

LITTLESS HIDE

WATER WORLD

Littless Hide offers views of the western side of Grafham Water reservoir. Designated as a bird sanctuary, this area acts as a refuge to our resident and over-wintering waterfowl by preventing fishing within this valuable and diverse habitat. Along the shoreline, reed beds buffer against the erosive force of the reservoir, whilst also providing valuable nesting sites for reed warblers and reed buntings, whose delicate nests can be seen suspended in the reeds. The shallow reservoir edges are home to vast assemblages of dabbling ducks such as coot, teal and tufted ducks. These species forage by sifting through the water and dabbling in the mud in search of aquatic plant material. Out in the open water, specialist diving waterfowl like the imposing cormorant and conspicuous great crested grebe may be spotted on the hunt for fish.



Left to right: male teal, reed warbler and great crested grebe mid courtship.



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From left to right: ringlet butterfly, common spotted orchid and a badger foraging.

BATS, BADGERS & BUTTERFLIES

Littless plantation surrounds the hide; a mixture of 40 and 60 year old plantation, this woodland consists of a patchwork of native and non-native trees such as oak, ash and sycamore. Interwoven with open rides, woodland glades and dense scrub blocks, the woodland is managed to promote a diverse habitat structure suitable for many plants, mammals, birds and insects. In the springtime, wildflowers such as St. John's wort and the common spotted orchid, bloom along the woodland rides, providing nectar sources for shade loving butterflies like the speckled wood and ringlet. As you venture deeper into the wood, the plantation gradually transforms into ancient woodland. Continuously wooded since the 1600s, this scarce habitat supports a rich diversity of flora and fauna including many nationally rare and protected species. Underground, the charismatic badger is at home in a network of tunnels, emerging at dusk to forage for insects. Up in the canopy, commanding veteran trees provide important roosting sites for bats such as the common and soprano pipistrelle, which forage for insects along the woodland rides from dusk until dawn.