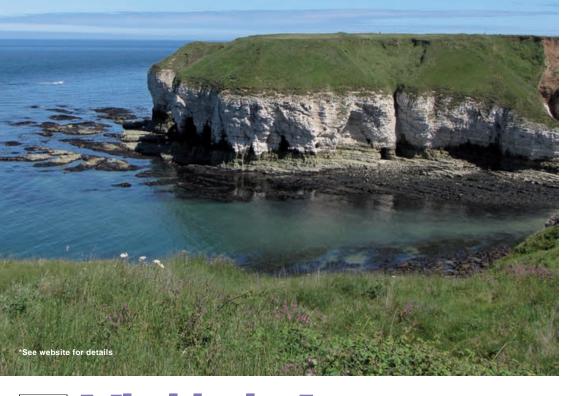


North Landing, North Marine Road, Flamborough, Bridlington YO15 1BJ OS Landranger 101 Grid reference TA 239719

and great grey shrike. Little auk, Manx shearwater, and

weasel can often be seen hunting in daylight. Look out f



### Wheldrake Ings Internationally important for its rich hou area don't Internationally important for its rich hay meadow flowers and wintering birds. Wheldrake

Yorkshire Ings, with its adjoining Natural England site at Bank Island, is part of the Lower Derwent Valley national nature reserve and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It is for its birds that the area is also designated a Special Protection Area (SPA) along with the rest of the valley. A RAMSAR site, designated as a wetland of International importance, and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). **Spring** and **Summer**: The floodplain meadows are drier and meadow plants and grasses grow, with the meadows

at their best in mid to late June. The typical plants include the 'fluffy' white flowers of meadowsweet, the beautiful round burgundy heads of great burnet and the vivid yellow of meadow vetchling scrambling up the surrounding plants. A huge variety of grasses and nationally rare plants such as narrow leaved water dropwort can be seen, making this an extremely special grassland habitat. In July the lush meadows are cut for hay. Within a few weeks the area starts to 'green up' as the grass re-grows. Stock are then turned out to graze until autumn. The wetlands hum with the sound of insects and warblers. Migrating whimbrel are notable visitors in May, and otters are occasionly seen on the reserve.

Autumn and Winter: The seasonal rains push the River Derwent over its banks and create the flooded meadows ideal for the wintering wildfowl, with large areas of standing water and thousands of waders and wildfowl, including whooper swan, wigeon, goldeneye. Look out for peregrines. It is both the sheer numbers of birds plus the variety of species that make the Ings such an amazing place at this time of year. Parking space is limited and the ground is often soft.

There are four viewing hides - visitors are asked to keep to the marked footpaths Ings Lane, off Church Lane, Wheldrake YO19 6AX

OSLandranger 105 Grid reference SE 694444



### **Howden Marsh**

A small nature reserve in the centre of Howden. This tranquil flood meadow and pond habitat offers a glimpse of some of Howden's wildlife. Ducks, moorhens,

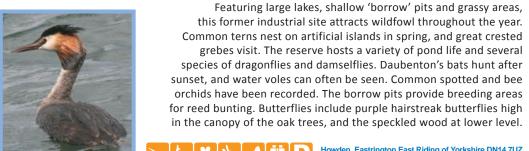
Frogs and toads and a variety of fish, from perch to pike, are present all year round. St John Street, Howden, East Riding of Yorkshire DN14 7DB

coots, finches and many other common bird species frequent the reserve.

OS Landranger 106 Grid reference 745283

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### EAST RIDING **EAST RIDING Eastrington Ponds**



Howden, Eastrington, East Riding of Yorkshire DN14 7UZ

## **Blacktoft Sands**

On the south bank of the River Ouse, this fabulous reserve features open water and a tidal reedbed, the largest in England. Home to bittern, marsh harriers and bearded tits at one of their most northerly outposts. One of the most breathtaking sights to look out for is marsh harriers performing their aerobatic displays and food passes in spring. From mid June onwards, migrating waders make a stop on the lagoons giving close views of these birds. 270 species have been seen here including 50 species of waders. A series of events throughout the year introduces beginners to waders, warblers and raptors.

**Spring** Bitterns boom and up to eight species of warblers sing as breeding begins. Avocets establish their nest sites on the islands. Look out for marsh harriers performing their courtship flights.

