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wild days out in the Broads National Park

In this guide you'll find lots of ideas for how to get back to nature with walks, boat trips, wildlife and the chance to rediscover the great outdoors. Some places have lots of facilities, others are places to get away from it all. But all of them offer something of what makes the Broads so special – and what makes it a national park.

The Broads is a wetland mosaic of waterways, fens, marshes and wet woodlands, with seven rivers and over 60 broads and other areas of open water. The broads, or shallow lakes, were dug out in medieval times to provide peat for use as fuel. Over the centuries water levels rose and the peat diggings flooded, forming the broads.

The national park is full of rare and beautiful wildlife – otters, birds such as booming bitterns, huge swallowtail butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies in their vibrant colours, and a lush profusion of plants such as the yellow iris in spring, white water lilies in summer, the guelder rose with its jewel-like red berries in autumn and golden reeds in winter. More than a quarter of Britain's rarest wildlife lives in the Broads.

- 1 **Barton Broad Boardwalk**    NR12 8XP
Neatishead
- 2 **Berney Marshes & Breydon Water**   NR30 15B
Near Great Yarmouth
- 3 **Brundall Church Fen**   NR13 5JZ
- 4 **Buckenham Marshes**   NR13 4HW
- 5 **Carlton & Oulton Marshes**   NR33 8HU
Burnt Hill Lane, Carlton Colville
- 6 **Cockshoot Broad**   NR13 6HN
Near Woodbastwick
- 7 **Fairhaven Woodland & Water Garden**   NR13 6DZ
South Walsham
- 8 **Herringfleet Hills**  NR32 5QX
- 9 **Hickling Broad**    NR12 0BW
- 10 **Horsey Windpump & Mere**   NR29 4EF
- 11 **Horstead Mill**    NR12 7AT
- 12 **Hoveton Riverside Park**    NR12 8UR
- 13 **How Hill**  NR29 5PG
Ludham
- 14 **Martham Broad**  NR29 4EB
- 15 **Ranworth Broad**   NR13 6HY
- 16 **Rockland St Mary Footpath**    NR14 7HP
Wherryman's Way
- 17 **St Benet's Abbey**    NR29 5NU
Near Ludham
- 18 **Salhouse Broad**    NR13 6RX
& Hoveton Great Broad
- 19 **Strumpshaw Fen**  NR13 4HS
- 20 **Surlingham Church Marsh**   NR14 7DF
- 21 **Thorpe Marshes & Cary's Meadow**   NR7 OQA
NR7 OEB
- 22 **Trinity Broads**   NR29 3AE
Near Filby
- 23 **Upton Broad & Marshes**  NR13 6EQ
- 24 **Wheatfen**   NR14 7AL
The Covey, Surlingham
- 25 **Whittingham Country Park**    NR14 8TR
Trowse

Where the wild things are

Many wild places tend to be off the beaten track, so you may find it helpful to have a map, such as a local Ordnance Survey map, to plan your route and to take with you, and to help you with finding public footpaths in the area if you want to do some further exploring.

If you're on a boat, most places have:

free moorings or paid moorings

If you want to explore even further, there are several long-distance routes: the Norfolk Coast Path, the Weavers' Way, the Angles Way and the Wherryman's way. More details from: www.norfolktrails.co.uk

Public transport

The green symbol after an entry means that a bus or train operates within about ⅓ mile (1km) of the site. Please note that not all services are regular so planning journeys in advance is advisable.

Buses

traveline
0871 200 2233
www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk

Trains

National Rail Enquiries
03457 48 49 50
www.nationalrail.co.uk

From Norwich the Bittern Line goes north through Wroxham and the Wherry Lines go east to Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

www.bitternline.com
www.wherrylines.com

There are stations at: Acle, Beccles, Berney Arms, Brundall, Brundall Gardens, Buckenham, Cantley, Great Yarmouth, Haddiscoe, Hoveton & Wroxham, Lingwood, Lowestoft, Norwich, Oulton Broad North, Oulton Broad South, Reedham, Salhouse, Somerleyton and Worstead.

