

Kinneil Foreshore Forth Nature Counts Survey Walk



Photo P Barclay

The Kinneil foreshore covers the site of the former Kinneil Colliery. Since 2013 it has been a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), managed by Falkirk Council and the Friends of Kinneil Foreshore group. The site is practically unrecognisable from its industrious past; where once there were mines and the din of industrious colliers, now there are swathes of grass, trees and meadows bustling with the calls of birds and the drone of bumblebees.

The meadows here are part of an Inner Forth Landscape Initiative (IFLI) project to enhance the nature reserve for the benefit of both wildlife and people. The meadow areas will be cut once a year, with the cuttings removed to keep nutrient levels down, creating a haven for wildflowers, butterflies and bumblebees in the summer months.

The project will also undertake work which will encourage new growth in the woodlands by thinning and coppicing the trees, planting native shrubs and promoting diversity. Log piles will provide habitat for fungi, insects and small mammals.

<http://www.innerforthlandscape.co.uk/projects/conserving-restoring/an-industrious-lnr>

This walk will take you through many of these meadows with their fabulous array of wildflowers and the invertebrates which depend upon them; you'll also travel through the woodland, keeping an eye out for all the species which call these woods home.

One of the most spectacular parts of this transect are Sections three, four and five which go along the shores of the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area. This section of the Forth is internationally important for its populations of wading birds. Watch out for curlews, shelduck, redshank and dunlin. If you're lucky you may even spot a peregrine hunting over the mudflats in the winter.

The Survey Walk

The Kinneil Foreshore survey walk is approximately 1.9km long and should take about an hour to walk. Remember to walk slowly, noting down everything you'd like to record as you go.

Begin your walk at the entrance to the LNR from the car park. **Section 1** follows the path North West through the grass towards the railway. (NS987813 at centre)

Section 2 begins when you reach the level crossing over the Bo'ness and Kinneil heritage railway line. Remember to look both ways and be careful as you cross, watching out for the historic trains which travel along this route. Follow the path to the left through woodland; silver birch, ash, elder,

and bramble provide the backdrop to the many bird species which live here, watch out for blue tits, blackbirds and even buzzards living amongst the trees. (NS984813 at centre)

After 150m or so you'll come to a fork in the path, take the left fork and head on down to the shore, where this section will end and **section 3** will begin. You'll be walking along the shore for a while now, looking out over the water and mudflats of the Firth of Forth SPA. Remember to keep on looking around you however, there is just as much to see onshore as off. (NS983814 at centre)



Halfway along the shore, as the path makes a right hand bend you'll change sections, switching to **section 4**. Although there has not been a great change in the habitat between the two sections you have come far enough to take a new grid reference. There are lots of wildflowers and accompanying invertebrates to be found along here, as well as the bird life out on the Forth. (NS983816 at centre)

Keep following the path until it begins turning East, where you'll begin **section 5**. Follow the grassy path through this section, paying attention to both the shore and the meadows and trees around you. Eventually the path will begin to curve away from the Forth, as it reaches the mouth of a small inlet, where this section will end. (NS984816 at centre)

Photo Paul Barclay

Section 6 follows the route of this inlet as it makes its way inland. Although you won't be crossing over to the small tidal island you can still watch for the species which live there. Little egrets have been seen on this stretch and there are plenty of invertebrates living amongst the plant life all around you. (NS985816 at centre)

Section 7 begins at a large stone slab on the right of the path, take the grassy track which curves to the right up through the trees, eventually bringing you to back to the main hard surfaced path. (NS986815 at centre)

The hard surface marks the beginning of **Section 8** which follows it back down towards the railway. When you come to a cross roads, take the left hand path heading for the level crossing. (NS987814)

Be very careful as you cross the tracks and begin **Section 9** which will head through the centre of one of the wildflower meadows which have been created to boost the biodiversity of the site. Your walk will end when you meet the hard path which formed the route of Section 1. (NS988813 at centre)

Thank you for taking the time to walk the Inner Forth Nature Counts survey walk around Kinneil Foreshore. Don't forget to log on to iRecord and upload your records and play your part in making nature count in the inner Forth.

