

~ Opening Arrangements During Covid-19 ~

The nature reserve is open at this time by prior arrangement only.

Please email info@withymead.org or phone 01491 872265 and leave a message to arrange a visit

The wardens will meet you in the car park and accompany you to the main reserve gate (opposite the Study Centre layby).

Please note the following restrictions at this time:

- People from the same household can visit, or two people only, from different households, at any one time
- Please observe social distancing (2 mts) at all times with the wardens, or from different households
- Timings are scheduled to allow the wardens time to sanitise bird hides and seats on the reserve between each visit
- The toilet will not be available, except in an emergency
- Please feel free to bring your own refreshments
- Withymead is, in most parts, a wetland site. Boots or walking shoes are strongly recommended
- Please phone the wardens at the end of your visit on 07861 457617 when you wish to leave
- Unfortunately we can not allow dogs onto the reserve

~ Ways you can support us ~

At this time, more than ever, Withymead needs your support. If you enjoyed your visit and would like to support us here's how you can:

- Donate to  VirginMoneyGiving.com and enter 'Withymead', and Gift Aid the donation if you can;
- Become a Patron by regularly giving £35 a year for individuals or £45 for couples or families;
- Buying merchandise such as honey, polish, plants, etc.
- Tell your friends about us and comment or upload photos on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

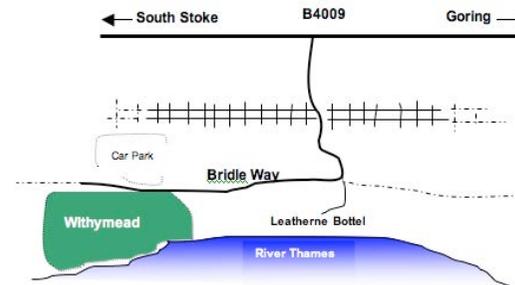
~ How to Find Us ~

From Goring –

Take the B4009 towards Wallingford for 1¼ miles, turn left at the sign for the Leatherne Bottel/Goring Sailing Club. Follow the lane over the railway bridge and turn sharp right onto the road marked 'Private'. Follow the lane for ¼ mile. Withymead stands in the trees on the left with the car park on the right.

From Wallingford/Crowmarsh –

Take the B4009 towards Goring. Pass through the villages of North Stoke and South Stoke. When you see the sign for Goring and Leatherne Bottel (50 metres) turn right and follow the instructions above



Withymead Nature Reserve
Bridle Way, Goring, Oxon RG8 0HS

Withymead Nature Reserve



**Bridle Way
Goring, Oxon RG8 0HS**

Admission ~ Free

**Donations gratefully received
for the Anne Carpmael Charitable
Trust are welcome**

Registered Charity No 1102152

**Tel: 01491 872265
email: info@withymead.org**

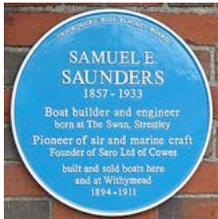
www.withymead.org

~ History ~

Over 100 years ago the area around Withymead was a thriving boat yard employing a local workforce of over 30 people. The remains of the boat yard are still visible at the nature reserve today.

In the early days the yard was called Springfield Works and belonged to one Samuel Saunders. Saunders owned the yard from the mid 1890s to 1911, building steam power launches and larger river craft. The yard was sold to Hobbs of Henley when Saunders moved to the Isle of Wight.

Saunders continued to build boats, but also turned his attention to aviation, in 1927 was joined at Cowes by Sir A.V. Roe and together they set up the Saunders-Roe Company, famous for its flying boats, sea planes and hydroplane, later to be renamed the British Hovercraft Corporation in 1957 and now trading as GKN Aerospace.



© Oxfordshire Blue Plaques Board and © Goring Gap Local History Society

Saunders Boat Yard from the River Thames circa 1910

~ Birds ~

Over 137 species of birds have been recorded in the grounds and on the water meadows in the past 30 years, of which 74 of these species have bred at the nature reserve.

We regularly see or hear Cettis Warbler, Reed Warbler, Corn Bunting, Kingfisher, Cuckoo, Wagtails, Swans, Grebe, Moorhen. The list goes on! Listen to the dawn chorus on our website.

Various surveys have taken place over the years, including a Bird Ringing Programme to study longevity and breeding success of some of the migrant species.

~ Bats ~ Badgers ~ Bugs ~



Peacock Butterfly on teasel © Steven Gozdz

Many species of bat frequent the riverside woodlands. At least eight species have been recorded.

Badger setts and fox dens are within the woodland area of the reserve and although mainly nocturnal and shy, they may occasionally be seen during the day.

A wide range of insects, including butterflies and moths, inhabit the wetlands and dragonfly and damselfly can be seen hovering throughout the grounds during the summer months.

~ Flora ~

Withymead's signature plant is the Loddon Lily; the county plant of Berkshire. This plant is at its best during late April and early May and performs best after a wet winter. Withymead also has rare reed beds, their natural habitat being floodplains. They provide perfect nesting ground for warblers and bunting. In the late spring and early summer, Yellow Iris, Loosestrife and Agrimony all provide nectar for insects and so provide food for birds.

~ The Anne Carpmael Charitable Trust ~

Withymead was the home of the late Mrs Anne Carpmael. She lived here for nearly 60 years – a keen naturalist, she provided a habitat that encouraged birds, both native and migratory. As a result Withymead is now an important site in the South of England for a number of red list species of birds and insects.

Prior to her death in 2003 a Trust was formed to preserve the house and its riverside land. The 14 acres now form the Withymead Nature Reserve.

With a resident warden, the Trust aims to promote, protect and preserve the wildlife at Withymead, providing a tranquil haven for wildlife and inspiration to visitors now and for future generations.

The Forest School encourages young children from local primary schools to explore and learn about wildlife at the reserve.

Since its formation, the warden has welcomed parties of bird watchers, moth watchers, environmentalists, artists groups, U3A, WI and even a corporate team-building event.

Entrance to the reserve is free, but the Trust is dependent on the generous contributions of visitors, and grants from various organisations to survive. Any donations, however small, are gratefully received.