

Dolydd Hafren

Dolydd Hafren is one of the finest of the Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust Reserves, covering an area of 41 hectares on the eastern bank of the River Severn just south of Forden village. Access is by the minor road from Forden to Abermule. When the road reaches The Gaer Farm (map ref SO 209997), the track to the reserve car park is a right turn. The track can be rough as it is shared with farm vehicles – at times a 4x4 is the best option. From the car park a footpath leads through field margins and woodland to two elevated hides which overlook the reserve. In this aerial photo, the carpark is just out of sight in the bottom-right. The reserve can be seen to the right of the river. The two hides are in the strips of woodland: the location of the first shown with a red arrow; the second in yellow.



The first hide overlooks a freshwater pool where Reed Buntings and both Sedge and Reed Warblers nest in the summer. The second hide commands a fine view over a sharp bend in the river, with shingle banks and islands which change shape after each winter's floods. This hide is named in honour of Brayton Holt, who founded the Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust Bird Group, and inspired a love of birds in many local residents. A colony of Sand Martins nest in the bank to the right of the hide, and the shingle often has breeding Oystercatcher, Little Ringed Plover and Common Sandpiper in summer. In recent winters a Curlew flock has often exceeded 50 birds, and Water Rail is often present, though usually secretive. Kingfisher, Little Egret, and Goosander can be seen at any time of year. In 2019 and 2020 a Great Egret has been a regular visitor. Hobby and Peregrine can sometimes be seen overhead, and Ospreys often visit on migration in spring and autumn. Look out for Linnets and Tree Sparrows in the field between the two hides. The second hide contains a logbook for visitors to record their sightings. For more information, see <https://www.montwt.co.uk/nature-reserves/dolydd-hafren>