

Priory Country Park – Riverside Wildlife Trail

1. Bird life to look out for on the lake from the main path includes: Cormorants, Mallard ducks, Canada Geese and Mute Swans.

2. You may see willow fencing in the water, this is bank revetment work. It is done to try and prevent the bank and the path from eroding away into the lake. Along either side of the main path you will see Willow trees growing. These trees are managed by rotational coppicing, each year a section is cut down, the new growth encourages insects and nesting birds.

3. Follow the path through the 'fingers' conservation area.

4&5. The floral and New Meadow are left long to encourage biodiversity, they are a haven for butterflies, dragonflies and beetles. Areas of grass are kept short to create paths and provide space for activities such as kite flying.

6&7. In the 1840's the New Cut was dug out to create an embankment for the railway. The cycle path now traces the route of the old line and is a part of route 51 connecting Milton Keynes to Sandy.

8. On the far side of the riverbank gravel extraction has created the landscape. Other habitats such as reedbeds, can be created after the gravel has been extracted.

9. Riverside Brook carries water down from the New Cut and feeds Riverside Pond.

10. Riverside Pond is a popular area with anglers fishing for Tench and Pike. It is an important breeding area for fish.

11. Along this stretch Willow trees and dog wood fringe the path. These are managed by coppicing and the young growth offers some contrast in colour.

14. A little way down the route a small path leads off to the left hand side to Kramer bird hide. From here quiet observation may reveal sightings of birds such as Heron, Coot, Moorhen, Mallard ducks and

15. There is a lovely view over the fingers lake from this point. The banks on the right are popular with night fishermen fishing for Carp.

16&17. To the left is the canoe slalom, this is regularly used for national and international canoeing events.

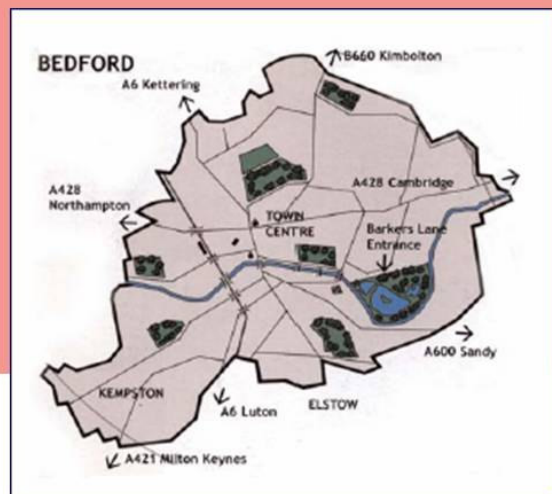
18. Following the slalom up to its source, you will see the sluice gate which is used to control the amount of water flowing down it. If the river levels become very high, the gate can be opened to divert some of the water away.

19-23. The trail continues along the river bank before cutting through Press Meadow and rejoining the river bank at Cardington Walk. Here there are a number of veteran Willow trees which support many insects and species of fungi.

24&25. The trail then leads through a Scheduled ancient monument, called the 'fish ponds', before joining the cycle path and leading back to the parks entrance.

12&13. Go through the kissing gate and into the Floral Meadow. Keep an eye out for butterflies, dragonflies and birds such as Pheasant and Green Woodpecker.





Priors Country Park

Contact Information

Riverside Wildlife Trail

The visitor centre is open:
9.00am-4.30pm Monday-Friday
(inc. bank holidays).

11.00am-4.30pm Saturday and Sunday

Staff are on hand for assistance.
In case of emergencies please refer to the numbers provided in the visitor centre window.

Thank you for visiting Priors Country Park, we hope you have found your experience enjoyable.

Please pick up a leaflet for the other trails we offer too.

Please place all rubbish in the bins provided and pickup after your dog. Thank you.

Park Information

Countryside Officer: 01234 267422
Park Ranger: 01234 211182

School Visits and Adult Education

The Wildlife Trust: 01234 364213

Priors Water Sport Association

Courses and Club Membership: 01234 271638

Canoe Slalom

Events: 01234 615615

Priors Marina Beefeater Restaurant

Table Bookings: 01234 352883

Priors Marina (British Waterways)

Boats and Moorings: 01234 351931

Priors Marina Cycling

Cycle Hire: 01234 340090



www.priorscountrypark.co.uk

email: priorsrangers@bedford.gov.uk

6.5 km/4 miles

Bedford