

The Withey Beds

Roesel's bush crickets normally have short wings, yet they are unable to fly. However, when population densities are very high, fully-winged individuals are produced which can fly great distances. Listen out between July and October and you may just hear the high pitched, continuous, buzzing of the males in the distance.



Roesel's Bush Cricket



Oak Jewel Beetle

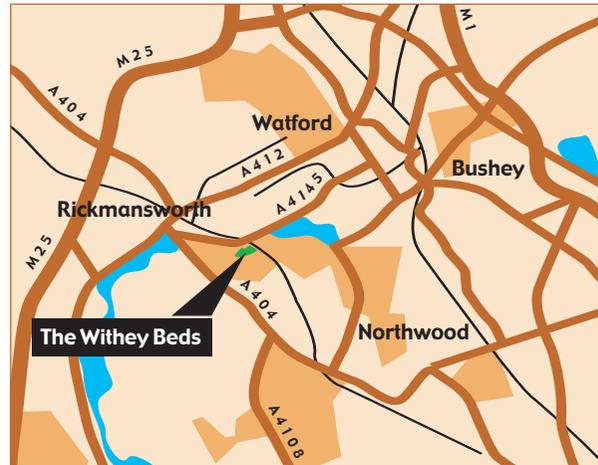
The oak jewel beetle is a rare beetle which has recently seen its range expand. It favours ancient woodlands and pasture woodlands where the larvae burrow in and under the bark of old and dead oak trees.

Solitary Bee

Solitary bees live on their own rather than working with lots of other bees. The adults can be seen for around eight weeks each year when they are out and about pollinating plants. Only the females can sting and they only do this when they are extremely angry.



How to get to The Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve



By train:

The Withey Beds is less than a ten minute walk from Moor Park tube station.

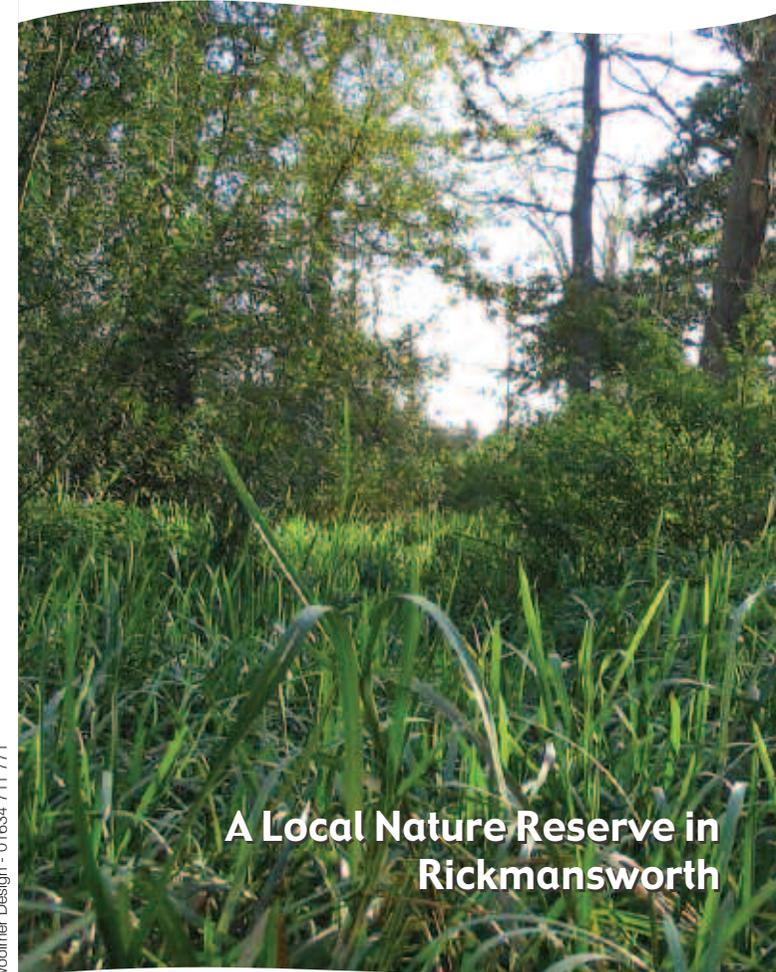
By Bus:

There are regular buses to Rickmansworth. Contact Traveline for information on 0870 6802608.

For general information contact
Three Rivers District Council on 01923 776611.
www.threerivers.gov.uk

The Countryside Management Service
works with communities across Hertfordshire
to help them care for and enjoy the environment.
Telephone 01727 848168.
www.hertsdirect.org/cms

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A Local Nature Reserve in Rickmansworth



What can you find?

Why is the Local Nature Reserve so important?

Throughout the 20th century wetlands have greatly declined within the district, as well as on a national scale. A drier county, changes in land use and urban development have all contributed to this. As such The Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is one of the few remaining wetlands in Hertfordshire.

The LNR also offers a variety of habitats and supports some fascinating plants and animals, particularly birds and insects which are characteristic of swamp and fen. Both of these facts help to make The Withey Beds a distinctive and valuable natural resource.

The diversity of habitats include wet woodland, mature standard trees, swamp, marsh, drier grassland, standing and fallen dead wood, open ditches and the River Colne. It is this diversity which provides an ideal breeding ground for migratory birds and other species.

Why is The Withey Beds called The Withey Beds?

'Withey bed' is an old English term used to describe the growing of different species of willow for coppicing. They once formed an important part of the local village economy; supplying poles for basketwork, thatching, firewood and many other uses. The withey beds in Rickmansworth were traditionally coppiced to provide such products and this form of management resulted in the varied habitats becoming established.

Today, The Withey Beds is still managed using traditional techniques. The rotational coppicing of willow preserves the character of the site and grazing with cattle, or cutting and removing the vegetation within the field, will help halt encroaching scrub as well as preserve the character of this special site and allow wildlife to continue to flourish.



Soldier flies are brightly coloured small flies, often associated with wetland habitat such as that found at The Withey Beds. The soldier fly found here is typical of marsh and pond edge habitats.

Soldier Fly

Important insects at The Withey Beds

Four invertebrates which are of a high national importance have all been found at The Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve. These are the oak jewel beetle, a soldier fly, a solitary bee and Roesel's bush cricket.