Summer and Autumn Marsh harriers hunt for food for their chicks. Migrating waders – spotted redshank, greenshank, black-tailed godwit, ruff and dunlin – can be seen on the lagoons. Look out for water rail and bearded tit.

Barn owls are often seen hunting in front of the hides. Winter wildfowl can be seen on the lagoons.

Winter Large bird of prey roost: marsh harriers, merlin and the occasional hen harrier.

Members free. Non-members: adults £3, under 16s £1, family £6. Ousefleet, Goole DN14 8HL, OS Landranger 108 Grid Reference: SE 843232





The nutrient rich pools encourage excessive plant growth, resulting in a fascinating micro-fauna. Teal and pochard are regular visitors. Great crested and little grebes have also bred. Other sightings have included bearded tit, bittern, marsh harrier, osprey, great reed warbler, garganey – the only summer visiting duck, water rail, green sandpiper and cormorant. Mammals found on the reserve

include water vole and harvest mouse.

OS Landranger 106, Grid reference: SE 773248

Saltmarshe, Hook, Goole DN14 7RX





# The Living Seas Centre 201 Danes Dyke 501

Opening in Summer 2012, The Living Seas Centre is Yorkshire Wildlife Trust's first dedicated marine education centre. Here you will find a wealth of information about our fascinating local marine life and learn more about the Trust's vision for Living Seas. Discover the weird and wonderful creatures to be found hidden below the waves, learn how the upwelling of the Flamborough Front supports such a huge variety of life, watch locally shot video of undersea kelp forests and chalk reefs, embark on a Storyboard Trail and find out how we can all do our bit for marine wildlife.

Exciting events are run from the centre year-round, so why not join us for a Family Shoresearch, take a Living Seas Safari, create a marine-themed masterpiece or learn loads about lobsters. With all this on offer, The Living Seas Centre is a great place for young and old alike. Hot drinks and toilets. For opening hours and events listings, please visit www.ywt.org.uk



South Sea Road, South Landing, Flamborough, Bridlington YO15 1Al OS Landranger 101 Grid reference: TA 231695

### Flamborough Head **Marine Conservation Zone**

Created in 2010, the Flamborough No Take Zone was the second highly protected marine site to be identified within UK waters. The site, visible from Sewerby Steps, is a recommended Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) recognising the littoral chalk features, an underwater reef that provides a home for unique communities of seaweeds and invertebrates. Extractive, depositional or damaging activities are prohibited, and regular surveys are now undertaken to measure improvement in the condition of the seabed and increased diversity of species. Blue mussels, many species of seaweed and several types of crab, including shore and edible, can all be found. Nearby is the Flamborough Head European Marine Site, supporting seabird populations of national and

European importance, including kittiwake, razorbill, guillemot, puffins, gannets and gulls. Cliff Lane, Sewerby, Bridlington YO15 1EW ce OS Landranger 101 Grid reference TA 202689

### **South Landing**

Adjacent to the Living Seas Centre, South Landing Local Nature Reserve includes a woodland nature trail, wildflower meadow and a superb beach for rock pooling. A mecca for migrating birds in spring and autumn. From the cliff tops, there are panoramic sea views due south, an unusual experience on the Yorkshire coast.

South Sea Road, South Landing, Flamborough, Bridlington YO15 1AE OS Landranger 101 Grid reference: TA 231695

**AUTUMN** Good for little stint and other

WINTER Ducks such as goldeneye, pochard,

peregrine are regularly spotted. Hedges and unharvested

shoveler, gadwall and teal. Barn owl, red kite and

crops support finches and buntings.

EAST RIDING

# North Cave Wetlands This rapidly growing wetland reserve is a great example of how industry.

This rapidly growing wetland reserve is a great example of how industrial landscapes Yorkshire can be restored for the benefit of nature. North Cave Wetlands is a haven for birds and birdwatchers alike, with a patchwork of deep lakes, wet grassland, gravel islands, reedbed and hedgerows all contributing to the reserve's success. This former gravel quarry already supports over 200 species of breeding, wintering and passage migrant birds, 200 plant species and 24 species

**SPRING** A hive of activity, with breeding avocet, mmon tern, little ringed plover, lapwing and redshank. Reed warbler and reed bunting breed in the reedbed, while sand martin and kingfisher nest in the sand cliffs of the quarry, and grassland areas support breeding skylark and lapwing. **SUMMER** Watch for butterflies and dragonflies such

as the four spot chaser and southern hawker,

and their nemesis, the hobby,

Four bird hides, including the innovative new straw bale hide, offer excellent views across the reserve, and a mile long circular trail takes in all the sites that North Cave Wetlands has to offer. Hot food and drinks available at the mobile Wild Bird Cafe at the entrance.

