

A series of white footprints, each consisting of a large heel print and a smaller toe print, are scattered across the lower half of the image, appearing to lead from the bottom left towards the top right. They are superimposed over a background of green grass and white daisies.

Cromwell Bottom
Nature Reserve

Self-guided Walks



An information guide to accompany your walk around Cromwell Bottom Nature Reserve

You are encouraged to use the accompanying map which will help to guide you around the reserve. Just follow the numbers marked on your map which will match up to the Information Point photos in this leaflet. Enjoy your time on the reserve!

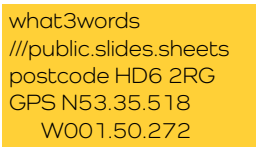
A brief history of the Nature Reserve

Cromwell Bottom Local Nature Reserve, in the past has been the site of a quarry, a tip for ash from the old Elland power station, and a land fill site. Now it is a mix of woodland, wetlands and grasslands, and is rich in plants, particularly species of orchids, and wildlife due largely to the alkaline nature of the fly ash underneath. Situated next to the Calder and Hebble Navigation, the River Calder runs through the reserve. It became a nature reserve in 2000.

Cromwell Bottom is considered to be one of the most important wildlife sites in Calderdale. The wetlands and meadows provide a variety of habitats for many insects, such as butterflies and moths, dragonflies and damselflies. A bird feeding area helps to attract many birds to the site. These include bullfinch, dunnock, woodpeckers, robins, redpoll and many more. Other birds that can be seen or heard around the site include kingfishers, oystercatchers and curlew. Many mammals and amphibians have also made Cromwell Bottom their home.

Cromwell Bottom Wildlife Group was founded in September 2011 and has since grown to a membership in excess of 100. We have weekly 'Volunteer Days' on Thursdays and monthly Trustees' meetings as we are a registered charity.





Pond Dipping Platform

Please note that this is a Rough Guide to Cromwell Bottom Nature Reserve and as such CBWG cannot accept li

Bottom Local Nature Reserve

5
oad

Brighthouse

Avocet and parking available,
leading to Brookfoot Lock -
join the towpath.



Radar key required to open metal 'kissing gates' for full wheelchair access.



Bird Viewing, feeding and photography area.



Bailey Bridge - metal, wide, accessible.

Suggested Routes (by no means definitive)



All red routes accessible for all Users, note RADAR key needed for metal kissing gates. Dashed line, not accessible for all Users.

River path - this is accessible up to a point but note there is a small wooden bridge (accessible) but then please note steps leading up, or down, depending upon your point of view!

Woodland Walk - turn right after entering reserve from towpath at Cromwell Lock. Not at all accessible, bumpy, narrow, roots on path, lined by trees, dead end at bottom.

1



View from 'Spider Bridge'

Can you spot any bridge spiders in their webs amongst the metal bars? In this view of the weir, dipper, grey wagtail, goosander, kingfisher and common sandpiper can often be spotted. Look behind you, the debris on the bridge marks the height of the river during the Boxing Day floods of 2015!

View of the perimeter hedgerow

Here, a mixture of native trees such as hawthorn and blackthorn form the hedgerow. They provide a nesting habitat in spring and a vital food source (berries) in winter.

Whitethroat, redwing, blackcap and blackbird can be seen here and in the summer months the orange tip butterfly visits here to feed on the dandelion nectar. The peacock butterfly lays its eggs in nettles in this area.

2



3



View of the river

Debris from the Boxing Day floods of 2015 remains here. Over 1 ton of objects such as wheelie bins, fridges and an ice cream fridge were all removed and disposed of by CBWG volunteers.

Look out for grey wagtails on the stones at the edges of the river searching for insects.

4



View of the weir

This is a popular nesting site for a dipper which previously has nested here, actually flying behind the waterfall to reach its nest! A good spot after sunset to see the 3 species of bats on the reserve (noctule, daubenton's and pipistrelle).

Teal duck can be seen on the far banking in winter and goosanders will often bring their young to the water's edge to feed and get used to the currents.

