

circular walks on the

MEANWOOD



valley trail



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

An introduction to the **MEANWOOD** valley

The Meanwood Valley has long been celebrated as a 'green artery' in Leeds, bringing rural countryside into the heart of the city. In this green corridor is a rich mosaic of habitats, including woodland, lowland heath, meadow, watercourses and ponds. Though much of the valley is readily accessible from local urban areas, it provides an excellent opportunity to experience and enjoy wildlife in often seemingly-remote surroundings.

The valley is centred on two watercourses, the topmost being Adel Beck which rises in Bramhope, but which gives way to Meanwood Beck just south of the Outer Ring Road. The becks are home to fish, such as stone loach and bullhead, as well as the native white-clawed crayfish, which is sadly now threatened. Keep your eyes open when walking near the becks and you may be lucky to spot one of our resident kingfishers or otters.

Where the becks flow between boulders and within the woodland, the cool, moist conditions provide the perfect habitat for ferns, liverworts and mosses. In contrast, the poor, free-draining soils and open and exposed conditions at Adel Moor are ideal for heather and if you're particularly lucky, you may spot the common lizards which live here. Small ponds along the valley are also the breeding grounds of frogs, toads and newts, including the protected great crested newt.

The woodlands that cover much of the green space in the valley provide wonderful scenes of carpets of ground flora in spring and rich colours in the autumn. Mammals such as roe deer, stoats and several species of bats make the woodland their home, together with a wide variety of bird species, from house sparrows and long-tailed tits to jays, red kites and all three native woodpecker – the great spotted, lesser spotted and green woodpecker.

This rich tapestry of habitats has been largely shaped by the human populations who have exploited the ecosystem services of the valley over the millennia. There is evidence of Neolithic, Bronze Age and Roman occupation, but the Valleys intensive industrial development began during the Medieval period, particularly through the milling, quarrying and smelting activities of the Cistercian monks at Kirkstall Abbey. In more recent centuries, corn-mills, tanneries, paper-mills, quarries and farms continued to maximise the ecosystem services of the day. Some of the many goits, mill races, mills, tan yards and other historical features are still obvious today





The MeanwoodValley Trail is a 7 mile linear walk taking you through some of the highlights of the cultural and natural history of this green corridor.

Now we have created 9 shorter, circular routes which you can follow to further explore this fascinating area. This booklet provides a clear map showing each walk, together with information about some of the local and natural history you might see on the way.

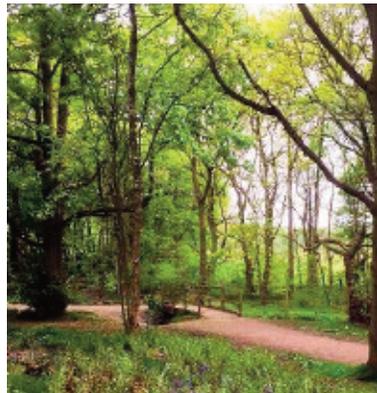
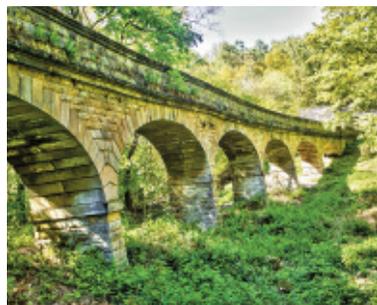
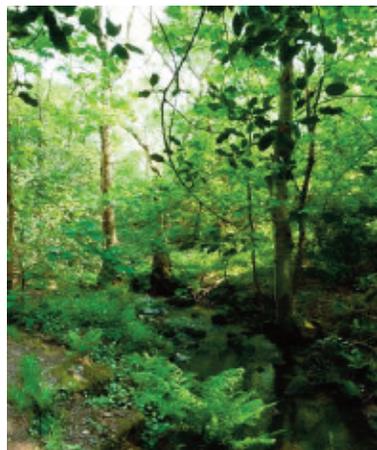
Some of the walks are relatively short and suitable for everyone, whilst others are a bit more challenging.

On each map you will see symbols giving you information about the walk:

-  **Distance of walk**
-  **Time to walk the route**
-  **Accessibility of route**
-  **Seasonal highlights**

We hope you enjoy your walk in the Meanwood Valley

circular walks on the **MEANWOOD** valley trail



1 Woodhouse Ridge circular

This walk provides opportunities to discover the fascinating cultural heritage found on this former Victorian promenade, in its current natural woodland setting.

2 Woodhouse Ridge and Sugarwell Hill

Taking in the cultural and natural heritage of Woodhouse Ridge, together with the fine views from Sugarwell Hill over the city centre and the Parkinson Tower of University of Leeds.

3 Grove Lane and Brookfield Pond

Grove Lane nature area, Brookfield Pond and the site of the former Meanwood Tannery. While parking is available at Meanwood Park, it is very limited, so you are advised to use public transport.

4 Meanwood Park and The Hollies

Meanwood Park, The Hollies, Meanwood Grove and Meanwood Woods. While parking is available at Meanwood Park and The Hollies, it is very limited so you are advised to use public transport..

5 Meanwood Park and Meanwood Hall Woods

Taking in Meanwood Park, Meanwood Grove and Meanwood Hall Woods, all on well-surfaced paths. Parking is very limited, so you are advised to use public transport.

6 Adel Woods and Scotland Wood

A mosaic of habitats, including damp woodlands, ponds and streams, dry acid grasslands and heathland. A rich cultural history is also evident, including the Slabbering Baby, Seven-Arches Aqueduct and Scotland Mill.

7 Golden Acre Park and Breary Marsh LNR

This is a fantastic trail for bird watching in a variety of habitats, from water-fowl on the two lakes, to woodpeckers and nuthatches in the wooded areas. A variety of warblers can be heard around the fen, and red kites and buzzards can often be observed circling high above the open fields of Cocker Hill Farm.

8 Golden Acre Park and Eccup Whin

Taking in Golden Acre Park and, this time, Eccup Whin. Again this is a great walk for observing birds, as well as a wealth of other wildlife.

Protect the **MEANWOOD** valley

If you would like to do more to protect the wildlife of the Meanwood Valley then you may wish to join one of the groups of volunteers who meet regularly here.



