Goring Wild Walk

Berkshire Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire



Explore Goring: enjoy magnificent views of the River Thames and rare chalk grassland species

Starting in Goring, this 8 km circular walk takes in the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust's (BBOWT) Hartslock nature reserve and a section of the Thames Path

- 8 km/5 miles (about 2½ hours)
- There are some short, steep climbs and descents on the route
- There are additional paths in Hartslock nature reserve to explore further
- The route follows a section of the Thames Path. This National Trail follows the River Thames from its source in the Cotswolds to London

How to get to the start

Postcode: RG8 0EP Grid ref: SU 602 806

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

By train: The route starts at Goring & Streatley railway station. Check www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times

By car: There are pay & display car parks at Goring & Streatley railway station and in Goring centre

By bike: There is cycle storage at Goring & Streatley railway station



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

Hartslock Nature Reserve

This small, steep remnant of chalk grassland, untouched by fertiliser and pesticides, is the scenic and wildlife highlight of the walk. The far-reaching views over the River Thames and Goring Gap are worth the climb up the hill.

In spring, the ground erupts with hundreds of orchid spikes breaking through the turf. Finest among the host of different species is the rare monkey orchid that only grows in two other places in the UK.

Later, wild marjoram carpets the ground in mauve and scents the summer air that is now filled with butterflies such as brown argus, chalk hill blue and common blue. Scrubby field margins provide shelter from winds, keeping the ground warm to benefit insects such as rufous and stripe-winged grasshoppers.

In summer, swallows skim the grassland whilst red kites soar overhead. Sheep graze the grass after the main flowering season, continuing the traditional downland management once commonplace in the area. This stops scrub and coarser grasses from dominating the grassland and encourages the wild flowers to bloom here each 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 Hartslock. Join us today!

NATURE NOTES



flowers have evolved in shape to attract specific insect

pollinators. The lower petal or lip is usually the most elaborate. In some cases, such as the bee orchid, it mimics a female insect to attract a male to visit the flower. Orchids also rely on specific soil fungi for nutrition. This specialisation makes many orchids extremely rare. The male **chalk hill blue** butterflies are a pale, silvery blue. You can see them flying

from around mid-July to September as they feed on knapweed and scabious. The brown females are harder to spot. After mating, the females lay eggs on horseshoe vetch, a yellow pea flower that the caterpillars feed on. These butterflies are only found on chalk grassland where this plant grows. Red kites are large tree-nesting raptors feeding mainly

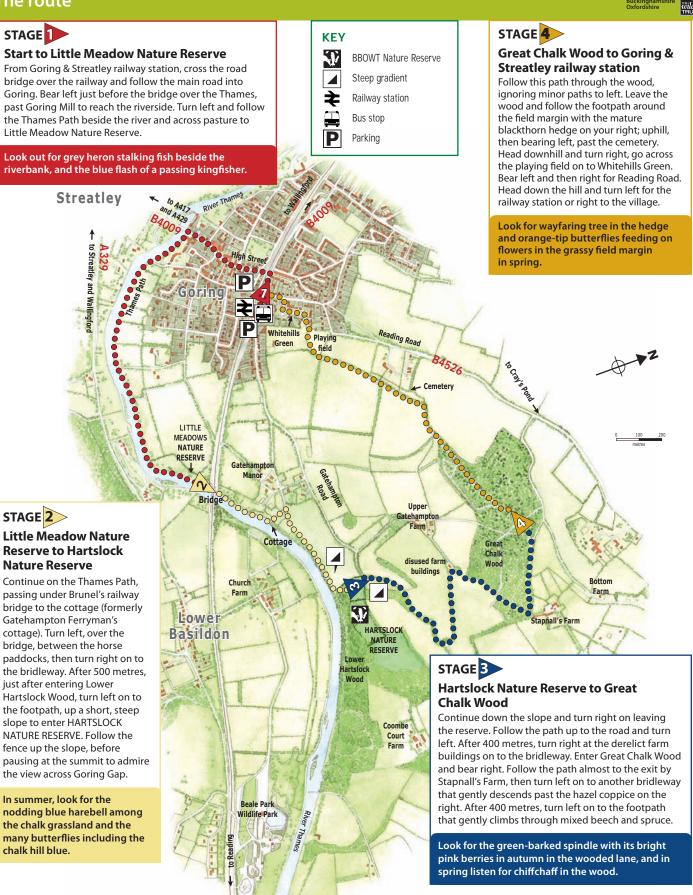
on dead animals and occasionally small mammals. They can be distinguished from the similar-sized buzzards by their forked tail and reddish-brown colour. Look for them soaring overhead, often in pairs or groups. Following a reintroduction programme there's now a large population in the Chilterns.



The wayfaring tree has creamywhite, five-petalled

flowers. In late summer it forms juicy red berries that turn black when ripe, you can often find red and black berries growing on one tree at the same time. The berries are eaten by birds and small mammals. This tree is generally found on limestone or chalky soils.

The route



WILDLIFE HIGHLIGHTS	J	F	Μ	Α	Μ	J	J	Α	S	0	Ν	D
Butterflies dancing over drifts of colourful wild flowers					V	V	V	V				
Chorus of woodland bird song				V	V	V	V					
Orchids growing at Hartslock Nature Reserve					V	V	V					
Waterbirds raising young along the river's edge				V	V	1	V	V				
Red kites soaring over the ridge	V	~	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	1

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