



giving
nature
a home

This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with access needs, but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services that we offer all our guests/visitors.

Access Statement for Abernethy/Loch Garten

Introduction

When ospreys returned to breed in Scotland, this ancient Caledonian pine forest is where they chose to come. The Loch Garten Osprey Centre (April to end-August only) provides fantastic views of these magnificent birds on the nest, as well as close up views thanks to our non-invasive CCTV camera.

The reserve also has some excellent walks, with the chance to see red squirrels, dragonflies and crested tits. Early in spring, join us for *Caper-watch* and see the spectacular display of the capercaillie, Scotland's largest grouse.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance please phone Office 01470 821409 Osprey Centre (April -Aug) 01479 831476 or email richard.thaxton@rspb.org.uk.

Pre-Arrival

- The Osprey Centre at Abernethy/Loch Garten Reserve is located on the unofficially named Loch Garten road (a minor C class road, narrow in places with passing places), off the B970. It is between the villages of Boat of Garten (3 miles/5 km) and Nethybridge (3 miles/5 km).
- During the "osprey season" April to end-August, brown RSPB Ospreys road signs are erected at all junctions from main arterial route (A9) through Strathspey. The final sign, 2 miles/3 km from the Centre, is at junction of B970 and Loch Garten road.
- The nearest mainline railway station is at Aviemore (8 miles/ 12 km). A private steam railway runs from Aviemore to Boat of Garten, 3 miles/5 km from the Centre.
- The local bus route (No. 34 / 34X, hourly), stops at B970/ Loch Garten road junction. There is a wooden bus shelter: buses will stop if flagged-down. From the bus shelter drop-off there is a

dedicated hard surfaced footpath (with slight inclines) which runs to Centre (2 miles/3 km).

- Taxis include Aviemore Taxis 01479 811111.
- Osprey Centre is open daily 10am to 6pm (last admissions at 5pm) from 1st April to end-August only. Reserve open year round.
- Entrance charges are (2013) Adults £4, Concessions £2.50, Children £1. RSPB members with valid membership cards and carers are given free entry.
- Registered assistance dogs are welcome. No other dogs are permitted at Osprey Centre. Staff always present to assist.

Car Parking Facilities and Arrival

- Osprey Centre car park, capacity for 3 coaches and 30 cars, plus 2 marked Blue Badge parking bays.
- Free parking.
- Centre is around 275m from car park on hard compacted gravel track with two slight inclines.
- 2 manual wheelchairs are available on request.
- Drop-off is available outside the Osprey Centre (2 cars maximum at a time). Gate key available from staff member on Reception duty at car park. Turning vehicles can be difficult, but staff will be present and happy to assist.
- No lighting in car park nor along path to Osprey centre (facilities are open during spring/summer daylight hours only).
- Minor ramp at Reception and Osprey Centre itself, but no steps.
- Reception walkway has handrails on one side, track to Centre itself does not.
- Osprey Centre floor is all one level, no steps. When Centre is open to visitors, all doors are propped open.



Approach to the Osprey Centre

Visitor Centre

- Entrance tickets are obtained at Reception, at car park.
- Centre flooring is carpet tiling. Floor is all one level, spacious, with large turning circle.
- Some unfixed wooden seating is provided, and some plastic chairs.
- Binoculars and telescopes are provided for use, through viewing slots, set at various heights including low level ones.
- Various CCTV cameras relay live images to Centre screens. TV monitors show recorded highlights and playback. No hearing loop, but staff give oral presentations. Nest microphone relays sounds of osprey back to Centre.
- Various fun props for use by staff with children.
- Limited lighting is by spotlights.
- Information provision is by direct dialogue and engagement with staff: written information is minimised.



Inside the Osprey Centre showing video images and telescopes

Nature Trails

- There are 3 way marked trails- Green, Red and Blue. A section of the Speyside Way runs through the reserve from Nethybridge and Boat of Garten.
- Green 2.7km / 1.5 miles, of between 1.5 and 2 m width, compacted gravel path, subject to becoming muddy after heavy rain with accumulation of pine needle/ humic material
- Red 3.4km / 2 miles of between 1.5 and 2 m width, compacted gravel path- may become muddy after heavy rain. Some sections of wooden boardwalk, with anti-slip mesh and handrails. Some narrower sections where two wheelchairs could not pass.
- Blue 3.3km /2 miles of between 1.5 and 2 m width, compacted gravel path- may become muddy after heavy rain. Some sections of wooden boardwalk, with anti-slip mesh and handrails, including dragonfly viewing deck with handrails both sides (pictured below), and large turning circle. Some narrower sections where two wheelchairs could not pass.



