

The Water Voles of Swalecliffe Brook



Please respect this fragile environment and the creatures that rely on it by staying on the footpaths and preventing your dogs from roaming across the site. Kite surfers should avoid crossing the shingle areas.



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Water voles are one of our most endangered animals. These charming creatures, immortalised by Kenneth Graham as Ratty from *Wind in the Willows*, live in burrows in the banks of Swalecliffe Brook and feed on plants along the river bank. Water voles are territorial and announce their presence to others by leaving piles of droppings which they dance on top of to spread the scent around.

The water voles of Swalecliffe Brook are particularly vulnerable as they are isolated from other populations. A predator, such as a mink, could easily wipe out the whole colony. Dogs in the water also disturb and endanger the water voles, preventing them from feeding and injuring or even killing animals. Long Rock is a nationally important site for wildlife so please be sensitive to the presence of all wildlife and keep your dog under close control when near to the brook, shingle beach and scrapes.

Long Rock's new scrapes.

The Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership created two shallow wetland areas at Long Rock during the winter of 2011. These areas, known as scrapes, were created to benefit wetland wildlife including plants, insects and birds.

Since their creation birds such as redshanks and lapwings have been using the areas to find food and rest. During the summer the damp muddy edges provide an ideal site for plants such as sea lavender to colonise.

Visit www.kentos.org.uk for more information on birds seen at Long Rock.

For more information contact: Canterbury City Council's Countryside Section on 01227 862 486

