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Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve



Only two miles from Leeds' bustling city centre and surrounded by both residential and commercial development, Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve is a surprisingly green, quiet and relatively undisturbed mix of wetland, meadow and young woodland copse with great views of the River Aire.

Join us
Protect local wildlife

Reserve information

Location
Redcote Lane
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS4 2AL

Map reference
SE268344

Great for...
birdwatching
getting away from it all
wildflowers

Best time to visit
May - Feb

Get directions
[Find out here](#)

Public transport
[Plan your journey](#)

Situated on the site of former Kirkstall Power Station, Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve now supports large areas of wildflower meadow and wetland areas of pond, bog and reedbed.

A large tree planting exercise also saw 15,000 trees planted to complement the existing oak, birch and willow on site with an understory of fruiting shrubs such as guelder rose, blackthorn and sea buckthorn. The area, once noted for orchards in medieval times, also supports a number of fruit trees including medlar, quince and five apple varieties.

Over 180 plant species have been recorded on site along with 65 species of birds including grey partridge and a number of mammals such as fox, badger, as well as pipistrelle, noctule and Daubenton's bats. Otters can be seen by the old ford, which is generally impassable for most of the year. There are also some large mature oak trees with spring bluebells on the island and a pond and wader scrape that has been used by little ringed plovers. Sixteen butterfly species have been recorded including comma and small copper and also six species of dragonfly.

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Top Tip:

Get here by foot or bike along the Leeds-Liverpool canal towpath - with links to Leeds centre, Kirkstall Abbey and Rodley Nature Reserve.

Much of the site is raised above the floor of the Aire valley as its rests on a plateau formed by the deposition of fly ash from the power station which was demolished in the late 1970s. The area was then used for landfill. Capped in the early 1990s the area was seeded with native wildflower mixes which are the basis of the meadows today.

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust manages the meadows through cutting and raking in late summer. The woodland is lightly coppiced and thinned in the winter.

There is a bar at the City Golf club house and toilets used with their permission.

Discover Yorkshire's Wildlife

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust's [Discover Yorkshire's Wildlife](#) book, which has detailed information on all of Yorkshire Wildlife and Sheffield Wildlife Trust's reserves, is available to buy now from our online [shop](#).

Public Transport

There are regular buses along Kirkstall Road from Leeds City Centre with a bus stop at the end of Redcote Lane. Burley Park Railway Station is about 1.5 miles away or a 30 minute walk.

Directions



Opening Times

Open at all times



Size

9.94 hectares

Living Landscape schemes

Aire Valley



Access

Permissive footpaths. Wheelchair access is limited; contact the Trust for more details.

Walking information

Permissive footpaths. Please keep all dogs on leads.



Parking

Park on Redcote Lane.



Dogs

Dogs must be on lead



Reserve manager

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
Tel: 01904 659570

info@ywt.org.uk

Downloads

Factsheets and



The entrance to the nature reserve is towards the end of Redcote Lane (just off Kirkstall Road), past Fitness First and City Golf and just before the railway bridge on the right. There is parking here on the road near the entrance. It is about two miles from the centre of Leeds.

- guides for your visit**
- [YWT - Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve map](#)
 - [YWT - Kirkstall Valley Area map](#)

Want to see more of Kirkstall Valley before your visit? Have a look below.


[Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve photos in our Flickr group](#)

Species and habitats

Habitats [Grassland](#), [Wetland](#), [Woodland](#)

Species [English Oak](#), [Downy Birch](#), [Grey Willow](#), [Bluebell](#), [Small Copper](#), [Comma](#), [Goosander](#), [Kingfisher](#), [Reed Bunting](#), [Smooth Newt](#)

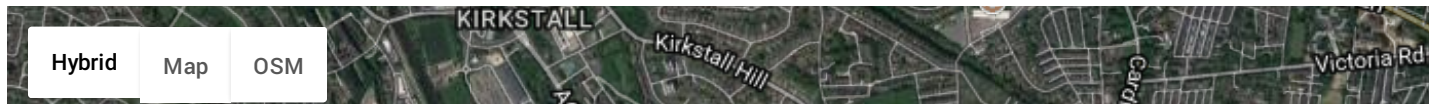
Nearby nature reserves

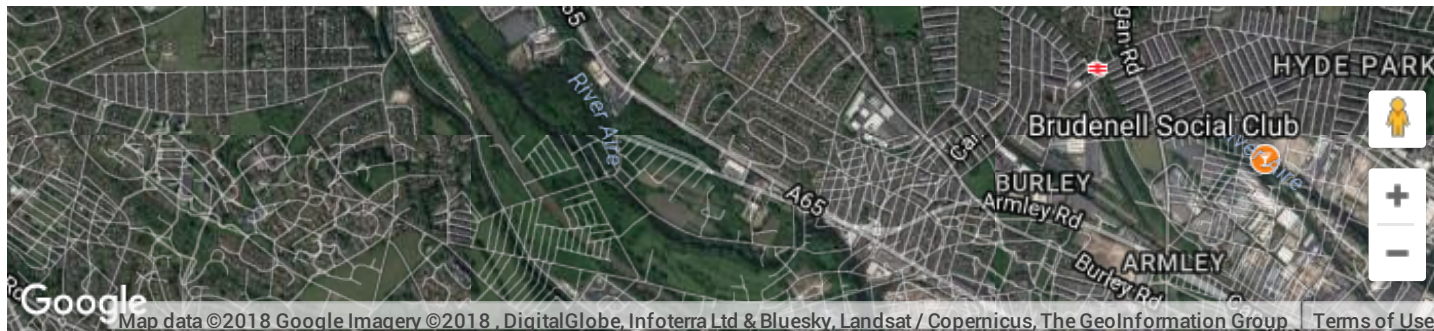
 [Adel Dam Nature Reserve](#)
4 miles - Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

 [Rothwell Country Park](#)
6 miles - Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

 [Rothwell Pastures Nature Reserve](#)
6 miles - Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Nature reserve map





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