Dryham Lane, North Cave HU15 2LY



heath, Allerthorpe has an impressive array of heathland wildlife on its acidic sandy soils. Habitats include wet and dry heath, mire, grassland and woodland, with over two hundred different species of moth and 150 species of spider. A good site to see adders and common lizards, particularly in the months of March and April. They emerge from hibernation on warm days and are easy to spot amongst the bracken and heather. Dragonflies and damselflies such as the four-spotted chaser and black darter are found around the ponds. Marsh cinquefoil and common cottongrass like the wet mire conditions, while purple moor-grass prefers the drier areas.



Allerthorpe, Pocklington YO42 4DD

# North Newbald Becksies 23 B2

This small reserve is wet or boggy, with drier margins. Historically, the Becksies were used Yorkshire for watering and grazing cattle. A herb-rich sward developed with a mosaic of wetland and chalk-grassland plants, like bogbean, marsh valerian and marsh marigold in spring, and devil's-bit scabious in early autumn. The becks contain water-cress, fool's watercress, brooklime and blue water-speedwell, and are bordered by water figwort and common fleabane. On the higher areas cowslips and yellow-rattle are common. There is usually a good show of marsh and common spotted-

orchids, as well as common twayblade North Newbald, Market Weighton YO43 4SA, OS Landranger 106 Grid reference SE 916372

### North Cliffe Wood

A beautiful birch wood, with alder, oak, hazel and rowan also present. Typical species include bluebell, primrose, wood sorrel and dog's mercury. Climbing fumitory, a species rare in east Yorkshire, is abundant. An area of lowland heath supports heathland species such as ling heather, common cottongrass, heath rush. Breeding birds include six species of tit, garden warbler, sparrowhawk and great spotted woodpecker. 18 butterflies and more than 150 moths have been recorded. Grass snakes can often be seen in the open areas.

North Cliffe, Market Weighton YO43 4XE, OS Landranger 106 Grid reference SE 860374

### EAST RIDING **Humber Bridge Country Park**

Set alongside the Humber Estuary, overlooking the iconic Humber Bridge, this reserve features short trails taking visitors from woodland to grassland to poolside habitats. This disused chalk quarry is now covered in chalk loving ash trees, with their creeping roots allowing them to cling onto ledges and the chalky quarry walls. In summer, butterflies such as peacock, red admiral, small tortoiseshell and painted lady flutter around the distinctive purple buddleia bushes dotted across the reserve. The rarest butterfly present is the white-letter hairstreak, so named because of a white L-shaped letter on its underwing. To see this elusive butterfly, look high up in the elm trees during July when they lay their eggs.

Ferriby Road, Hessle, Hull HU13 0HB OS Landranger 107 Grid reference TA 021262



secret garden, with sweet scented herbs, a thriving vegetable patch, meadows, ponds (a great place to see newts) and trees. A perfect spot for a picnic: look out for the brimstone, red admiral and holly blue butterflies that grace the site in summer.

Pearson Park, Princes Avenue, Hull HU5 2TD OS Landranger 107 Grid reference: TA 084303



earthwork which runs through the reserve and across the whole of the Flamborough headland, effectively securing five square miles of land. The reserve contains the most extensive area of woodland on the headland, and is important for attracting more resident breeding and wintering birds than any other nearby wood. In summer, bats can be seen after dusk on warm

Named after the ancient two mile ditch and bank

evenings in the woods and car park. The beach between here and Sewerby Steps has some good rock pools. The dyke and the steep cliffs make the enclosed territory and its two boat launching beaches, North and South Landing, easily defended. Despite its name, the dyke is prehistoric in origin, and Bronze Age arrowheads were found when it was excavated by Major-General Augustus Pitt-Rivers in 1879.

