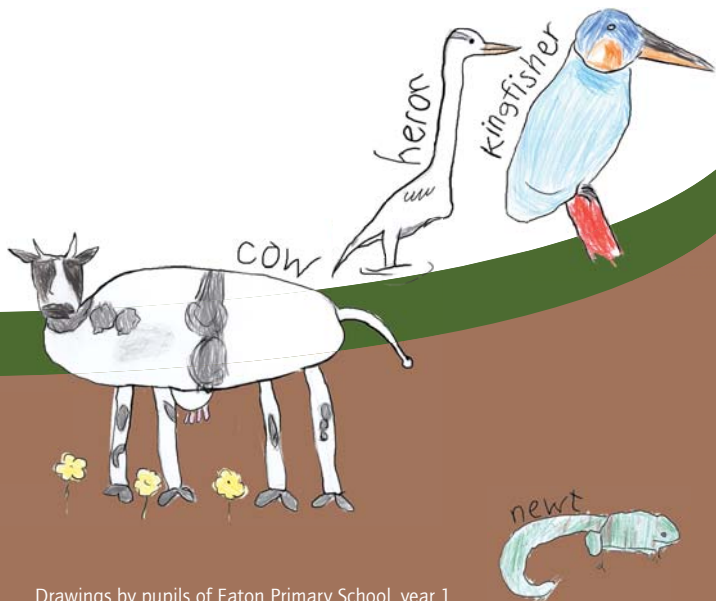




Marston Marsh

Local Nature Reserve

the countryside on your doorstep



Young volunteers from the 13th Norwich Guides clearing grass



Volunteers building a new kissing gate



Location: Marston Marsh is off Marston Lane, near Eaton, between Newmarket Road (A11) and Ipswich Road (A140) opposite the Holiday Inn.

Grid Reference: TG 215055

About Marston Marsh

Marston Marsh, located in the south of Norwich, along the banks of the River Yare is one of the city's eight Local Nature Reserves – areas that have been officially recognised by Natural England as a place with wildlife or geological features of special local interest.

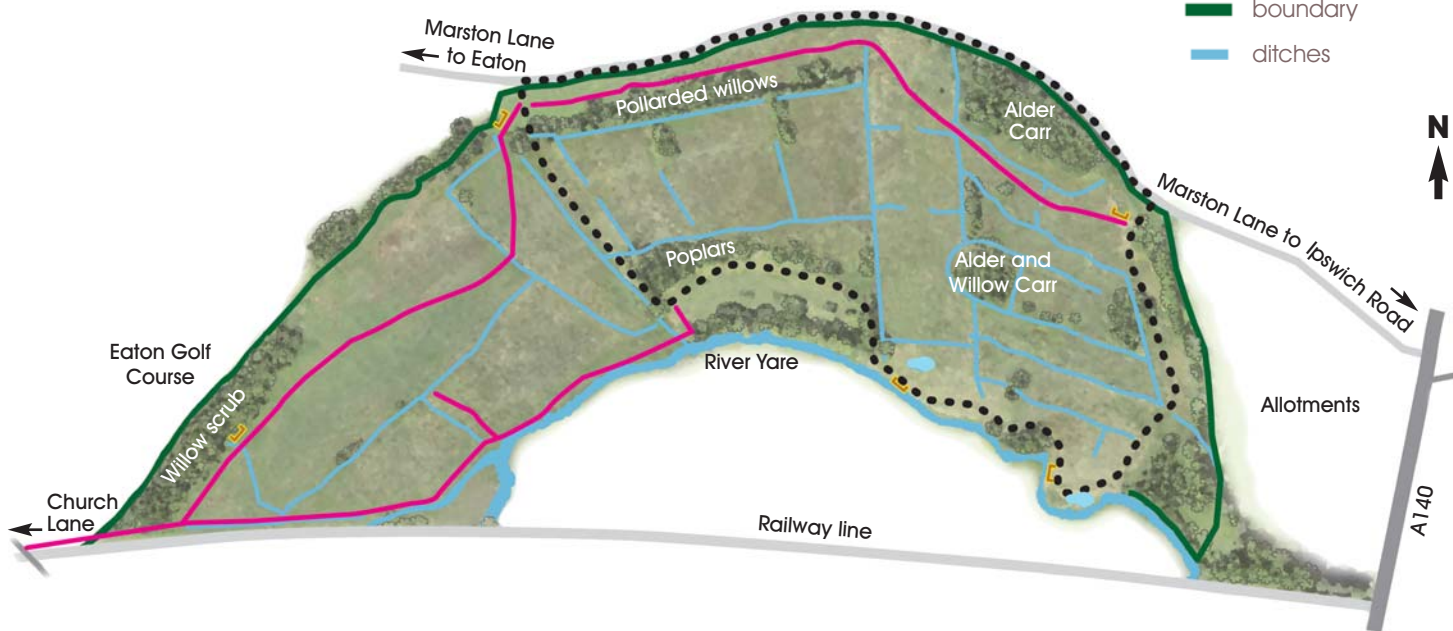
The marsh, totalling 26.5 hectares, is divided into a number of fields by a network of dykes and is owned by Norwich City Council and actively managed in partnership with Norwich Fringe Countryside Management Project.

