



The bird hides at Standlake Common Nature Reserve offer a tranquil place to relax and watch wildlife, on the Windrush Path, between Standlake and Newbridge.

When Oxfordshire County Council granted permission to SITA in the 1990's, to extract gravel from this area of farmland, it also provided a wonderful opportunity to work with the mineral company to create a new nature reserve next to the River Thames.

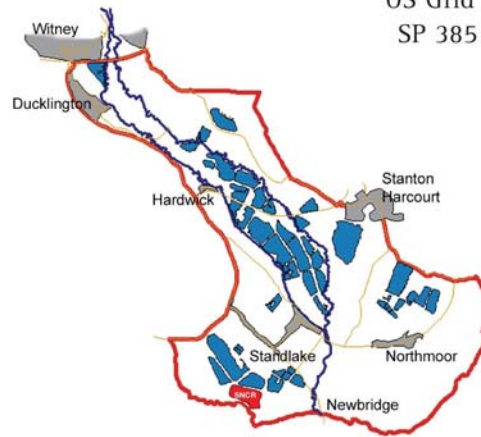
Extraction was completed in 2000 and since then a mosaic of wetland habitats have been established on this 25ha site, that now supports a wealth of wildlife. To date more than 150 species of bird have been recorded with an increasing number successfully raising young during the summer.

In order to avoid disturbing the resident wildlife, particularly during the nesting season, the reserve has been carefully designed to allow visitors to view the whole site from two hides.

Keys for these hides are available for purchase from the project office, enabling access at anytime. Public access across the rest of the reserve is not permitted.

The nature reserve is found within the Lower Windrush Valley to the south of Standlake and can be accessed via the Windrush Path from Standlake or Newbridge. Please note there is no public car park at the reserve itself.

OS Grid Ref:  
SP 385 018



For further information about how to obtain a key to access the bird hides contact:

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## Welcome

## Contact

## Standlake Common Nature Reserve

The nature reserve is an important site in the Lower Windrush Valley, an area that has been transformed by mineral extraction over the last 60 years.

With extraction set to continue for many years to come the Lower Windrush Valley Project was established to deliver a range of environmental initiatives that aim to strengthen the landscape, protect and enhance the biodiversity and improve public access opportunities in the valley.

### Access for all

The bird hides are accessible to wheelchair users with limited parking for blue badge holders. Please contact project office for further information.



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The reedbed was created by planting many pot grown reed shoots that quickly established and spread across the western shore. The dense reed provides nesting sites for small birds such as the reed bunting, a winter roost for flocks of starling and seclusion for more timid waterfowl like the Water Rail.

The lake incorporates a range of features along the gently sloping, sinuous shoreline and many islands that attract birds throughout the year. In winter, large numbers of duck visit the reserve to feed, whilst in summer, Great Crested Grebe, Coot and Lapwing all successfully rear young. The extensive areas of bare mud and gravel also provide nesting sites for Common Tern, Little Ringed Plover and Redshank.

The Windrush Path is a new route being developed by the Lower Windrush Valley Project that ultimately aims to provide a link between Witney and the Thames Path National Trail.

The nature reserve is found along the southern section of the Windrush Path, which opened in 1999. This 3km section of the path runs from the River Thames at Newbridge to Standlake.

A picnic area has also been created on the Windrush Path at Standlake Common for use by walkers and visitors to the nature reserve.

The bird hides provide good views across the site and so access is not permitted across the reserve. Keys for the hides are available to purchase from the project office and enable you to visit these and other hides in the Lower Windrush Valley at anytime.

The bird hides are accessible to wheelchair users and there is limited parking for blue badge holders directly next to the Langley Lane Bird Hide.

Dogs may be taken into the hides so long as they are kept on leads and do not disturb wildlife or visitors.

The meadow to the south of the lake has been sown with a range of grass species and is managed as a traditional hay meadow, which is cut in July and then grazed by livestock until the winter floods arrive.

Nest boxes have been installed on the old electricity poles in the meadow to encourage barn owls and kestrels to breed in this area which offers a good hunting ground.

The River Thames flows along the southern boundary of the reserve. The good bankside vegetation and abundant fish populations provide excellent habitat for otters that have been seen visiting the site.

To the north the straight drainage channel of the Brighthampton Cut supports many wetland plants. Kingfishers and a variety of damselflies are also often seen.

The hedges, trees & scrub that form the boundary of the reserve provide good cover for wildlife and the many berries and seeds produced each autumn attract birds such as the goldfinch.

