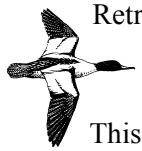


10. Turn right. Common reed grows here attracting several species of warbler in Spring and Summer. On the left is a small-leaved lime and a black poplar, whilst English oaks form a stand on the right.

11. A bird-watching hide overlooks the lake. Several species of duck, with coot, moorhen, great crested grebe, cormorant and heron among the water birds are often seen from here.



Retrace the path to point 10, turn right and cross over the bridges to return to the starting point.

This trail is approximately 0.6 miles.

12 The longer walk continues south along the embankment.



The path is lined with buddleia which provides shelter and nectar for butterflies in Summer. Here in July and August glow worms are seen after dark. Look over the lake on the right for ducks, geese and grebes.

13 Turn left at the cross roads and follow the path to the golf course. Goats rue blooms in summer. Look out for small birds. Cross the practice ground to the footpath sign, using the bridge over the ditch to reach the main golf course path.

(The path between points 13 and 14 is also part of the South Wood Trail.)

Turn left and return to the start along the edge of the lake keeping clear of the golf tee, or continue up along the path bearing right to return to the car park.



**Part of the
Colne Valley
Park**

Hillingdon Natural History Society

Most members join with limited knowledge, and through society activities gain considerable enjoyment from a greater insight into nature. Our regular programme includes bird watching, botany and entomology, conservation, indoor meetings, and guided field trips all year round.

There are usually three society events per month - for the membership cost of 20p per week for an entire family!

On the first Wednesday of each winter month we have an evening talk on specialist subjects. In summer we have field visits to local sites of special interest.

On the last weekend of each month (not December) we visit a more distant area, having a pub or picnic lunch.

The Greylags, which include retired members, manage Harefield Place Nature Reserve on Thursday mornings.

Anecdotal and informative articles are published in our society newsletter twice a year, together with the programme for the following six months. We have published an updated records book for the reserve.

For further information contact Ann Rix (Membership Secretary) or Alan Rix (Chairman) on 01895 466804 or visit our website at

<http://www.hillingdon-naturalhistorysociety.org.uk>

To join the society please send details as follows:

I wish to join Hillingdon Natural History Society.

Name, Address [and telephone number]

Please choose one category:

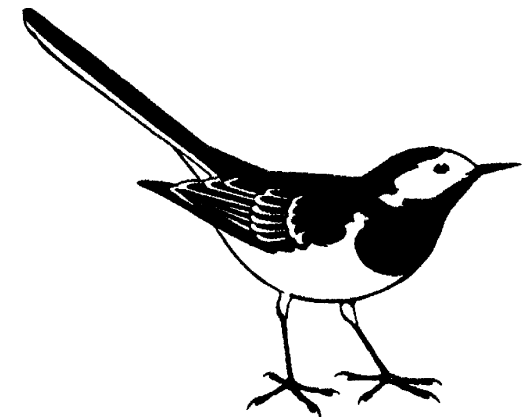
Family membership	£ 10.00
Individual membership	£ 8.00
Unwaged	£ 5.00

Please send your cheque, payable to Hillingdon Natural History Society to:

Mrs Ann Rix, Membership Secretary, 31 Norfolk Road, Uxbridge, Middx. UB8 1BL

HILLINGDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Harefield Place North Wood Nature Trail



Part of Frays Valley Local Nature Reserve

This trail can be very muddy, especially between points 8,9,10 and 1. Wellingtons rather than walking boots recommended in or after wet weather.

START at the entrance from the golf course. Here the fence is covered with hops and there is a stand of common reed just inside.



1 Stop at the clearing by a leaning oak tree, the best spot for finding goldcrests and tree creepers. On warm days from March to October, speckled wood butterflies cross the clearing. Move on to your right, passing the evergreen privet and box. Ash and wych elm grow here. One younger English elm has survived the onslaught of Dutch elm disease whilst older elms have died.

2. Bear right and look for clumps of male fern. Hazel here has been coppiced and the stools protected by chicken wire from damage by hungry muntjac deer. Catkins may be seen from October onwards. The big trees to the right are hybrid limes, not a native species.

3. On the left there is a wild service tree. On the right is a lime tree which fell in 1980. The root plate is over 2 metres high and the tree still produces shoots each year.

Large cherry trees are seen on the right. The strong, hairy stems of ivy are climbing the lime tree, whilst mosses cover only the lower parts of the trunk, and not every aspect of the tree. Look for horizontal rows of holes high on the lime trees made by woodpeckers sucking the sap. Dog's mercury and enchanter's nightshade form the ground flora. A large hornbeam grows here. Are there any seedlings? Dead elms are left for woodpeckers. Look for their holes.

4. Here are many elm suckers. Look on the bare trunk of the dead elm for the channels left by the beetles which cause Dutch elm disease. A young field maple grows by the path.

5. Here is the largest oak in the reserve. On the right is a double trunked hornbeam. Ahead, the large beech has bracket fungi. One year a thrush attempted to nest on top of one bracket. Turn left in front of the beech and bear right on to the path. Fallen wood provides good habitats for fungi in the Spring and Autumn.

6. Oil pollution has affected the whole area in front of you. Many larger trees are dead or dying. Some ground flora, living with roots above the levels affected by oil pollution,

can thrive. Sedges grow near the path. Look for dragonflies over the pond on the left and lichens growing on tree trunks. Continue to the right, over a small bridge into the meadow.

7. Sit here quietly for a while, looking for small birds. Bullfinches are often seen in the blackthorn. Grass snakes may bask here in the sun.

Returning to point 6, now bear right. Himalayan balsam grows abundantly here. We have reduced the dominance of this attractively flowered plant as it chokes the other plants. The large wood piles are left as shelter for small mammals, homes for wood beetles and habitats for many species of fungi. Notice the many dying trees - hornbeam, hawthorn and alder. Many alder seedlings are growing now. The path bears left. It is marked with moss-covered logs and stumps. An ash trunk is coloured bright orange by an alga.



8. A bird-watching hide has been built here. Trees have been cleared in front of it. Shallow ponds for water and peanut holders have been provided. Birds seen here regularly include blue tits, great tits, robins nuthatches and woodpeckers. The notice in the hide lists the birds seen in the reserve.



Further along, large ash logs by the path offer seating but beware rabbit droppings. Follow the path, crossing the bridge over the ditch, reaching a T-junction.

9. Turn right. In this wet track to point 12, pond skaters can be found in puddles. Ferns grow to the right and a patch of ramsons may be seen in Spring on the left.

On the ramp pendulous sedge grows in clumps and teasel heads survive into the Winter. Can you find red campion in flower?

Here you have a choice : For the longer walk go through the gate, turn left and continue from paragraph 12.

For the short walk, return to point 9, bear slightly right and continue towards point 10. A patch of small teasel is spreading on both sides of the path.