Meanwood Valley Partnership
Working to conserve, protect and enhance the Meanwood Valley

Contact Chris Swales on meanwoodvp@hotmail.com
Website: www.meanwoodvalleypartnership.co.uk

Meanwood Valley Volunteer Rangers

Contact: MeanwoodValley.Ranger@leeds.gov.uk

Woodhouse Ridge Action Group

Contact Nigel Lees on wragsec@gmail.com
www.woodhouseridge.org.uk Facebook: Woodhouse Ridge Action Group

Friends of Sugarwell Hill

Contact: Tim Hobson Smith on sugarwell@btinternet.com
Facebook: The Sugarwell Hill Gang

Friends of Meanwood Park

Contact: friendsofmeanwoodpark@gmail.com
www.meanwoodvalleypartnership.co.uk/friends-of-meanwood-park

Friends of The Hollies

Contact: friendsofthehollies@gmail.com
www.friendsofthehollies.com

Friends of Adel Woods

Contact: Roger Gilbert on foaw@me.com
friendsofadelwoods.wordpress.com

Friends of Breary Marsh

Contact: MeanwoodValley.Ranger@leeds.gov.uk

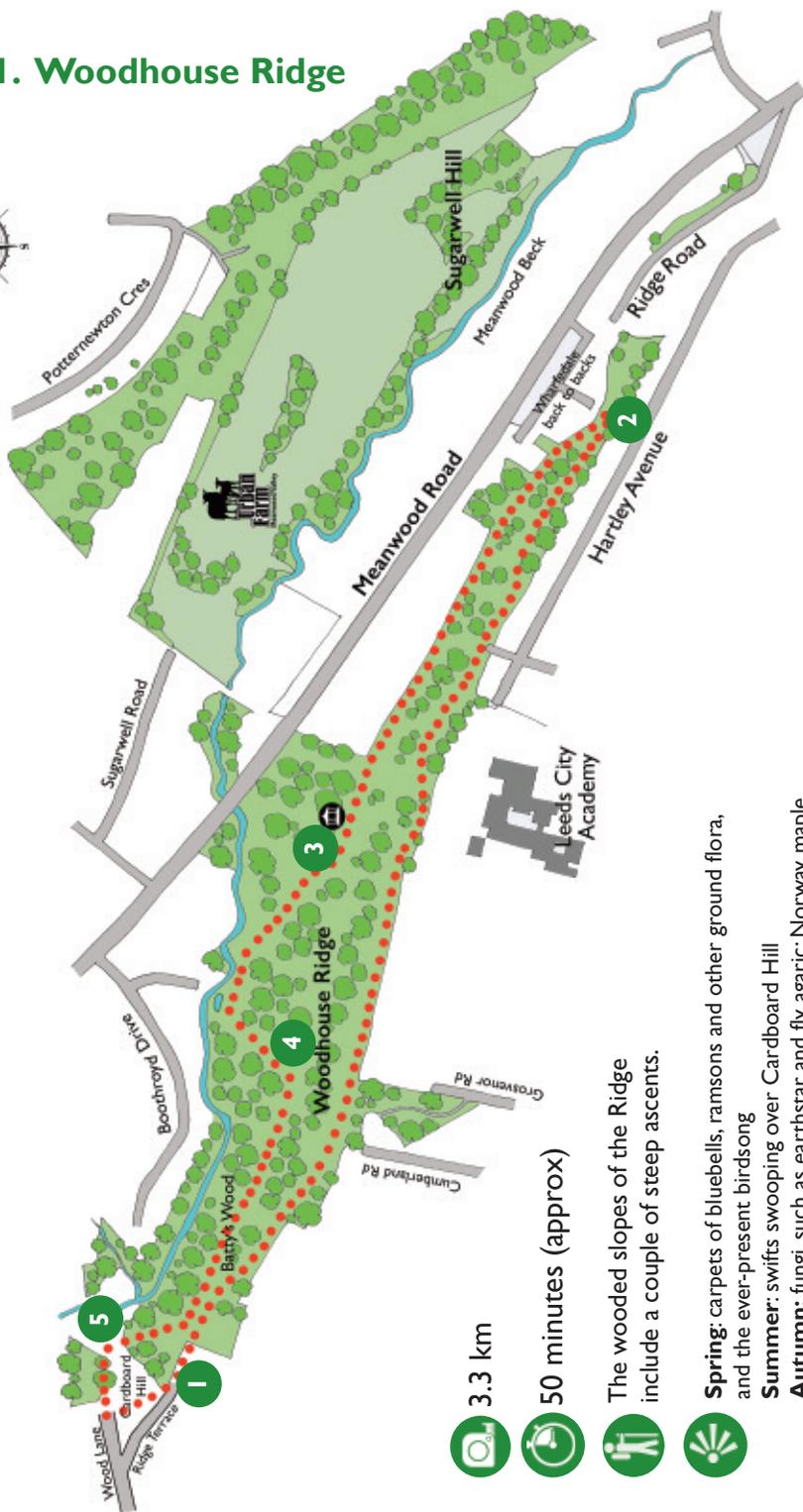
The Meanwood Valley is a lovely asset and this is how you can help keep it this way:

- Enjoy the walks but respect wildlife, plants, trees and others.
- Keep dogs and under close control to prevent disturbance to others and to wildlife.
- Take all litter, food or drinks home and leave the walks better than you found them.
- Guard against fire risk.
- Keep to paths to protect the biodiversity in the undergrowth.
- Resist removing dead wood; it is home to much wildlife.





I. Woodhouse Ridge



3.3 km



50 minutes (approx)



The wooded slopes of the Ridge include a couple of steep ascents.



Spring: carpets of bluebells, ramsons and other ground flora, and the ever-present birdsong

Summer: swifts swooping over Cardboard Hill

Autumn: fungi, such as earthstar and fly agaric; Norway maple in autumn colours

Winter: Roe deer and red fox are easier to spot



I. Woodhouse Ridge

1. Start at the Ridge Terrace entrance in Headingley, where an information panel at the top of Cardboard Hill provides you with details about the meadow and mills. Head east on the top path, keeping the stone wall on your right for most of the first section.

This top path takes you along the edge of the woodland, where jays, woodpeckers, tree creepers and long-tailed tits can often be observed in the ancient oaks around you. At the end of this path Norway maple make up much of the canopy providing rich colours in the autumn.

2. Go as far as the Wharfedale back-to-backs and then turn back, taking the right hand path, to the bandstand.

The remains of the bandstand hark back to the glory days, when this wooded slope was formed as a public park in the Edwardian Era, with several promenades and an open vista of the countryside to the north. Details of this history can be found on the information panel.

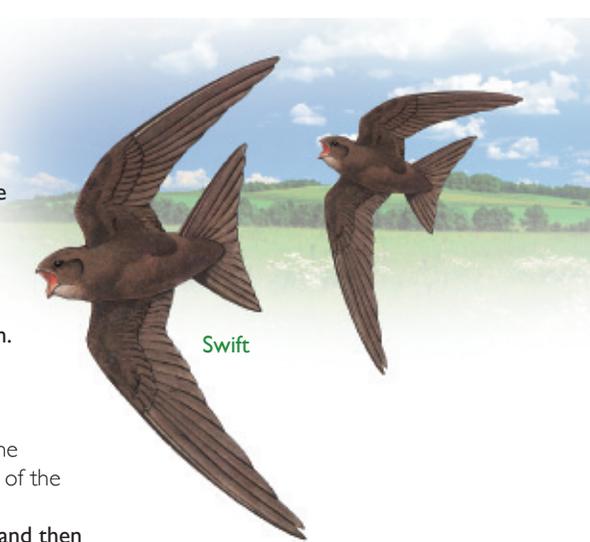
3. Continue along, past the bandstand and then veer right following the path downhill and then head left when the path forks, towards the information panel, along the track above the pond. Now brace yourself for the steep uphill to meet the broad middle path, turn right and proceed under the ancient oaks and ash canopies of Batty's Wood.