What to take with you

When you're out and about in the countryside please bear in mind the season and the weather. You may need boots or wellies, and warm or waterproof clothes. Paths may be wet and muddy, and it can be cold out on the water, even in summer. You may also need sun protection and a sun hat. In summer and autumn especially, insect repellent may be helpful. It's a good idea to take some water, or a hot drink if it's cold, and a snack or lunch to keep you going. Shops and pubs can be few and far between and they may not be open when you visit. So be prepared or check in advance - it's all part of the adventure!

Accessible sites

The more accessible sites in this guide are marked with a pink symbol. However, you may find it helpful to phone to check whether the sites are sufficiently accessible for you.

More info

The Broads information centres and yacht stations will be able to help with more info on anything mentioned here, and they can also help with ideas for other places to visit and things to do, such as day boat, canoe and bike hire. All the Broads information centres have induction loops and the information centres at Hoveton and Whitingham are accessible to wheelchair users. The ground floor of Toad Hole Cottage is accessible via a ramp.

You'll also find lots more info, ideas and links for organisations mentioned in this leaflet on www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk

For bookings and information on events please check with the contact given in each entry.

Distances and suggested times to allow for a visit are approximate and intended as a guide only.

Broads Information Centres and Yacht Stations

Open all year

Whitlingham Visitor Centre
Whitlingham Lane, Trowse
Norwich NR14 8TR
01603 617332 / 01603 756094
[whitlinghamtc@
broads-authority.gov.uk](mailto:whitlinghamtc@broads-authority.gov.uk)

Open April - October

Hoveton / Wroxham
Station Road, NR12 8UR
01603 782281 / 01603 756097
hovetontic@
broads-authority.gov.uk

How Hill, Ludham
Toad Hole Cottage, NR29 5PG
01692 678763 / 01603 756096
toadholetic@
broads-authority.gov.uk

Norwich
Riverside Road, NR1 1SQ
01603 612980 / 07747 065378
*[norwichyachtstation@
broads-authority.gov.uk](mailto:norwichyachtstation@broads-authority.gov.uk)*



Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road
Norwich NR11RY
01603 610734
www.broads-authority.gov.uk

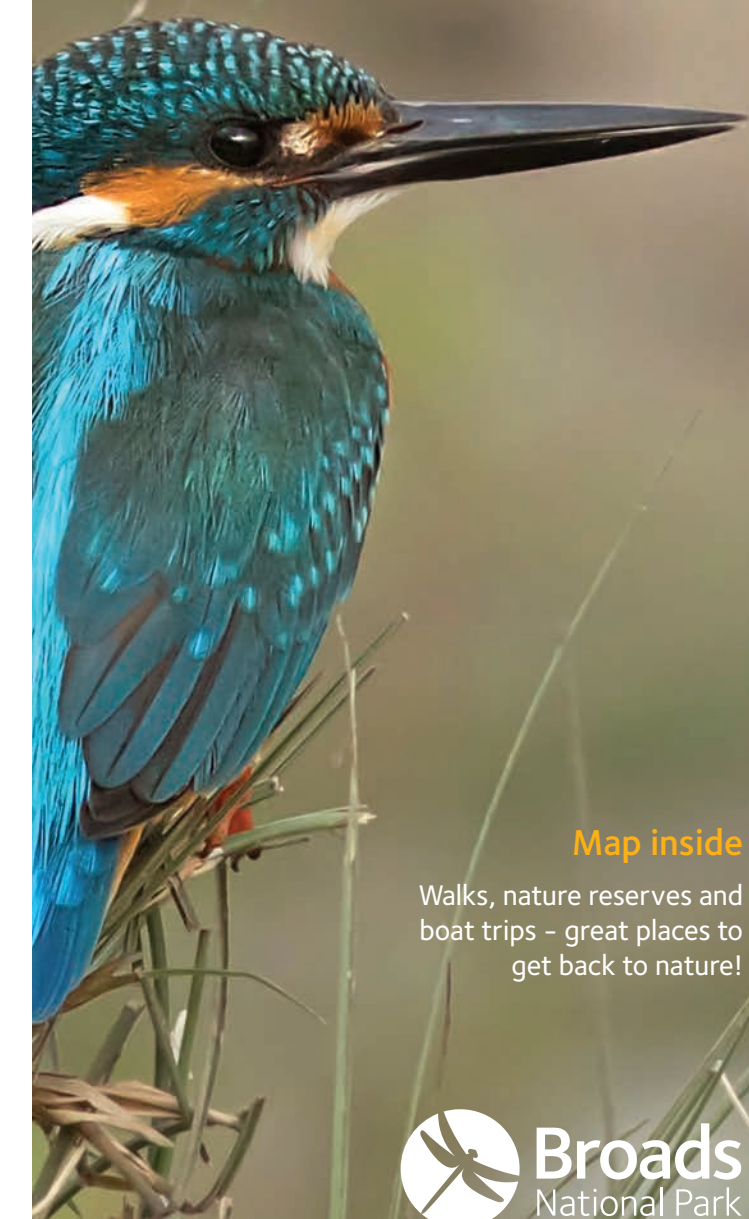
Design Karen Sayer
Print Samwell Print
Photos Tom Barrett, Julian Claxton, Jackie Dent, Simon Finlay, Wayne Huzzey, Brian MacFarlane,
Tom Mackie, Andrew Midgley, Steve Moore, Richard Osbourne, Mike Page, Avijan Saha/NPL (front cover), Bill Smith, Waterside, Jonathan Webb/ Webb Aviation, Terry Whitaker/2020vision

