



Kingfisher. Photo © John Harding

In November this is a great place to watch salmon jumping up the weir. Also look out for kingfishers.

K Weir

Here's another meadow that has been seeded from a nature reserve. Look out for yellow rattle, tufted vetch and a range of other interesting plants and a good variety of insects.

J Mousefield*

This is a great place to lunch and watch river wildlife like kingfishers, trout and the banded demoiselle damselfly.

I Riverside bench

Hay from an existing nature reserve was strewn over this part of the meadow next to the Rea Brook with the result that many wildflowers can now be seen here behind the large clump of trees. Look out for yellow rattle which is partly parasitic on grasses and reduces the height of grass where it grows.



H Rea Brook meadow*



Goosander. Photo © John Harding

Look out for goosanders, cormorants, little grebe, mute swans and of course lots of mallard ducks and black headed gulls. Goosanders are one of only two birds in the UK to have a serrated bill to help hold on to fish. Growing in the cracks in the wall by the river are some large showy plants like purple loosestrife, St John's wort, and water figwort.

G English Bridge

The nationally rare purple-ramping fumitory grows here.

F St Mary's Water Lane

Further information

Cycle Shrewsbury

Visit www.cycleshrewsbury.co.uk to find out more about Cycle Shrewsbury; details of events; to sign up as a member and get loads of great benefits; or for tips and advice on cycling and buying a bike and where to cycle in Shrewsbury.

There are loads of great places to cycle in and around Shrewsbury. Visit our website or call 01743 253008 for details of other leaflets in the Cycle Shrewsbury series.

Darwin

Charles Darwin was born in Shrewsbury on 12 February 1809. This leaflet was first published as part of the annual Darwin Festival in February 2011.

www.discoverdarwin.co.uk

Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Tel: 01743 284280

www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Shropshire Council Parks and Countryside team

Tel: 01743 255957

www.shropshire.gov.uk/countryside.nsf

Natural Shropshire

www.naturalshropshire.org.uk

Shrewsbury and Newport Canal Trust

www.sncanal.org.uk



Purple rampion



www.cycleshrewsbury.co.uk



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Purple loosestrife

An oxbow of the River Severn cut off from the main river thousands of years ago and long since silted up. The area is now a mix of marsh and fen and is the best site for wildlife in Shrewsbury. It is the closest Site of Special Scientific Interest to Shrewsbury. At dusk you can see barn owls hunting over this wildlife rich wetland. The site is kept in good condition by using cattle to graze the scrub.

D Old River Bed*

This area of woodland was planted by local people in 2001 and, along with the nearby pool is providing a valuable habitat for wildlife.

C Greenfields Community Woodland*

You are cycling next to the Old Shrewsbury Canal. The canal was opened in 1797 and officially closed in 1944. It brought barges all the way to town from the Shropshire Union canal near Market Drayton. The canal was abandoned and is now a valuable area for wildlife. You can walk or cycle along most of the canal route in Shrewsbury, from the Canal Tavern near the station out to the village of Uffington.



Water rail. Photo © John Harding

B Old Shrewsbury Canal*

Great created newts are a protected species and the population living in Sundorne is internationally important. The newts, along with other wildlife, benefit from this pool which was created recently. If you are lucky you may see the shy water rail.

A Sundorne newt pool*

Wildlife and waterways – things to see along the ride



FAMILY FRIENDLY RIDES

Wildlife and Waterways

Shrewsbury has some very special places for wildlife and is home to some unusual plants and animals – and you can see them in the heart of town. Allow time for stops on this ride and remember if you keep still for a few minutes you will have the best chance of seeing some of the shyer creatures. Remember to take your binoculars.

What sort of ride is it?

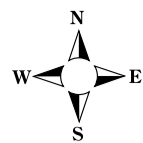
Distance: 11km / 7 miles plus optional short walk.

Time: Allow 2-3 hours

Type of route and surface: Mostly quiet roads or traffic-free paths. You can use any sort of bicycle but some paths are unsurfaced so may be muddy. There is one short stretch on a busy road where there is the option of walking if preferred.

