

# Guide to Birding Lytchett Bay



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**Livability**  
Holton Lee



amphibian and reptile  
conservation 



# Guide to Birding Lytchett Bay

Lytchett Bay is situated on the northern shores of Poole Harbour and is made up of several important wildlife rich habitats. The area is owned and managed by several different organisations, with each location providing a unique and easily accessible opportunity to watch birds. This leaflet was made to help guide you around this secret and special corner of Poole Harbour.

The habitat in the north west part of the bay has changed dramatically in the last 10 years and now attracts good numbers of waders right the way through the year, whilst the surrounding fields and woodlands provide suitable breeding habitat for a number of summer migrants and resident birds. The scrapes and pools that are best viewed on a high tide, with waders and wildfowl taking refuge as the rest of the bay floods.

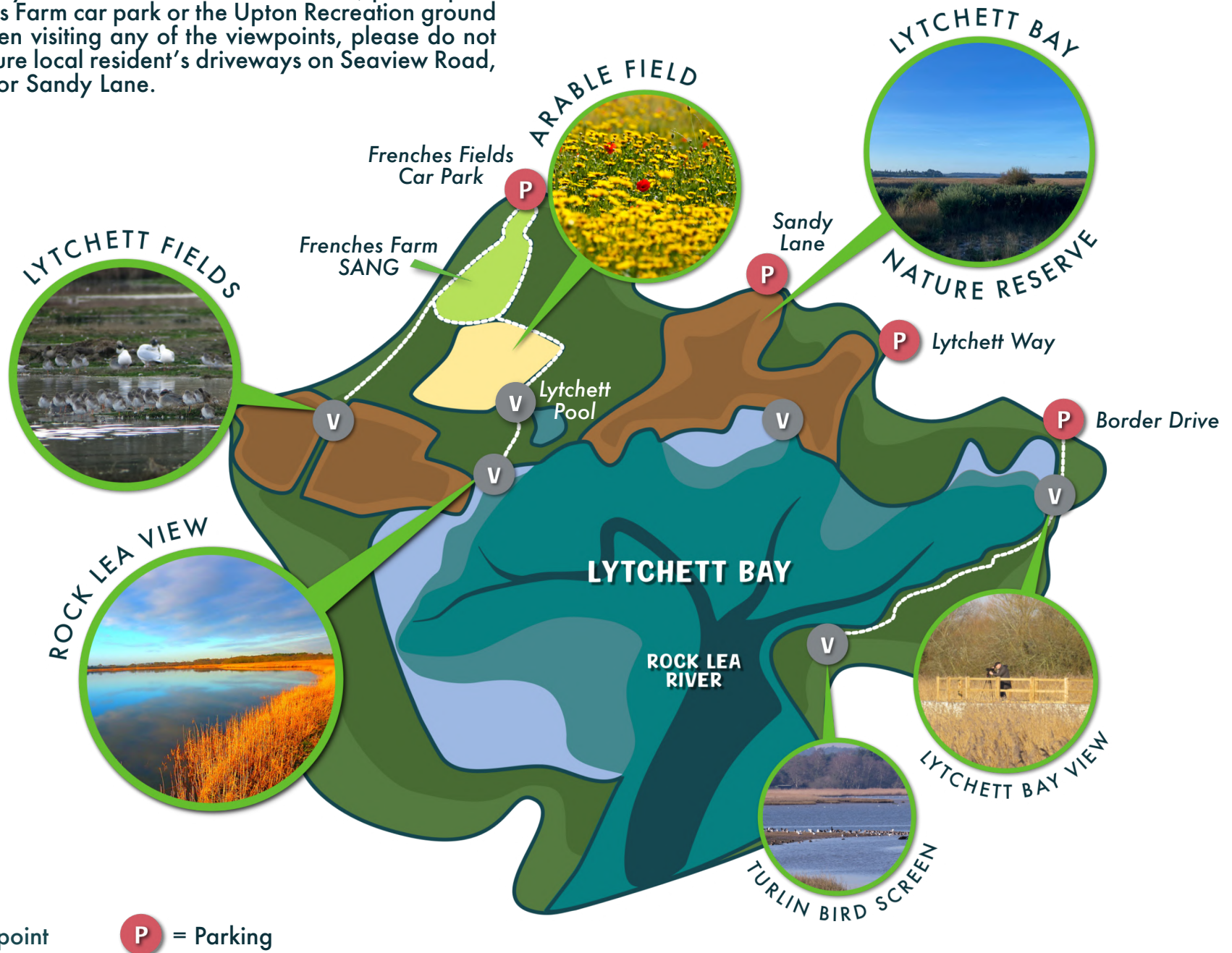
Along Sandy Lane, you'll find access to a small but very productive patch of heathland, with both breeding Nightjar and Dartford Warbler. The reed beds on the southern edge of the heath provide interest right the way through the year with breeding summer migrants, Water Rail and Bearded Tit.

The shallow waters and exposed mudflats of Lytchett Bay area crucial feeding and sheltering zone for large numbers of over-wintering waders and wildfowl. Viewable from several convenient access points, the bay provides daily birding spectacles as the tides rise and fall, and the birds make the most of the nutrient rich mud.

To report your sightings from any of the Lytchett Bay sites then please email [info@birdsofpooleharbour.co.uk](mailto:info@birdsofpooleharbour.co.uk) and tag @harbourbirds and @LytchettP on Twitter.



