



The woodlands support a varied range of wildlife including many birds. Nuthatch, Goldcrest and Tree Creeper are just a few of the birds you should find while walking through the woods. Spring is always a good time for bird watching with the migrant species present. Pick up a copy of the Chard Reservoir bird watching leaflet for more information. In the summer the unimproved meadows are well worth a visit; ox eye daisies, marsh orchids and yarrow all make for a beautiful floral display.

During the breeding season reed beds can shelter several pairs of Reed Warblers. As we improve these habitats (by expanding their area) we hope that other species will visit. On hot summer nights bats fly over the reeds catching their prey. Reed beds are threatened habitats in the UK and because of this we prioritise their conservation at the reservoir.

On open water you should see some birds all the year round; with Swallows and Martins in the spring. During winter cold snaps you may see large numbers of wildfowl. Look out for Little Egret and Grebes which have become much more common in the last few years.

Wildlife - The diversity of the habitats at Chard Reservoir makes it a great place for wildlife.

Open Water

Reed Beds

Woodland

MANAGEMENT

LOCATION

CHARD

Reservoir

Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve is a special site that requires a range of management techniques. The habitats on site vary from native woodlands to wildflower meadows, open water to reed beds. Each area has very different management requirements and the rangers are kept busy conserving this important array of species. In the woodlands we have greatly reduced the exotic species (Laurel and Rhododendron) in an effort to return to a more balanced native woodland. The meadows are cut annually and no chemical fertilisers are used. This approach has left us with an impressive display of marsh orchids in the summer months. The reed beds are helped to expand by reducing the number of willows that out shade them.

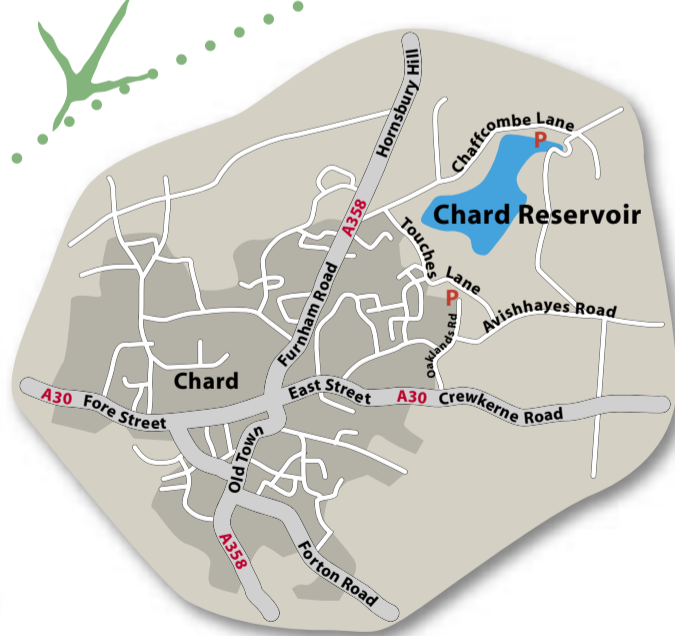
Floating rafts have been added to the open water of the reservoir to provide resting and nesting places for birds, cormorants will often be seen hanging their wings out to dry.

The meadows in Summer are alive with wildlife. Visit the buttercup meadow in June to see a carpet of Marsh Orchids. In July these unimproved meadows support a healthy population of Marbled White butterflies, plus Skipper butterflies and some Blues. Throughout the Summer both dragon and damselflies can be seen zooming over the grasslands and water.



Nuthatch

Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve is situated on the North East of Chard Town Centre. The Car Park is situated at the end of Oaklands Avenue which is off the A30 Chard to Crewkerne Road.



The Countryside Service

Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve is owned and managed by South Somerset District Council. A part-time countryside ranger works from the Nature Reserve and will be pleased to help and advise visitors. A series of events and walks run across South Somerset's countryside sites each year; to receive more information about these, or any other aspect of the countryside service please call 01935 462462 or email countryside@southsomerset.gov.uk

SSDC, The Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT



Share the Secret

ACCESS

As the District Council does not own all the land it is not possible to walk around the whole of the reservoir. However there is a good surfaced path and wooden boardwalks that will help you take in most of the reserve. The path winds through the woodland and reed beds and gives good views across the reservoir. The fully accessible bird hide is the best place for bird watching with Grebes, Kingfishers and Little Egrets common. Local birdwatchers keep an updated board in the hide listing recent sightings. We strive to keep the hide open for as many daylight hours as possible, but we apologise if you find it locked.



Anglers Car Park

Eco loo
(composting toilet)



HISTORY

Chard Reservoir was built in 1842 to provide water for the Chard Canal. When the railway arrived the canal was abandoned. For many years the reservoir was used as a sporting area (duck shooting and trout fishing) until it was given to the Council in 1990 and became a Local Nature Reserve.



WATER LEVELS

The water levels are kept high in the spring/summer period to encourage Great Crested Grebes to nest along the margins and also birds that use the reed beds.

The level is dropped in late summer and throughout the winter. With a low level during the winter we are able to store water after heavy rainfall and then let it go gradually, this all helps reduce flooding downstream. This is done with the co-operation and support of the Environment Agency.

No dogs beyond this point



Grasshopper

Chafcombe Road

Touches Lane

Bird Hide



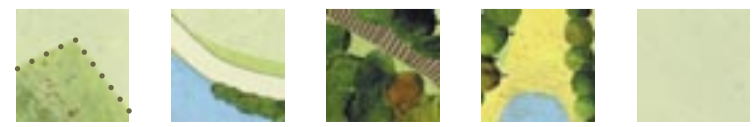
Reserve Boundary

Surfaced Path

Board Walk

Reed Beds

Private Land



ANGLING

There is fishing in certain areas under licence with Chard Angling Club by permit only. Please see details on the notice board at Angler's car park.

The marked surfaced path around the site is suitable for electric wheelchairs and for manual wheelchairs with some assistance.