

Aldbury Nowers

Situated on the Chiltern escarpment and adjoining The Ridgeway National Trail with superb views across the Tring Gap and Vale of Aylesbury, this reserve supports splendid wildflowers and up to thirty species of butterfly.

Aldbury Nowers (previously known as Duchie's Piece) comprises two areas of hillside linked by The Ridgeway. The warm south-facing slopes host the small but beautiful flowers of chalk grassland including common milkwort, common rock rose, clustered bellflower and lady's bedstraw.

The reserve is one of the finest butterfly habitats in Hertfordshire with Essex skippers, marbled whites, green hairstreak, brown argus, and the scarce grizzled and dingy skippers. It is also very good for other invertebrates such as solitary bees and wasps.

Birds include large flocks of redwing, fieldfare and mixed finches during the winter, when a sparrowhawk may be glimpsed as it attempts to single out small birds from these flocks.

The Trust works with the owner, the National Trust, and the reserve is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Constant management is undertaken by the Trust to prevent the important areas of short turf from being overgrown with rank grasses, scrub and encroaching woodland. This is achieved through selective clearance and careful grazing by older breeds of sheep such as Shetlands.

Autumn

Management work has now started on the reserve, with the enclosures being cut and raked to reduce bramble and coarse grass growth. A small flock of shetland sheep are also grazing the southern enclosures, having been present on site since the summer.

Late butterfly sightings have included a speckled wood and brimstone on 1/11. A visit at this time of year provides a chance to see redwings and fieldfares in the scrub and woodland that surrounds the chalk grassland. Mixed flocks of tits can be seen and a detailed search will often reveal a nuthatch or treecreeper amongst them.

Wildlife highlights this year on the reserve have included both small and chalkhill blue butterflies for the second year running and a sighting of the duke of burgundy, a species which hasn't been seen on the reserve for many years. It is hoped that with continued management both the small blue and duke of burgundy will re-establish themselves on the reserve.

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

How to Get Here

Location

Near Tring

Directions

From Tring town centre head east on Station Road to Tring Station and Aldbury. Just beyond the railway bridge turn left onto Northfield Road. Park in the small layby on the right. The reserve is a five minute walk along the track opposite the layby.

Public Transport Links

Bus/Rail: Tring railway station a 10 minute walk away.

Walking Links

Ridgeway National Trail runs through the reserve; Icknield Way; Hertfordshire Way; Chilterns Cycleway; for more walks and cycle routes in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, visit www.chilternsaonb.org

Map Reference

SP 951129

Visitor Guide

Size

11.5 hectares (28.4 acres).

Access to site

Either along the Ridgeway National Trail or from Northfield Road. The reserve is in two parts. Northern side can be reached by walking across Pitstone Hill where there is a National Trust car park.

Access around site

Some steep slopes, muddy footpaths.

Walking time

1-2 hours.

Advice on what to wear/bring

Map of site (if available)