Top things to do

Spring/summer

A busy time for nature and a great time for you to explore.

1. Hear the “boom” of male bitterns. You might even see one flying over the reedbed.
2. Admire great crested grebes as they perform their graceful courtship dance.
3. Watch hobbies, small, agile birds of prey, hunting over the ponds and ditches.
4. Look out for butterflies and dragonflies that are out and about all over the reserve.
5. Hear the strange croaking of marsh frogs.

Autumn/winter

Five things not to miss during the chillier months.

1. Scan the skies to see marsh harriers hunting for food across the reedbed.
2. Don’t blink: you might miss the blue flash of a kingfisher darting past.
3. Keep your eyes peeled for a glimpse of an elusive otter.
4. Marvel at the thousands of starlings coming to roost in the reedbed at dusk.
5. See roe deer foraging for food.

How to get here

Nearest town: Glastonbury

By bicycle: the national cycle network (Route 3) runs nearby. The old railway line through the reserve is now a local cycle route. Cycle racks are available around the reserve and in the car park.

By bus: nearest stops are in Meare and Ashcott.

By car: Ham Wall is on Ashcott Road, a minor road that runs between Meare and Ashcott. The large RSPB car park (postcode BA6 9SX) is just over a mile (2 km) south of Meare and 2 miles north of Ashcott.

Opening times

The reserve is open every day from dawn until dusk. Automatic gates for car park. Please check our web page and entrance signs for opening times. Alternative Natural England car park 100m away.

Admission charges

Car parking charges apply: £2 for up to two hours, £3 for more than two hours. RSPB Members free

RSPB Ham Wall office

RSPB Workbase, Avalon Marshes Centre, Shapwick Road, Westhay, Somerset BA6 9TT

Tel: 01458 860494

E-mail: ham.wall@rspb.org.uk

www.rspb.org.uk/hamwall

The RSPB is the country’s largest nature conservation charity, inspiring everyone to give nature a home.

Helping to give nature a home

Get involved

We are always looking for volunteers who can help out at our reserves and who are enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge with visitors.

For dates, prices and full details of future events, or if you would like to volunteer at Ham Wall, please e-mail ham.wall@rspb.org.uk or call 01458 860494.

Other local attractions

RSPB Greylake, Somerset, TA7 9BG

Tel: 01458 252805

(rst 6.2 miles) rspb.org.uk/greylake

Shapwick Heath National Nature Reserve, Ashcott Road, Meare, Glastonbury BA6 9SX.

Tel: 01458 860120

(0.5 miles from Ham Wall) www.naturalengland.org.uk

Rich in history and wildlife. Follow in the footsteps of our ancient ancestors, exploring meadows, woodlands and reedbeds.

A very special part of the world. I love coming here to admire the wildlife spectacles.

Lee Dutton, Frome

Bittern by Andrew Parkinson (rspb-images.com)

Welcome

Enjoy the sights and sounds of this magical wetland, created by the RSPB when peat extraction ended on this site.

Ham Wall is a special place that teems with wildlife. You might be lucky enough to see or hear secretive bitterns, otters, water voles, marsh frogs and great crested newts, which all call this place home.

Enjoy the stunning views across the marshes to Glastonbury Tor and follow secluded paths that weave their way through the mystical landscape.

In winter, make sure you hang around until dusk to see the starlings and their spectacular displays as they gather to roost in the reedbeds.

Amazing wildlife, panoramic views and the sounds of the reeds swaying in the wind make Ham Wall nature reserve an unforgettable day out for the whole family.

Explore a wonderful wetland

Enjoy amazing views across the marshes

Look out for elusive otters in the water

Get amongst the swirling starling flocks in winter

Take part with us

Events

Or call 01458 860494, e-mail ham.wall@rspb.org.uk to volunteer at Ham Wall, please get involved. With your help, this site will continue to thrive for visitors and wildlife alike. We are always looking for volunteers to help with our conservation and education work.

Get involved

Fun for all the family.

Family activities

We organise lots of family activities during the school holidays. Join us for a fun day out and help give nature a home.

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Ham Wall
Finding your way around

Ham Wall loop
A scenic 1.7 mile circular walk starting from the car park and following a grass trail along the canal. Cross the canal via a bridge to return along the old railway track. Allow at least an hour to walk the loop, or 40 minutes to walk from the car park to the Avalon hide and back.

In summer, look out for different kinds of dragonflies, butterflies and bumblebees. As you walk, you might see roe deer, or if you are really lucky, an otter!

The Reedbed trail
This trail is accessible for wheelchair users and children’s buggies. It takes about five minutes to reach the Tor View hide.

Keep your eyes peeled for marsh harriers flying low over the reedbed in search of prey, and bearded tits clinging acrobatically to the reeds. If you listen carefully, you might even hear the gentle “plop” of a water vole slipping into the water.

Walton Heath trail
Stroll along 1.1 miles of grass track and enjoy quiet, tucked-away places to sit and watch for wildlife. It takes about 30 minutes to walk the trail, but longer if you stop to enjoy the surroundings.

Try to spot grass snakes, roe deer and dragonflies. Though difficult to see, Cetti’s warblers may make their presence known by belting out loud bursts of song from deep within the reeds.

Loxton’s Marsh trail
Walk this 0.8 mile trail (about 10 minutes) to discover one of the more secluded areas of reedbed and scrub. Please take care on this trail in winter, as the grass tracks may be wet.

Don’t forget to stop at the viewing screen – it’s a great place to glimpse elusive wildlife like bitterns. Listen for woodpeckers drumming on the trees in spring, and look out for weird and wonderful fungi in autumn.

Key

Water
Grassland
Woodland
Reedbeds
Footpath
Viewing platform
Viewing screen

Car park
Disabled car park
Seat
Hide
Toilets
Visitor reception
Natural England car park

Dogs are allowed on the Ham Wall loop but please keep them on a lead. Registered assistance dogs are allowed on all parts of the reserve.

For more information about the accessibility of RSPB Ham Wall, please visit rspb.org.uk/hamwall

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