

Here's how you do it...

- 1 Decide which site you want to visit
- 2 Enter the 'car park' coordinates into your GPS* and navigate your way there.
- 3 When you arrive at the car park, enter the coordinates for the start point clue plaque. You may have to search around for this, as your GPS device will only get you to within a metre or two of the actual location. The start point plaque will have another set of coordinates, either leading to a further clue plaque, or pointing you to the cache itself.
- 4 When you find the cache, open the box, 'sign in' and leave a short message (it is usual to use a nickname or code name); stamp your leaflet with the embossing stamp. You might also find some bug hunting equipment. Please do not put these items back when you have used them.
- 5 See whether you can collect all the stamps and answer the questions. The answers to the questions can be found on information panels on the sites, and within the leaflet.

* If you don't have a GPS device you can borrow one FREE from one of our Leisure Centres at Diss, Long Stratton or Wymondham provided you leave a £40 deposit by cash, cheque or credit card.

Look out for the coordinate clue plaques – they'll help you find the hidden treasure.

South Norfolk

Locations of sites



Useful contacts

www.geocacheuk.com

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

01508 533945

South Norfolk Cache



Discovering South Norfolk's hidden treasures.



N52-22.502 E001-05.116



South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE



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Welcome

to the South Norfolk Cache Trail and the exciting world of geocaching.

If you've not done it before, geocaching is a hi-tech treasure hunt that uses handheld GPS devices to track down hidden boxes, or caches, containing various goodies. Simply entering coordinates into the GPS will take you to within a few metres of your target. Then the search begins.

On this trail you'll venture into some of South Norfolk's most beautiful corners, and discover all manner of wildlife treasures. You'll also have a lot of fun in the process.

Go explore.



Bog pimpernel (*Anagallis tenella*) – a native perennial of fens, bogs and peaty places. Its Latin name means 'delicate delight'. The delicate flowers open in the sun, and close in less favourable weather conditions making them a good old-fashioned weather indicator.

Bladderwort (*Utricularia vulgaris*) – a rootless aquatic plant, which gets its nourishment entirely from insects that become trapped in its underwater air bladders. Drainage and pollution elsewhere have caused this plant to become a bit of a rarity.

Question time

1. On what rotation is the saw sedge at Roydon Fen cut?
2. Why are parts of Fen Meadow cut each year?
3. What did people do to keep the fen wet, and prevent vegetation becoming overgrown up until the early 20th century?

Stamp 1 of 7

Roydon Fen

Site status: Local Nature Reserve

Grid Reference: TM 100858

Cache series: 1 of 7

Car park coordinates: N52-22-382 E001-06-058

Start point clue plaque: N52-22.482 E001-05.281

Roydon Fen is part of a series of fens that connect up the Waveney and Little Ouse Valleys, forming a chain of wetlands that are home to a wide variety of rare and specialist plants and animals.



Swardeston Common

Site status:

County Wildlife Site,
registered common

Grid Reference:

TG200030 including
TG200026

Cache series:

2 of 7

Car park coordinates:

N52-34.615 E001-14.708

Start point clue plaque:

N52-34.835 E001-14.819

Swardeston Common is home to a wide variety of habitats, from woodland and scrub to dry and wet marshy grassland. It also has eight ponds!

Look out for...

Blackthorn – you will notice that parts of the common are covered in thickets of blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*). This woody shrub started to invade the grassland when grazing animals were taken off the common about 40 years ago. Today, it is coppiced to help control its spread, and to develop a mix of different aged shrubs to benefit birds and other wildlife. Coppicing involves cutting a tree down to just above ground level every few years and letting it grow back again.

Native tree plantation – to mark the Queen Mother's 80th birthday 80 native trees were planted alongside the cricket pitch. The area was also planted with spring bulbs and wild flowers to attract butterflies and other insects.

Question time

1. Why is blackthorn coppiced?
2. In what year was the native tree plantation planted? (look out for a plaque)

Smockmill Common

Site status:

Local Nature Reserve

Grid Reference:

TM218981

Cache series:

3 of 7

Car park coordinates:

N52-32.107 E001-16.140

Start point clue plaque:

N52-32.165 E001-16.358

Smockmill Common is owned by the Shotesham Estate, but managed by South Norfolk District Council as a recreational space for the local community. It hosts a variety of habitats, including a coppiced beech wood in Law's Plantation and an area of fen close to the River Tas.

Up until the late 19th century Smockmill common was used for grazing wild animals and sand and gravel extraction. Areas of beech and hazel were coppiced to provide poles for hurdle making, thatching materials and as a source of fuel.

