

Wildlife in the Country Park

This leaflet, produced by the Friends of Hastings Country Park Nature Reserve, shows just a few of the many species of birds, butterflies, moths, plants and fungi which you might see in the Reserve



The **Northern Wheatear** likes open coastal grassland and in summer can often be seen sitting out on posts and rocks. It is an insect eater and tends to nest in holes or rock crevices. A long-distance migrant.



The **Barn Swallow** is one of our favourite summer visitors. Seen swooping over fields and ponds after insects. Often returns to the same mud-packed nests under the eaves each year.



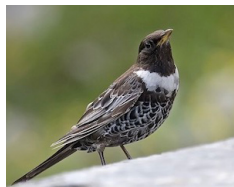
If you see a small bird of prey hovering, it's probably a **Kestrel**. It will be searching with its keen eyesight for voles, other rodents, young birds or other prey – even earthworms and insects.



The **Peregrine Falcon** has made a comeback after less use of farm pesticides. Like many birds of prey, the female is larger than the male. In the “stoop”, descending on prey, the peregrine is one of the world's fastest creatures. The photo is of a young bird.



Probably the most striking of our finches, the **Goldfinch** can often be seen perched on the top of bushes or seed heads such as thistle or teasel. The collective name for a group of goldfinches is a “charm”.



The **Ring Ouzel** belongs to the thrush family. The white band on its neck is its distinguishing feature. In the Nature Reserve it is most likely to be seen on its migration south in October from its northern uplands.



The **Yellowhammer** is a member of the bunting family and is a seed-eater which can often be seen on top of small trees in the Reserve. Its call is said to be like “a little bit of bread and no CHEESE”.



One of the crow family, the **Jackdaw** likes the cliffs of the Reserve and the fields above them. Struts around with an upright posture pecking for bugs and other food. Greyish hood to the neck.



The **Green Woodpecker** feeds mainly on ants on the ground, unlike our other woodpeckers who are more often seen on trees. Flies off with a swooping flight and a shrill call. Known by many as the yaffle.



Smaller than the more familiar herring gull and with straighter wings in flight, the **Fulmar** can be seen nesting on the cliffs from Rock a Nore eastwards. Wide ranging in search of food to scavenge in the sea.



The **Whitethroat** is a summer-visiting warbler. You might either see it singing at the top of a bush or in a bouncing flight along the hedge in front of you as if suspended on elastic.



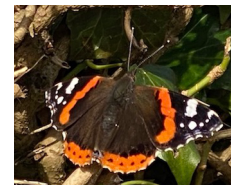
The **Stonechat** is a year-round resident, feeding on insects. Often seen as a pair, they sit out on posts and gorse bushes in the Reserve. The alarm call is like two pebbles struck together.



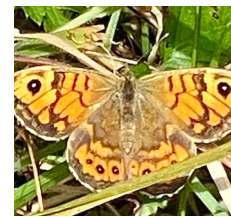
Often seen in flocks from NE Europe in winter in the Reserve, the **Meadow Pipit** really is a “little brown job” species. In summer, you might see it doing a parachute flight with a rather sad song.



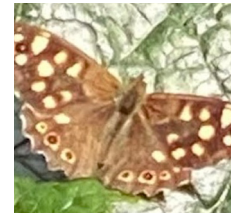
The **Cinnabar Moth**, unmistakable with its brilliant red hindwings. Lays its eggs on ragwort which turn into tiger-striped caterpillars. Common in the Reserve in the summer months.



The **Red Admiral** is one of our most striking and popular butterflies. Has a long-flying season from March to November and might actually hibernate in adult form. Stinging nettles are the preferred food plant for its caterpillars



The **Wall Brown** can be identified by its prominent eye-spots. It likes to bask on bare ground. Its caterpillars have grasses as their food plants



The **Speckled Wood** butterfly has a long flying season from April to October. The cream spots camouflage it well in dappled shade. Feeds mainly on honeydew in the treetops.



