

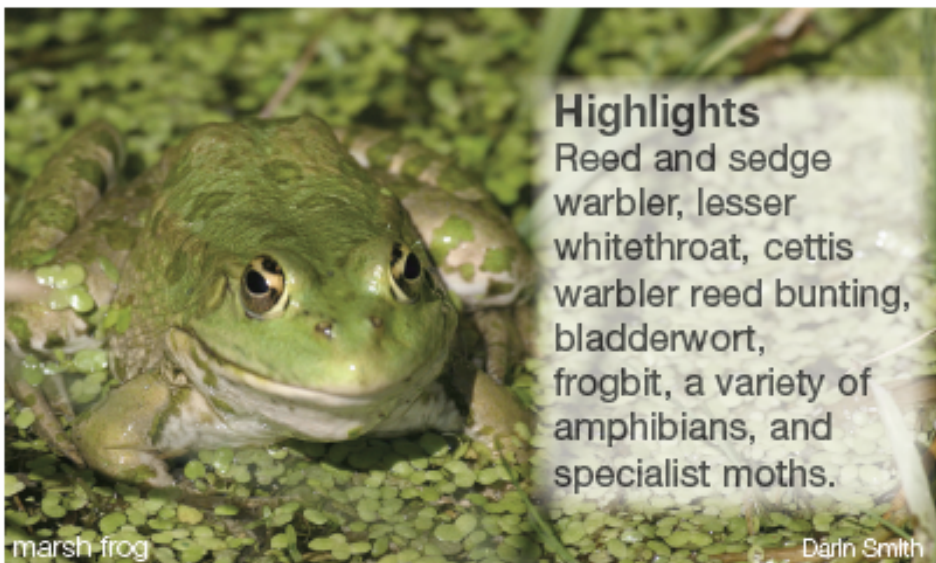
Filsham Reedbed

A large reedbed with ditches and lagoons, set in a river valley floodplain

One of the largest reedbeds in Sussex is surprisingly hard to find, tucked away in the Combe Haven valley — a Site of Special Scientific Interest — between Bexhill and Hastings.

The valley is an important migration route for birds, and the reedbed, a Local Nature Reserve, is a crucial stopping-off point for thousands of swallows and warblers, and much rarer species, including marsh harrier and bittern. Birds including reed warbler, bearded tit and water rail breed here; rare specialist moths such as the wainscots are numerous, and unusual plants including frogbit, water violet and the insectivorous bladderwort exist wherever enough light can reach the water surface.

The area was once pasture, but the cessation of grazing and higher water levels have caused the reedbed to develop naturally over just a few decades. A balance is now maintained between areas of reed and open water.



Highlights

Reed and sedge warbler, lesser whitethroat, cettis warbler reed bunting, bladderwort, frogbit, a variety of amphibians, and specialist moths.

marsh frog

Darin Smith

Where to see wildlife in Sussex is available for £11 (inc. p&p)
from Sussex Wildlife Trust 01273 492630
www.sussexwt.org.uk



New pools have been dug and ditches opened as part of the site's management to provide much better conditions for breeding birds as well as other reedbed wildlife. Visitors can experience life in a Sussex reedbed first hand using a raised boardwalk which takes you into the heart of this wonderful reserve.



Clockwise sedge warbler, ragged robin, reedbed and ditch