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RIPON CANAL

Home to a host of interesting plants, insects, birds and animals, the Ripon Canal and wetland area forms part of a much larger wetland landscape within the Ure Valley, one of North Yorkshire's most important wildlife conservation areas.



Great willowherb

Because of its unique ecology, the canal, from Oxclose in the south to Rhodesfield in the north, is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The wetlands have been formed over the last few years by sand and gravel extraction, and feature shallow lagoons. During spring and summer the canal, grassland and wetland areas support many species of wildflower and provide a home for hundreds of nesting wildfowl and waders. In winter the wetlands provide home to even larger numbers of wildfowl, with birds coming from as far away as Siberia.

A diversity of wildlife

Many species of bird can be found here, in particular the little ringed plover, a rare migrant wading bird noticeable for its yellow eye-ring.

Little ringed plover



Lapwing

The tufted duck, kingfisher and great crested grebe breed on the wetlands, osprey are occasionally seen passing through the valley and mute swan, coot and moorhen nest along the margins. The lapwing's distinctive 'pee-wit' call can be heard for miles around.

Both the canal and the wetlands support an outstanding range of dragonflies and damselflies, including the banded demoiselle, azure damselfly and the migrant hawk dragonfly – all of which can be seen resting on leaves during the summer months. A wide variety of butterflies including peacock, small tortoiseshell and orange tip can also be found, together with a range of other insects along the towpath.

You can see many aquatic and emergent plants including greater pond sedge, ferned pondweed and amphibious bistort, as well as *Phragmites* reeds, which are establishing in the wetland lagoons. Easier to see are the white water lilies and the flag iris, whose bright yellow flowers are a striking feature of mid summer. Along the canal towpath, plants such as great willowherb and black knapweed can be observed.

USEFUL INFORMATION

WILDLIFE

The canal and wetland areas are home to a wide variety of wildlife. Take care not to disturb nesting birds. Please do not pick wild flowers.



ANGLING

The canal is home to a variety of fish species including roach, dace, chub and guppies. An Environment Agency licence is required and the rules on angling in the canal apply.



NAVIGATION

Long call boats on the canal and a narrowboat are available to hire from Ripon Marina. Please contact Ripon Marina, North Yorkshire, NG16 1JH or 01509 528225.



CIRCULAR WALK

Several walks are available from the canal and wetland areas including a 3km walk to the canal and back to the canal. For a full view of the canal and the surrounding wetlands, a 10km walk is available. The walk passes the village of Little Keby where it is possible to see a good view of the local scenery.



Ripon Canal is a very special place with a wealth of heritage and wildlife interest. Enjoy your visit and please look after the canal for future visitors.

Ripon Canal is managed by the Ure Waterways. The conservation project is in partnership with British Waterways, South and West Yorkshire, Ripon Canal Partnership, North Yorkshire Council, Ripon & Thirsk District Council.



















