

# Bowness-on-Solway Nature Reserve



Wildlife has an amazing ability to bounce back if given a chance. This nature reserve used to be four fields. Then it was used as a gravel quarry before being abandoned and then managed by Cumbria Wildlife Trust as a nature reserve. Now it is one of the richest wildlife sites in the area.



## Included in this pack:

- Information on getting to and around the nature reserve
- A short history of Bowness-on-Solway Nature Reserve
- Spotter sheets - easy, medium and difficult
- A quick quiz
- Draw or write about what you saw

## Your walk

The circular path is one mile long. You can take a short cut back to the road from several places along the path as there's a farm track that runs down the middle of the nature reserve.

There are boardwalks over wetter areas and a small number of steps - overall the walk is quite flat. Please wear sturdy boots and remember to take waterproof clothing, sunscreen and hats – it is easy to get caught out in the Cumbrian weather!

Kevin Scott the Reserve Officer says  
"Look out for frogs, toads and newts in the spring, a profusion of dragonflies and butterflies in the summer, and in the autumn redwing, fieldfare and blackbirds feasting on berries".



# Bowness-on-Solway Nature Reserve



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## GETTING TO THE NATURE RESERVE

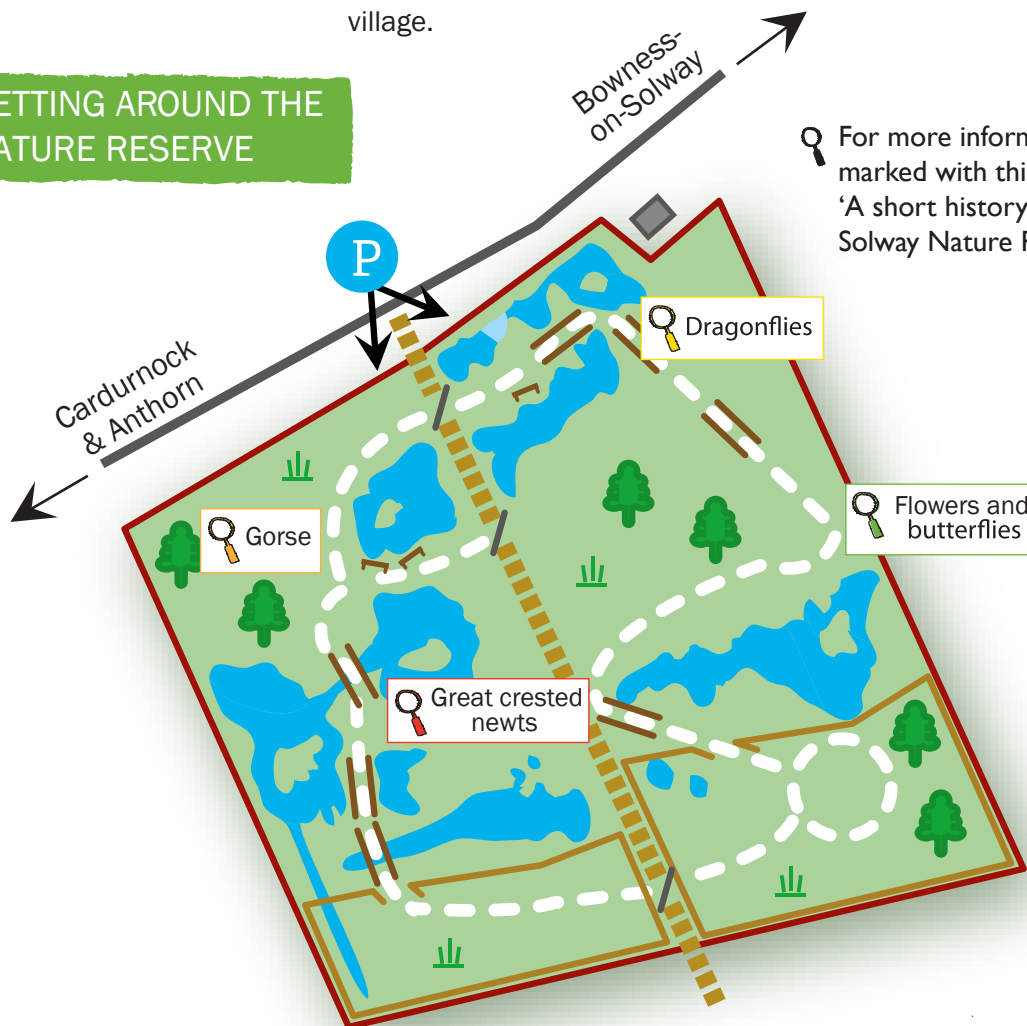



*By car* From Carlisle take the B5307 to Kirkbride and take a right fork to Burgh-by-Sands before the city boundary. Follow this road all the way to Bowness-on-Solway and straight through the village. The reserve entrance is the track after Biglands House approximately 1.25km/ 0.75 miles from the village. From Wigton take the road to Kirkbride. In the village turn left for Anthorn and Bowness. Cross the river and turn right at the junction. At the T-junction in Bowness village turn left and follow the road until the nature reserve is reached. Park on the verge at the nature reserve entrance. Please do not obstruct farm track through the nature reserve.

*By bicycle* The nature reserve is on National Route 72 Hadrian's Cycleway.

*By public transport* Buses run from Carlisle to Bowness-on-Solway village.

## GETTING AROUND THE NATURE RESERVE



 For more information on features marked with this symbol, see 'A short history of Bowness-on-Solway Nature Reserve'



# A short history of Bowness-on-Solway Nature Reserve





Ponds have been disappearing from our gardens and countryside for many years now. The eight ponds that are found in this nature reserve are so good for wildlife the reserve has been designated as a Flagship Ponds site by the Freshwater Habitats Trust.


