

5 BRASSIDE POND

Brasside Pond together with the adjacent larger pond is one of the largest lowland expanses of unpolluted open water in County Durham (excluding reservoirs).



Mayfly larvae

Great Crested Grebe



The two ponds at Brasside form one of the largest open water habitats in lowland County Durham. The Trust only manages the smaller of the two, but visitors can still view the large pond from the causeway that separates them.

This part of the Wear Valley comprises deep, laminate clays which were excavated on a large scale earlier this century. Several clay ovens operated at Brasside between 1900 and 1920, but were in-filled with Durham City's domestic waste with the remaining clay pits flooding to form the existing ponds.

Visitors will see a variety of waterfowl, especially geese, coots, grebes and both diving and dabbling ducks with the largest numbers seen in winter. Also to be seen are warblers, goldcrest, gulls, waders and herons.

The two ponds are important for aquatic invertebrates, with large numbers of damselflies, dragonflies, alderflies, caddisflies and mayflies.

The pond is complimented by other habitats including acid and neutral grassland, scrub and developing woodland. The causeway supports mature oak woodland with abundant fungi and bryophytes.



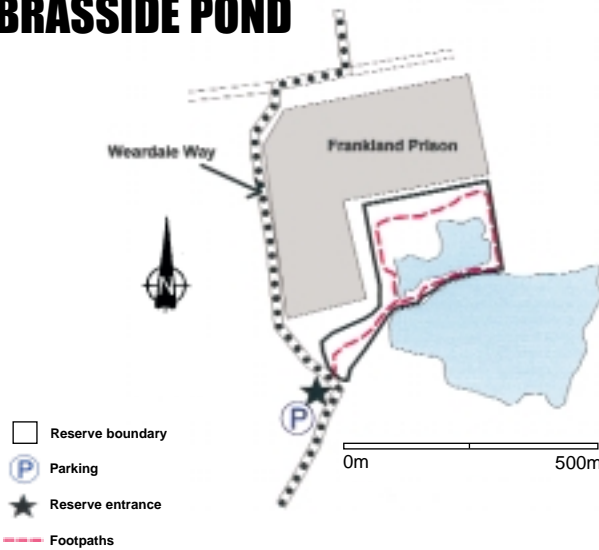
Shoveler

Southern hawkler



Best seen – Spring and autumn for migratory birds.

BRASSIDE POND



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General Information

Ownership:

Leased from Home Office

Area: 5.1 hectares

Grid Reference: NZ 288 453

Explorer Map No: 308

Parking and access to site:

There is no official car park but there is parking along the Lane leading off of Finchale Road. Access to the site is through a gate towards the end of this lane. The site is signposted.

Public transport:

Buses are available from Durham Bus station

Dogs: Dogs permitted but must be kept on a lead. (Prison dogs patrol carried out regularly around the perimeter of the prison)

Accessibility: ▲▲▲▲

This card is kindly sponsored by:



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www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/durham/

Management

Management aims for the site comprise enhancement of the pond margins by selective felling of mature lakeside trees and scrub which are suppressing the growth of fringing vegetation such as reeds, sedges and rushes. This will increase habitat for breeding wildfowl and invertebrates such as dragonflies.

The grasslands are maintained by annual cutting in late summer and interconnecting rides are kept open as corridors for butterflies.

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

Goldeneye



The Causeway between the two ponds is probably the only surviving semi-natural habitat on site consisting of mature oak woodland with a luxuriant ground cover of bryophytes and fungi.



The Causeway

Location

The ponds are two miles North next to Frankland Prison. Access can be from the A167. At Pity Me roundabout take the Durham City Northern Bypass, pass the Arnison Centre straight across the roundabout, and carry on to the next roundabout take the right exit. Continue until the next roundabout with the Newton Grange Pub on the corner; take the first exit along Finchale Road. Continue until the right hand turn just before Frankland Prison. Drive down this path car parking space is available where this lane meets a disused railway. Entrance to the reserve is via a gate.

Permission is required prior to a visit.