

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF THE COLNE VALLEY



Points of interest/history



A) Stockers Lake was formed by gravel extraction. Now a wide range of aquatic plants have become established. It was designated as a Local Nature Reserve in 1984 and is managed by Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust. The lake is characterised by gravel ridges which form a series of islands providing an important refuge for wildlife. Ducks are abundant in winter. Shoveler and Goldeneye visit in nationally important numbers, and Smew and Pochard are occasional. In the breeding season, Common Tern nest on floating rafts and there are good views of the large heronry.

B) On your right at the far end of the lake is the large Springwell Reedbed. Most of the site is dominated by Common Reed, with some Greater and Lesser Pond Sedge. Scattered Alder, Crack Willow and Grey Willow can also be found. The site is a home for harvest mice and is also noted for large numbers of breeding Reed Warblers and Sedge Warblers. In winter, the reedbed is a roosting site for many birds, with up to 100 Reed Bunting and 300 Starlings a regular occurrence. Birds of prey such as Sparrowhawk and Peregrine Falcon are sometimes seen. Other rare wintering birds include Snipe, Water Rail and Bearded Tit.

C) Completed in 1803, the canal was originally known as the Grand Junction Canal. It provided an important transport route for carrying goods between London, Birmingham and the north by narrowboats and barges – the “M1” of its time. Building the canal was an amazing achievement as there were no machines to handle the thousands of tons of earth and rock – this was all moved by men using picks and shovels and by horse and cart.

D) Note the old industrial site and disused wharf on the opposite bank associated with a chalk pit. Further on, look out for two coal tax posts on your left, one granite and one (just before Stockers Lock) painted metal with the City of London coat of arms. These are boundary markers to indicate where tax was due on coal and other fuel brought into the London area under certain 19th century Acts of Parliament. Over 200 posts survive. Most are listed structures.



RICKMANSWORTH LAKES

CIRCULAR WALK
8

3¾ miles
short route 2¼ miles

A peaceful walk around three lakes on what was once a busy gravel extraction site



Access: Mostly level ground and good paths or boardwalks. Some small slopes and muddy patches in winter.



Refreshments: Café and public toilets at Rickmansworth Aquadrome near waypoint 1.



Public Transport: R21 bus from Uxbridge via Maple Cross to Harefield stops close to Rickmansworth Aquadrome. Other buses stop in Rickmansworth centre, which has a train station.



By Road: Junction 17 of the M25 then head towards Rickmansworth on the A412 and follow signs for Rickmansworth Aquadrome on Frogmoor Lane.

Parking: Free parking at Rickmansworth Aquadrome or there are other free car parks in the centre of Rickmansworth.



Postcode: WD3 1NB (approx.)


OS Grid Ref: TQ 056 938


Latitude: +51.6330, **Longitude:** -0.4754

What3Words: vine.barks.memo

Explore the
Colne Valley Park
Countryside on your doorstep






For points of interest/history, turn over when you see this 

1) From Rickmansworth Aquadrome car park, head down the tarmac path to the lakes with the café and toilet buildings on your left. Keeping Bury Lake on your left, follow the path around two sides of the lake until you reach a T-junction. Turn right and then after 100 yards (just before a bridge over the River Colne) left through a kissing gate. Follow the path with the river on your right and then Stockers Lake on your left for about ½ mile until you reach a kissing gate and then a bridge on your right 
(A)

Shortcut: Do not cross the footbridge - bear left through a gate and follow the path with Stockers Lake on your left to reach waypoint 5.

2) Cross the River Colne via the footbridge and follow the path with the attractive Inns Lake on your right until you reach a road (Springwell Lane). Cross the road and enter the small Springwell Lake car park (currently closed). Go through the gate at the end of the car park

3) Follow the path to the right and walk around Springwell Lake.  (B) When you reach the tarmac road, follow this to the left then, just before the bridge, turn off the roadway through the gate on your right and then turn left onto the canal towpath to reach Springwell Lock where there is another small car park.  (C) . This part of the walk may be muddy in winter, so wellies are advised.

4) Follow the canal towpath for approximately 1 mile.  (D) Immediately after Stockers Lock take a path on the left that leads away from the towpath. After 100 yards, turn right at a path junction.

5) Walk alongside Bury Lake. You will see the car park on your right after about ¼ mile.