This takes you through carpets of bluebells and accompanying orange tip butterflies in the spring. In summer speckled wood butterflies can be observed basking in spots of sunlight, in autumn fungi, such as earthstars can be seen by the keen observer. Batty's Wood was possibly the scene of a battle in the Civil War; 'The Battle of Meanwood'. It is also the older and most natural woodland habitat of The Ridge.

4. Turn right by the rocks at the side of the entrance gate and take the ancient stepped foot-path which skirts Batty's Wood, going down to the Meanwood Beck bridge at the bottom, and take in the valley bottom setting.

At the valley bottom damp-loving plants, such as ferns, mosses and liverworts can be observed, together with Solomon's seal and foxglove in the more open areas of woodland.

5. Retrace your path and just before the squeeze stile, take the steep hedged track heading up the hill on your right, this finishes at the Wood Lane entrance track, back in Headingley. Turn left and walk uphill through Cardboard Hill meadow to reach starting point.





2. Woodhouse Ridge and Sugarwell Hill



4.3 km



1 hour 10 minutes (approx)



Mostly good access a few inclines



Spring: ramsons, cherry blossom, Rhododendron flowers
Summer: orange hawkweed, bird foot's trefoil and other acid loving grassland flowers
Autumn: fungi, such as earthstar and fly agaric; Norway maple in autumn colours
Winter: kingfisher and otter, if you're lucky!



2. Woodhouse Ridge and Sugarwell Hill

1. Starting at Meanwood Valley Urban Farm car park, head back out to Sugar Well Road and turn left to take footpath down to Meanwood Road. With care, cross Meanwood Road and take footpath into woods, signposted Woodhouse Ridge. Continue up the steps and turn right at the top and follow path to the bandstand. Continue past the bandstand, turn left and up to bench. Just after the bench turn right and proceed along path, signposted to Headingley Centre, under the ancient oaks and ash canopies of Batty's Wood.

Batty's Wood is ancient woodland, and has many ancient woodland indicator species, such as bluebell, ramsons, wood anemone and lesser celandine on the woodland floor.

2. At the rocks at the side of the entrance gate turn left and back on yourself, heading east on the top path, keeping the stone wall on your right for most of the way until you emerge through a gate onto Ridge Road in Woodhouse. Continue along Ridge Road and take ginnel on your left down to Meanwood Road.

Turn right and cross Meanwood Road at the crossing. Veer right on footpath onto Buslingthorpe Road and follow this uphill, turning left onto Scott Hall Street after approx. 50m. Continue to take cobbled track, past gate into Sugarwell Hill.

Sugarwell Hill was at one time just fields for grazing stock, but from the 1980s this changed through extensive tree planting to create spinneys and large wooded areas.

3. After a short distance, take right-hand fork and follow stepped-path uphill. Turn left and continue up this wooded path, past farm building, for about 250m. Take right-hand fork, shortly followed by left-hand fork to emerge in scrubby area.

Looking down here in the summer you will see a wealth of acid grassland wildflowers, such as common cat's ear, orange hawkweed and leafy hawkweed. In late spring and early summer orange tip butterflies can be seen fluttering through the glades. And if you look up, you will be blessed with fine views over the city centre and the Parkinson's Tower of Leeds University.

4. Continue on this path as it heads back down the slope through acid grassland to emerge on Sugar Well Mount. Turn left and follow footpath back to entrance of Meanwood Valley Urban Farm on your left. This hidden gem of a farm is well worth a visit and the café will provide welcome refreshments following your walk.



Ramsons, Bluebells and Wood anemone



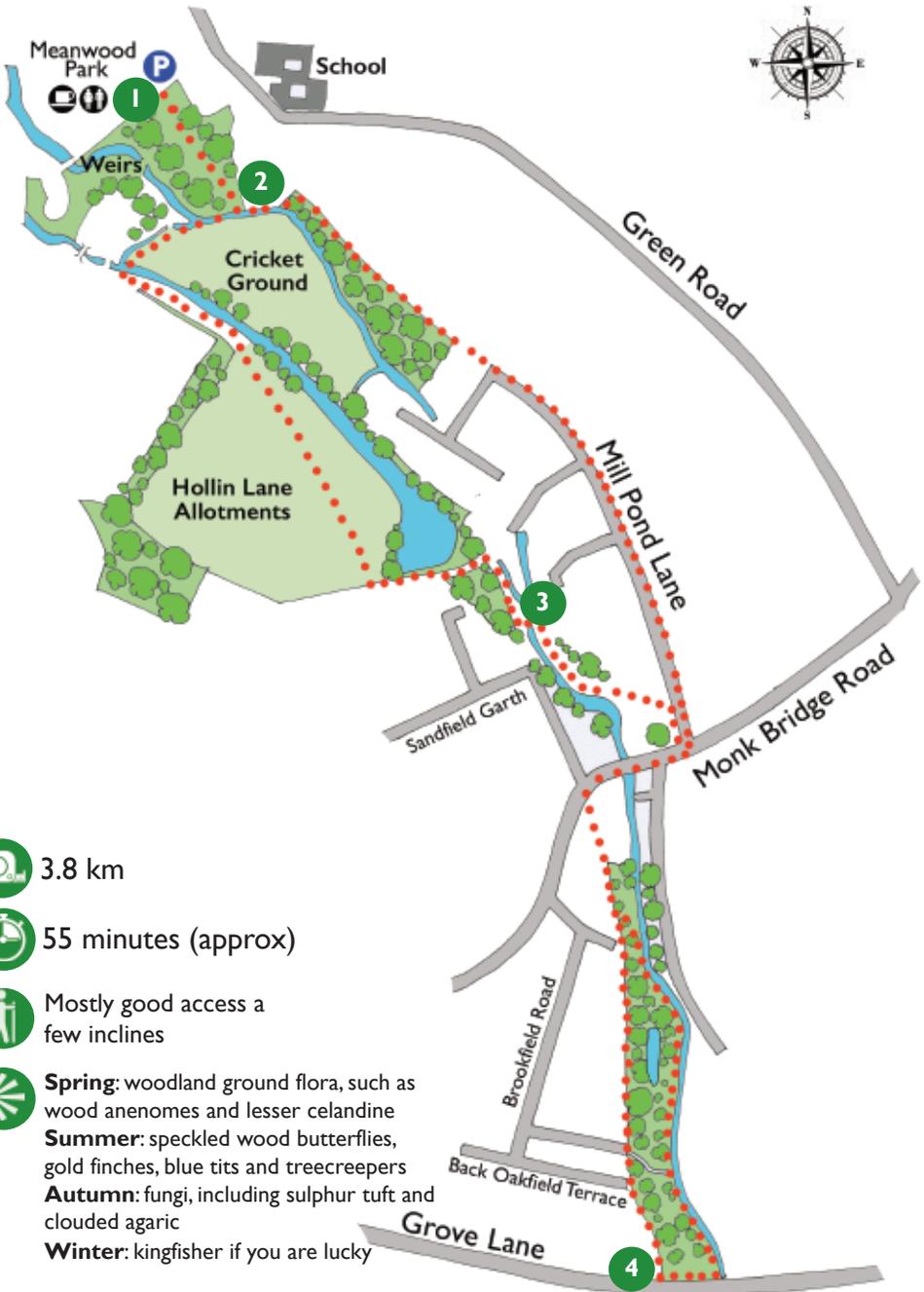
Fly agaric



Sulphur tuft



3. Grove Lane and Brookfield Pond



3.8 km



55 minutes (approx)



