

TUNSTALL RESERVOIR WALK

Tunstall Reservoir is located within the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and has an excellent walk along its eastern edge through a semi-natural broadleaved woodland.

The Tunstall reservoir walk is not only a very scenic and relaxing walk but once in the woodland offers the chance to view a variety of wildlife.

The woodland on the eastern edge of the reservoir is extremely specie rich and contains a variety of species, including; sessile oak, ash, alder, willows, rowan, hazel, holly and birch. The woodland has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest named Backstone Bank and Ball Hill Woods.

The understorey includes a variety of shrubs and plants, including bilberry and great wood rush. Any lying dead timber around the woodland also provides a home to invertebrates and small mammals.

There is a footpath around the reservoir, and a good starting point is at the northern end near the nature reserve. Part of Tunstall reservoir is designated as a nature reserve and supports a number of birds throughout the year including Great rested grebe, tufted duck, goosander, moorhen, coot, mallard and common sandpiper. Redshank, lapwing and oystercatcher have also been known to roost the dam.

Look out for butterflies around the site, as there is quite a diverse range to see, with up to 13 species including red admiral, small tortoiseshell, peacock and meadow brown.

Parking: Car park halfway along western side of reservoir.

Distance: 3km – allow 1 hour, suitable footwear required.