While every effort is made to include accurate and up-to-date information at the time of compilation, the Broads Authority accepts responsibility for any errors or omissions.

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Wild Days Out

in the Broads



Walks, nature reserves and boat trips - great places to get back to nature!



1 Barton Broad Boardwalk

Neatishead

What's it like?

Barton Broad is owned by Norfolk Wildlife Trust and is the second largest of the broads. Water quality at Barton was hugely improved by the Barton Broad millennium project, and there's an abundance of flowers, dragonflies and birds. The walk takes you through woodland undisturbed for over half a century and leads out to a viewing platform. Allow about an hour for the walk. Sorry, no dogs except assistance dogs.

What's special?

The chance of seeing an otter

Magical moments
Spring or autumn are best for birds

Open

at all times

Facilities and equipment

Braille signs, accessible toilets

Getting there and getting around
From Neatishead, follow signs to 'boardwalk'. The boardwalk is easily accessible by wheelchair and a car park for disabled visitors is available at the entrance. Other visitors please use the car park in Long Road.

Prices
Free

Who to contact
Norfolk Wildlife Trust 01603 625540
www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

   at Gogge's Statue



14 Martham Broad

What's it like?

A National Nature Reserve and a great place to see swallowtail butterflies. Public footpaths skirt the broad to north and south, but they may be muddy in wet weather. Allow up to 2 hours. Assistance dogs allowed throughout, other dogs allowed on public footpaths only.

Magical moments
Midsummer is best for swallowtail butterflies

Open

at all times

Getting there and getting around

Small parking area at West Somerton

Prices

Free

Who to contact
Norfolk Wildlife Trust 01603 625540
www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Did you know?

Martham Broad has some of the clearest water in the Broads

 at West Somerton



2 Berney Marshes & Breydon Water

Near Great Yarmouth

What's it like?

A place to experience the wide-open expanses of grazing marshes and mudflats. In spring the marshes are alive with the dramatic, tumbling flying displays of breeding lapwings and the atmospheric calls of breeding redshanks. Atlantic grey seals often come into Breydon Water with the tide. Follow the Wherryman's Way Footpath from Great Yarmouth Railway Station – allow 2 hours to walk one way. Dogs allowed on public footpaths – please keep them under control.

What's special?
In June and July the flowers and other plants are luxurious and it feels very wild

What's special?
Spectacular numbers of breeding wading birds and wildfowl

Magical moments

Winter – to see tens of thousands of ducks, geese, swans and wading birds, which visit the estuary and surrounding grazing marshes

Events

Boat trips

Open

at all times

Getting there and getting around
No access by car but you can get a train to Berney Arms (request stop)

Prices

Free

Who to contact

RSPB 01603 715191

www.rspb.org.uk

Did you know?

Breydon Water is all that remains of a huge estuary, protected in Roman times by the fort at Burgh Castle. You can reach Burgh Castle from Great Yarmouth or Belton and walk around the fort remains. More info from Norfolk Archaeological Trust www.norarchtrust.org.uk www.english-heritage.org.uk

  for eight boats



15 Ranworth Broad

What's it like?