Mostly good access a few inclines



Spring: woodland ground flora, such as wood anemones and lesser celandine
Summer: speckled wood butterflies, gold finches, blue tits and treecreepers
Autumn: fungi, including sulphur tuft and clouded agaric

Winter: kingfisher if you are lucky



3. Grove Lane and Brookfield Pond

1. Starting at Meanwood Park car park off Green Road, you can find out about the history of Meanwoodside, especially in relation to Edward Oates on information panels. Walking away from Green Road, exit the car park on the surfaced path.

After roughly 20m turn left to follow the 'Meanwood Valley Trail' path to the southern entrance to the park.

An information panel here gives details of the resident white clawed crayfish found in the Meanwood Beck. The white clawed crayfish is unfortunately in decline, due to the introduced signal crayfish, which not only competes for food, but carries a virus that is deadly to our native crayfish. The Meanwood Valley is a regionally important area for crayfish.



White clawed crayfish

2. Continue over footbridge and turn right to follow trail along watercourse. When you emerge at the street turn left and follow path alongside the mill lade and through allotments. At the end follow path to the left, past the mill pond, and then right to the buildings.

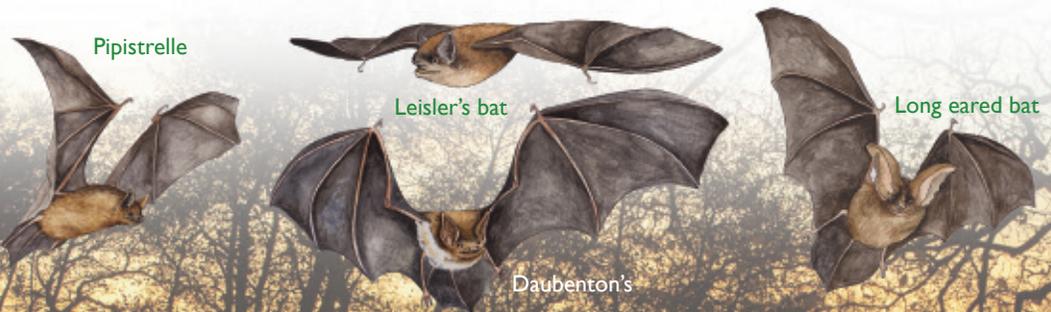
At this point you will pass Tannery Park; the site of the former Meanwood Tannery, which was built in 1857 by the former brewer, Sam Smith. Prior to this it was a paper mill called Wood Mills and the probable location of a medieval corn mill that serviced Kirkstall Abbey, which is only 1½ miles away as the crow flies.

3. Continue along trail, over bridge to emerge on Mill Pond Lane. Turn right, continue to Monkbridge Road and cross at crossing. Turn right, cross over Monk Bridge Terrace and continue past the newsagents. Just after the newsagents take the ginnel on the left and continue on this path through Grove Lane nature area.

A suite of information panels provide details of the wealth of wildlife found in along this stretch of the Meanwood Valley, including the 7 species of bats recorded here, woodland ground flora and amphibians found in Brookfield Pond.

4. Just before you reach the exit on Grove Lane, turn left and follow the path back north through the nature area. Shortly after passing Brookfield Pond, rejoin the Meanwood Valley Trail and re-trace your steps back to Mill Pond Lane. Now continue to the end of Mill Pond Lane and enter the green space to your right via the A-frame. Continue on path, keeping Meanwood Beck on your left. At the fork, turn left and then right to enter Meanwood Park.

Retrace your steps to the car park and welcome refreshments at the café.



