

WEIR WOOD RESERVOIR

The reservoir was created in 1954 by damming the River Medway. Originally built to supply water to Crawley, it is now used only as a control source. It is owned by Southern Water and is just over 2km long by 200m to 300m wide. It covers an area of 150 hectares.

Because of the rich community of breeding, migrating and wintering birds the whole reservoir was declared a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1966. The western end was classified as a Local Nature Reserve in 1988.

THE NATURE RESERVE

In addition to the reservoir, there are various habitats, including: water meadows, marsh, pools, reed and streambeds, hedgerows, mature and coppiced woodland.

There is one of the largest heronries in Sussex with over 25 nests visible from the hide. Great Crested Grebes are present all year round.

Surveys have identified:

- 240 plant species, some rare in Sussex, such as Orange Foxtail and Marsh Valerian
- 257 species and 5 subspecies of birds
- 34 species of butterfly
- 24 species of Damsel and Dragonfly.
- 296 species of moth.
- 20 species of mammals including 3 species of deer
- 9 species of reptile and amphibians.

Access inside the nature reserve is limited to organised visits. These are arranged by the Friends and publicised in our Newsletter, on our web site and in our Facebook group.

FRIENDS OF WEIR WOOD SOCIETY

Formed at the end of 1996, the Friends manage the site ably assisted by ESCC Rangers to maintain the Reserve for the benefit of wildlife and to develop its biodiversity.

**To mark our 25th anniversary in 2021 we produced a book on *The Nature of Weir Wood*.
For further information please contact the Membership Secretary.**

The objectives of the Society are set out in our constitution. Members of the Society carry out much of the biological survey and maintenance work.

Recent conservation work includes: planting hedgerows; creating reed beds and ponds, building the Tern rafts and replacing bridges.

We maintain over 100 bird nesting boxes plus bat boxes

We have licensed bird ringers who record for the British Trust for Ornithology.

We keep records of all birds seen at Weir Wood which are submitted to the Sussex Ornithological Society, for the Sussex Bird Report, and to the national database.

During the winter we provide bird feeders by the hide car park.

We publish quarterly Newsletters for all members.

Volunteering

Please come and help us with conservation or survey work. There is something for all ages and abilities. You will be most welcome.

Working parties meet in the car park on Tuesday mornings at 09:30. Please see our web site for further details.

Keeping it clean.

The Friends try to keep the hide and car park free of litter.

WHEN TO WATCH BIRDS

Spring and Autumn are good for passing migrants, Ospreys are occasional visitors. When the water level falls waders feed at the margins.

Winter brings large numbers of wildfowl to the reservoir. The feeding station by the car park attracts many bird species - and bird watchers. There may be close views of less common species such as Siskin, Marsh Tit, Brambling, Reed Bunting, Great Spotted Woodpecker and Redpoll. Nesting starts in the heronry on the north bank early in the New Year. Whillet's reed bed holds Reed Bunting and Starling roosts and Water Rail.

Breeding time. The variety of habitats supports a high breeding population. Whitethroats in front of the hide, Mandarin Duck deep in the reserve, Common Tern on the rafts, Great Crested Grebe below the heronry and Cormorants next to it. Reed Warblers nest in the reed bed. Tawny and Barn Owls and Stock Doves nest in the woods and meadows.

Post breeding season sees young birds exploring, and the unexpected may occur.



WHERE TO WATCH BIRDS

There is a hide and viewing area by the free car park at the western end of Legsheath Lane.

Other viewing possibilities are from roads (caution):-
Laybys in Legsheath Lane - south side of reservoir,
and Whillet's Bridge for views of pool and reed bed.

The Sussex Border and the Millennium footpaths, on the north side, give views across the reservoir. Follow the signs to the Millennium Path from the car park by the Pumping Station at the dam end.

Those carrying their membership card are permitted to view from in front of the Weir Wood Sailing Clubhouse at the dam end.

JOIN THE FRIENDS

To join, please complete the form below and return it to :-

**Membership Secretary,
10 Woodlands, Pound Hill, Crawley
West Sussex RH10 3DL.**

Email: membership@weirwood.me.uk

Minimum subscription **£3** per person. All additional donations will be most welcome and are used for our important conservation work.

Name

Address

Telephone no

Email address

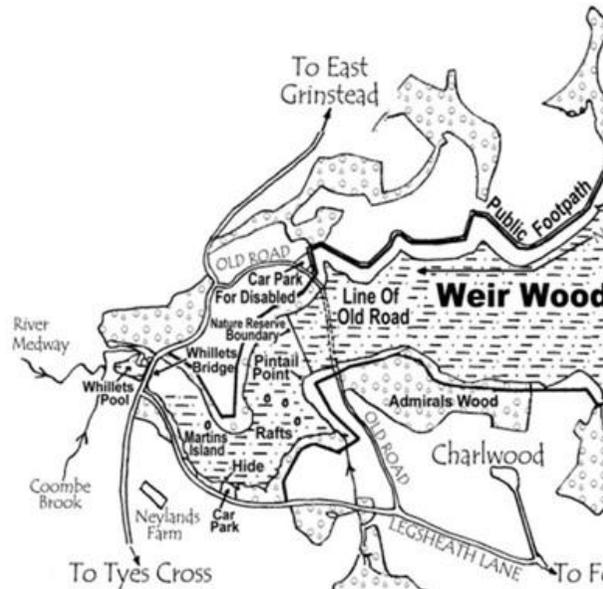
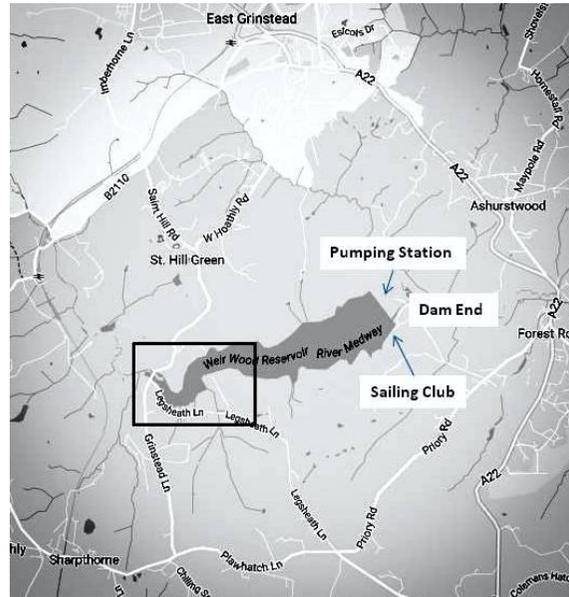
I enclose £.....

Please make cheques payable to:-
'Friends of Weir Wood'.

To pay by bank transfer please ask for details.

LOCATION

Maps not to scale
OS grid reference TQ3834



Western end and nature reserve.

Bus route 84 crosses Whillet's Bridge.

FRIENDS of WEIR WOOD SOCIETY

25 YEARS of CONSERVATION



For more information visit our website

www.weirwood.me.uk

and

Friends of Weir Wood

on Facebook.