Danes Dyke, Sewerby, Bridlington YO15 1AA OS Landranger 101 Grid reference: TA 231695

### Sewerby Hall & Gardens 60

Situated in a dramatic cliff-top position with spectacular south facing views over Bridlington Bay, Sewerby Hall and Gardens boast 50 acres of stunning early 19th Century parkland. The award winning gardens are amongst the best in the region. There are some impressive stands of beech, and woodland birds including great spotted woodpecker can be seen and heard. In autumn, there are good displays of fungi. In front of the Hall, the cliff top path gives access to Sewerby Steps, and the pebbly beach, with good rock pools and visiting wading birds such as turnstone and oystercatcher. Events include wildlife activities, art exhibitions, concerts and craft fairs. The estate, Clock Tower tea rooms

and children's zoo are open all year round. The free car park is open during seasonal daylight hours. The Hall is open daily between April and September.

Church Lane, Sewerby, Bridlington YO15 1EA Grid reference OS Landranger 101 Grid reference TA 203689



So much to see in Sewerby

Millington Woodland Walk

Woodland Wonders

Danes Dyke - Jackie Brookshaw

## **Millington Wood**

This ash wood occupies Lily Dale and dates back nearly 1000 years to 1086. Lily Dale is a typical dry valley of the Yorkshire Wolds, and has distinctive chalk landscape features. The deeply incised and branching chalk dales around Millington are some of the finest undisturbed examples in England.

Botanically, Millington Wood is a SSSI and the richest

woodland in the East Riding. In spring, look for carpets of bluebells and wild garlic. In summer, the main ride features stunning giant bellflowers towering above the flower filled verges. These can grow up to two metres and particularly love the calcareous soils. Millington also has the smaller nettleleaved bellflower that is usually found further south. Conifers and other species planted in the 1950's are being

removed, to encourage the chalk loving ash that would once have dominated the wood. Selective felling of the shade-casting sycamores and beech trees also encourages regeneration of the chalkland flora.

Millington, Pocklington YO42 1TX OS Landranger 106 Grid reference SE 838530

### Thixendale

Thixendale is probably the most isolated village in the Yorkshire Wolds and has been cut off by heavy snow in recent winters. An amazing sixteen radiating dales lead from the village, which boasts a pub, two shops and church. The red pantiled roofs of the few houses contrast with the dark green of the steep scrub woodland on the valley sides.

barn owls and other raptor species including red kites, peregrines and sparrowhawks may be seen in the vicinity. The wildlife artist's Robert Fuller's Gallery is signposted from the village. Refreshments and toilets in the village hall.

Typical chalk grassland species inhabit the surrounding dales, many of which have open access. Brown hares,

Thixendale, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 9LS OS Landranger 100 Grid reference SE 842612 

## Yorkshire Wolds Way 1582

One of Britain's National Trails, the Yorkshire Wolds Way winds for 80 miles through some of the most tranquil countryside in England. From Hessle on the Humber, northwards along wooded slopes and through dry valleys, the walk climbs gently on to the tops of the Wolds with long views in all directions. Descending to the east from the northern escarpment the final section of the Way ends on the headland of Filey Brigg. Chalk grassland flowers abound in the summer, and birds of prey such as red kite, barn owl and peregrine can regularly be seen.

Start in Filey or Hessle or at any point between OS Landranger 100,101, 106, 107



### **Paull Holme Strays**

Created as part of a flood risk management scheme, the mudflats and saltmarsh found at Paull Holme Strays support birds all year round. This inter-tidal reserve comes into its own during autumn and early spring, when migrant waders, such as black-tailed godwit, bar-tailed godwit and avocet come to feed on the rich mud flats. Impressive flocks of thousands of golden plovers are regularly sighted

during October and November. The waders arrive in autumn and peak in the winter but by late spring they have all left for their breeding grounds. Spring is a good time to see passerines like swallows and martins, yellow wagtails, marsh harriers and skylarks. The freshwater areas bordering the site are good for dragonflies, the most notable being the small red eyed damselfly. Nearby, historic Paull Church has been restored and a team of local volunteers offers teas and homemade cakes (and toilet facilities) at weekends.

Thorngumbald Road, Paull, Hull HU12 8AX OS Landranger 107 Grid reference TA 176255.



