

- Water
- Agricultural land
- Wooded areas
- Wetlands at the bottom of the valley
- Reed Beds
- Lock-keeper's House
- Wooden foot-bridge

- Starting Point**  
Lock-keeper's house at Méricourt-sur-Somme
- Car Park**
- Be careful:**  
Hunting is carried out on this site during the official hunting period. Please be careful during this period.

**Protect the natural environment**  
To help with the conservation of the rich natural habitats of this fragile site, please:

- . Always use the marked trails
- . Keep gates and stiles closed
- . Respect the fauna and flora
- . Take your litter away with you

This trail is maintained by the Poppy Country



- Sign posts**
- Route continues
  - Wrong direction
  - Change of direction

**This leaflet was created by the Somme County Council**  
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**For more information:**

- Tourist Office: Poppy Country : 03 22 75 11 72  
[www.tourisme-paysducoquelicot.com](http://www.tourisme-paysducoquelicot.com)
- Audio-guide for the walk: [www.zévisit.com/tourisme/pays-du-coquelicot](http://www.zévisit.com/tourisme/pays-du-coquelicot)
- Somme Tourist Board: [www.somme-tourisme.com](http://www.somme-tourisme.com)  
[www.somme-nature.com](http://www.somme-nature.com)
- This walk has received the: "Tourism and Handicap National Label"



# La Somme

## The Marshlands of Méricourt-sur-Somme

**Méricourt-sur-Somme**, 8km from Bray-sur-Somme, 31km from Amiens

By visiting the marshlands of Méricourt, nature will reveal all of its beauty. Hiking, hunting, fishing, and nature discovery activities - something for everyone.



- Starting at:** Car park at the lock-keeper's house at Méricourt-sur-Somme
- Time:** 30 mins
- Distance:** 1,5km
- Route:** easy

- Spring
- Summer
- Autumn
- Winter

## Exploring the natural sites

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Updates and printing: imp. Cg60 - Translation: C. Carnel - Summer 2012



# The Marshlands of Méricourt-sur-Somme

By visiting the marshlands of Méricourt-sur-Somme, you can enjoy a magnificent site characteristic of the Somme Valley. Follow our guide to the heart of these re-established marshlands and discover a site managed and maintained by man, but where nature is reclaiming its rights.



**Franck Beauvarlet**, Mayor of Méricourt-sur-Somme

"The municipal council took on the ecological rehabilitation of

the site in 2006. Before this time, 40 hectares were rented out and the area was occupied by chalets. When we took over the site, we worked to transform the site into an area for leisure activities. Through wood clearing, grazing, fishing and the introduction of educational areas, we have given back to nature what man had taken out."

## About the site

- > **Proprietor:** Municipality of Méricourt-sur-Somme
- > **Size:** 40ha
- > **Managed by:** Municipality of Méricourt-sur-Somme
- > **Maintenance partners:** Syndicat de la Vallée des Anguillères, Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Picardie
- > **Financial partners:** Poppy Country, Europe, State, County

## A place between land and water

Plunge into this peaceful green setting situated between land and water. The ponds and marshes are encircled to the east by the Somme Canal and to the west by the old Somme River. The water from this river stretches out and forms ponds; in this water filled area, the fauna and flora flourish...

## Follow the guide

To reach the starting point of the walk at the lock-keeper's house at Méricourt-sur-Somme, follow the signposts leading to the Caesar's Camp Belvedere, situated by Méricourt Church. Follow the trail to the left leading to the educational pond where a picnic area has been established. This walk leads around many ponds, surrounded by pollarded willows where "catch and release" fishing is carried out. At this point the walk crosses

the hiking trail: "The Cows' Marsh". Carry on towards the old River Somme and follow its banks turning right at the Ablette d'Or Ponds.

Cross the stile on the left where the information panel retracing the site's history will tell you more about the development and maintenance work that has been carried out. Follow the path, edged with Yellow Irises, until you reach the Somme Canal. On your



**Bluethroat:** The Bluethroat is a passerine bird that belongs to the Muscicapidae family. It seeks areas containing plenty of water and is fond of large reed beds filled with willow thickets, using them to perch and sing. Not very common to Picardy, the conservation of this species is considered to be a priority in Europe.

right, you will find a habitat of great interest to birds, such as the Marsh Harrier or the Kingfisher, which are attracted by the patchwork of natural habitats. You will find a diverse web of ponds, reed beds, small channels, peaty bogs, and woods of alder and willow.

By following the Somme Canal to reach the lock-keeper's house, you will pass in the proximity of a spawning ground: a body of water offering a haven of peace to fish during the reproduction period. You will certainly see the Common Snipe, and other small passerine birds: species that have returned to the site

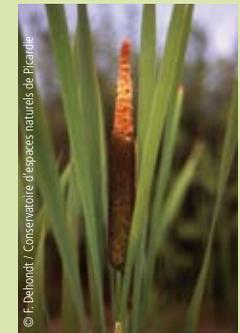


**Orange-spotted Emerald:** The Orange-spotted Emerald is a dragonfly of a metallic-green colour with yellow spots along the top of the abdomen. It likes to frequent large rivers and ponds surrounded by woods and thickets. It can often be seen in the Somme Valley.

after the development and maintenance work that was carried out. The courtship dance of the Great Crested Grebe, the flowering of the reeds or the metamorphosis of the dragonflies will no longer hold any secrets for you.

## A potential that should be conserved

All of these species of wildlife and vegetation make up a biological potential that it is important to preserve. The restoration of suitable habitats and areas of reproduction at the heart of the site would offer an extra chance to all of these species to develop and colonise new biotopes. An area "ecogérée" (ecologically maintained) by the Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Picardie, has been established to preserve the biodiversity of the site at the north-east limit of the marshes. It is only open to the public during organised visits.



## Bulrush

With a large, upright stem which can reach 2,5 metres in height, it holds seeds and is enclosed by large, sword shaped leaves. Its flowers take the form of a large cigar, starting off green in colour but quickly becoming brown. This plant, which develops rapidly and doesn't mind periods of cold weather, grows with its feet in shallow water.