Pipistrelle

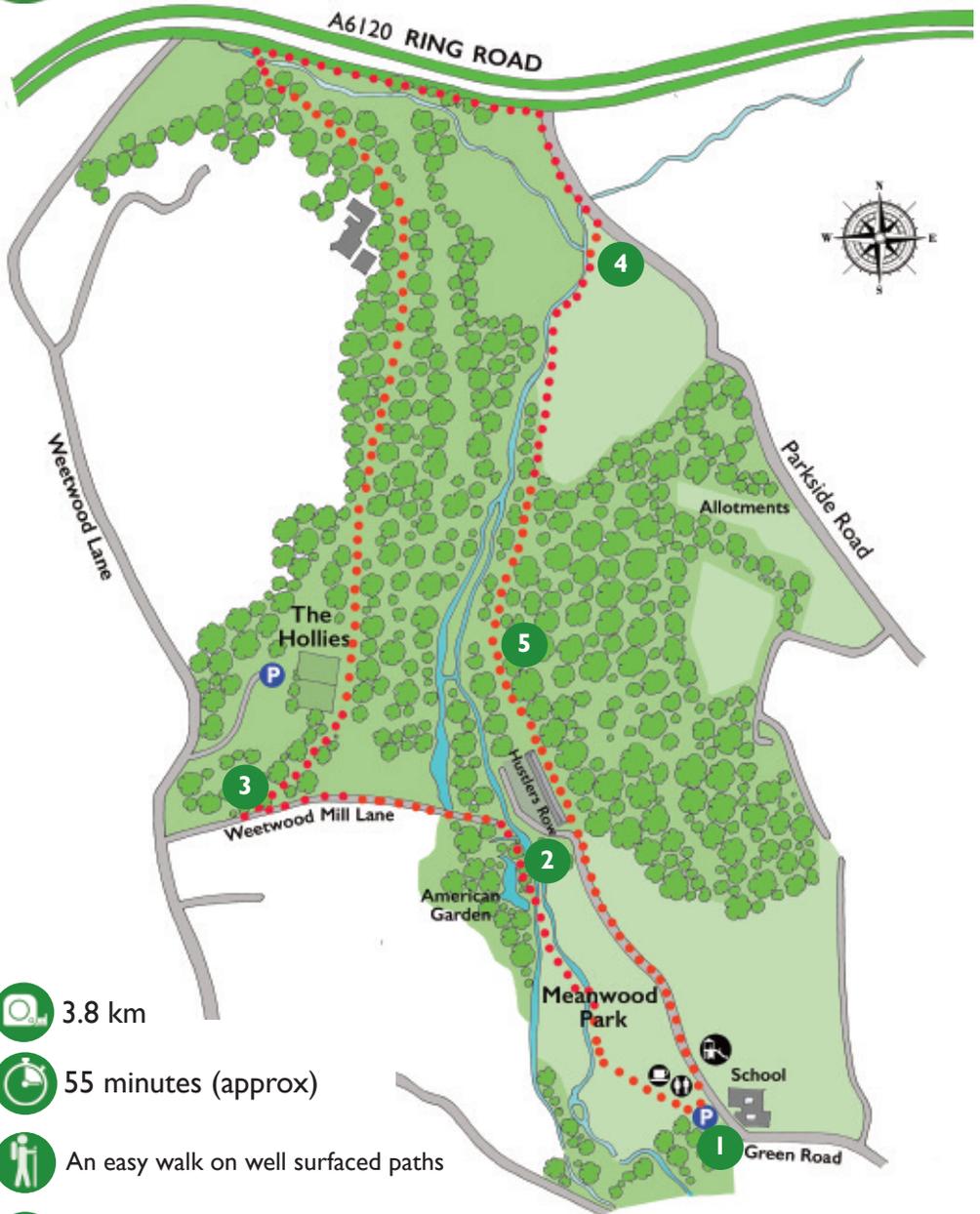
Leisler's bat

Daubenton's

Long eared bat



4. Meanwood Park and The Hollies



3.8 km



55 minutes (approx)



An easy walk on well surfaced paths



Spring: woodland ground flora, such as wood anemones and lesser celandine

Summer: Daubenton's and noctule bats, speckled wood butterflies

Autumn: birds such as fieldfare and siskin, and fungi, including sulphur tuft

Winter: roe deer; and kingfisher if you are lucky



4. Meanwood Park and The Hollies

1. Starting at the car park off Green Road you can find out about the history of Meanwood Park, especially in relation to Edward Oates on information panels. Walking away from Green Road, exit the car park on the surfaced path. After roughly 20m turn right to follow the path signposted 'Meanwood Valley Trail'. Continue on this path as it crosses and then runs alongside Meanwood Beck. At the fork, take the left-hand path and follow around pond of American Garden. Henry's Pond was excavated in 1845 by Edward Oates as part of his American Garden. Henry's Pond is now the only remaining pond of a series of four. The pond is home to many mallards and other water fowl, and if you are lucky you may spot a kingfisher. *Please do not feed the ducks with bread, as it is harmful to them and other wildlife.

2. Continue to cross over stone arch bridge and turn left. Follow path onto Green Road, by Hustler's Row. Cross over bridge and go straight up the hill to follow Weetwood Mill Lane. After approx. 300m, when you are approaching Weetwood Lane ahead, turn right into The Hollies.

The Hollies is an extensive Victorian hillside woodland garden with a noted collection of ericaceous shrubs, rare trees and a delightful stream with paths threading down through rock outcrops.

3. Continue on this path, past the tennis courts, and all the way to a fork in the path. Take the left fork and veer right to continue along path all the way to exit onto the Ring Road. Turn right and continue for approx. 250m, then turn right onto Parkside Road. Continue for just over 100m and turn right, through A-frame, onto the Meanwood Valley Trail at Meanwood Grove.

The information panel here provides details about the meadow and ponds at Meanwood Grove, as well as the Grove Tannery; the relic of which can still be seen today. Behind the picnic area are some of the stone lined tan pits, where skins were soaked in a liquor of water and oak bark.

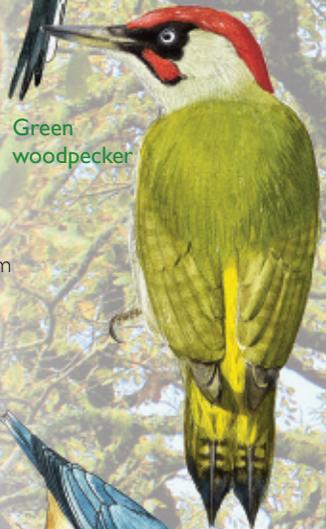
4. Continue on path past meadows and pond and into Meanwood Woods. At the fork head straight (left-hand fork) and continue through woods.

The information panel on this path provides details about the cultural and natural heritage of the woods. Look out for woodland ground flora, such as wood anemone, lesser celandine and wood sorrel, and keep an eye up in the trees to spot great and lesser spotted and green woodpeckers, as well as nuthatches, treecreepers, jays and various other woodland birds.

5. Continue on path to emerge into Meanwood Park and join Green Road. Follow this back to the car park and welcome refreshments at the café.



