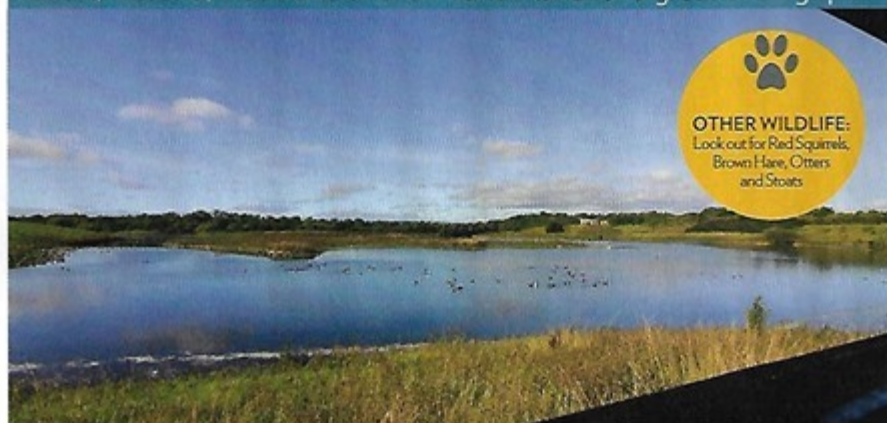


## HAUXLEY NR

Coast, wetland, woodland and farmland make for a great birding spot



**A** former opencast mine, Hauxley is one of four Northumberland Wildlife Trust reserves that border the magnificent sweep of Druridge Bay, with its protected dune system, and is an outstanding reserve in so many respects.

More than 140 species have been spotted here and it's not unusual in the summer months to see Marsh Harriers from the nearby East Chevington reserve hunting over the lake, and Grasshopper Warblers can be seen on the coastal stretch.

Basically, there is a 1.2-mile circular walk crossing streams and sluices giving you sweeping vistas of the lake and islands from different angles. It gives access to six hides, with five overlooking the lake (one of which is NWT members only). This walk has been extremely well thought out, with picnic tables around the route, benches with views, and screens to observe the reedbeds and other habitats.

The western section of the walk has open views across

farmland for species such as Lapwing, Golden Plover, Buzzard and Meadow Pipit, while the eastern section runs parallel to the coast some 60 yards away, so as we were walking this stretch, Oystercatcher, Dunlin and Eider flew overhead.

Some of the hides are very spacious, but you do need to take care when using the latches to secure the windows as they can be a bit loud in some. The path down to the member hide is well worth doing as it's very narrow and you are in a virtual tunnel of trees where we managed to get Goldcrest and other small birds. All in all an outstanding venue where literally anything can turn up.

STEVE NEWMAN

## KEY POINTS

**1** The car park has Red Squirrel feeders, and if you wait a while, you are very likely to see them. It also has a range of bird feeders, giving you Long-tailed Tits, Goldfinches and an almost resident Willow Tit.

**2** The Skua Hide overlooks the coastal vegetation with a selection of bird feeders which have Tree Sparrows and Great Spotted Woodpecker visiting, and we got a Treecreeper here too. You can also view with your scope a section of rocks on the shoreline.

**3** The Tern hide has, as the name suggests, views of the Common and Arctic Terns in summer. Roseate Terns breed on nearby Coquet Island so it's worth

checking any terns. On our visit it gave us flocks of Canada and Pink-footed Geese plus Gadwall, Shoveller and several waders.

**4** The Discovery Centre is the best place to start. You can have a coffee and scan the lake and islands from here and work out your visit. It's also a good spot for dragonflies and butterflies. Little Grebes were right in front of us on our visit, as were Reed Bunting, Teal and Snipe.

**5** This long open stretch is bordered by farmland to the west and young woodland and scrub to the east. Meadow Pipit, Wren, Kestrel, Dunnock, Pheasant, Grey Partridge, Buzzard, Jackdaw and Lapwing are all possible here.

## SITE GUIDE

GRID REF: NU 285 023

POSTCODE: NE65 0JR

**HOW TO GET THERE:** Located just south of Amble the reserve is signposted from the A1068. Please drive carefully through High Hauxley village. The reserve shares an access drive with Silver Cars Caravan Park.

**WHERE TO PARK:** The reserve has a large car park which costs £2 per day. There is no entry fee but all donations are welcome to help with upkeep of the site and facilities. Dogs are not allowed on the reserve. Reserve is open from 9am-5.30pm in summer and 9am-4.30pm in winter (check [nwt.org.uk/nature-reserves/hauxley](http://nwt.org.uk/nature-reserves/hauxley)).

Car park locked at closing time. **ACCESSIBILITY:** Accessible half-mile route to two accessible hides, plus a disabled toilet.

## FACILITIES:

The eco-friendly Wildlife Discovery Centre has a café with large windows overlooking the reserve, plus toilets, shop and information centre. There is also an outside observation lounge.

**WEBSITES:** [facebook.com/HauxleyWildlifeDiscoveryCentre](https://www.facebook.com/HauxleyWildlifeDiscoveryCentre) & [nwt.org.uk/nature-reserves/hauxley](http://nwt.org.uk/nature-reserves/hauxley)

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

Public bus service from Newcastle to Alnwick X20 stops at Hauxley Road End, a 25-30 minute walk away. Website: [arrivabus.co.uk/north-east/places/amble/](http://arrivabus.co.uk/north-east/places/amble/)

**CLUB CONTACT:** Northumberland and Tyne-side Bird Club, Andrew Brunt, email: [nbtccorg@gmail.com](mailto:nbtccorg@gmail.com) web: [nbtcc.org.uk](http://nbtcc.org.uk)

**COUNTY RECORDER:** Tim Dear, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury, Northumberland NE65 7PW. Tel: 01669 621 460, email: [t.dear@btinternet.com](mailto:t.dear@btinternet.com)

**MAPS:** OS Explorer 532 & 335, OS Landranger 81