The **Ringlet** butterfly has a short midsummer flying season, often feeding on bramble blossom. Its eggs get laid on various grasses.



Both colourful and poisonous, the **Fly Agaric** is found in woodlands across the Reserve in late summer and autumn. It is usually associated with birch trees



You are most likely to see the **Shaggy Inkcap** in late summer and autumn in grass, beside paths and on recently disturbed ground. It is also known as the lawyer's wig or shaggy mane from the way it looks in later stages.



Common Dodder is a parasitic annual plant whose unmistakable slender red stems can be seen twining round gorse and heather on the coastal heaths of the Firehills. Declining and threatened in England, its tiny five petalled flowers, white tinged pink, usually appear in late summer.



Common Bird's-foot Trefoil is a prostrate perennial in the pea family that produces clusters of deep yellow flowers tinged red, turning orange as they go over. A common meadow plant that flowers in summer, it is found in drier grassy places throughout the Reserve.



Common Gorse, a prickly evergreen shrub in the pea family, is widespread in the Reserve. Its bright yellow flowers, which can be seen between November and June, smell of coconut.



The pure white flowers of **Greater Stitchwort** decorate hedgerows and open woodland between April and June. Flowers are 20-30mm in diameter with 5 petals, each divided halfway to the base. The stalkless narrow leaves are in pairs on the square stem.



Spring in the Reserve means **Bluebells** in the woods. The narrow bell-like flowers with rolled up tips, all on one side of the nodding stem, have a distinctive scent which attracts bees.



The aptly named **Bee Orchid** is a stocky orchid whose spike has several widely spaced flowers. The shape and colours of the central part of the flower bring bumble bees to mind. They can be seen during June on the meadows and verges at the entrance to the Reserve.



The yellow daisy type flowers of **Hoary Ragwort** appear in grassland in July and August. The regularly lobed leaves have curled under margins and a greyish hairy underside which distinguish it from the similar Common Ragwort.



The solitary thistle-like heads of **Common Knapweed** have many little reddish purple flowers sitting atop a solid brown and black globe. They can be seen in meadows, rough grassland and cliff tops from summer to autumn.



The smell of garlic greets you well before you see the large patches of **Ramsons** in woodland in spring. Each plant has a cluster of white flowers on a single stem between two or three broad Lily-of-the-valley like leaves.



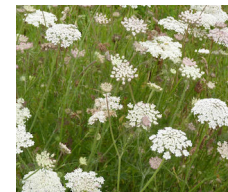
A downy plant flowering throughout the year, mostly in woodland, **Red Campion** has bright pink flowers with five notched petals and opposite leaves. Male and female flowers are on separate plants – look carefully!



Yellow Archangel has striking yellow hooded flowers with three-lobed lower lips lightly streaked with red, square stems, long runners and strongly smelling opposite leaves, it flowers in spring and early summer in woodland and on shady banks.



Heath Bedstraw, a close relative of Cleavers, has branched ascending shoots bearing whorls of 6-8 spear-shaped leaves and clusters of tiny five-petalled white flowers at the tips. Mat forming, it can look like white froth on acid grassland in June.



Summer flowering in open and grassy places and resembling garden carrot, **Wild Carrot** has feathery leaves and a noticeable ruff of three-forked leafy bits beneath a flat head of white flowers, often with a single dark red one in the centre.



Creeping and ascending, with four-petalled velvety yellow flowers in summer, and bright green unstalked toothed leaves on the stem, **Tormentil** grows on heaths and acid grassland.



Flowering in high summer on the meadows and verges near the Bale House, the lobed flowers of **Pyramidal Orchid** range in colour from pale pink to magenta (occasionally white), and form a pyramid at the top of a stem with lance-shaped leaves.



A woody undershrub of the dry heathland on the Firehills and at North's Seat, **Bell Heather** has clusters of needle-like leaves on the branched stem, and conspicuous mauvy-pink flowers in late summer and autumn.

To learn more about the work of the Friends to protect and promote this important Reserve go to our website: www.fhcpnr.org

