Levington

Long Walk – 3.42 miles/5.5km

Short walk – 1 mile/1.6 km

Both walks take the same route from the Ship Inn to the river wall.

Cross road in front of the Ship Inn to wide track opposite (marked as footpath), to right of a house.

Follow track as it bears left, then through gate, and immediately turn right. Glimpse gate to the right as you follow post and wire fence to bottom right hand corner of field.

Here you have views of the Orwell estuary – to the right, the river heading inland to Ipswich, and to seaward, the Port of Felixstowe.

You may have seen Cetti’s Warbler here, though it is a shy bird, and if you see it, it will probably be diving for cover – a small brown-backed bird, with lighter front, an eye-stripe, and bursts of song, especially in spring when it sings from dawn to dusk, and again at night.

The cluster of yachts marks a well named Levington Marina. Some 550 boats are tied here, in floating basins and on the land. When the tide goes out, a sill at the entrance holds back enough water in the basins to keep the boats afloat. The marina was constructed between 1967 and 2005, occupying previously reclaimed land where river walls had failed and left it flooded.

Follow wooden boardwalk through area of low lying marsh and reeds, a reclaimed area protected behind the river wall. At end of boardwalk continue between fence lines. At end of path, go up steps onto river wall.

The Stour and Orwell estuaries are together classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds by the European Community. This protection is extended to a number of rare bird species and to regular migrants.

Shelduck are protected as migrants, and are frequently seen especially between October and July. ‘Young’ are often seen in large groups, tended a ‘chick’ by only a few adult birds, while the parents have migrated. The estimate of Shelduck’s population is usually about 3,500 birds.

Port expansion and channel dredging for shipping threaten the Shelduck population is usually about 3,500 birds.

The long and short walks divide here:

Long Walk: turn right on the river wall, and see overfor for further directions

Short walk – continued

Short Walk: Turn left (waymarked Stour and Orwell Walk) and follow footpath on top of river wall.

The Ship Inn

Church Lane, Levington, Suffolk IP10 0LQ

Location: In village

Disabled access: Yes

Children welcome: outside

Garden/courtyard

Pilots’ Way

To a point where pilots used to join visiting ships to the Port of Felixstowe

This path is the ‘Pilots’ Way’. It leads down to the river Orwell, to scenic areas used to pan visiting ships to navigate them up to Ipswich.

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**Levington Route overview**

Both walks start from the Ship Inn. The pub has a car park but please, check before leaving your car there, especially if you plan to walk first, and end the pub later.

The walks follow the same route for the first two miles. Turn right (waymarked S&O Walk) into trees. Keep fence on right until it ends, then straight on into Home Wood (waymarked S&O Walk). Follow path through Wood.

Once out of the wood look right to see parkland surrounding Broke Hall, seat of the nobility since at least 14th century. The distinguished Rear Admiral Sir Philip Bowes Vere Broke was born here in 1717, and it was his father who commissioned Humphry Repton to design the park. Design criteria included obscuring the impressive house from the fields. The fine tree avenue approach still stands. The woodenland is home to roe deer, re-introduced since their extinction in England in the 16th century. If you are not lucky enough to see them, you must be satisfied with the signs that they are there: hoof prints, unless you are not lucky enough to see them, you must be satisfied with the signs that they are there: hoof prints, which have recently become quite rare, enjoys open country with hedges. You may see it singing

**Levington Long walk – continued**

The river is close by to your left. The path leads you straight on through open grassy area (Norton Picnic Site). Before this, there is easy access to the beach; 1/2 for a brief diversion if you wish.

Here you can see the London Clay in the cliffs you have been walking on. There are heaps ofRobin ear, thought to have come from excavations in Germany. The large blocks of shale are 'septaria', popular with the Romans and Normans and burnt to make cement. Still needed for restoration purposes, it was, until quite recently gathered from the banks, wth planning permission, but it is now quarried.

The Yellowhammer, which has recently become quite rare, enjoys open country with hedges. You may see it singing from the top of a bush – it is about the size of a sparrow, and the male has bright yellow head and underside, brown back streaked with white, chestnut-rump and shows white tail-ti feathers in flight.

Brown back streaked with black, chestnut rump and shows white tail-ti feathers in flight. The fine tree avenue leading to Broke Hall, on right. Just after height restriction barrier, glimpse of Repton's lime avenue leading to Broke Hall, on right. Follow path to the beach for a brief diversion if you wish.

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