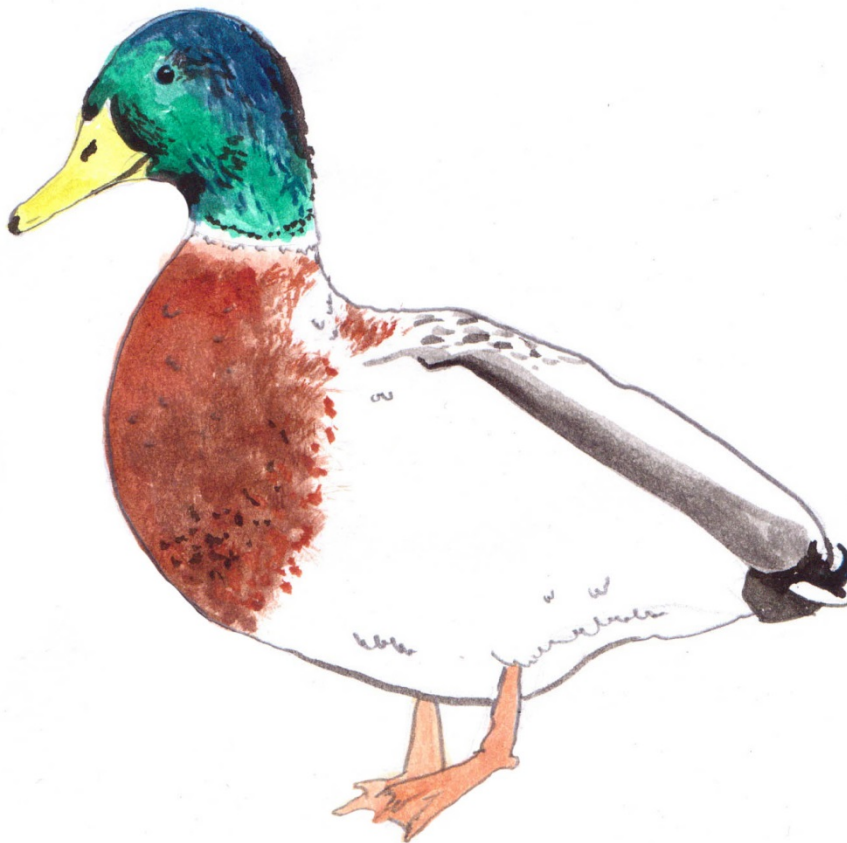




HEVER CASTLE
& GARDENS

CHILDHOOD HOME OF ANNE BOLEYN

LAKE WALK NATURE TRAIL



Remember to bring your pencil



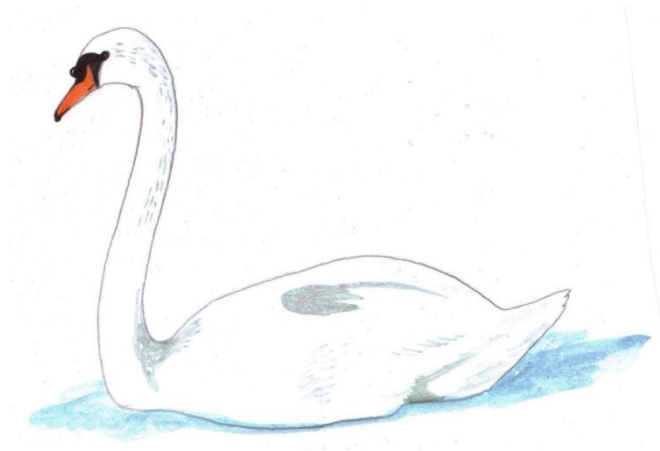
Please follow The Countryside Code

We recommend allowing 1 hour for your Lake Walk.

Sheep graze around the lake. Please close all gates.

Please keep dogs on leads.

If you require further information or assistance, a member of staff will be happy to help you.



