



# Explore Wetley Moor

Christine Harding and Mark Preece

**W**etley Moor is one of the nature reserves in the Staffordshire Moorlands that we're taking on management for in 2022. This ancient area of common land hosts a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and is a great place to come for a stroll to see birds and expressive skies. Mark Preece guides you on an enjoyable 1.5 mile circular walk. This route includes some uneven paths, hills, and stairs, so please remember to wear suitable footwear on your adventure.

**1** Set off from the car park on Armshead Road and head down the path along the boundary on the right side. This trek goes through the former millstone grit quarry and toward lowland heathland.

**2** You'll come to the trig point where there are some spectacular views of the rest of the reserve. You are standing at the highest point of the common at around 830 feet. Here the ground is well drained

millstone grit with abundant heather and bilberry. Go down the set of steps to the right, through the metal barrier and onto the track, Sandy Lane.

**3** Continue along the track and turn left past the metal barrier. This stretch of path is a good place to spot stonechats in the winter. Follow the path until you come to a blue and black marker, then make another left.

**4** Go over the little bridge (this is made of recycled plastic). Follow the hedge line on the right when you come to the next marker at the junction. Make a left here onto the open heathland.

**5** This track is called Saltway and it's an ancient pack horse route – some of the original stones are visible in places. It can be wet at times, so wear your wellies if it's looking rainy! Continue on over the peaty heathland soil overlying shales and coal measures. The heathland

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During winter months while there is less foliage look out for birds like stonechats, redwings, and fieldfare on the wing.



here is dominated by purple moor grass. At the edge of the open heathland pass through a tunnel of trees surrounded by small enclosed fields. This is a great place to see fieldfares, redwings, and willow tits amongst the holly during winter.

**6** When you come to a T junction at the end of Washerwall Lane take another left. At the metal barrier take a right to go up the road and make your way back to the picnic area and car park.



Lowland heathland is of European importance as a habitat for wildlife. Heathland landscapes were created 4,000 years ago when trees on poor soils were cleared for grazing.

NOW YOU DO IT

**Visit Wetley Moor**

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

**Location:** Wetley Moor is situated between Werrington (to the south) and Bagnall (to the north east). The main access point is via the car park on Armshead Road, Werrington, Stoke-on-Trent, ST9 0NA. This car park can fit a maximum of 12 vehicles. This is a 118 hectare site, and the route listed is only one path. Other trails are marked but we recommend bringing a map with you if this is your first visit. There are private residences on this Common.

**Opening Times:** Open at all times

**Access:** Ground can be uneven and boggy. There are some hills and stairs. Please be aware of horse riders on the bridle paths.

**Email:** [info@staffs-wildlife.org.uk](mailto:info@staffs-wildlife.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/nature-reserves/wetley-moor](http://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/nature-reserves/wetley-moor)