

20 SHIBDON POND

One of the best wetland sites in the region, it is regionally important for a number of bird species, especially wintering wildfowl.



Shibdon Pond



Reedmace



Grey Heron

Shibdon Pond is one of the few large lowland, open water bodies between the Tyne and the Tees and is particularly important due to its location on the urban fringe.

The pond was probably formed as a result of mining subsidence and is spring fed from the site of the old Blydton Main Colliery. The pond is fringed by extensive reedswamp with a number of marsh pools within and tall fen, with associated willow and hawthorn scrub and damp grassland.

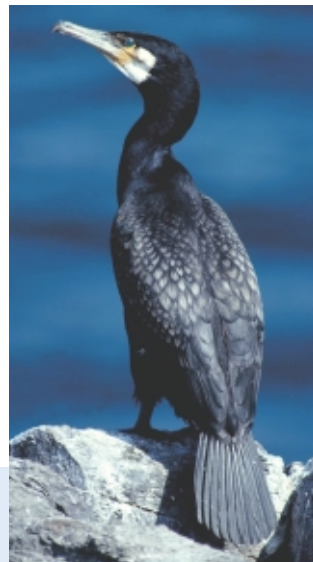
Open water areas support aquatic plants such as Water Starwort and Stonewort with large stands of Common Reed, Reedmace and Reed Sweet Grass dominating the margins. Herb rich grassland within the reserve includes Yellow Rattle, Cuckooflower, Northern Marsh and Common Spotted Orchids with some unusual areas comprising Heather. The Pond supports large numbers of wintering wildfowl including Wigeon, Teal, Pochard and Shoveler. Breeding species include Mute Swan, Water Rail, Sedge Warbler and Reed Warbler and regular passage waders include Greenshank, Common and Green Sandpiper. The pond also supports large Cormorant and Tern roosts.

The reserve is of particular note for its invertebrates with nine species of dragonfly and seventeen species of butterfly. All three species of British newt have been recorded on site and Otters frequently use the reserve. Shibdon Pond is designated a Site of Special Scientific and a Local Nature Reserve.

Best seen – April to July for breeding wildfowl, Spring and Autumn for passage waders



Otter



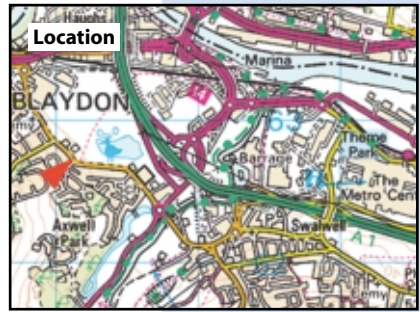
Cormorant

SHIBDON POND

0m 200m



- Reserve boundary
- Parking
- Reserve entrance
- Footpaths



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Water Rail

– one of our shyest and most secretive birds, these birds are very difficult to observe as they rarely venture into the open. The name "rail" is thought to relate to the word rattle, which has been used to describe its distinctive call.

Management

The water levels on the site are managed allowing the level to rise over the winter and then drop down again in the spring. Clearance of aquatic and marginal vegetation creates a mosaic of open water, reed swamp and marginal vegetation that provides habitats suitable for a wide range of birds and vertebrates. Floating platforms have been installed on the main pond and are maintained to provide nesting areas for Common Terns.

The meadow areas are cut once annually and the cuttings removed to maintain low fertility of the soil and thus retaining the high diversity of plants.

The reserve is managed in partnership with Gateshead Borough Council and English Nature under the "Reserves Enhancement Scheme".

Great-crested Newt



Water Rail (©RSPB)



Birds Foot Trefoil

Location

Shibdon Pond is situated at Blaydon, near the A1 and the Metro Centre. The reserve can be reached via the B6317 at Swalwell. Parking is available at Blaydon Swimming Baths from which the reserve is accessed on foot. The reserve is very popular especially with bird watchers and includes a nature trail and bird hides. Although well surfaced and passable in most weathers sturdy boots would be recommended.

General Information

Ownership:
Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council

Area: 13.7 hectares

Grid Reference:
NZ 192 628

O.S. Explorer Map No: 316

Parking access to site:
Parking available at Blaydon Swimming baths 1/4 mile south of the reserve

Public transport:
Regular bus services from Newcastle and Durham.

Dogs: Dogs to be kept on leads at all times

Accessibility: ▲▲▲▲

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