

# Old River Dove

Old River Dove Site of Special Scientific Interest, south of the village of Marston-on-Dove, is an old river meander cut off from the present course of the River Dove by river engineering works in the 19th century. It supports diverse aquatic and emergent plant communities and is also important for its dragonflies and damselflies.



## Plants and wildlife



Yellow water lily  
*Nuphar lutea*



Branched bur-reed  
*Sparganium erectum*



Flowering rush  
*Butomus umbellatus*



Kingfisher  
*Alcedo atthis*



Ruddy darter dragonfly  
*Sympetrum sanguineum*



White water lily  
*Nymphaea alba*



Water plantain  
*Alisma plantago-aquatica*



Water mint  
*Mentha aquatica*



Common blue damselfly  
*Enallagma cyathigerum*



Emperor dragonfly  
*Anax imperator*

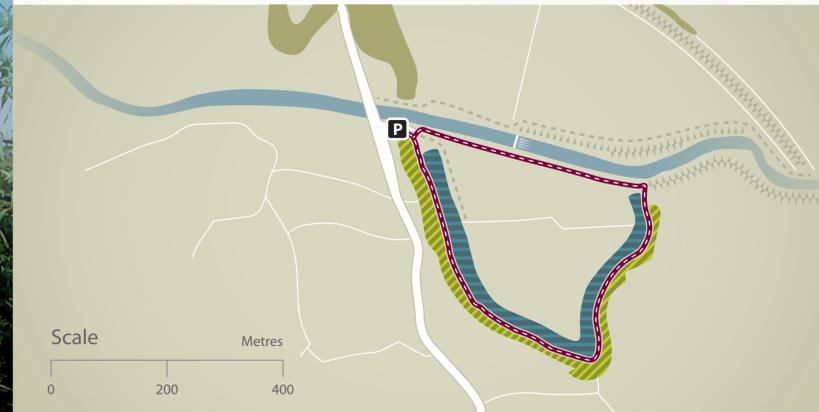
Illustration by Crayfish Design



Please help us keep this a special site!

PLEASE NOTE THAT A STRICT ALL DOGS ON LEADS POLICY IS IN PLACE ACROSS THE SITE.

The footpath around this site follows the bank of the Old River Dove. There is a wildlife strip between the footpath and the field. Please keep to the footpath and keep dogs on leads to prevent disturbance to the SSSI and the wildlife strip. Thank you.



Scale 0 200 400 Metres  
Permissive footpath access Area of resource protection Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

## About the wildlife

The open water is surrounded by a band of tall mixed fen and swamp communities locally dominated by reed canary-grass. These types of vegetation were formerly much more frequent across the county.

The drier fen communities alongside the banks include common marsh bedstraw, water mint and water figwort. Moving towards the water, branched bur-reed dominates much of the wetter swamp community where flowering-rush, water horsetail, common spike-rush and water-plantain are locally abundant.

In the open water yellow water-lily grows abundantly along with white water-lily and unbranched bur-reed, broad-leaved pondweed and the rare grass-wrack pondweed. 16 species of dragonfly/damselfly have been recorded from the site, four of which are probable breeding species and one confirmed breeding species. Species that use this site include the brown hawkler, emperor dragonfly, ruddy darter, common blue, emerald and red-eyed damselflies.

In recent years work has been carried out to reduce the amount of shade cast by trees that have grown up along the banks recently and fallen into the water. Larger, older trees have been re-pollarded, a traditional technique to rejuvenate them as would have been routinely done in the past. Too much shade prevents the rarer fen and swamp habitats from growing and falling leaves contribute to the build-up of sediment on the gravelly base of the waterbody. The aim is to restore a range of shaded and open conditions along the length of the meander to benefit the animals and plants that live here.

To find out more visit [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)



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