

Inkpen Wild Walk

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



Explore west Berkshire: this walk includes ancient heathland, woods and downs and spectacular views

Starting in Kintbury, this 17 km circular walk takes in the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust's (BBOWT) Inkpen Common and Inkpen Crocus Field nature reserves.

- 17 km/10.5 miles (about 4.5–5 hours)
- The end of stage 2 and start of stage 4 are very steep
- There is a shorter 10km/6 mile circular section which starts at Inkpen Common nature reserve. There are further paths around the reserve to explore further
- BBOWT's Kintbury Newt Ponds nature reserve is nearby

How to get to the start

Postcode: RG17 9UT Grid ref: SU 387 672

By bus: Check www.traveline.info for information about local buses

By train: The walk starts at Kintbury railway station, check www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times

By car: There is parking in Kintbury, by Wayfarer's Walk and limited parking on Great Common Road, Inkpen

By bike: There is limited cycle storage at Kintbury railway station



Please help us look after wildlife by keeping dogs on short leads at Inkpen Common and picking up after them.



Please note no dogs are allowed at Inkpen Crocus Field.

Inkpen Common Nature Reserve

This remnant of Inkpen Great Common, dominated by heathers and gorse, contains many plants both beautiful, such as pale dog-violet, tormentil, heath milkwort and heath spotted-orchid, and unusual such as lousewort and the parasitic common dodder.

Oak and birch fringe the heath, supporting breeding finches and warblers that provide a chorus of birdsong during spring and summer. A carpet of rushes and bog mosses in the small valley bog is punctuated by yellow blooms of bog asphodel through the summer.

Fungi, including the attractive but poisonous fly agaric, erupt from the ground each autumn. Periodically trees are cut down to restore open heath, and livestock are used to maintain this by grazing the young saplings and regrowth.

Inkpen Crocus Field – renowned for its spectacular display of thousands of crocuses blooming each spring. You can also see many butterflies, such as ringlet, orange-tip and gatekeeper, on this flower-rich meadow later in the year.

Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)

BBOWT relies on the support of our members to help us look after local wildlife. By joining BBOWT you can help to secure the future of special landscapes like Inkpen Common and Inkpen Crocus Field. [Join us today!](#)

NATURE NOTES



The song of **skylarks** is one of the iconic sounds of the

countryside. Listen out for the seemingly endless song as it pours down from high above your head. Skylarks are found on grassland and farmland where they nest on the ground. Modern farming methods have led to a decline in the number of skylarks in recent years. BBOWT is working with farmers and landowners to promote wildlife-friendly practices to help skylarks and other farmland birds.



In autumn an array of fungi emerge from the ground. The **fly**

agaric is the toadstool of fairy tales with its red cap covered with white spots. It's poisonous to humans but edible to slugs and rabbits. Look for them growing on the ground near birch trees. The toadstools we see above the ground are actually the fruiting bodies of the fungus which has an extensive body hidden within the soil.



Buzzards are a common bird of prey that can be seen all

year round. They take a wide selection of prey from rabbits, voles, mice and shrews to frogs, toads, insects, earthworms and fledglings. These tree-nesting birds are often seen soaring overhead. **Red kites** are also common in this area and soar high above too. But red kites have a distinctive forked tail and two white patches under their wings.



Brown hares rely on speed for protection and escape from danger,

instead of bolting down holes like rabbits. Hares, distinguished from rabbits by black ear tips, lie up in shallow depressions in open ground to escape predators. Unlike rabbits that are born blind and naked, young hares or 'leverets' are bright-eyed, fully furred and ready for action from birth. Look out for them on open grassland and farmland. During the breeding season in spring they can be seen 'boxing'.

STAGE 1

Start to Inkpen Common nature reserve

From Kintbury railway station, cross the canal, then after 100 metres turn right on to Mill Bank. Climb the steps at the end, turn left at the road and follow the footpath past the church, across High Street, along Titcomb Way and past pasture. Cross a stream and continue to the road beside Titcomb Manor. Turn left, then as the road bends left, take the footpath straight on. Follow the footpath beside field edge, across another road, and beside paddocks and gardens. At the end of the footpath, cross the driveway and follow the bridgeway down through the wooded stream valley to INKPEN COMMON NATURE RESERVE.

STAGE 2

Inkpen Common nature reserve to Wayfarer's Walk

Follow the footpath through the nature reserve, and just before the exit, turn right on to the footpath beside the power lines. After 100 metres, take the left path as it forks, then over the boardwalk to the reserve boundary. Turn right then after 400 metres turn left on to the restricted byway. At Great Farm turn right along the road, and then at the right hand bend, take the second footpath (beside the wood). Follow the footpath by the hedge, across the road, and up through steeply sloping pasture, heading left of the scrub on the ridge line.

Look for pale dog-violet flowering in May and heathers flowering in late summer at INKPEN COMMON NATURE RESERVE.

STAGE 5

Lower Green to Kintbury railway station

Turn right at the road and head towards Inkpen, carry straight on at the first road junction, and then take the footpath just after the second road junction. Follow the footpath besides gardens and paddocks to Manor Farm, and then straight on through pasture and under a large laurel tree to a private drive. Turn right and follow the drive on to Pottery Lane. After 100 metres, turn right to explore INKPEN CROCUS FIELD NATURE RESERVE. Continue to the end of Pottery Lane, and take the footpath straight on at the road junction bearing right across field. Turn left on to the track, and then just after crossing the stream, bear left at the path junction, then straight on to Great Common Road. Turn left and follow the road to the main Inkpen Common reserve entrance. Retrace your route back to Kintbury.