Great spotted woodpecker



Green woodpecker



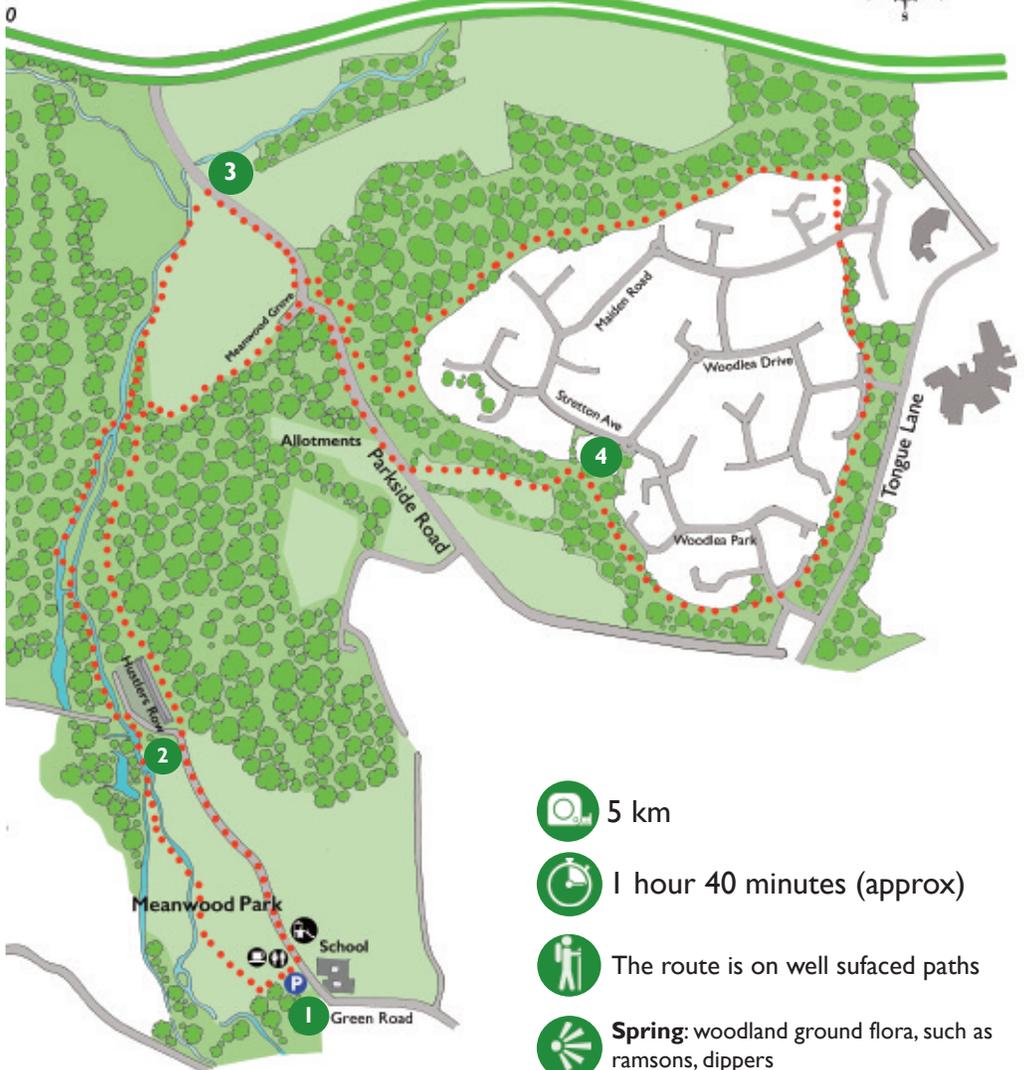
Nuthatch



Treecreeper



5. Meanwood Park and Meanwood Hall Woods



5 km



1 hour 40 minutes (approx)



The route is on well surfaced paths



Spring: woodland ground flora, such as ramsons, dippers

Summer: dragonflies and damselflies in Meanwood Grove

Autumn: fungi, including sulphur tuft, oyster mushrooms and

Winter: roe deer; and kingfisher if you are lucky



5. Meanwood Park and Meanwood Hall Woods

Starting at the car park off Green Road you can find out about the history of Meanwood Park, especially in relation to Edward Oates on information panels. Walking away from Green Road, exit the car park on the surfaced path. After roughly 20m turn right to follow the path signposted 'Meanwood Valley Trail'. Continue to follow fingerposts for the Meanwood Valley Trail along the beck, past Hustler's Row.

Keep a keen eye out when walking by the beck, as dippers can often be seen walking in the beck, hunting for small aquatic invertebrates. You may also be lucky to glimpse a kingfisher. White clawed crayfish and fish, including brown trout, stone loach and bullhead are also present in the beck, but you would have to be very lucky to spot these. Hustler's Row was built in 1849 by John Hustler, a local quarry owner, to house his workers and their families.

2. Continue on the path signposted 'Meanwood Valley Trail', along the mill race, over the weir, past Meanwood Grove to emerge on Parkside Road.

Look for frogs performing the frog chorus in the pond in spring. In summer keep an eye out for dragonflies and damselflies.

3. Turn right and continue up left-hand pavement of Parkside Road, past the stables and horse fields. Just after passing Meanwood Grove (road) on your right, enter the woodland on your left and take the right-hand fork to climb the wide wooden steps. Follow these steps all the way to the top and when you reach the T-junction, by the houses, turn left. Follow this path all the way around the Woodleas estate, crossing 3 roads, all the time keeping the houses on your right.

The woodland surrounding the Woodleas development establishes the former boundary of the Meanwood Hall estate. Some of the beech trees in this woodland are between 100 and 200 years old, and provide a habitat for a wealth of wildlife. Look for holes; tell-tale signs of woodpeckers feeding on invertebrates beneath the bark, as well as a host of fungi such as oyster mushroom. Some of these mature trees also provide roosting sites for bats. Meanwood Hall, which was built around 1762 for Thomas Denison, and which now forms the centre-piece of the Woodleas estate, was taken on by Leeds Corporation in 1919 to provide a home or 'colony' for people with severe physical or learning disabilities.



Kingfisher

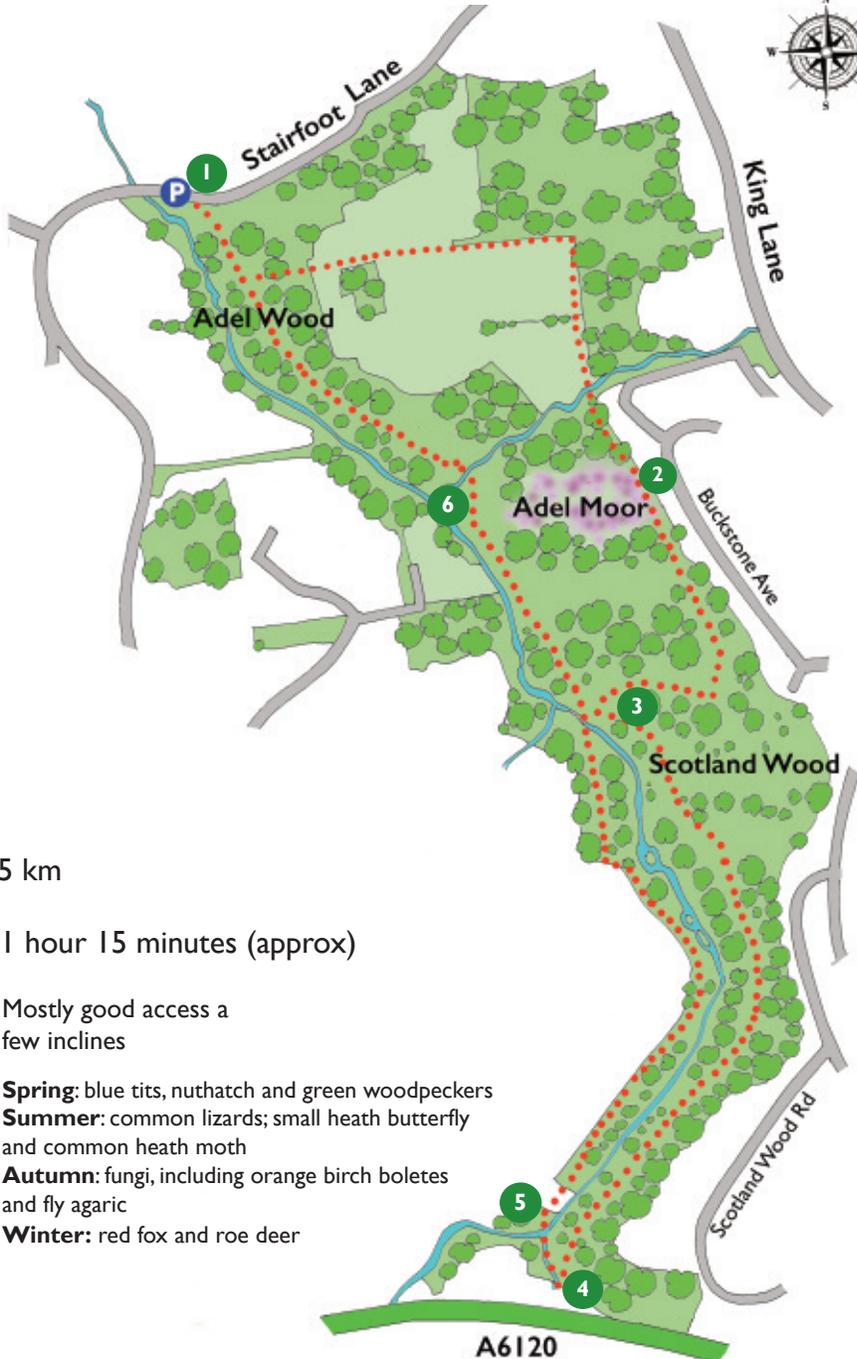


Dipper

4. Just after you see the play area on your right, take the left-hand fork down to emerge on Parkside Road. Turn right and continue down road and turn left onto Meanwood Grove (road). At the end of Meanwood Grove take the footpath into Meanwood Woods. When you hit the main path at the bottom, turn left and continue into the woods. At the fork head straight (left-hand fork) and through the woodland to emerge into Meanwoodside and join Green Road. Follow this back to the car park and welcome refreshments at the café.



