



Draw these symbols on the map as you walk around.

Where would you...



...sit to think?



...be still to spot wildlife?

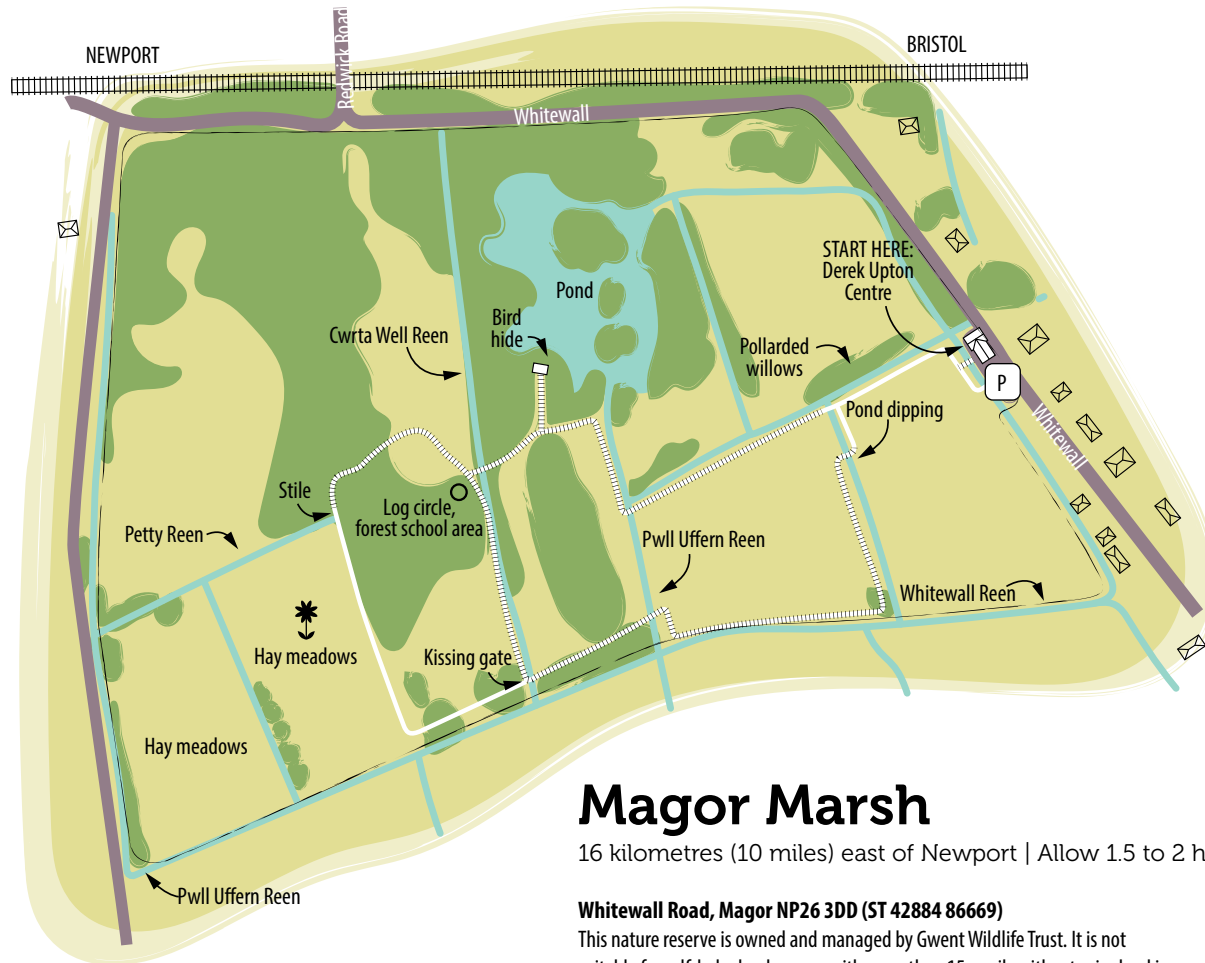


...find evidence of the past?



...feel peaceful?

KEY					
	Water		Light vegetation/rocks		Seasonal flowers for pollinators
	Tarmac/gravel		Dense vegetation/woodland		Boundary
	Mud/rocks		Path		Car park



Magor Marsh

16 kilometres (10 miles) east of Newport | Allow 1.5 to 2 hours for trail

Whitewall Road, Magor NP26 3DD (ST 42884 86669)

This nature reserve is owned and managed by Gwent Wildlife Trust. It is not suitable for self-led school groups with more than 15 pupils without prior booking due to small car parking facilities and the sensitive nature of the site.

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MAP & GUIDE



Magor Marsh

A relict marshland, unchanged for thousands of years



Water voles

The water vole, although rat-like, has a short, blunt nose, less obvious ears, a hairy, shorter tail and a rounder, more compact body. Water voles love the water channels (reens and ditches) here at Magor Marsh, digging burrows into the banks, where they nest and sleep. The clean water, lots of water plants and absence of non-native mink, which eat them, all help them to survive here.



Spotting water voles

Look for clues that water voles have been busy here at Magor Marsh. They feed on water plants and you can look for their tell-tale nibbles – a 45° diagonal cut made with their orange front teeth. If you are quiet you might hear the voles chewing some plants or plopping into the water as they dive away for cover. Look for apples left out for them on small wooden floats on the reens. Has the apple been gnawed? If so, a vole might have been busy eating it. Can you spot any small poos (droppings) on the float? These may have also come from the water vole.



Pollarding

Cutting the branches and tops of trees is known as pollarding; it is a way in which wood can be continually harvested from the same trees over and over again. After each cut the trees grow many new, young branches which can be cut periodically. Willow was, and still is, a common tree to pollard here at Magor Marsh.



Pollarded willows at Magor Marsh

What is pollarded wood used for?

Imagine that you are a person living in a large family next to the reens 500 years ago. What would you have used wood for? Think about the different members of your family – what does each person use wood for? Do we still use wood in the ways that you have listed? If not, why not? What is the advantage of using wood instead of other materials?

Magor Marsh's habitats

Magor Marsh has changed very little for thousands of years and is an example of relict fenland. It has a mosaic of habitats including hay meadows, wet woodland, sedge fens, water channels (reens and ditches) and ponds. Unlike surrounding farmland, the area close to the railway remains wet and boggy and the pond provides a watery home for some rare plants and animals. The fields remain damp during the summer and they have distinctive patterns where drains have been dug so the water can easily flow away.



Wet meadow at Magor Marsh

What makes a good home?

Visit and describe the different habitats here at Magor Marsh, and think about what animals could survive in each habitat. Why is this a suitable habitat for them? What do they use for food, bedding and warmth, and how do they keep away from predators?

I spy...



Ragged robin – pink, ragged petals

Mistletoe – round, nest-like structures in trees

Common reed – purple flowers and green stems in the summer and yellow-brown stems in the winter

Meadowsweet – sweet-scented, delicate white flowers and red stems