Look for brown hares in pasture.

STAGE 4

Wigmorease Pond to Lower Green

After a small pond, turn left and head directly down the steep slope, then take the path left, down to the field corner. Take the bridgeway beside the tree plantation, then straight on between arable fields to the road.

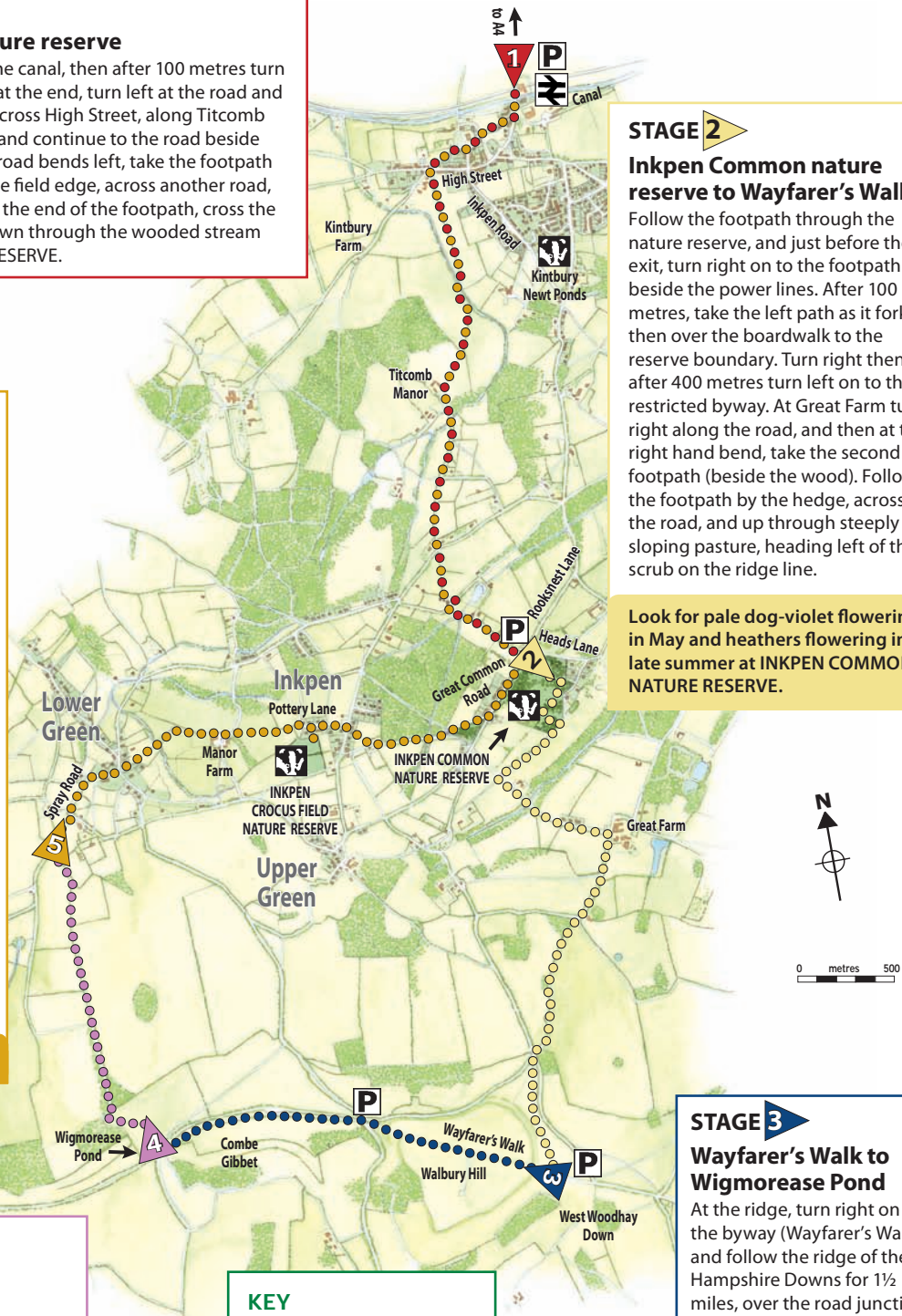
Look for buzzards soaring above the woods.

STAGE 3

Wayfarer's Walk to Wigmorease Pond

At the ridge, turn right on to the byway (Wayfarer's Walk), and follow the ridge of the Hampshire Downs for 1½ miles, over the road junction and past Combe Gibbet. After 600 metres, at the clump of beech trees, turn right on to the bridgeway.

Listen for skylarks singing high above the downs.



KEY

- BBOWT Nature Reserve
- Railway station
- Bus stop
- Parking

WILDLIFE HIGHLIGHTS

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Purple carpet of heathers at Inkpen Common								✓	✓	✓		
Delicate wild flowers on the chalk downs						✓	✓	✓	✓			
Drifts of purple and white spring crocus at Inkpen Crocus Field		✓	✓	✓								
Skylark singing over the downs			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Autumn fungi at Inkpen Common									✓	✓	✓	