One of Norfolk's most popular broads, with plenty to do for both families and naturalists. 500m boardwalk leading to a visitor centre – the Broads Wildlife Centre. Allow up to 3 hours. Assistance dogs allowed throughout, other dogs allowed on public footpaths only.

What's special?
Experience the full range of Broads plants in just a short walk

Magical moments

Plenty of birds to see at all times of year such as common terns

Events

Guided boat trips from Easter to October

Open

Boardwalk open at all times. Visitor centre open April–October daily 10am–5pm.

In the village

Toilets, Ranworth Information Centre, pub, cafe

Getting there and getting around
Norfolk Wildlife Trust car park in Ranworth village. Parking for disabled visitors close to start of boardwalk, which is suitable for wheelchair users.

Prices

Free

Who to contact

Norfolk Wildlife Trust 01603 270479

www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

  at Ranworth Staithe



3 Brundall Church Fen

What's it like?

A small jewel, a mixture of wet woodland, open Yare valley fen and riverbank with lovely views over the quiet waters of the River Yare.

A boardwalk takes you through very wet woodland and there are tidal dykes with crystal-clear water. Reserve owned by Brundall Parish Council. Allow about ½ hour. Dogs welcome.

What's special?
Resident kingfishers

Magical moments

In June and July the flowers and other plants are luxurious and it feels very wild

Open

at all times

Getting there and getting around
From the roundabout on the A47, follow Cucumber Lane. Go past the filling station, turn left into The Street, then look out for the church on your right. Park beside church, go down Church Lane and the reserve is over railway line.

Open

at all times

Getting there and getting around
No access by car but you can get a train to Berney Arms (request stop)

Prices

Free

Who to contact

Broads Information Centres

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk

Did you know?

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  for eight boats



4 Buckenham Marshes

What's it like?

A reserve with grazing marsh, fens, dykes and peat pools – a magical marsh plain with whispering reeds under wide, open skies. Carlton Marshes provides ideal nesting cover for reed and sedge warblers, Cetti's warbler and marsh harriers. Allow about 2 hours.

Dogs allowed on a lead. At Oulton a circular walk (about 2 miles) runs out on to the marshes. Good for birds, including marsh harriers, grasshopper warblers and bearded tits. Allow an hour for a stroll. Dogs allowed on a lead.

What's special?
Winter bird spectacles: thousands of wintering wigeon arriving from northern Europe, and hundreds of teal, lapwings and golden plovers. England's only regular flock of taiga bean geese spend the winter here.

What's special?
Spectacular numbers of breeding wading birds and wildfowl

Open

at all times

Getting there and getting around
Park by Buckenham Station and cross railway line on foot. Train to Buckenham (request stop). Disabled visitors – please contact the RSPB to arrange access to site by car.

Open

at all times

Getting there and getting around
No access by car but you can get a train to Berney Arms (request stop)

Prices

Free

Who to contact

RSPB 01603 715191

www.rspb.org.uk

Did you know?

Breydon Water is all that remains of a huge estuary, protected in Roman times by the fort at Burgh Castle. You can reach Burgh Castle from Great Yarmouth or Belton and walk around the fort remains. More info from Norfolk Archaeological Trust www.norarchtrust.org.uk www.english-heritage.org.uk

  at Cantley



5 Carlton & Oulton Marshes

Burnt Hill Lane, Carlton Colville

What's it like?

A reserve with grazing marsh, fens, dykes and peat pools – a magical marsh plain with whispering reeds under wide, open skies. Carlton Marshes provides ideal nesting cover for reed and sedge warblers, Cetti's warbler and marsh harriers. Allow about 2 hours.

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Winter bird spectacles: thousands of wintering wigeon arriving from northern Europe, and hundreds of teal, lapwings and golden plovers. England's only regular flock of taiga bean geese spend the winter here.

What's special?
Spectacular numbers of breeding wading birds and wildfowl

Open

at all times

Getting there and getting around
Park by Buckenham Station and cross railway line on foot. Train to Buckenham (request stop). Disabled visitors – please contact the RSPB to arrange access to site by car.