6. Adel Woods and Scotland Woods



 5 km

 1 hour 15 minutes (approx)

 Mostly good access a few inclines

 **Spring:** blue tits, nuthatch and green woodpeckers
Summer: common lizards; small heath butterfly and common heath moth
Autumn: fungi, including orange birch boletes and fly agaric
Winter: red fox and roe deer



6. Adel Woods and Scotland Woods

1. From Stairfoot Lane car park, take the exit into the woods and follow the bridle path (Crag Lane), passing Adel Crag on your left. At the picnic benches, bear left and continue along the bridle path. After passing the Rugby Clubhouse, turn right down a tarmac access road to the cricket club. Follow the path behind the pavilion, down the steps and over the wooden bridge across Nanny Beck. Turn right and through the kissing gate. After 20m, turn left, following the path uphill to Adel Moor.

Adel Moor is a remnant of the moorland that covered much of the area in the past. This rare, Lowland Heathland supports a wealth of wildlife, such as small heath butterflies and common lizard. Adjoining Adel Moor is the Buckstone Fields, an area of dry acid grassland that gets its name from when roe deer roamed freely in the area and the dominant male used the Buckstone (a rock) to survey the surrounding area.

2. Follow the path behind the houses. Pass to the left of two stone gateposts and come to the Buckstone rock on your right. Continue to junction with another path, turn right and follow down to building. Keep to left of building and turn left at junction with other path, just before Seven Arches aqueduct.

Seven Arches was Leeds' first aqueduct, and was built in 1840 to carry clean water from Eccup Reservoir to the rapidly growing city. More details can be found on the panel.

3. Continue on this path, as it winds its way through the woods, over wooden boardwalks and stone pitched paths, along the top of the valley until you pass through two stone gateposts onto Scotland Mill Lane.

As you walk through the woods on this path, you pass through impressive stands of mature beech, wet flushes, oak-birch woodland and finally a stand of Scots Pine. Impressive views over the valley bottom often provide glimpses of wildlife, such as roe deer.

4. Turn right and continue down lane to pass over stone arch bridge. Turn left to pass the remains of Scotland Mill.

Scotland Mill was the first mill ever to successfully spin flax using the power of water.

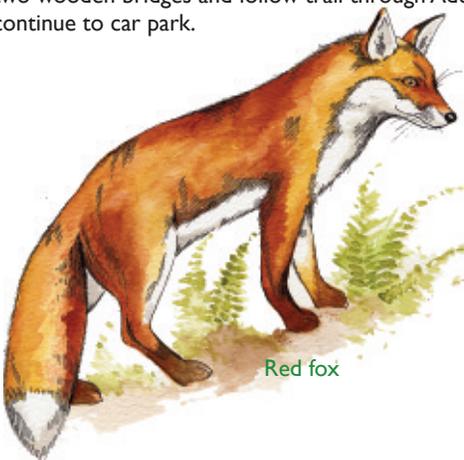
5. Turn right after the mill and follow the Meanwood Valley Trail back up to Seven Arches. Pass under the aqueduct and continue along path to the Slabbering Baby.

The 'Slabbering Baby' is the stone carving around a spring. Its origins are unknown, but we do know that Potter's Flax Mill once stood here, which later became a Verity's teahouse; a popular refreshment spot for walkers in the Victorian Era. More details on the panel here.

6. Continue straight forward, over bridge, up steps, passing the mill pond on your left. Cross over two wooden bridges and follow trail through Adel Woods to picnic benches. Turn left and continue to car park.



Scots pine



Red fox



Roe deer



7. Golden Acre park and Breary Marsh LNR Water and Waterfowl Walk



3.6 km



50 minutes (approx)



Mostly good access a few inclines

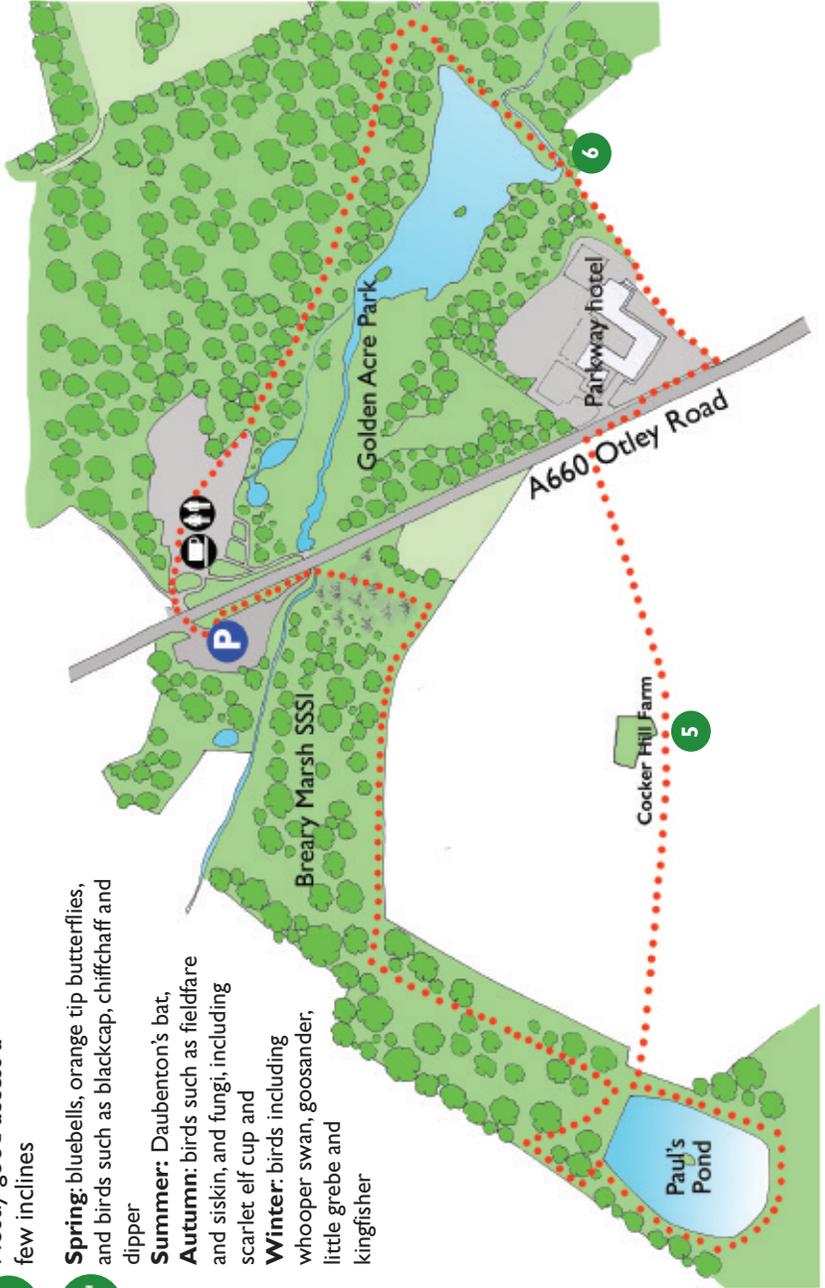


Spring: bluebells, orange tip butterflies, and birds such as blackcap, chiffchaff and dipper