Original canal bridge

The original canal here was built by James Smeaton who also built the Eddystone Lighthouse. Stone from a nearby quarry was transported to barges on the canal.

The River Calder itself was too narrow for barges to navigate so a join or 'Tag' was made to link 2 areas of navigable water. Hence, this part of the reserve is named 'Tag Cut'.

5



Now re-trace your footsteps and enter the reserve via the gate to your right.

6



Grass banking on tag cut

In the summer months this area is covered in flowers, notably bird's foot trefoil, common blue butterflies lay their eggs here and can be seen on this part of the reserve in summer.

7

Natural pond

This is part of the original Calder and Hebble Canal from Elland to Brighouse. The rust colouring in the water is caused by material from the old ironworks via the horizontal mineshaft getting into the water. An area of reeds further downstream helps to purify the water as it passes through.



Site of former canal

This is an excellent place for spotting common red and blue damselflies. Natural ponds like this are very important for frogs, toads, common newts and palmate newts to breed and inhabit.

Deer often pass through here to drink. The reeds filter out the iron content in the water. You can see that the water is clearer further downstream.

8



9



Orchids banking

Different kinds of orchids can be found on this banking during the summer. There are 2 other species of orchids on the reserve – southern marsh and marsh orchids.

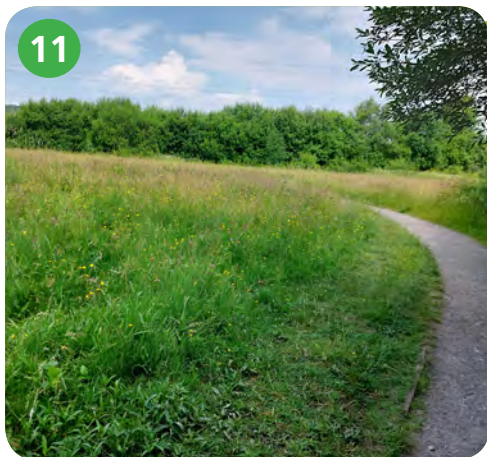
Wildlife ponds with pond dipping platform

The pond dipping platform was constructed in January 2017 to enable groups to study the rich pond life. Flag iris, water plantain and marsh marigolds grow in these ponds which sustain a variety of creatures such as frogs, toads, newts, pond skaters, water beetles, great diving beetle and water boatman. Red/blue damselflies along with the broad bodied chaser and southern hawker dragonflies can be seen in summer. A good place for spotting a kingfisher and heron.



10

11



Little hay meadow

This area is covered with a rich carpet of wild flowers / plants in the summer providing a habitat for many different species of insects including butterflies and moths e.g. skipper and burnet moth.

Extensive sapling planting (3,000+) has taken place over the last few years – native species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, dog rose, holly and rowan create a mixed hedgerow. Calderdale Council cut the grass annually to maintain this area rich in wildlife.

12

Tip pond

This was a popular place for pond dipping before the new ponds were constructed.

Newts, water boatmen, water beetles and pond skaters can be seen in the water. This is another popular place for a variety of dragonflies and damselflies. The encroaching vegetation needs management to maintain an area of open water.



Signpost

There are 2 possible routes from here

Option 1 To the bird feeding station then back up over the large hay meadow (14a to 17a on the map) or:

Option 2 Turn right and visit / circle the lagoon (longer route - 14b to 18b on the map).

13



14a

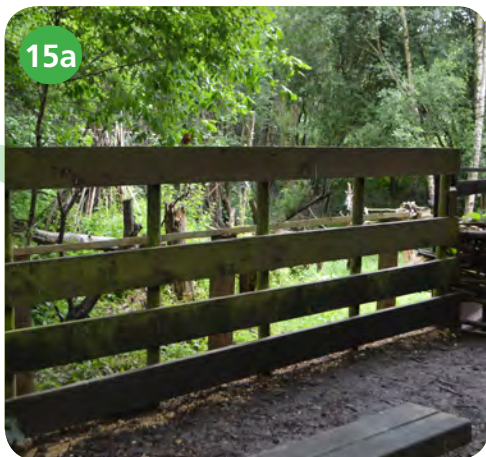
Route Option 1

Bird feeding station

This is a popular bird watching area with photographers. An identification board helps visitors to recognise any visiting birds. A variety of birds can be seen at different times of year. In winter, siskins and redpoll appear. More common birds such as jays, blue/great/long tailed/coal tits, numerous finches and the occasional sparrowhawk are common visitors. The wood sculpture you see supports bird feeders and has carved hollows which are filled with seed.



