

Oughtonhead

A mature alder/willow woodland with fen vegetation running adjacent to the River Oughton. It is adjacent to Oughtonhead Common Local Nature Reserve.



Despite being only around 5 hectares in size, Oughtonhead is one of the larger [fen](#) woodlands in Hertfordshire. For such a small reserve the diversity of [habitats](#) is surprisingly large, comprising wet and dry woodland, fen, aquatic and water margin areas. In addition there are several ditches which are important for certain fen species.

The site is typically semi-natural and has a long history of being managed as a fen. When this ceased, natural [succession](#) took place resulting in the mature alder [carr](#) seen today.

The reserve is an important habitat for birds such as kingfishers, water rail and woodcock whilst mammals such as the water shrew may be seen.

The site is owned by Hertfordshire County Council and managed by the Trust.

The reserve can be viewed by walking along the footpath which runs adjacent to the river. There is no access due to the wetland nature of the site but most of the reserve is viewable from the path. This also helps minimise disturbance to the wildlife found here.

The fen is maintained by cutting and by scrub removal to allow new growth. There is non-intervention management throughout much of the woodland.

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

How to Get Here

Location

Hitchin

Directions

From Hitchin take the A600 towards Bedford. At Ickleford turn left at the mini roundabout into Westmill Lane (the Icknield Way) Park by the farm cottages and take the footpath down to Westmill. The reserve can be seen by following the public footpath, upstream, along the River Oughton.

Public Transport Links

Bus stop on A600

Walking Links

Icknield Way

Map Reference

TL 166304

Visitor Guide

Size

5 hectares

Access to site

Access is by permit only. Contact Grebe House for details.

Access around site

Walking time

Advice on what to wear/bring

Map of site (if available)