**Points of interest**

**Testwood Lakes**
- **Creasted grebe**. duck, coot and great birds such as tufted and winter shelter for banks have been planted with wetland which were last worked in 2001. Its of the 4 lakes, formerly gravel pits, 
- **Testwood Lakes Centre**: open to the public most weekdays to learn about wildlife, the Centre is staffed by volunteers. Car parks are open every day between 8am-4pm (winter) and Sunday afternoons.
- **Lower Test Valley Self Guided Trail**: Distance approx. 5 miles (8km) Time: allow 2.5 – 3.5 hours

**River Test**
- **Oystercatcher and little ringed plover.**

**Lower Test Meadows**
- **Blackthorn, gorse and ash.**

**River Test at Nursling Mill**
- **Can you find 10? Hawthorn, spindle, dogwood,**

**Testwood Park**
- **Dragonflies are often seen basking on tied water. Signs of water vole and otter**

**Coastal Grasslands**
- **Coastal grasslands are rich with berries providing an important food source for birds and small mammals.**

**Reedbed**
- **Reedbeds provide feeding grounds for birds and shelter for small mammals.**

**Testwood Lakes Nature Reserve**
- **is 400 acres (162 hectares) of open water, grassland and woodland on the edge of Totton. Steeped in Bronze Age history, it forms part of the internationally important Test Valley floodplain. The lakes support large numbers of overwintering wildfowl and waders, which can be viewed from the viewing screens and bird hides. In summer the grassland is a blaze of colour with wildflowers.**

**How to find us**
Exit M27 at Junction 2, take A326 Fawley/ Totton road, take the first exit to Totton (A36) and proceed towards Totton. At the first roundabout turn left into Brunel Road. Testwood Lakes is situated 200m down on the left hand side. This is the start of the trail. For more information, please call: 023 8066 7929 or visit [www.hiwwt.org.uk](http://www.hiwwt.org.uk)

**Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust**
- **Beechcroft House, Vicarage Lane, Curdridge, Hampshire SO32 2DP.**

**Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust**
Registered Charity No. 201081, Company Limited by guarantee and registered in England No. 676313
Points of interest

**Testwood Lakes Centre:** a great place to learn about wildlife, the Centre is open to the public most weekdays and Sunday afternoons staffed by volunteers. Car parks are open every day between 8am-4pm (winter) and 8am-5pm (summer).

**Testwood Lake:** is the largest of the 4 lakes, formerly gravel pits, which were last worked in 2001. Its banks have been planted with wetland species to provide nesting sites, food and winter shelter for birds such as tufted duck, coot and great crested grebe.

**Nature Conservation area:** look through the viewing screens to see Meadow Lake and the Scrapes, an area of ridges and ditches, created to attract nesting waders including lapwing, oystercatcher and little ringed plover.

**River Blackwater:** this tributary of the River Test is lined with mature alder trees, home to both great and lesser spotted woodpecker. In winter alder cones attract flocks of siskins and redpolls. In summer look out for both the banded and beautiful demoiselles.

**Reedbed:** Redbridge can be seen to the south. Formerly ‘reedbridge’, it got its name as it overlooked one of the largest reedbeds on the south coast. The tall reeds provide ideal breeding grounds for large numbers of reed, sedge and Cetti’s warblers. Listen out for their distinctive territorial singing in spring. The reedbed is also an important autumn roost site for swallows and sand martins preparing for migration.

**Coastal grasslands:** Salt-tolerant plants such as sea aster grow in these ditches. Their fleshy leaves are able to store water to counteract the salt levels in the brackish tidal water. Signs of water vole and otter can be found here.

From the boardwalk there are often good views of little egret hunting in wet pools, noisy stonechats perched on brambles, and the pinkish plumage of water pipits (particularly in spring). In summer black-tailed skimmer and common darter dragonflies are often seen basking on the boardwalk.

**Testwood Park:** this is a much drier area of grassland than Lower Test nature reserve. This enables it to be grazed in winter, resulting in a tall summer meadow rich in insects, particularly meadow brown and skipper butterflies. The adjacent Wettrans Copse is carpeted with bluebells in spring.

**River Test at Nursing Mill:** This former grain mill stopped working in 1960. Beneath it is the River Test, a classic chalk stream with clear, fast-flowing water. The river is rich in insect life and attracts trout, grey wagtail and kingfisher.

**Lower Test Meadows:** in spring look for wild flowers such as cuckoo flower, lesser spearwort, meadowsweet and ragged robin. In winter these fields are waterlogged and you can make out the pattern of ridges and furrows, a remnant of the old water meadow system which once operated here. Part of the old Southampton to Andover Canal, completed in 1796, can be glimpsed on the left.

**River Test:** the river here becomes slower and deeper as it starts meandering across the nature reserve on its journey towards the estuary. This is the highest tidal reach of the river.

**Nature Conservation area:** The testwood lakes nature reserve is managed by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust in partnership with Southern Water.

For more information, please contact:
+44 (0)23 8066 7929
+44 (0)23 8066 7930
email info@hiwwt.org.uk  
web www.hiwwt.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 201081, Company Limited by guarantee and registered in England No. 676313
Getting around

Testwood Lakes: paths are surfaced and relatively flat but there is one steep slope on the north and south side of the main lake. There are benches at regular intervals. If you have a large buggy or wheelchair you may need a RADAR key for the gates (available from the Centre by arrangement). Please note some paths regularly flood during winter.

Lower Test and adjacent areas: paths are generally unsurfaced and there are a number of stiles, kissing gates, stepping stones and boardwalks to cross. There are no benches or toilet facilities after leaving Testwood Lakes nature reserve.

Dogs
Testwood Lakes: responsible dog walking is permitted around Testwood and Little Testwood Lakes. Dogs are not permitted around the Testwood Lakes Centre or in the Nature Conservation Areas.

Lower Test: due to breeding and over-wintering birds here, dogs are only permitted on the Test Way footpath and must be under close control. Responsible dog walking is permitted in Testwood Park.

Tides
Lower Test nature reserve is tidal and footpaths and boardwalks regularly flood at high tide. Always check the tide timetables before starting out on a long walk.