### Hornsea Mere

Hornsea Mere is, at 120 hectares, the largest freshwater lake in Yorkshire, and the final remnant of a post-glacial wetland in Holderness that formerly featured many smaller meres and marshy areas. The Mere is a SSSI and SPA, cited for its international ornithological importance, with large numbers of overwintering wildfowl and roosting gulls, and spring/summer resident breeding species. A noted little gull roost, Hornsea sees rarities such as black tern, bittern and Slavonian grebe. For botanists, the Mere has one of the most important regional colonies of the rare greater water parsnip.

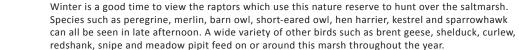
Hornsea Mere is privately owned by the Trustees of the Wassand Estate. Access from Hornsea to the eastern end of the site, where there is a cafe and boating franchise operating in the summer. A public footpath passes east-west some distance away from the southern shore, and down the driveway of Wassand Hall. Limited parking at the entrance on the B1244 Sigglesthorne – Hornsea road.

Near Tickton, Beverley HU17 9RY OS Landranger 107 Grid reference TA 051439

# Pulfin Bog Wildlife TRUSTS A hotanically rich area of wetland once

A botanically rich area of wetland, once typical of the River Hull floodplain, Pulfin lies on deep peat overlying clay. Springs penetrate the peat, and in most winters the reserve is periodically flooded. The common reed and many other typical fenland plants such as common meadow-rue, common valerian and marsh woundwort are present. The vegetation at Pulfin Bog is very dependent upon the water table; in periods

of drought the common reed is seriously affected. Many other common fenland plants such as common meadow-rue, common valerian and marsh woundwort are present. Reed bunting, reed warbler and sedge warbler regularly breed. Roe deer lie up on the reserve. The reedbed south of the Old Drain is being encouraged, and low intensity grazing is used to benefit the grassland and glyceria swamp. The nearest parking is at Hull Bridge, Tickton. Walk north along the public footpath



first plants to be covered by the tide.

OS Landranger 113 Grid reference TA 338191

Humber Side Lane, Welwick, Patrington, Hull HU12 0UX



## **Bempton Cliffs**

One of the best places in the UK to see seabirds. Each spring, a quarter of a million birds flock to the spectacular cliffs and begin a life or death struggle to raise their young on the narrow ledges. The bird's eye view of a breathtaking wildlife spectacle never fails to delight visitors, with staff and volunteers always on hand for guidance. And even when the seabirds have left, a walk along the spectacular clifftop footpath will blow away the cobwebs. The visitor centre features live CCTV images of nesting gannets, a shop, and hot drinks.

SPRING Breeding seabirds return, including gannet, puffin, guillemot, razorbill, fulmar, kittiwake, herring gull and shag. Farmland birds such as skylark, linnet, meadow pipit, reed and corn bunting abound and there are normally kestrel and peregrine. Keep a look out across the fields for brown hare and the occasional roe deer and red fox.

**SUMMER** The seabird breeding season peaks in June with 200,000 seabirds with eggs or chicks. Tree sparrows use nest boxes around the reserve and the songs of whitethroat, grasshopper and sedge warbler augment the resident farmland birds. A range of butterflies may be seen on sunny days and carpets of red campion and orchid add colour to the clifftop. Keep an eye out in particular for the stunning bee orchid.

**AUTUMN** Many seabirds have departed and breeding has ended, but thousands of gannets are still nesting. The autumn migration can be spectacular at Bempton owing to its prominent headland location. Thousands of thrushes chats can be found and in some years the reserve is alive with the sounds of migrating goldcrests. Offshore, Manx and

arrive from Scandinavia and flocks of pink-footed geese make their way overhead. Migrant warblers, flycatchers and sooty shearwater, Arctic and great skua may be seen in strong NW winds.



Kiplingcotes Chalk Pit and Rifle Butts Quarry

include yellowhammer, goldfinch, linnet and tree sparrow.

Kiplingcotes, Market Weighton YO43 3NA

OS Landranger 106 Grid reference SE 916435

Car park in Londesborough Road, Market Weighton YO43 3AZ

Hodgson's Fields

OS Landranger 106 Grid ref SE 876418

the reserve in the summer months.