Look out for...

Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) – this 19th century foreign import may look pretty but it has a darker side. It grows vigorously and spreads quickly, out-competing many of the native plants in the struggle for survival. It has exploding seed pods which can fling seeds up to seven metres away. The plants are hand cut or pulled every year before they flower and seed.

Question time

1. Why did people coppice hazel and beech?
2. When was the Smock mill of Smockmill Common built?

Poringland Wood

Grid Reference:

TG260035

Cache series:

4 of 7

Car park coordinates:

N52-34.931 E001-20.156

Start point clue plaque:

N52-34.966 E001-20.368

Poringland Woods is owned by the Crown Point Estate and managed by South Norfolk District Council and the Norwich Fringe Project for the quiet enjoyment of the local community. The diverse woodland, which includes areas of heathland, coppice, plantation and meadow, is home to a rich and diverse array of plants and animals.

Look out for...

Deadwood – although it might not look that attractive, dead wood is a valuable habitat for hundreds of species of insects, mammals, birds, and fungi. Keep an eye and ear open for one of the most striking woodland residents, the lesser spotted woodpecker, as he hammers into a piece of standing deadwood.

Rhododendron – this extremely invasive species was first introduced to the UK in the 17th century as an ornamental garden shrub. Today, this garden escapee now poses a serious threat to the welfare of some of our woodlands. Each year 'rhodi-bashing' takes place here, in which the plant is cut back and burnt.

Question time

1. When did the Great Gale occur?
2. What is Sleepers Meadow managed as?

Caistor Roman Town

(*Venta Icenorum*)

Site status: County Wildlife Site / National Monument

Grid Reference: TG232033

Cache series: 5 of 7

Car park coordinates: N52-34.871 E001-17.609

Start point clue plaque: N52-35.077 E001-17.648

Venta Icenorum, which means 'market-place of the Icenii', sits at the confluence of the rivers Tas, Wensum and Yare. During Queen Boudica's uprising the site was probably used as a military base.

Look out for...

Barn owls – ghostly in outline and silent in flight it swoops low over the tussocky grassland at dawn and dusk in search of field voles. Don't be alarmed if you hear its long, eerie screech!

Milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*) – this plant has long been used for medicinal purposes, such as treating liver disease and death cap (a type of fungi) poisoning.

Question time

1. Who first spotted the grid-like pattern of Roman streets in the cropped fields here, and in what year?
2. When was the massive stone wall built around this site?
3. Why was the name 'Caistor' given to the site when the Roman town fell into decay?

Stamp 5 of 7

Dunston Common

Site status: Local Nature Reserve

Grid Reference: TG227025

Cache series: 6 of 7

Car park coordinates: N 52° 34.505 E 001° 17.160

Start point clue plaque: N52-34.474 E001-17.066

Dunston Common is a County Wildlife Site and contains a mixture of grassland and semi-mature woodland.

Look out for...

Fly agaric (*Amanita muscaria*) – this distinctive red-topped fungi should be treated with caution. It is in fact toxic to humans and has hallucinogenic properties. Its name is thought to have come from the fact that it was used in Europe as an insecticide when sprinkled in milk.

Great spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*) – listen out for the loud 'drumming' sound as the male woodpecker acts out his courtship ritual or as he wards off other birds who dare to invade his territory. They feed by chiselling away at loose bark on tree trunks and using their long, sticky tongue to extract grubs and insects.

Question time

1. How many slats are there on the xylophone in the woodland?
2. How many birds are there in the old oak tree?
3. Which bird makes a loud drumming sound?

Stamp 6 of 7

Whitlingham Country Park

Site status: Green Flag Site

Grid Reference: TG255078

Cache series: 7 of 7

Car park coordinates: N52 37.243 E001 .19.643

Start point clue plaque: N52-37.318 E001-20.100

Just south of Norwich on the River Yare, this Green-Flag-Award-winning site offers a range of lively events, outdoor activities, walks and a mobile phone tour which introduces the park's fascinating past and vibrant wildlife. You can even take a video tour of the park before you come by visiting www.bbc.co.uk/norfolk/nature.

If you want to have a quiet walk in the tranquil surroundings of ancient woodlands or enjoy more rigorous outdoor activities then Whitlingham is the place for you.

Question time

1. What is the name of the yellow-flowering aquatic plant that grows around the edges of Whitlingham broad?
2. What is the name of the old trading vessels that were once common on the River Yare?
3. Which famous local family once owned the Whitlingham Estate?

Stamp 7 of 7