What makes Swanwick Lakes special...

- It has scenic lakes, woods and meadows created by nature from abandoned clay workings.
- It contains many uncommon kinds of wildlife such as great crested newts, nightingales and mining bees.
- It provides a valuable space for people to relax and learn about wildlife.

Swanwick Lakes’ highlights

**Spring**
Great spotted woodpeckers drumming and morning chorus of birdsong.

**Summer**
Dragonflies darting across the water and butterflies dancing over meadows.

**Autumn**
Gold-coloured birch trees reflected in deep green lakes and fungi erupting from the woodland floor.

**Winter**
Sunlight streaking through frosted trees and flocks of tits passing close by.

Things to look and listen out for...

**Great spotted woodpeckers**
These birds are a common sight in the area, often feeding on insects in dead trees. They can be seen pecking away at trees, searching for insects to eat.

**Comon spotted orchids**
These delicate flowers are a beautiful sight in the meadows, with their distinctive spotted leaves and tall flowering spikes. They appear to cascade down from the woodland canopy in June.

**Marbled whites**
These butterflies are attracted to the seeds within teasels, using their pollen to fertilise the flowers. The male yellow catkins are a favourite food plant of goldfinches. These colourful birds can be seen feeding on the teasels in late winter.

**Common kingfishers**
These small birds are frequently seen at the edge of the reserve, perching on branches above the water. They are known for their sharp call and their ability to catch fish with a dive from a waterside perch.
Swanwick Lakes

Welcome to Swanwick Lakes, a nature reserve with scenic lakes, woods and grassland rich in orchids, birds and dragonflies. This leaflet describes the things you will find to see and do...

Events and activities – The staff at the Study Centre run guided walks, children’s activities and other events throughout the year. See the posters and leaflets for details.

Swanwick Lakes Nature Reserve is a joint project between NATS and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

Things to look and listen out for...

**Green woodpeckers** are the largest of the three British woodpeckers. They can be seen on the meadows, digging holes into ants’ nests. Listen for their laughing ‘yaffle’ call.

**Buzzards** are the commonest bird of prey in Britain. You can see them soaring over the tree tops from New Hill. This large hawk is slower than kestrels and sparrowhawks, so prefers to ambush rabbits, rats and mice by swooping down from a perch high up in a tree. Listen for their ‘mewing’ call.

**Kingfishers** are frequently seen at the lake by the centre. The shallow water brings the fish closer to the surface, making it easier for these colourful birds to catch them with a dive from a waterside perch. Listen out for their shrill repeated ‘chee’ call, and look for a blue streak flying low over the water.

**Marbled white** is a butterfly. It is particularly attracted to the seeds within teasel plants in late winter. The male yellow catkins appear to cascade off its branches like golden waterfalls. Look more closely for the tiny red filaments of their pollen.

**Common Spotted Orchids**, with their distinctive spotted leaves and tall flowering spikes, are at their best in June. These delicate pink flowers are well adapted to growing in Longaldridge Pasture, where past years of strawberry growing have disturbed the soil. The distinctive spotted leaves and tall flowering spikes are at their best in June. These delicate pink flowers are well adapted to growing in Longaldridge Pasture, where past years of strawberry growing have disturbed the soil.

**Teasels** are a favourite food plant of goldfinches. These colourful birds are attracted to the seeds within the plant’s spiny cone-like flower head. Take a closer look at the teasel flowering on New Hill in the summer. Each of these flowers develops into an energy-packed seed by autumn.

**Hazel** trees flower in late winter. The male yellow catkins appear to cascade off its branches like golden waterfalls. Look more closely for the tiny red filaments of the female flowers that appear on separate buds after the catkins have released their pollen.

What makes Swanwick Lakes special...

- It has scenic lakes, woods and meadows
- It is a rare spot of grassland
- It provides a unique space for people to relax and learn about wildlife.
- It offers a valuable space for people to relax and learn about wildlife.
- It contains many uncommon kinds of wildlife such as great crested newts, nightingales and mining bees.
- It offers a valuable space for people to relax and learn about wildlife.

Find out more...

Contact Swanwick Lakes Education Officer on 01489 570240 or visit our website at www.hiwwt.org.uk

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Swanwick Lakes’ Trails

Getting Around
Most of the paths have firm, stony surfaces and benches every 200m. There are some steep slopes but the paths are flat elsewhere. The unsurfaced paths are waterlogged and slippery when wet because of the clay soil. The path around the eastern side of New Lake has around 60 steps, is less than 1m wide and has deep mud in winter.
For more information on getting around the site, see the map or contact the Study Centre (details overleaf).

Red trail  ● ● ● ● ●
Distance:  1km (~¾ mile)
Time:  30 minutes
A circular route with views of woodland and grassland. The path goes over New Hill and there are steep slopes in some places.

Blue trail  ● ● ● ● ●
Distance:  600m (< ½ mile)
Time:  20 minutes
A circular route around Bens Lake with good views across the other scenic lakes. The path has one short steep slope.

Yellow trail  ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Distance:  500m (< ½ mile)
Time:  15 minutes
A flat circular route through the wood to the best view point overlooking New Lake.

All of the trails have firm, stony or concrete surfaces at least 1.5m wide and benches every 200m.