

# WELCOME TO PATTY'S BARN NATURE TRAIL

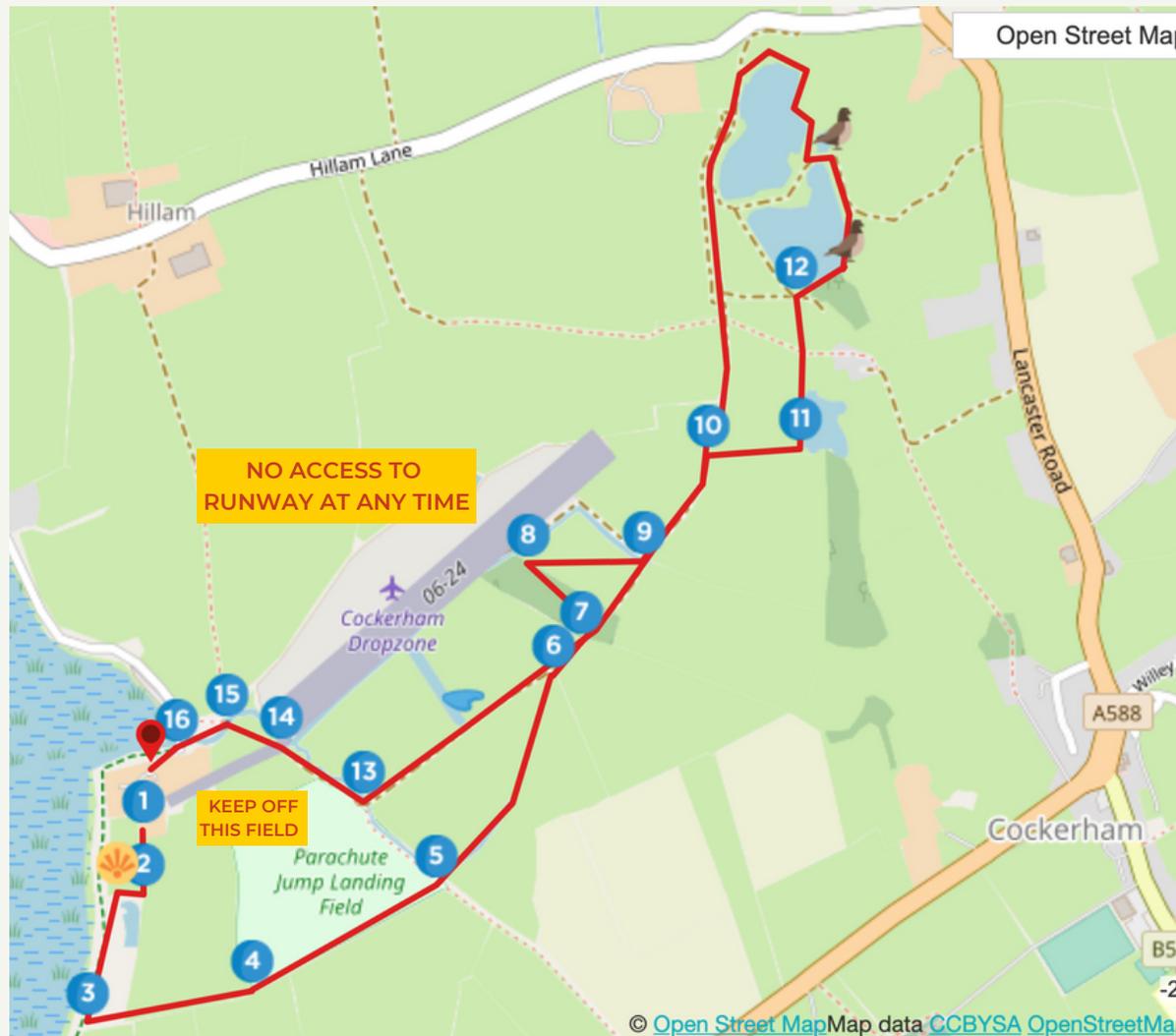
BE WILD AND WANDER

## SPRING TIME

Welcome to Patty's Barn Nature Trail. We invite you to explore and be curious. Our family are 3rd generation dairy farmers and are very connected to the land and nature that surrounds us. We're really excited to share our local area with you. Please use this trail to guide you around the site and help you identify some of the plants and animals to look out for.