MAP KEY

Nestbox



Lifebuoy



No entry





1. SIXTEEN ACRE ISLAND

On 29th December 1904 a contract was signed for the excavation of the lake and formation of the embankments, and also construction of an overflow weir and sluice gates. The contractors were ordered to work day and night (except Sundays), and the 38-acre lake varying in depth from three to ten feet was hand dug by 800 men, reinforced with six steam diggers and seven miles of railway, and completed within two years of signing the contract. The lake was filled in July 1906 and at the same time Sixteen Acre Island was created.

Look for kingfishers, mute swans and grey herons around the lake.



2. CHESTNUT AVENUE

This feature of the walk is a remnant of the original mile-long avenue planted 1904-1908 which was designed to lie on the same axis as the Long Gallery in the Castle. The avenue started from the side of the outer moat and ran the whole length of Sixteen Acre Island and beyond, leading to the eastern boundary of the estate. The avenue suffered extensive damage from the Great Storm of October 1987, but this section survives relatively intact.

Look at the landscape and tick the colours you can see on the colour wheel below.



3. DEER POND

Ponds are very much a feature of the landscape in this area. Often found in the corners of fields in natural hollows and left if the area tended to lay wet, or dug out further and used as watering holes for livestock. Note several woodpecker nest holes in some of the trees surrounding the pond, and an old gnarled pollarded (pruned) oak near the fence adjoining the Golf Course.



Listen for the loud laughing call of the green woodpecker. The green woodpecker is the largest of the three woodpeckers that breed in Britain. What do you think they eat? Ants, ants, and more ants! They use their strong beak to dig into ant colonies and eat the inhabitants.

4. PILLBOXES

During the Second World War pillboxes were carefully positioned as part of defensive 'stop-lines', called the Corps Line in Kent, consisting of obstacles like rivers, railways and canals, together with trenches and other anti-tank devices to defend strategic points and slow down any German advance. Pillboxes were built along the north bank of the River Eden at 300-400 metre intervals, often staggered to provide interlocking fields of fire. Here, three pillboxes are spaced much closer together to cover what would have been a key crossing point.

5. LEGACY OF THE GREAT STORM, 1987

Note how several wind-blown oaks cut back to stump level have regenerated, and how around a dozen young oaks have grown up from acorns left where the trees fell. These have been well-protected from grazing and squirrels by an impenetrable bramble thicket (now cut back), giving the appearance of a stand of oaks planted in the last 15-20 years.

6. STONE AND MECHANICAL WEIR

The weir was originally built when the lake was constructed during the period 1904-1908. The mechanical weir, designed to control the level of water in the lake, can be raised and lowered as necessary. The River Eden, of which the lake is part, continues its course eastwards in a series of meanders until it flows into the River Medway near Tonbridge.



Look for the great crested grebe who sometimes goes fishing by the waterfall. On land they are clumsy because their feet are placed so far back on their bodies. Very young grebes often ride on their parents' backs.

7. REED BEDS

There are around four reed beds growing against the banks of the lake. These beds tend to develop where water is slow moving and silt is deposited.

Listen for reed warblers from mid-April to early October. They sing from within the reedbed rather than from a perch, so often heard rather than seen. They eat insects and berries autumn.



in



Look for wrens nesting in the litter. They eat insects and spiders.

8. DEAD STANDING TREES

Although unsightly to some, these provide an important habitat for fungi and invertebrates (e.g. beetles), which are in turn fed on by woodpeckers. Look out for the clusters of holes where woodpeckers have been feeding.

Look for the violet ground beetle. It rests during the day under logs or stones. It eats slugs, snails, worms and insects.



9. POPLARS



This is the species *Populus deltoid* (Cottonwood). Planted early in the 20th century, probably as a timber tree.


Try closing your eyes for 1 minute. Count how many different sounds you can hear. How many of these sounds are natural and how many are man-made?

10. WINDBLOWN TREE

Note the size of the root-plate which hints of the extensive root system of a mature tree. The tree itself is a Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*) and although it came down in a storm in 2007, it continues to live as a certain part of the root system remains intact.



Look for the nestboxes. We encourage birds into the gardens at Hever Castle by providing plenty of places to nest. A nestbox is an excellent substitute for a tree hole and many different species will use one. At Hever the nestboxes are home to owls, blue tits, robins and woodpeckers.



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hevercastle.co.uk

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