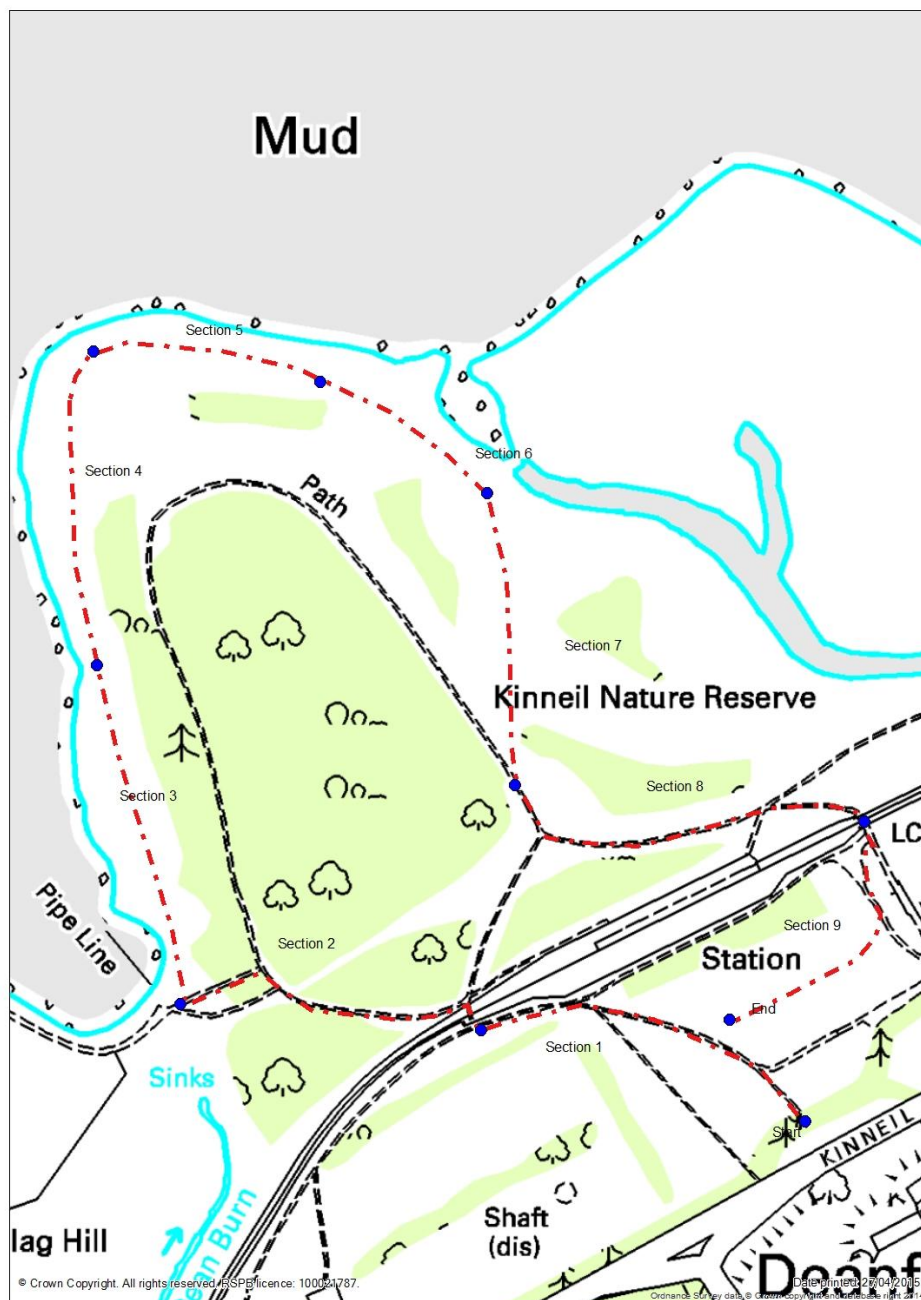
<http://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/enter-inner-forth-records>

Thank you for making Forth Nature Count!

This survey walk is part of IFLI's Forth Nature Counts project which aims to increase the number of verified biological records for the Inner Forth area. We are doing this by encouraging volunteers and local people to become citizen scientists through surveying sites then adding their wildlife records to our iRecord page; running a series of free wildlife identification workshops covering a wide range of species; and promoting wildlife recording through IFLI's social media pages, website and e-newsletter. Find out more about this project on our website:

<http://www.innerforthlandscape.co.uk/projects/recording-celebrating/forth-nature-counts>

If you'd like more information you can contact Kate Fuller, IFLI Community Engagement Officer on info@innerforthlandscape.co.uk or 01324 831 568



Transect Name		Kinneil Foreshore Survey Walk		
Insert a map or even a simple drawing of your transect location and route				
Location name		Bo' Ness	OS 6 fig grid ref (at centre of transect)	NS985815
County		Falkirk	Transect Length (m)	1865
Section	6 Figure Grid ref (at centre of section)	Length (m)	Habitat Description (e.g. farmland, urban etc.)	
1	NS987813	235	Amenity Grassland, Scattered Trees	
2	NS985813	220	Mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodland, shrubs	
3	NS983814	230	Shore, tall herbs, Wildflowers, Conifer trees	
4	NS983816	240	Shore, Tall herbs, Wildflowers, Conifer trees,	
5	NS984817	160	Grass, wildflowers, Scattered trees, Shore	
6	NS985816	135	Mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodland, Wildflowers, Tidal water	
7	NS986815	195	Mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodland, Grass, Wildflowers	
8	NS987814	260	Mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodland, Grass, Wildflowers	
9	NS988813	190	Mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodland, Grass, Wildflowers	

A quick look at some species you might spot on Kinneil Foreshore



Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)

Our largest wading bird, the curlew is easily identifiable thanks to its long downcurved bill, long legs and haunting call. Feeds on soft mud, searching for crustaceans and invertebrates. Once common, curlew numbers are now a cause of some concern.



Redshank (*Tringa tetanus*)

The name 'redshank' literally means 'red legs', giving a hint to this species' most distinctive feature. They also have a red bill, brown back and pale undersides, with a white fringe to the dark wings in flight.



Common Blue Butterfly (*Polyommatus icarus*)

It is only the males of this species which possess the distinctive blue colouring, females are brown with only a blue dusting over the body. Found in grassy habitats, the caterpillars rely on plant species such as common bird's-foot trefoil and white clover.



Red-tailed Bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*)

Flying from early spring through to the Autumn, this common bumblebee is easily recognisable thanks to the female's totally black body and bright red tail. Males emerge late in the year and share the red tail but have yellow stripes on the thorax.



Common Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*)

Flowers May to September, this plant is a vital food source for species such as common blue butterflies and red-tailed bumblebees. The yolk yellow flowers and red buds give the common name 'eggs and bacon'. Its seed pods are said to look like bird's feet.



Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*)

A native broad leaved tree the silver birch owes its name to the distinctive silvery white bark on the trunk. The serrated triangular leaves turn yellow in Autumn. A hardy 'pioneer' tree species, the silver birch is often one of the first to recolonise newly bare ground.

Name			
Location		Date	

[illegible]