

The Dragonfly Walk, Holly Cross Lake, Amwell Nature Reserve

Report and photos from Steve Chilton's visit on 21 May 2009.

It is still early in the season for Dragonflies but good numbers of Common Blue, Red-eyed and Large Red Damselflies are already on the wing as are Common Blue Butterflies.



My photograph shows Red-eyed Damselfly, for more information see the HNHS book *Dragonflies and Damselflies of Hertfordshire* published last year.

During my visit, Common Terns were feeding over the lake and Hobbies are almost guaranteed to be hawking overhead. Sedge Warblers sing incessantly from the reeds and bushes and the explosive song of the Cetti's Warbler is not uncommon.

Look out for Little Egret, Little Ringed Plover and Redshank on nearby Great Hardmead Lake as well as the regular wildfowl and grebes - many of which now have young families in tow.

This area of Amwell Nature Reserve is fantastic for wild flowers now and all summer long.



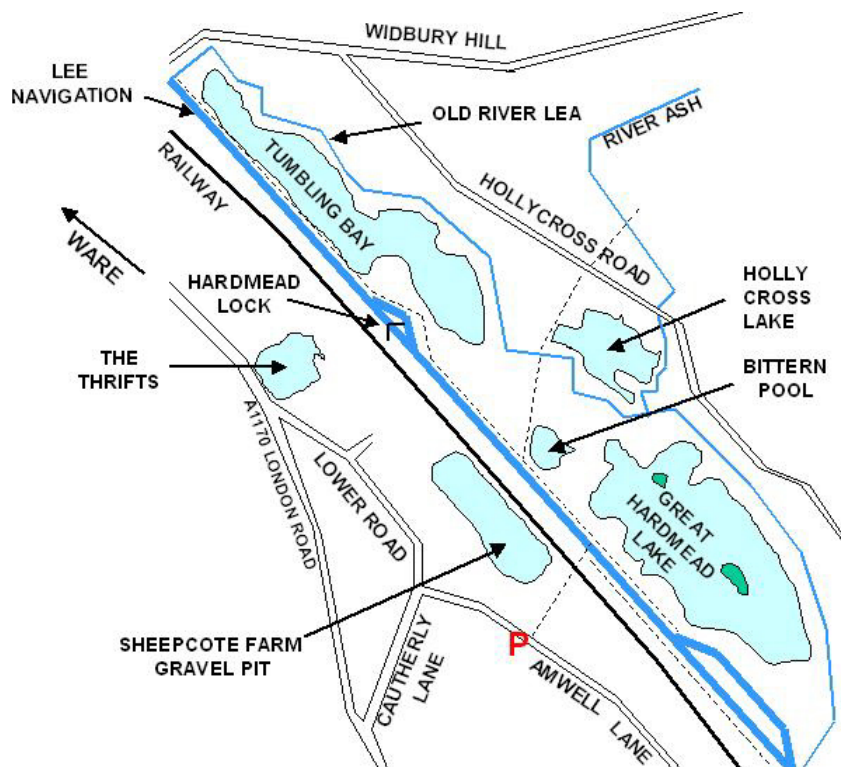
Water Mint is not yet in flower but the smell is wonderful at the water's edge. Species seen in flower included Red Clover (above), Creeping Buttercup, Common Mouse-ear Mouse-ear Hawkweed and Yellow Iris (left).

Then of course there are the orchids.



Early Marsh Orchid (left) and Southern Marsh Orchid (right) are both in flower now, as are Common Spotted, and Bee Orchids should be open very soon.

Amwell is a Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve and is open every day. Access is via Amwell lane between Great Amwell and Stanstead Abbots; grid reference TL377129



Parking is possible at the side of the road. The access point is signposted as is the route to the dragonfly walk. For further details see www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/herts/

Photograph of Amwell Reserve and access map by Alan Reynolds, text and other photos by HNHS member and local wildlife photographer Steve Chilton.