Open

at all times

Getting there and getting around
No access by car but you can get a train to Berney Arms (request stop)

Prices

Free

Who to contact

Suffolk Wildlife Trust 01502 564250

www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org

Did you know?

Breydon Water is all that remains of a huge estuary, protected in Roman times by the fort at Burgh Castle. You can reach Burgh Castle from Great Yarmouth or Belton and walk around the fort remains. More info from Norfolk Archaeological Trust www.norarchtrust.org.uk www.english-heritage.org.uk

  at Carlton Marshes



6 Cockshott Broad

Near Woodbastwick

What's it like?

Access by boat only to a boarded walkway along Cockshott Dyke and through wet woodland, leading to Cockshott Broad. This area is part of the Bure Marshes, a National Nature Reserve managed by Natural England, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and the Broads Authority. Cockshott Broad was the site of the Broads Authority's first broads restoration project. Good for all Broads wildlife, including dragonflies, bats on summer evenings and marsh harriers throughout the year. Allow up to an hour. Sorry, no dogs except assistance dogs.

What's special?
22 kinds of dragonfly including the Norfolk hawkfly; only access on foot to Oulton Dyke, with good views

Magical moments
Spring and summer for flowers

Events and special things for children
Events throughout the year at Carlton Marshes including children's and family activity days, wildlife birthday parties and Weekend Wildlife Club meetings; guided tours at Oulton Marshes

Open
Reserve at Carlton Marshes open daily dawn to dusk. Oulton Marshes open at all times, but the dyke bank can be slippery during the winter and paths may be closed during dredging.

Facilities and equipment
10am–5pm weekdays April–October; toilets also available during the week when the centre is staffed

Prices
Free

Who to contact
Norfolk Wildlife Trust 01603 625540
www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Did you know?

This wet woodland, usually dominated by alder and willow, develops on peaty soil and is called carr woodland

  at Oulton Marshes



7 Fairhaven Woodland & Water Garden

South Walsham

What's it like?

A large organic woodland garden with a private broad and boat trips. 3½ miles of fully accessible paths, wheelchair-accessible bird hides and boat trip. Dogs welcome on leads.

What's special?
Ancient woodland including 950-year-old oak tree, and stunning display of candelabra primulas and rhododendrons flowering in May

Magical moments
Beautiful view of South Walsham Inner Broad from the staithe, with the chance to spot one of the resident otters

Events
Year-round events programme – see website

Open
daily except 25 December: March–September 10am–5pm, October–February 10am–4pm

Facilities and equipment
Toilets, tea room, picnic area, mobility scooters for hire

Getting there and getting around
Car parks, fully wheelchair accessible

Prices
£6.85 adult, £6.60 concession, £3.95 child (5–16 years), under 5s free, dogs 25p

Who to contact
Norfolk Wildlife Trust 01603 625540
www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Did you know?

This wet woodland, usually dominated by alder and willow, develops on peaty soil and is called carr woodland



8 Herringfleet Hills

What's it like?

An area of lowland grassland heath, which is nationally a very rare habitat with its own unique collection of wildlife. It provides lovely views across the Waveney valley and a bird's-eye view to Herringfleet Smoke Mill. As a hot, dry site it's great for reptiles and has most of the British ones present such as slow-worms (not slow at all), adders and grass snakes. The valley slope provides excellent cover for some of Britain's finest warblers, such as the whitethroat, willow warbler, chiffchaff and blackcap. The site is owned and managed by the Somerset Estate. Allow about 1½ hours. Dogs are welcome, but as there are farm animals around please keep them under effective control, and keep them on a lead between March and July.

What's special?
Herringfleet Smoke Mill

Magical moments
Spring is good for the birdsong

Events
Mill open days

Open
at all times

In the villages
Pubs at Somerleyton, St Olaves and Fritton

Getting there and getting around
Car parks, fully wheelchair accessible

Prices
£6.85 adult, £6.60 concession, £3.95 child (5–16 years), under 5s free, dogs 25p

Who to contact
Norfolk Wildlife Trust 01603 625540
www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Did you know?

This wet woodland, usually dominated by alder and willow, develops on peaty soil and is called carr woodland



9 Hickling Broad

What's it like?