15a



Route Option 1 **Viewing area with wheelchair access**

This is a purpose built area to enable wheelchair users to observe wildlife in the bird feeding area.



Re-trace your steps to the signpost and continue right, up the incline to the "Meadow".

Route Option 1 **Glade**

This is an excellent place to see common and spotted orchids. It is possible to see roe deer in this area in the early morning or evening.

16a



Route Option 1 **Continue up and over the large hay meadow**

Along the edge of the path are field maple, rowan, Alder and willow trees. A number of different butterflies are found here including meadow brown, gatekeeper, heath and the occasional small copper.



17a

Route Option 1 Line of trees

A variety of trees grow here such as alder, hazel, silver birch and willow. A popular place to see goldfinches, siskins and redpoll as these trees provide berries for their winter feeding.

Return to the visitor centre via the following route ...



Turn left at this signpost towards the kissing gate.



Go through the gate and turn right along footpath.



Cross back over the 'Spider' Bridge, through the next gate and follow the path/fence along the edge of the compound towards the cabin (refreshments available on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays).





Route Option 2

Longer route back via lagoon

Turn left at this signpost - 'Lagoon'.

Route Option 2

Viewing point - Bailey Bridge

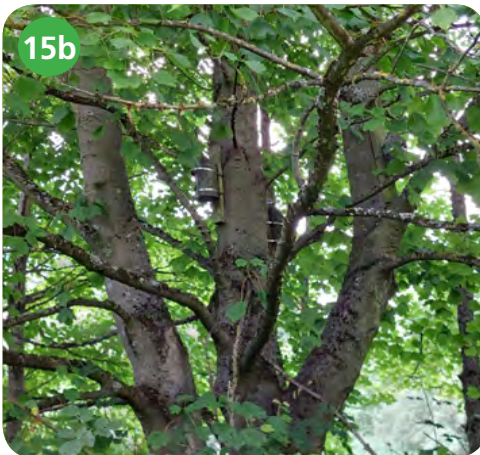
Wildlife which can be seen here includes grey wagtail, dipper, the occasional otter, goosander and mink.



Take the left fork at this junction.



15b



Route Option 2

Bat boxes

We have 3 species on site on the Reserve:

- daubentons
- noctule
- pipistrelle

They emerge at certain times after sunset, because different species of moth, their main diet, appear at different intervals during the evening.

16b



Route Option 2

Protected conservation area

This area has been fenced off to protect a number of rare plant species:

- Round leaf wintergreen
- Twayblade orchid
- Broad leaved helleborine

Route Option 2

View of lagoon

The lagoon supports breeding birds such as moorhen, Canada geese, coot and little grebe.

17b



Follow the pathway right along the top edge of the lagoon.

18b



Route Option 2

View of lagoon 2

You are now between the wet woodland and reed bed lagoon.

Birds to be seen here are sedge & willow warblers, reed bunting, little grebe and kingfisher.



Continue over the wooden bridge and down the steps to the edge of the river.



Turn right when you reach the river path and follow the edge of the river until you reach the Bailey Bridge.



Turn left over the Bailey Bridge and return to the visitor centre via the bird feeding station or the large meadow routes.

Further information

Our Visitor Centre is open for refreshments Sundays 10-4pm (and often Tuesdays and Thursdays if the board is outside the entrance!)

We serve hot/cold drinks, biscuits, cakes, crisps, ice cream/ lollies (DONATIONS ONLY).

You can also find toilet facilities (including disabled) information, literature, photographs & displays about the reserve. You'll always receive a warm welcome!

For further information, ask a CBWG member or visit our website/facebook page.



