

## Wildlife along the Trail

The mature oak woodland, just inside the nature reserve entrance, is home to many kinds of birds including robins, wrens, warblers and tawny owls. Listen for the tapping of woodpeckers searching for insects and the repetitive song of the chiffchaff.

As you reach the softer, wetter ground, water tolerant trees such as alder and willow start to dominate. Clumps of tussock sedge provide support for the tree roots and strings of wild hops and honeysuckle cling to their branches. This tangled shady woodland is known as 'carr' and is home to the rare royal fern.



Swallowtail butterfly  
on milk parsley

Near the water's edge are areas of reed fen. Regular flooding brings nutrients to these otherwise poor soils, allowing marsh flowers, such as yellow loosestrife, hemp agrimony and meadowsweet to grow. Look out for milk parsley - the food plant of the rare swallowtail butterfly caterpillar. Adult swallowtails, with their large yellow and black wings, may be seen flying over the reeds between May and July.

## Visiting the Nature Reserve

Open all year. NWT's Broads Wildlife Centre is open April to October daily 10.00am to 5.00pm. Tel: 01603 270479. Group visits and school groups welcome, but booking is essential. There is wheelchair access along the trail.

Please use the NWT car park in Ranworth Village, as there is no parking at the nature reserve entrance. It is a 5 minute walk from the village to the nature reserve. No dogs please. Public toilets can be found by the Maltsters pub car park.

For more information about your visit, please ask in the visitor centre. There you can find out more about Norfolk Wildlife Trust and how you can join as a member.

NWT runs a variety of events at NWT Ranworth Broad over the summer months. Call 01603 625540 for further details.



Alder cones

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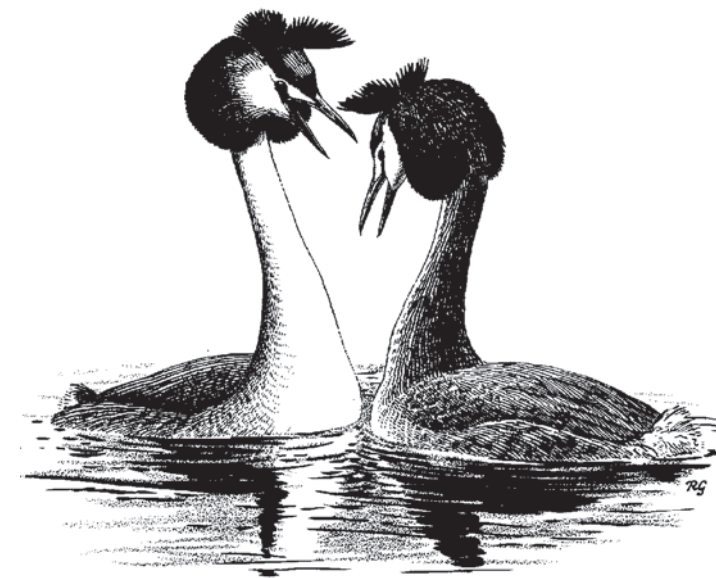


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# Nature Reserve



## NWT Ranworth Broad



## Introduction

NWT Ranworth Broad is of national and international importance for wildlife. Situated in the middle stretches of the River Bure it forms part of the larger Bure Marshes National Nature Reserve. A boardwalk trail leads through woodland and reedbed to the floating visitor centre which provides excellent views over the open water.

## The Creation of the Broads

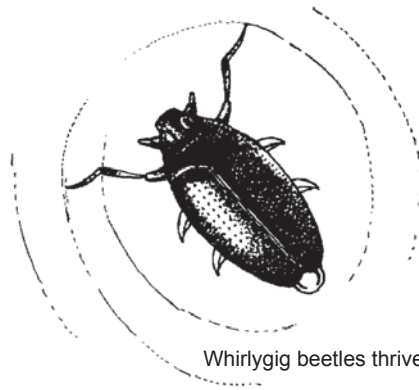
The Broads were made by people during the Middle Ages as they dug peat for fuel. All the digging was done by hand creating shallow pits between 1½ and 4 metres deep. During the 14th century, the sea level rose flooding these pits and forming the Broads.