## PLEASE HELP US KEEP OUR TRAIL SAFE BY FOLLOWING THESE STEPS:

1. Always follow the route outlined on the map following the green and pink arrows along the route.
2. Keep off the airfield and parachute landing field at ALL times.
3. No dogs.
4. Leave no trace of your visit, take all your litter home.
5. Leave gates and property as you find them.
6. We are a working farm so please respect the Countryside Code & any livestock.



SCAN ME FOR  
INTERACTIVE MAP



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Text by John Lamb, Senior Conservation Officer for Lancashire Wildlife Trust with contributions from Seumus Eaves, local ornithologist, and Michelle Parry, The Rewilding.



Lancashire  
Manchester  
North Merseyside



## STOPS 1-2

Walking from the start of the nature trail along the track towards Stop 2, the hedgerow on the right is dominated by Hawthorn but has some Holly too. Plants growing along the base of the hedgerow include Cow Parsley and Nettles. Several butterflies, including Red Admiral and Small Tortoiseshell, lay their eggs on nettles, and we can use them to flavour beer, to make nettle tea and as a spinach substitute in cooking!



Looking from right to left you can see from a single wind turbine to Heysham nuclear power station with the mountains in the Lake District behind, to Bank End (0.8 mile northwest) and Cockersand Abbey, to the wind turbines out to sea, Fluke Hall (5 miles southwest). The footpath on the embankment is part of the 66-mile (106 km) Lancashire Coastal Way, which will become part of the 2,795-mile England Coast Path, the Lancashire section being scheduled to open in 2022/23.

Return to the track and the woodland on the left which is dominated by Alder trees but also has Dogwood, Holly, Hazel, Rowan, willow, poplar, Ash, birch and Wild Cherry.

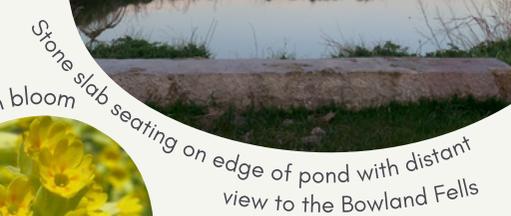
The banking to the right of the track is part of the sea defences that have been constructed between Conder Green and Knott End-on-Sea to stop the sea flooding the fields twice a day when the tide comes in. Walk up the banking and look out for Cowslips and Dandelions in flower on the bank. From the top of the bank you are looking across sheep-grazed saltmarsh that forms part of the estuary of the River Cocker, the River Lune and the much larger Morecambe Bay, which is a Ramsar site – a wetland of global importance for birds, a Special Protection Area (SPA) – a site of European importance for birds, and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – a site of national importance in England. Look out for Little Egret, Oystercatcher, Redshank and geese, together with Dunlin, Knot, Teal and Wigeon when the tide is in.

## STOPS 2-3

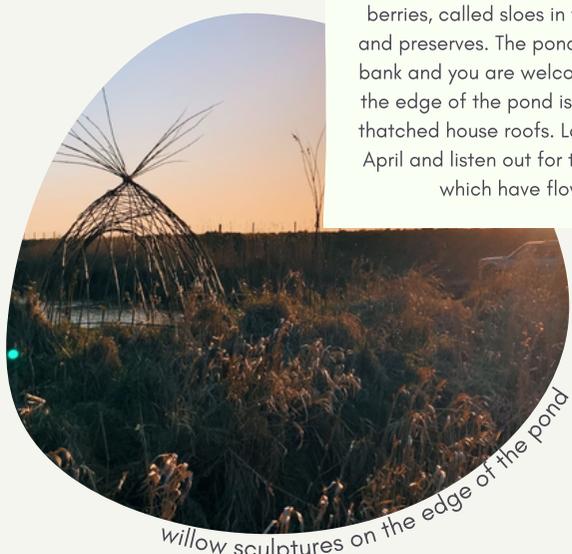
Just around the corner from post 2 on your right, Blackthorn comes into flower in April before its leaves unfurl. Blackthorn produces berries, called sloes in the autumn, which can be used to make jams and preserves. The pond on the left has living willow sculptures on the bank and you are welcome to explore them. The tall grass growing on the edge of the pond is Common Reed, which is the material used on thatched house roofs. Look out for Colt's-foot in flower on the bank in April and listen out for the song of Chiffchaff and/or Willow Warbler, which have flown back from South Africa to breed!