When visiting Lytchett Fields and Rock Lea View, please park in the Frenches Farm car park or the Upton Recreation ground car park. When visiting any of the viewpoints, please do not block or obscure local resident's driveways on Seaview Road, Border Drive or Sandy Lane.



# RSPB Lytchett Fields

Lytchett Fields is managed by the RSPB and is the place to see a wider variety of waders. Split into two areas known as Sherford Pool and Frenches Pool, the area changes with every tide and 36 species of wader have now been found here. Thanks to a permissive path everyone can come and enjoy the spectacle.

Lapwing, Snipe, Green Sandpiper, Black-tailed Godwit and Greenshank might be expected. During migration Little Ringed Plover is a good bet. In the context of Poole Harbour, your chances of catching up with Wood Sandpiper, Ruff, Curlew Sandpiper and Little Stint are better here than anywhere else (during autumn migration, late July - September). Water Pipit like the site but are elusive, nonetheless patience can pay dividends. It really feels as if something unusual could turn up at any time. Time your visit to coincide with rising or high tide, and light is better earlier or later in the day.



## Frenches Farm SANG

These fields contain some nice hedges and mature trees around the old farm. Native planting should enhance the site further in the future. This area has already produced Hawfinch and is proving attractive to passerines.

Walking from the fields to Lytchett Pool is worthwhile. This single field has hosted 24 species of wader but is now overshadowed by the main Sherford and Frenches Pools. Nonetheless this is probably still the best place to see Water and Scandinavian Rock Pipits in season. Important – please do not drive down Slough Lane as there is strictly no parking. There is a car park at Frenches Farm. Alternatively please park at the Recreation Ground on Seaview Road.



Water Pipit, *Anthus spinoletta*

## Rock Lea View

The Rock Lea View platform is the latest addition to the RSPB Lytchett Fields reserve. The scene changes with every tide and in every season, The viewpoint offers close views of waders and wildfowl during the autumn, winter and spring, with best viewing on a rising tide during the afternoon.

In late summer and early autumn, it will become an ideal spot to scan for hunting Osprey. Kingfisher can be seen frequently perched on the fence posts bordering the ditch in front of the viewing platform. This viewpoint is likely to offer good views of White-tailed Eagles dispersing to the area from the Isle of Wight reintroduction project as it progresses.



Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus*

# Lytchett Bay Nature Reserve

## Lytchett Heath

Lytchett Heath forms part of the Lytchett Bay Nature Reserve, owned by the Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT) and jointly managed by DWT and Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC). This small pocket of heathland incredibly hosts Dartford Warbler and Nightjar as well as the rare and protected Sand Lizard. It grades into reed bed and this is the best place at Lytchett Bay to find Bearded Tit. Cetti's Warbler can be heard throughout the year on the fringes of the reedbed and during the breeding season both Reed Warbler and Reed Bunting can be seen and heard singing. During migration periods, especially in autumn you could encounter species such as Stonechat, Sedge Warbler, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Redstart and Whitethroat. In autumn, Firecrest are frequently in the holly and ivy that border the heathland. Recent rarities have included Yellow-browed Warbler, Wryneck and Lapland Bunting.



Dartford Warbler, *Sylvia undata*

## Lytchett Way

Lytchett Way is also part of the Lytchett Bay Nature Reserve, owned by DWT and jointly managed by DWT and ARC. A public footpath through oak woodland leads to a great vista on the shore of the Bay. During migration periods and in winter the Bay attracts large flocks of waders and waterfowl, including Redshank, Black-tailed Godwit, Curlew and Dunlin, as well as good numbers of Avocet during cold spells.

Time your visit to coincide with the rising tide and if you are lucky the birds will be pushed closer and closer on to the shoreline. Search the scrub for Cetti's Warblers and other passerines. Nightjars breed on the heath most years. During the winter both Meadow Pipit and Rock Pipit can be feeding out on the marsh, with stunning Peregrine and Merlin occasionally arriving to hunt. This is also a great place to enjoy a sensational sunset.



Black-tailed Godwit, *Limosa limosa*

## Lytchett Bay View

Lytchett Bay View is managed by the local parish council and is much more than its name suggests. Yes, there is a fabulous view of Lytchett Bay but it also the gateway to the Turlin Moor shore line and it has at its heart a green space which includes a good diversity of trees and shrubs together with a summer meadow. It is also Lytchett Bay's premier visible- migration site.

It is best to view on a neap tide in the morning when good views of waders, waterfowl and Water Rails are likely. The viewpoint is a good place to look for Ospreys and other raptors. The scrub can be very good for warblers especially during autumn migration. Keep your eyes on the skies winter thrushes can pass here in large numbers. Interesting birds on the site list include Penduline Tit, Yellow-browed Warbler, Nightingale, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Ring Ouzel and Arctic Skua.



Wigeon, *Anas Penelope*

## Turlin Bird Screen

Turlin Bird Screen is on the Turlin shoreline in an area of open space managed by BCP Council. The whole area has an interesting mosaic of habitats and has a good record of attracting migrants. Views from the screen itself are best in the morning when the light is excellent. Different tides produce different species but this is the best location to get long and varied list.

Good views can be gained over the extensive reed beds of Holton Lee with species such as Hen Harrier and Marsh Harrier a possibility. Spoonbill now also occur with increasing regularity. The Turlin area has a track record of producing Lytchett Bay rarities with Penduline Tit, 2 Hoopoes and Snow Bunting heading the list. A boardwalk links the site to Lytchett Bay View and an enjoyable circular walk is now possible from the parking spot at Border Drive, Upton.



Marsh Harrier, *Circus aeruginosus*