Near Skeffling, Easington, Hull HU12 0UR

Lying in the Market Weighton Spillway, a glacial drainage channel dating back over 10,000 years,

Kiplingcotes reserve is former quarry featuring a full range of successional vegetation. It is a botanical

SSSI for its chalk grassland flora. The quarry floors and face have been colonised by pioneer species of

and field scabious. Butterflies include marbled white and common blue. Birds common on the reserve

lichens and mosses. Basil, thyme, carline thistle, centaury and autumn gentian have established, and

above is an area of denser turf dominated by grasses and herbs, including salad burnet, knapweed

A short walk westwards along the former railway bed brings you to Rifle Butts Quarry, which features a geologically

target marker pit now features winter aconite, comfrey, giant bellflower, sweet cicely and leopard's-bane.

including cowslip, marjoram, field scabious and wild basil. Ringlet and common blue butterflies breed.

Over 150 plants have been recorded in this small area, which still displays some characteristic chalk species,

important Cretaceous "unconformity", where sediments from the Jurassic and Lower Cretaceous periods were eroded

away. The sea once again covered the area, depositing red and then white chalk. Once used as a rifle range, the former

The Hudson Way 18 B2 EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

This short trail follows part of the Hudson Way, a long distance walk named for George Hudson

'The Railway King' who fell from grace in 1849 following a financial scandal. The route follows part

of the track bed of the Market Weighton to Beverley railway. Opened in 1865, the line operated for

just 100 years. Two YWT reserves are along the route, Kiplingcotes and Rifle Butts Quarry (see above).

This scrub and grassland habitat is now rare in South Holderness, making this an

extremely important reserve for birds, insects and plants alike. Summer is the best

The saltmarsh formed in a sheltered bay when the Patrington Channel was closed

early in the twentieth century. Mud and silt accumulated, raising the level of the

mudflats until they were exposed for a sufficient period for salt-tolerant plants to colonise. As

more sediment was deposited, other species were able to enter the community successively.

creating the zonation characteristic of saltmarshes. Only very specialised plants survive the

Meanwhile the early colonisers were able to establish themselves further into the estuary, thus

conditions on the saltmarsh. Characteristic species include sea lavender, sea aster, cord grass and

sea purslane. Glasswort is to be found on the colonising edges of the salt marsh being one of the

time for a visit, when visitors such as grasshopper warblers, sedge warblers and whitethroats can

year round. Southern and Northern marsh orchids can be seen during June and July in the wetter

areas of the reserve, as well as yarrow, wild angelica and meadow sweet in the rougher pastures.

Butterflies such as large skipper, meadow brown, ringlet and small heath can also be seen across

be seen in addition to yellowhammer, reed bunting, tree sparrow and linnet which are seen all

This wetland reserve features two birdwatching hides, and is home to a number of Yorkshire mammal, insect and amphibian species, including an internationally important population of great crested newts. The general nature of the land and regular winter flooding ensure a comprehensive wetland flora. The dominant species is soft rush, with water plantain, water-crowfoot, celery-leaved buttercup, nodding bur-marigold and adder's-tongue fern all present.

Springtime is a period of rejuvenation for the fauna of the site, as the first mass of frogspawn appears on the marsh, and little The insect-rich habitat and proximity to the coastal flyway have produced a variety of interesting bird species with over Garganey are annual visitors and may have bred. Teal and tufted duck breed as have grasshopper and sedge warblers, sparrows at the car park is especially prized. During the drier days of high summer the water level drops coinciding with

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### Filey Brigg

Several species of dragonfly breed and others visit.

grebe and moorhen compete for the best nest sites.

reed bunting and lesser whitethroat. The colony of tree

wader migration. Bird life can be particularly impressive during

these passage periods. Twenty species of butterfly have been

recorded including clouded yellow, marbled white and comma.

220 recorded since 1985.

Nearby, on the coast, Filey Brigg juts into the North Sea, sheltering Filey Bay and providing good bird-watching and sea-watching opportunities all year round. Seabirds such as gannet, puffin, guillemot and razorbill can be seen in the April-July period, and many rarer migrants in spring and autumn. One of the best sites in winter for purple sandpipers. Minke whale, harbour porpoise, white-beaked and bottlenose dolphins have also been seen offshore in recent years.



### Tophill Low 1902

Tophill Low Nature Reserve is an active Yorkshire Water treatment works built in 1959. The reserve features 12 hides spread across a 300 acre site flanking the River Hull. Two reservoirs dominate the reserve and have SSSI status for their huge wildfowl numbers. Around the perimeter a network of marshes, ponds, woodland and grassland result in an annual bird count of over 160, with over 60 species readily visible even in mid-winter. Kingfisher, barn owl, smew, water vole, otter, grass snake and dragonflies are all signature species for the reserve.