Summer: Daubenton's bat,

Autumn: birds such as fieldfare and siskin, and fungi, including scarlet elf cup and

Winter: birds including whooper swan, goosander, little grebe and kingfisher





Red kite

Buzzard



7. Golden Acre park and Breary Marsh LNR Water and Waterfowl Walk

1. From the car park, follow path down to bridge and view point over the fen.

An information panel here will provide you with details about the special wildlife found in the nature reserve. Keep an eye out here for summer migrants, such as black caps and willow warblers.

2. Cross over bridge and continue on path until T-junction and turn right. Follow path through woods, as it passes past alder carr, over bridge, and along beck to dam banking.

Observe the woodland ground flora as it changes from reeds in the wet alder carr woodland, to carpets of bluebells in the drier oak-birch woodland. Up in the trees great spotted woodpeckers can often be observed.

3. At the steep bank turn right and follow path round to farm gate, turn left and follow path to Paul's Pond.

Tufted ducks and cormorants can regularly be seen diving and the lucky observer may spot a dipper or kingfisher. The remains of freshwater swan mussels can often be found on the bank, having been predated by waterfowl.

4. Follow path around pond and just before a wooden bridge, use a stile to follow the well-trodden grassy path towards Cocker Hill Farm / A660.

Red kites and buzzards can often be observed flying high above these open fields.

5. Continue on path through farm, along farm track until emerging on A660. Cross over, with great care, and turn left onto footpath just after Parkway Hotel. After 200m turn left into Golden Acre Park and turn immediately right to cross over bridge and follow path adjacent to bottom end of lake.

More waterfowl may be observed from here, including tufted ducks, mallards and mute swans. In spring great crested grebes may be observed performing their elaborate mating rituals and in winter migrant whooper swans from Scandinavia make the lake their home.

6. After crossing the stone bridge turn left and follow the signs to the café, for welcome refreshments after your walk. Follow signs to the car park via the underpass to complete your walk.

A short de-tour to the duck hut on the southern shore of the lake will provide you with information about the waterfowl, as well as opportunities to feed the ducks. Do not feed bread to the ducks, as this is harmful to them and other wildlife. Duck food can be purchased at the kiosk next to the café.



Canada goose

Shoveler

Great crested grebe



8. Golden Acre park and Eccup Whin



3.6 km



1 hour (approx)



Mostly good access a few inclines



Spring: cherry blossom, and birds such as blackcap, chiffchaff and dipper
Summer: stoats and weasels, and birds, such as great spotted woodpecker
Autumn: birds such as fieldfare and siskin, and fungi, including aniseed funnel cap
Winter: birds such as whooper swan, goosander, little grebe and kingfisher





8. Golden Acre park and Eccup Whin

1. From the car park, enter Golden Acre Park via the underpass and turn right to follow the surfaced path adjacent to the lake.

From the 'duck hut', a wealth of waterfowl, can be observed, such as great crested grebes performing their elaborate mating rituals during the breeding season, and whooper swan and goosander are regular winter migrants. Resident tufted ducks can be observed diving for food. On the opposite side of the path, butterflies such as orange tips and small tortoiseshell can be observed fluttering around in the wildflower meadow. Information panels provide details about the wildlife found at the lake and meadow.

2. Continue along path to end of lake. At fork take right-hand path and turn left onto bridleway.

A short detour here provides a welcome visit to Adel Dam nature reserve, and a good chance to spot kingfishers from the bird hides.

3. Continue on the bridlepath until it emerges on Arthington Road. Take great care to cross the road onto the left-hand verge of King Lane. After approximately 200m use the stile to enter the woodland. Continue along path to enter Eccup Whin.

An information panel here provides details about the wealth of wildlife found in this nature area, which includes great crested, palmate and smooth newts; mammals, such as hedgehogs, deer, stoats and weasels; numerous birds, such as the summer migrant blackcaps, willow and garden warblers, as well as resident great spotted and green woodpeckers; and a wealth of wildflowers, such as common spotted orchid. Eccup Whin can be explored in more depth via a network of paths shown on the panel.

4. When emerging onto Black Hill Lane, turn left and take care to follow road to end. At junction, turn left and take care to follow Arthington Road to the Golden Acre Park car park. On entering car park follow signs to Lakes & Wildfowl, and continue on surfaced path as it winds through the cherry orchard, along the northern side of the lake and to the café. After some welcome refreshments, follow signs to the car park via the underpass to complete your walk.

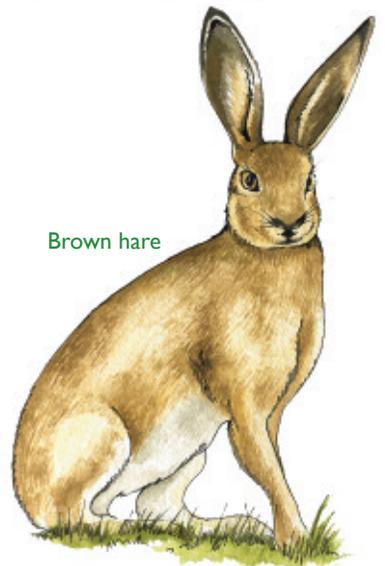
This winding path affords excellent views, beautiful displays of cherry blossom in the spring, and a chance to listen to the chorus of songbirds when walking along the woodland path by the lake.



Common spotted orchid

Clustered bellflower

Scabious



Brown hare



This walks booklet has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, as part of the 'Meanwood Valley: Wilderness on your Doorstep' project.

This project was delivered by a partnership of Leeds City Council and the Meanwood Valley Partnership, together with the various Friends groups that volunteer throughout the Meanwood Valley. The aim of the project is to encourage as wide a range of people as possible to experience, understand, protect and celebrate the wildlife of the Meanwood Valley.

Because in the words of David Attenborough:

**“No one will protect what they don’t care about
and no one will care about what they have never
experienced”**

For more information about this project and to find out about ranger-led wildlife events and volunteering opportunities please visit:
www.leedscitycouncil/MeanwoodValley

 Meanwood Valley

 Leeds Parks and Countryside Service

Or contact the Countryside Ranger Team at
MeanwoodValley.Ranger@leeds.gov.uk or CountrysideRangers@leeds.gov.uk

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