Refreshments: Shops on Spring Gardens and in Coleham: buy a picnic to eat in the Rea Brook Valley. Town centre cafés, pubs and sandwich shops close to Greyfriars Bridge





SCALE: 1/2 Kilometre

Directions

Start: Shrewsbury sports village, Sundorne Road, SY1 4RQ

- 1 From the sports village follow signs to Route 81, Town Centre.
- 2 Turn right when you reach Route 81 signed Town Centre and Ditherington.
- 3 Follow the old canal to Telford Way and cross by the toucan crossing. Keep straight on along the old canal signed to Ditherington.
- 4 Turn left when you reach Spring Gardens. Take care: this stretch has busy traffic so you may prefer to walk. If on foot cross Spring Gardens at the pelican crossing by New Park Close (approx 300m).
- 5 Turn right on to Crewe St, and follow signs to Herongate and Harlescott, past Flaxmill and down track.
- 6 Go under the railway and keep straight on signed Herongate and Harlescott.
- 7 Take the first right signed Hubert Way. On your right is the Old River Bed nature reserve/SSSI (for the best views cycle up to the top of Hubert Way – 750m). Retrace steps back to the Flax Mill (signed Castlefields and Ditherington).
- 8 Cross Spring Gardens at Factory Bridge (plaque on wall) and join the old canal path, signed Town Centre.
- 9 Continue to end of path and join New Park Road. Turn left then immediately right into Beacalls Lane (signed to HM Prison and station car park). One way traffic. Take first left into Severn Street (two way traffic, take care).
- 10 At the bottom go straight ahead, cross Victoria Street, and down to the riverside path. Take care. Rejoin Route 81 and turn right signed Town Centre along riverside.
- 11 Pass under railway and under English Bridge.
- 12 Take the ramp up to Greyfriars footbridge and cross the river.
- 13 Turn right on to Longden Coleham and then immediately left into Greyfriars Road. At the T junction turn right on to Belle Vue Road then immediately left into Trinity St (or use the pelican crossing).
- 14 Turn left onto Bynner St. At the end turn right on to Betton Street and cross the two railway bridges (closed to traffic) on to Scott Street.
- 15 At the bottom turn right on to Rocke St. Keep straight on. Rocke St becomes Reabrook Avenue.
- 16 Continue straight on until the road bears right, then leave the road and go straight on under the underpass to the Rea Brook Valley. Lock up your bikes, cross the footbridge and walk along the

Rea Brook Valley. Collect your bikes for the return journey and retrace your route back up Rocke St.

- 17 Cross Old Potts Way at the pedestrian refuge and turn right on the cycle track on the opposite side.
- 18 Turn left at the roundabout and follow the cycle track along Bage Way and over the railway.
- 19 Turn left off the cycle track just before the next roundabout. Follow signs to Castlefields.
- 20 Keep straight on at the crossroads and follow Crowmere Road. Follow signs to cross Monkmoor Road at the toucan crossing. Turn into Tankerville St.
- 21 Cross Underdale Road to the cycle track, following signs to Castlefields.

- 22 Cross the river on the footbridge and bear left, then turn left down to the riverside path, signed Town Centre and Harlescott (you should recognise this bit!). Turn left along the riverside path. From here you will be following signs for Route 81 to Sundorne for the rest of the ride.

- 23 Join the road along the river, follow it when it bears left away from the river and take the next right into Darville, signposted Route 81.
- 24 Turn right into Millers Green at the top of Darville, and shortly afterwards right down a path between houses (the signs are on the opposite side of the road).
- 25 Stay on Route 81 to cross Telford Way by the toucan; or alternatively use the underpass (can be muddy) and then rejoin Route 81. Return to the sports village along the canal path.

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Banded demoiselle © Nigel Jones



Tufted vetch

- Take care
- Toucan crossing
- Pedestrian crossing
- Children's play area
- Steps
- Shops
- Underpass