National Nature Reserve with open skies and lots to see. There are plenty of trails and hides overlooking pools at this Norfolk Wildlife Trust reserve. Wonderful water trail by electric boat through the quiet backwaters of the broad. Allow at least half a day for your visit, water trail takes 2½ hours. Assistance dogs allowed throughout, other dogs allowed on public footpaths only.

What's special?
The tree tower – for one of the best views in the Broads

Magical moments
Water trail runs Easter to October, but there's plenty to do all year

Open
Nature reserve open all year round. Visitor centre open April–September March–October 10am–4.30pm, weekends in winter 11am–4pm.

Facilities and equipment
Toilets, wheelchairs available for loan, refreshments




Getting there and getting around
Car park beside the visitor centre, signposted from the A149 Stalham to Caister-on-Sea road. Visitor centre and boardwalks fully wheelchair accessible.

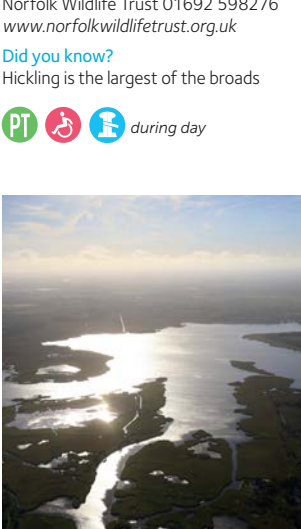
Prices
Gift aid admission £4.50, free for children and NWT members, additional charge for water trail

Who to contact
Boat trip bookings and information: Norfolk Wildlife Trust 01692 598276
www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Did you know?

Hickling is the largest of the broads

   during day



10 Horsey Windpump & Mere

What's it like?

Windpump situated in the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as well as in the Broads National Park. Great walks around the wider estate, which is internationally important for wildlife. Allow up to half a day. Dogs on leads welcome.

What's special?
The view from the top of Horsey Windpump, which dates from 1912, on a clear sunny day. The windpump has recently been extensively restored and on selected days you can see its sails going round.

Magical moments
Early morning and dusk usually best for birds

Open
Nature reserve open all year round. Visitor centre open April–September March–October 10am–4.30pm, weekends in winter 11am–4pm.

Facilities and equipment
Toilets, wheelchairs available for loan, refreshments




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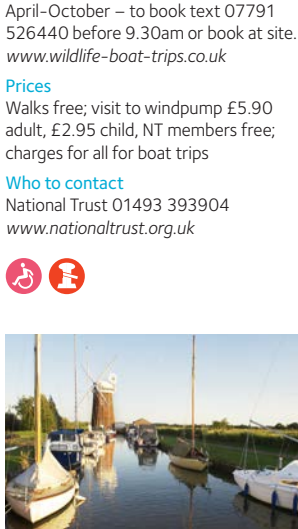
Prices
Gift aid admission £4.50, free for children and NWT members, additional charge for water trail

Who to contact
Boat trip bookings and information: Norfolk Wildlife Trust 01692 598276
www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Did you know?

Hickling is the largest of the broads

   during day



11 Horstead Mill

What's it like?

Site of historic mill on the River Bure with short countryside walks through woodlands, meadow and grazing marsh within Horstead Conservation Area. Great site for wildlife. Look out for kingfishers and grey wagtails. Eels, trout, chub, pike and roach live in the river, and there are also rare black poplar trees close to it. The site is owned by Horstead and Stanninghall Parish Council, and is managed by the parish council, the Environment Agency and the Broads Authority. Allow 1–2 hours. Dogs welcome.

What's special?
The chance to see kingfishers, skinks, marsh tits, treecreepers and great spotted woodpeckers right in the middle of Horstead

Magical moments
Spring and summer to see flowers and other wildlife, especially banded demissei damselflies

Special things for children
Large meadow for running around

Open
at all times

Facilities and equipment
Canoe launching area and mill pool

Getting there and getting around
Turn into Mill Road near the roundabout close to the Recruiting Sergeant pub and continue along it to find the mill car park on your left. Circular route accessible to wheelchair users. From Coltschall you can walk along the River Bure, and the Bure Valley Path and Railway run between Horstead and Wroxham, and Aylsham, with a station at Coltschall.