Shoveler

## Wherries

NWT Ranworth Broad has been a private water since the 19th century and was given to Norfolk Wildlife Trust in 1949. Of particular interest are the wherries - large sailing barges - that were sunk here during the Second World War to prevent enemy hydroplanes from landing. More recently a wherry and several barges were sunk along the edges of the broad to protect the banks from erosion. You can see some of the remains from the visitor centre windows. Originally these shallow hulled wooden craft were used to transport goods such as corn, coal, chalk and mail, as well as passengers throughout the Broads system.

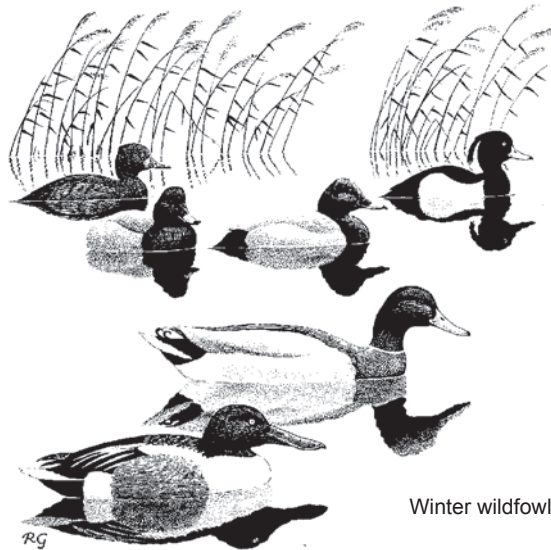


Whirligig beetles thrive in the dykes

## Wildlife on the Broad

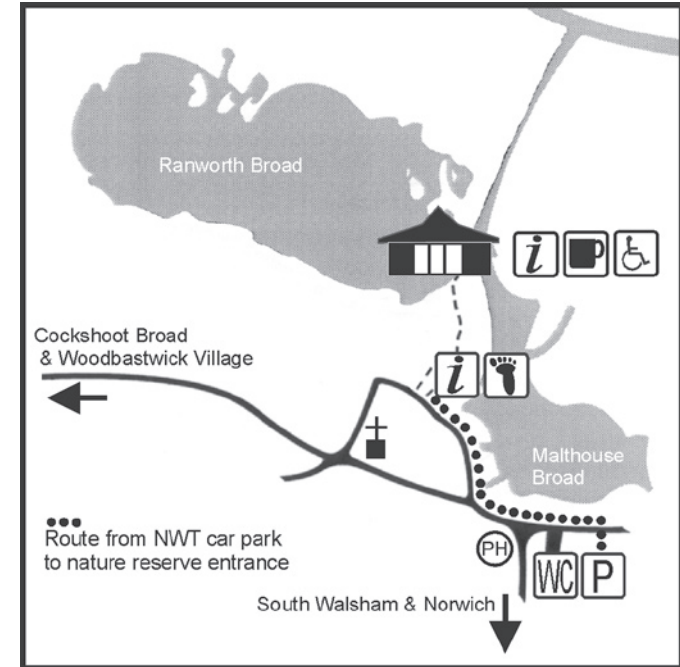
NWT Ranworth Broad is home to a great variety of birds. During summer, common terns nest on the artificial rafts and great crested grebes can be seen diving for fish. Swallows and swifts hunt for insects over the water.

In the winter months, large numbers of wildfowl, such as teal, wigeon, shoveler, pochard and gadwall, come here to feed. The broad is also a roost site for up to 400 cormorants, one of the largest inland roosts in Britain.



Winter wildfowl

## Ranworth Broad Nature Reserve



Keep to the path. DO NOT step off the boardwalk.  
Please keep children under close supervision.



Great crested newt

## Nature Trail - a Trip through Time

Since the Broads were formed they have been turning back into dry land. This natural process, which happens gradually over many years, is known as 'succession'. It starts as plants growing at the water's edge trap mud and dead material between their roots and stems. Slowly layers are built up, the ground level is raised and becomes drier. You can see all the different stages in the succession between open water and woodland along the trail - you are taking a trip through ecological time!