

Activities whilst you walk

Try out some of these activities whilst you walk through the meadow.

 **Go on a sound walk.** Walk to a spot and sit or stand quietly, closing your eyes. What can you hear? Try another spot and see if you can hear anything new.

 **Go on a minibeast hunt.** Look really carefully to discover how many minibeasts you can find. Pick up a log or stick and see if you can find any hiding. Keep a list of what has been spotted. Maybe next time see if you can add to your list.



 **Play I-spy.** Take a spot on one of the benches and have a go at I-spy. To make things easier try 'I spy something green'

 **Take rubbings.** Take some paper and crayons and experiment taking rubbings of objects, trees and plants in the meadow.

 **Become a photographer.** Get the kids to take photos of any interesting things they find—wildlife or plant. Share any photos with OPT [#OPTOutdoors](#)

Self-guided walks OXFORD PRESERVATION TRUST

Exploring Heyford Meadow Nature Reserve



Getting to the start (by car)

Heyford Meadow is on Heyford Hill Lane (nearest postcode: OX4 4XS). Parking is along the roadside.

Bus: The 3A bus service stops at the end of Heyford Hill Lane and then the nature reserve is only a short walk away.

Share your experience:

Twitter: [@OxfordPresTrust](#) or Facebook

It's hard to imagine that Heyford Meadow was once a scrapyard! Five years of hard work turned this waste land into a beautiful nature reserve and the perfect place to enjoy a stroll and views of the River Thames.

1. Follow the path from the main gate to the right of the play area at the end of Broadhurst Gardens. Pass some willow trees - you are now in Heyford Meadow.

2. Depending upon when you visit, the grass and flowers in the meadow will be different heights because we manage the meadow traditionally, making hay in late summer after the wildflowers have finished. **Fun fact: The flowers in Heyford Meadow make sweet tasting hay for cows to eat over winter.**

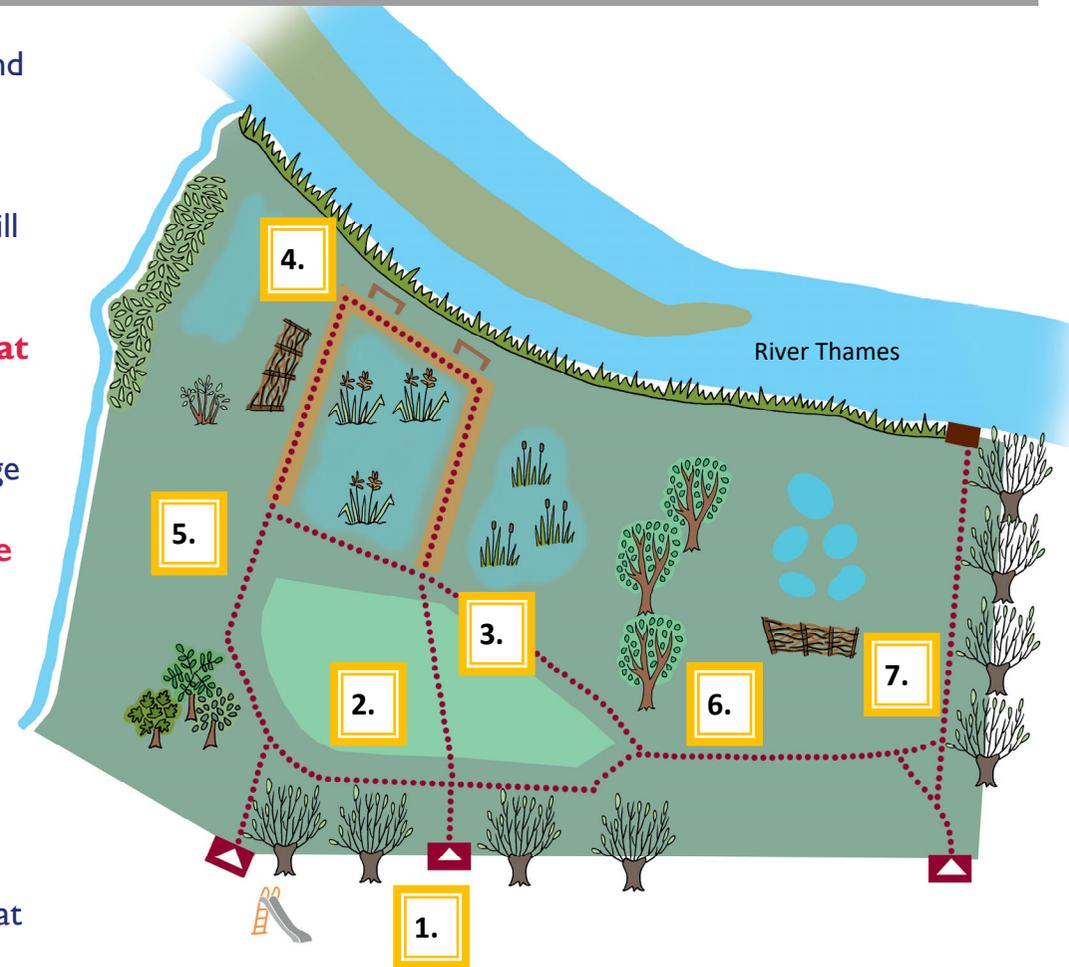
3. Walk straight ahead towards the old concrete post which marks the edge of the floodplain. Follow the boardwalk to the benches - here you'll find views of the Thames. **Fun fact: We heap the cut sedges onto old tree stumps to make homes for grass snakes.**

4. After the second bench, follow the boardwalk as it turns back to the meadow. Peep through the willow screen you might glimpse wildlife at the scrape. Frogs and toads come here each spring to breed.

5. At the end of the boardwalk follow the path straight ahead through the meadow back to the play area or, for a longer walk in the nature reserve, take the path to the left to get to the ponds. Owls hunt over the meadow at dawn and dusk. **Listen: In May you might hear a cuckoo.**

6. Just past the tall aspen trees on the left (which 'shiver' in the wind), you will see another woven screen - behind here are five small ponds of different depths. **Listen: For a coot on the Thames, a great tit singing "teach-er teach-er", or in summer, a chiff chaff singing its own name.**

7. Where the path splits after the ponds, follow it to the left and go down to the river where you have views across the Thames to OPT's riverside meadows at Kennington. Retrace your steps up the path and across the nature reserve to where you started.



Things to spot:

1. Red kites soaring overhead.
2. In April, look out for snake's-head fritillaries near the boardwalk.
3. The Owl box.
4. Dragonflies around the ponds.
5. Herons fishing on the riverbank.