

WILDLIFE WALKS

LOUND LAKES

The nine lakes at Lound and the 200 acre mosaic of surrounding habitat, managed in partnership with Suffolk Wildlife Trust, hold several interesting species, including waxcaps and common spotted orchids.

The site is also a hotspot for birds due to the mix of open water, woodland and grassland habitats. Snipe, kestrel and green woodpeckers can regularly be seen at Lound Lakes.

The route

The footpath starts on the same side of the road as the lay-by, next to the old chapel. Enter the site past the gate, with the chapel on your left. If you look up, you will see a barn owl nest box on the south facing wall of the chapel. After approximately 40 metres, follow the footpath round to the left. Conifer woodland exists on your left and broadleaved woodland on your right; both are rich with birdsong in spring and summer. These woodlands are alive with robins, garden warblers and tits, all of which are commonly found in gardens.

Dead wood is a great habitat for insects which depend on decaying wood and fungi to survive and the standing dead tree in Chapel Loke woodland is a good example. Much of the fallen dead wood at Lound is left where it lies to create habitats for such insects. As you walk, keep a look out for the star of Bethlehem. This plant's name derived from its star-shaped, white flowers and grows at the footpath edges.

Travelling on past Rolf's Wood to your right, the footpath enters an area of open grassland. Turn right and follow the edge of Rolf's Wood. The wetter ground within the wood has promoted the growth of alder; a tree species found close to water bodies.

A variety of flowering plants bloom within the grassland in spring and summer, including the yellow pea flower of common bird's foot trefoil, and lilac-tinted common spotted orchids. Turn left and follow the grassy path east, keeping the hedgerow on your right. As you walk, you may glimpse dragon-and damselflies hovering over the hedgerow or within the open grassland. Common blue and azure damselflies have been noted at Lound Lakes, as well as the blue-tailed damselfly.

Pass through the gap next to the gate on the eastern side of the grassland and turn left along Blue Doors Loke. Rich hedgerows guide your path on either side, to break further north, giving spectacular view over the lakes. Look into the sky and you may see a kestrel hovering or a hobby, with its scythe-shaped wings. Complete the walk by passing the gate at the end of the footpath and turning left at the road. This will take you back to the lay-by near the chapel.

Parking Lay-by off Hall Road, near the chapel.

Refreshments/facilities The Village Maid pub, Lound, Suffolk, NR32 5LP. Toilets at Lound Lakes available during organised events.

Distance 1.13 miles/1.81 kilometres.

Allow 45 minutes.

LOUD LAKES