 Features with this symbol are marked on the nature reserve map

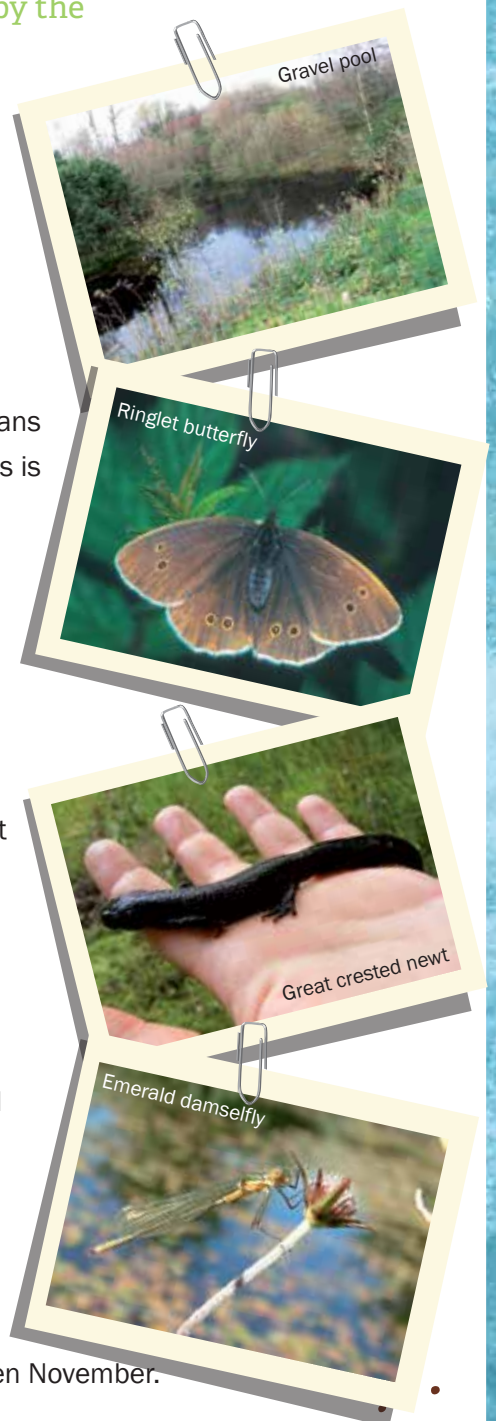
The ponds were created when the land was excavated for gravel for use in industry. This extraction stopped in the 1970s and as the wildlife started to move in, the land was generously donated by the owners so that we could encourage more wildlife.

Some of the ponds were dug to well below the water table which means they never dry out. The others all change levels with the weather. This is because water can travel easily through the gravel that the ground is made from. So when it rains the ponds quickly fill up and the nature reserve can get quite wet, although we've put in boardwalks over the wettest parts so you can still get around.

The nature reserve can dry up very quickly too and only the deepest three ponds will still have some water in a dry summer. This means the ponds are suitable for some wildlife but not others.  Rare great crested newts love these ponds and happily raise families in them but they also live in the surrounding grass and scrub to feed and hibernate. Diving beetles and mud snails also like ponds with fluctuating water levels.

 Dragonflies love these ponds and 14 species have been recorded on the reserve. Different species fly at different times: in April large red damselflies can be seen, along with four spotted chasers and common blue damselflies. As the summer progresses more species can be seen, including common and southern hawkers, emperors and more. Some species, such as the common and black darters, have very long flight periods and can still be seen in October and even November.

All this insect life needs something to feed on and you'll find lots of hedgerow blossom on  gorse and hawthorn bushes. There are also rare wildflowers throughout the spring and summer, some of which you have to look very carefully for and some you will see in profusion.



# EASY SPOTTER SHEET

## Bowness-on-Solway Nature Reserve



Tick them off as you spot!



Information sign



Ponds



Hawthorn berries



Entrance gate



Gorse bush



What else did you spot?



# Medium SPOTTER SHEET

Bowness-on-Solway  
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Tick them off as you spot!



Darin Smith

Mallard duck



Lichen



David Marshall

Large red damselfly



Knapweed



Peacock butterfly



What else did you spot?



# DIFFICULT SPOTTER SHEET

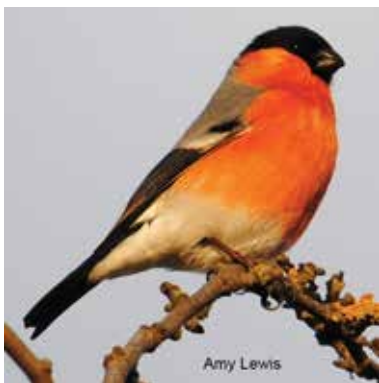
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## Tick them off as you spot!



Bullfinch



Frog



Bird's-foot trefoil



Four-spotted chaser



Dark Green Fritillary



What else did you spot?



# QUICK QUIZ

Bowness-on-Solway  
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What was Bowness-on-Solway before it was a nature reserve?

.....

Why do the water levels fluctuate so much?

.....

What types of wildlife live in the ponds ?

.....

Tick the wildlife that lives at Bowness-on-Solway

Great crested newt

Mud snail

Dolphin

Common blue damselfly

Hyena

Diving beetle

Meadow brown butterfly

Gorse

Emerald damselfly



DRAW OR  
WRITE  
ABOUT WHAT  
YOU SAW

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