The willow and alder trees are pollarded and coppiced approximately every 10 years and the ditch (dyke) system is dug out on a 10-15 year rotation.

Volunteers play a key role in looking after this special place.

Key

- ● access for all hard-surface path
- other paths
- fish fry pools
- mixed woodlands
- benches
- boundary
- ditches



Access to the site: Please note Marston Lane is not a through road. There is limited parking, for up to five cars, in the Danby Wood car park off Marston Lane (off Ipswich Road). There are cycle racks at both entrances – Ipswich Road and Eaton, as well as good bus links. The site is within walking distance of Eaton, Lakenham and Tuckwood and has good wheelchair and pushchair access, with a hard surface path and large kissing gates.



Access around the marsh

In 2011 a hard surface path was built around the marsh to improve access for all, including people with wheelchairs and pushchairs, so even some of the wilder parts can be explored.

The path was made possible through a grant from the Big Lottery's Community Spaces Fund, won by the Eaton Village Residents' Association.

The path was made from small amounts of gravel taken from areas of the marsh, which allowed a shallow wet scrape to be created for winter wading birds such as snipe and redshank.

The grant also helped create two pools, connected to the River Yare, as refuges for young fish (fry) and two interpretation signs providing useful information for visitors.

Grazing

Between May and November, cattle graze on the marsh. The cows act as natural lawnmowers, helping to keep the marshland open, rather than over-grown, and retain its characteristic wildflowers, birds and insects.

Marshland wildlife and plants

Willows (*Salix*) are trees common to marsh areas. Willows here on the marsh include crack and goat willow. Charcoal is made from crack willow and is used by artists for drawing, while the wood of goat willow is very light in weight and was once used to make clothes pegs and tines for rakes.

Crack willow
(*Salix fragilis*)



Here, some of the willows are pollarded and others are left as nesting habitat and song posts for marshland birds. Willows also provide welcome shade for grazing cattle on sunny days.

This snake is the largest in Britain; harmless to humans, but not to frogs which provide its main source of food. It is easily identified by distinct yellow markings on its neck and its olive or grey-green colouring.



Grass snake

Naturally adapted to both land and water you may see the grass snake in the ditches or coiled up among vegetation. Grass snakes are shy creatures, so if you see one please leave it undisturbed.

When on the marsh, you may hear the familiar sounds of the cuckoo, green and great spotted woodpeckers; or witness a grey heron fishing for food in the ditches or a kestrel hovering overhead in search of mice and voles.



Willow warblers

If you are prepared to rise early for a visit to the marsh in the month of May, you will be greeted by the dawn chorus of the reed, sedge, willow and Cetti's warblers as well as the blackcap and lesser whitethroat.



For more information or to report an issue:

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