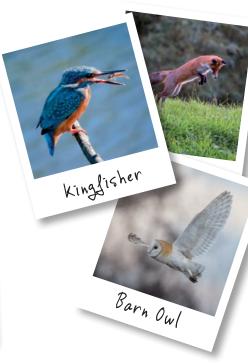
**SPRING** Littleringed plover arrive in late March, followed by thousands of martins, swallows and swifts feeding up on migration. Other regular migrants include osprey, greenshank, grebes, little gull and terns. A wide range of warblers, marsh harrier and hobby also arrive, with grass snakes often found sunning themselves on warm mornings. Great crested newt, common toad and the introduced marsh frog are very active on all ponds.

**SUMMER** Common tern breed on the marshes, along with black-headed gull, shoveler, pintail and little ringed plover. Two pairs of barn owl often breed along with many tawny owls. Water voles are active on pools, with otters occasionally glimpsed. Bee, common spotted and marsh orchids are in full flower in early June, followed by carpets of fleabane in August. These attract marbled white and brown argus butterflies. Returning wading birds in late summer include black-tailed godwit, green sandpiper and occasionally rarer vagrant species.

Tophill Low Nature Reserve, Tophill Low, Driffield YO25 9RH OS Landranger 107 Grid reference TA 073484



Tophill Low - Yorkshire Water



calcareous grassland, embryonic, mobile and fixed sand dunes. There are sandy beaches on the seaward side and mud flats on the estuary. A mecca for birdwatchers, many rarities can be seen here in autumn and spring, along with thousands of commoner migrants and winter visitors.

Spurn National Nature Reserve forms part of the Humber Estuary Special Area of Conservation, SPA and RAMSAR site - international recognition of the area's importance

is unique coastal national nature reserve features a long sandy spit stretching three

**SPRING** Spring can start late here, with the first signs being the by more familiar migrants: sand martin, swallow, wheatear, and black sightings of roe deer and barn owl k redstart. Early morning or evening may provide

**UMMER** Whitethroat is a common breeder and their scratchy song can be heard from the tops of most bushes.
The beaches host ringed plover and little tern, but summer peaks quickly here with the return of the waders in their fully many of the commoner butterflies may be seen on supply days, along with SUMMER WI

Spurn, largely because it is such an exposed and recognisable coastal location, and migration can be observed as birds head south along the peninsula. Short-eared owls arrive for the winter (depending on food availability) but the main interest is the arrival of migrant willow warblers, chiffchaffs, whitethroats, lesser whitethroats, reed warblers, goldcrests, stonechats, wheatears and redstarts. Offshore, Manx and sooty shearwaters, Arctic and great skuas can be seen, and recently a humpback whale was spotted only a few hundred metres from the beach.

WINTER Bracing walks, unique estuary views and seascapes are among the best in the region. Flocks of silver knot wheel like schools of fish against leaden skies, chased by peregrine falcon and merlin. Both species of godwit can be

found but they rarely mix. Hen harrier may drift by as they venture out from their winter feeding areas on the saltmarshes of the Humber. Spurn truly is a site for all seasons, and no two days are the same. Visitors (sorry, no dogs) may wander freely over much of the reserve, with the help of interpretation boards on the paths, and more detailed information displays at the Blue Bell café and at the Warren









**AUTUMN** The wading bird passage continues, and late summer and early autumn are the best time to spot young kingfishers at the North Marsh. Osprev again stop

black-headed and common gull, and up to 300 great black-backed gulls. Occasionally Mediterranean gulls are mixed with them. On the woodland floor up to 280 fungi species can be found. VINTER Cold northerly winds bring occasional Arctic gull species to mix with the roost, including

on migration and the winter gull roost starts to build up

late afternoon daily on both reservoirs with up to 40,000

glaucous and Iceland, with wintering peregrine falcon predating black-headed gulls. Tophill is one of the UK's best places to spot wintering smew, along with thousands more wigeon, teal, tufted duck and gadwall. The bird feeders regularly bring in brambling whilst bittern and water rail spend winters stalking the reed beds.



Tophill Wildlife - Tony Mclean

AUTUMN The autumnal bird migration is perhaps the focus of interest at

ldyllic Spurn Point