The tree in the hedgerow on the other side of the track with a bird nest box on the trunk is a poplar, which has flowers hanging in catkins in April. Pause a while to see if there are any birds nesting in the box...

Pond at Stop 2 with Common Reed growing on the edge.



Past the willow on the corner of the pond, the stone slabs on the ground are there to sit on if you want to pause for a while.





## STOPS 3-4

Walk along the edge of the field with reeds lining the ditch on your right with Hawthorn and Bramble on the other side of the ditch. The marker with F.W.B M is a Fylde Water Board Mains water pipe.



Lesser Celandines

## STOPS 4-5

In the distance the hills that you can see are part of the Forest of Bowland, which is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), but also a SPA and SSSI (as above). Much closer is Cockerham Church. Look out for Brown Hare, Meadow Pipit and Lesser Celandine.



Ditch lined with reeds with view to the Forest of Bowland AONB, Mini Stonehenge'

View to the Bowland Fells



View to St Michael's Church



View back over the "Invisible Pond"



## STOPS 7-8 AND 8-9

The trail leads to the "Invisible Pond", so called because it isn't visible until you get up close to it. At the pond look out for Greylag Geese, Mallard, Moorhen, Reed Bunting, Shelduck, swans and, if you're really lucky, a Kingfisher. You may see fish rising to the surface as the pond has been stocked with trout. Bear left walking away from the pond.

## STOPS 6

On the far side of the pond, bear right on the flagged path away from the corner of the wood dominated by Wych Elm, Ash and Sycamore.

Loop around the pond, bearing left with a third seating area on the right hand side having a good view to St Michael's Church, Cockerham, on the right. The woodland in front of you is called Nelson's Wood has a Rookery typically with around 90 nests. Return to the track looking out for Roe Deer.

Bluebells



Wych Elm leaves and seeds

## STOPS 5

Enter Patty's Wood, which is dominated by Sycamore trees with an understorey of Hawthorn, Holly and Wych Elm. Turn left into the wood, noting the bug house on the right and the mini Stonehenge on left, which is a seating area for groups, schools and visitors to use for storytelling mindfulness etc.



Wildflowers in the wood include Bramble, Ivy, Ramsons (often called Wild Garlic), Red Campion, Nettle and Snowdrops. Continue to the pond, looking and listening out for Great-spotted Woodpecker, Blackcap (one of the Sylvia family of birds, whose songs vary from sounding like tinkly bells to heavy metal!), Willow Warbler, Wren, Goldfinch, Blue and Great Tits, Chaffinch and Mallard. The screen on the left of the path is a windbreak.

Patty's Wood with the windbreak on the right



Step onto the flagged path in between two Wych Elm trees, which have survived being infected with Dutch Elm Disease probably because they are isolated from other elms in the wider landscape and too far away for the beetles, which carry the fungus that kills elm trees, to fly. From late April through May, Bluebells should be in bloom. Ash trees are also growing adjacent to the path and these are threatened with a new disease called Ash Dieback, which is a fungus that was imported to England in 2012 on infected trees grown in Europe. Up to 95% of Ash trees in the UK are expected to be infected and die from the disease!

## STOPS 10-11

Pass three Horse-chestnut trees and then a veteran Ash tree on your right (veteran trees are those that are significantly bigger, and presumably older, than trees of that species in the surrounding landscape). This Ash has a diameter, measured 1.3m above ground level of 6.7 metres which, using Alan Mitchell's 1 inch per year rule, gives the tree an estimated age of 264 years!



Veteran Ash tree, estimated to be around 264 years old

Bear right heading to the right of the woodland ahead, past '290' and into the field beyond. Ware Cottage that you can see on the right hand side is a grade 2 listed building. There should be some Alpacas in the field on the right hand, but keep the wood on your left looking and listening out for Tree Sparrows, which have a chocolate-brown head unlike the grey heads of House Sparrows. When you reach the lake, called Swan Lake, you may be able to see up to 400 swans! Three Black Swans have been seen on the lake in the past. The waterbody is also a specialist carp lake used by local anglers - the biggest being a 35-pound specimen named "Two Scar Monster"!



