

# Arnold's Meadow



## Location & Access

**OS:** 131 • **GR:** TF 260 216 • 2.60ha (6.50 acres) • Freehold 1992

**Habitat type:** Grassland

The meadow is situated on the east side of the Coronation Channel at Spalding. Access is reached from Peck's Drove, crossing a Bailey bridge over the channel, onto Childer's South Drove. The entrance is over a footbridge and through a hand-gate from where paths form a circular walk of the reserve. Please close all the gates after entering and before leaving, and keep to the paths as the meadow is used for hay cropping.

It is preferable to park well past the gate to the nursery opposite as some large lorries need to get access to this nursery gate. The road is not wide enough for parking on the grass verge.

## Description & Management

Half of the area of this triangular-shaped reserve is taken up by a hay meadow, the centre of which is flooded in autumn and winter. The remaining half consists of three areas of water: a moat round an island and two shallow ponds. The reserve is bounded by mature hedgerows and trees, with a small wooded area in the northern corner.

The variety of habitat attracts many birds: 73 species have been recorded, including kingfisher, and 35 species have been known to breed, including sparrowhawk and jay. Seventeen species of butterfly have also been recorded. There is a good population of water voles, toads, frogs and grass snakes. Plants are abundant on the reserve with 171 species recorded on the heavy clay. The wet area of the meadow has purple-loosestrife,

brooklime, ragged-robin and butterbur.

Before 1968 the area was a bare field, and the reserve has therefore been entirely man-made. The meadow is managed as a traditional hay meadow by taking a late hay crop, while vegetation in the ponds is controlled in order to retain open water. The buildings are used by the Trust's local volunteer group that help manage reserves in south Lincolnshire.

