

## Tring Reservoir (Wilstone)

Wilstone Reservoir is an artificial water-body, fed by natural springs, surrounded by ancient marshes, reedswamp and willow carr.

Wilstone Reservoir is one of the four Tring Reservoirs, owned by British Waterways. Wilstone is managed by HMWT in conjunction with the Friends of Tring Reservoirs. Built in 1802, the reservoir supplies water to the Wendover arm of the Grand Union Canal. It is up to 18 feet deep and has a capacity of 240 million gallons.

The reservoir was made famous by the first nesting in this country of black-necked grebes in 1918 and of little ringed plovers in 1938.

Wilstone is one of the most famous birding spots in southern England. A walk round the reservoir's edges gives good views, and there's always a surprise in store. Whether it's the impressive summer duck moult, rare passage migrants or the superb wintering water birds, you'll not be disappointed. Surrounded by one of Hertfordshire's largest reedbeds and set in the lovely Chilterns countryside, Wilstone is a very special place. The other three Tring Reservoirs (Little Tring, Startops and Marsworth) are all nearby and also have footpaths and viewing areas.



### Red footed falcon

On Wednesday (26/05/10) an adult male red footed falcon was present at Wilstone Reservoir all day. It was joined by a first summer male on Thursday with this bird remaining to provide excellent views to visiting birders and walkers throughout the weekend. It was still present on Monday and this morning (1/06/10).

Good numbers of hobbies have also been seen over the past week, often in the company of the red footed falcon. Good places to watch them are along the reservoir bank, especially overlooking the reedbeds and from the hide.

### Spring update

Now that spring is well under way many different birds have been seen at Wilstone over the last month. Perhaps the best sighting was of a red rumped swallow at the beginning of May, seen amongst a flock of swallows and martins.

Marsh harriers have been seen regularly as they migrate to breeding areas. Scan the reedbed and you may be lucky enough to spot one. They occasionally roost in the reedbed overnight before departing fairly quickly the next morning.

Common terns have returned in good numbers, using the rafts provided for nesting. Small numbers of little gulls have also been seen. A good range of waders have also been seen, including whimbrel, dunlin and greenshank. Common sandpipers have been quite easy to spot as they characteristically 'bob' their tails whilst searching for insects on the algae bunds.

Excellent views of swifts can be had simply by standing on the top of the bank by the car park and watching them swoop past you, especially if the weather is poor as they will be forced down from the sky. Hobbies have been seen in good numbers, the hide is an excellent place to get good views of these expert aerial hunters.

### The seasons at Wilstone

Spring brings passage and summer migrants. Breeding duck include Gadwall and Shoveler, and the reserve has one of the county's three regular heronries. Flowering plants include celery-leaved and goldilocks buttercups.

The summer moult flocks of Tufted Duck and Pochard are of national importance.

Autumn passage again brings terns, gulls and other vagrants.

In winter waterbirds include nationally important levels of Shoveler as well as Teal and Wigeon. The nightly gull roost can be in excess of 20,000 birds, and corn buntings roost in the reedbed.

- [Get driving directions](#)
- [Find nearby public transport](#)

## How to Get Here

Location

Near Tring

## Directions

Wilstone lies along the B489 between Aston Clinton and the village of Marsworth, and about 3km NW of Tring. From Aston Clinton, turn north onto the Lower Icknield Way (A489). From Tring, follow Little Tring Road from the B488, and turn left on meeting the A489.

## Public Transport Links

Tring Station is 4km away, and buses serve both Tring and Aston Clinton.

## Walking Links

## Map Reference

SP 903135

## Visitor Guide

## Size

55 hectares

## Access to site

## Access around site

There are very steep steps from the car park to the top of the reservoir banks. Flat access is available via public footpath from the east of the reserve - please park considerately.

## Walking time

## Advice on what to wear/bring

The high banks of the reservoir are often exposed to cold winds - please wear warm clothing. Wellingtons are advised during autumn and winter.

## Map of site (if available)