Swan Lake with fisherman

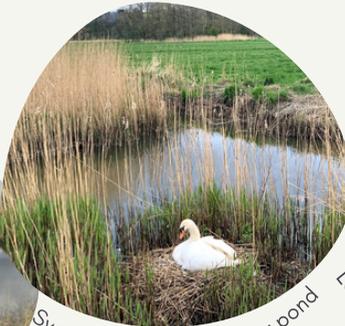


## STOP 14 BACK TO STOP 5

Bear left onto the track, passing a linear pond on the right - look out for Grey Heron, Mallard, Moorhen, Reed Bunting, Sedge Warbler and a pair of Mute Swans.



Linear pond with reflections



Swan nesting in the linear pond



Looking up at the quarry face

There is a Sand Martin colony in the former sand and gravel quarry ahead of you. The quarry was excavated between 1995 and 1999). There are usually 40 to 50 active holes and each pair of birds each rears 3 to 4 young, hence there can be between 160 and 250 Sand Martins leaving the quarry each year. The quarry face reveals the layers of sand and gravel deposited during the last ice age, and the timescale from the top to the bottom is several 1000 years.

## STOPS 13-14

Head away from the quarry walking in between the two lakes, looking out for Buzzards overhead and Cormorants and Grey Herons on the waterbodies. The dark green circular building ahead is Cockerham Green Energy's anaerobic digester which uses agricultural waste to produce green electricity. There is a patch of Bulrushes in the corner of Swan Lake - look out for Reed Bunting, which feed on the Bulrush seeds in the autumn.

Cockerham Green Energy's anaerobic digester



## STOPS 12-13

If it's clear you should have views of the Lake District in the distance.



Sand Martin "in the hand"



Sand Martin leaving nest hole in sand quarry face



## STOPS 5-15



From Stop 15, keep right and follow the path past a red windsock called the "Red Dancing Lady" by children at Cockerham School, then crossing the road with care using the Green Cross Code towards Stop 16. Please stick to the footpath and do not go onto the parachute landing field located on the left.



The "Red Dancing Lady"

"Witches Brooms" in birch tree



View along ditch from the footbridge

Turn left out of the woodland and head towards the stile. Damsons bushes may be in bloom in the line of shrubs on the right, which then produce their fruit in the autumn. Walk up onto the sea defence embankment from which you can see a lighthouse 2.5 miles away on Plover Scar to the right of Bank End Farm - the plover referring to the Grey Plover, although another name for Lapwing is the Green Plover, both of which can be seen along the coastline here and there.

## STOPS 16-17

Head towards and into the woodland, looking out for Witches Brooms on the birch trees - the 'broom' is a growth produced by the tree in response to being infected by Witches Broom fungus. Cross the footbridge over the ditch and from late April through May, Bluebells should be in flower in the woodland.

Look out for the way marker with a red flag and please stay to the track, do not bear right or left toward Black Knights Parachute Centre or the runway, there is no access to these areas at any time.

Views along the sea defence embankment from the end of the nature trail



High Tide



View to Pattys Barn in the setting sunlight

# THANK YOU!

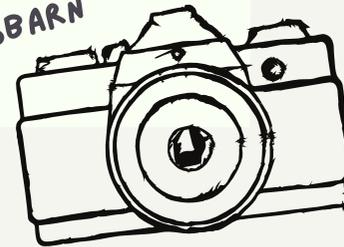
WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED OUR SPOT

We hope that you have enjoyed the Spring Nature Trail - why not return to retrace your steps in the summer and/or autumn to see how things change through the seasons?

Stay curious!



TAG YOUR PICTURES  
@PATTYSBARN



SCAN ME FOR  
INTERACTIVE MAP



### WE'D LOVE TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK?

We'd love to hear about your experience, and if you have any feedback please let us know by emailing [hello@the-rewilding.com](mailto:hello@the-rewilding.com)



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