Dragonfly viewing platform on Blue Trail

- Speyside Way 3.5km / 2.5 miles - there is a steep section mid-way along Spey Way, which may make this impassable for some users.
- Colour marked with directional arrows at ground level.
- No stiles or gates.
- Trails start and finish at car parks: Green trail (Mallachie car park) OS Landranger Sheet 36 NH972186. Red & Blue Trail NH952191. Speyside Way section through reserve from NH997199 to NH952191
- Large print information display boards at trail heads/in car parks
- No other viewing point/facilities/hides along trail routes.

Viewing Facilities

- Osprey Centre viewing facilities accessed from Osprey Centre car park, via Reception & toilet building, along 275m compacted gravel track, with two very slight inclines.
- Doors and viewing slots are fixed open and closed by staff.
- Low viewing slots with fixed binoculars and telescopes provided.
- Large auditorium, with capacity for 100 visitors. Floor space of 300 m² with large turning circles.
- Limited amount of written information provided, staff always present to engage with all visitors face-to-face.
- Dragonfly viewing deck on wood boardwalk on Blue trail with handrails both sides, and large turning circle.

Toilets

- Osprey Centre toilets are of a waterless, composting-type, the long-drop type, no cistern flushing. There is 1 accessible toilet, 4 ladies toilets, and gents has 1 toilet and 3 urinals.
- Disabled toilet has handrails.
- Level entry to toilets, no steps.
- Disabled toilet door is 91cm/36 inches wide
- Disabled toilet room width is 163cm/64 inches
- Space on left hand side of toilet for wheelchair, 104cm/41 inches
- Height of WC from floor to seat 48cm/19 inches
- Both a horizontal (LHS) and a vertical (RHS) grab rails.
- In emergency, no alarm or flashing light, but staff and/or visitors are always within earshot.
- Small fluorescent light.
- Flooring is textured lino.
- No handbasins or water, hand cleaning is by handwipes.
- Pull down baby changing facilities in accessible toilet- can be used from seated position.



Alternatively, there are public toilets in Nethybridge village (3 miles/ 5 km), in village hall, accessed from outside and Boat of Garten (3 miles/5 km), behind former village hall, adjacent to village Post Office.

Catering

- No catering at Osprey Centre, only hot drinks machine and some snacks (eg biscuits and flapjacks) available in Centre shop. Shop staff always on hand to assist.
- Shops, hotel and cafe in Boat of Garten village (3 miles), shops and hotel in Nethybridge (3 miles).

Shop

- Shop is an integral part of Osprey Centre building, access from Centre auditorium. No steps or ramps, all on same floor level. Metal shutter door (130cm/51 inches) is always open when facility is open, this and exit door (116cm/46 inches) always opened by staff not visitors.
- Shop floor space has two mobile display units, with room for wheelchair to get around them and entire shop floor area.
- Floor surface is carpet tiling.
- Lighting is by spot lights.
- Goods displayed from floor to 200cm/79 inches high.
- Site manager has received disability awareness training

Future Plans

- Exploring making a section of Green trail more accessible
- Exploring purchase of electric mobility scooter.
- Trails/ Speyway surface under regular review/repair/upgrade.

Contact Information

Address (Inc postcode): Abernethy National Nature Reserve (Reserve office), RSPB Scotland, Forest Lodge, Nethybridge, Inverness-shire, PH25 3EF Note, no postal address for Loch Garten Osprey Centre.

Telephone: Office 01470 821409 Osprey Centre (April to end-

August only) 01479 831476

Email: richard.thaxton@rspb.org.uk

Website: <http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/l/lochgarten/>

Grid Reference: OS Landranger Series Sheet 36 NH982184

Hours Of Operation: Oprey Centre 1st April to end-August only, daily
10am to 6pm (last admissions 5pm)

Local Accessible
Taxi: Aviemore Taxis 01479 811111

Local Public
Transport: Inverness 01463 239292