation screen