

HIGH RID RESERVOIR

by Ian McKerchar



High Rid Reservoir (Ian McKerchar)

High Rid Reservoir is a relatively small, off-square, stone sided reservoir situated three miles to the west of Bolton town centre. It is easily accessed and can be efficiently covered very quickly, making it ideal to include into a tour of other Bolton birding sites. The excellent Rumworth Lodge is situated 1.5 miles to the south-east, Doffcocker Lodge a mile due east and the outstanding Horwich Moors are only 1.5 miles due north.

High Rid Reservoir is accessed via a footpath off High Rid Lane. The lane is very poorly surfaced and there is parking for only a few cars by the metal five bar gate and footpath beyond which leads up to the reservoir itself. There is plenty of further parking along either of the two access roads mentioned below and those with precious vehicles might consider parking here and walking the short distance to the reservoir.

High Rid Lane can be accessed via two main roads:

1. Turn off the A673 Chorley New Road onto Fall Birch Road which then becomes High Rid Lane.
2. Turn off the B6402 Old Kiln Lane onto Old Hall Lane, which then becomes High Rid Lane.



The entrance to the footpath leading up to the pump house and reservoir, viewed from the High Rid Lane. There is very limited car parking along the lane just before this gate but should this be full parking should be sought elsewhere in a sensible location. The 'pump house' by the side of the reservoir itself can be seen just in the middle of this image. (Ian McKerchar)



The footpath leading up to the pump house and reservoir. The fields either side of this track can be productive, especially if horses are present. (Ian McKerchar)



The entire reservoir in all its glory! It is remarkably small and easily covered, which only enhances its potential. (Ian McKerchar)



The area of fields and hedges off to the north of the reservoir are always worthy of a decent scanning. (Ian McKerchar)



The reservoir is stone lined along its entire circumference which can be walked via a decent path. (Ian McKerchar)



More of the same, viewed from the pump house. (Ian McKerchar)

Birds

Despite poor coverage and being nothing but a small stone sided reservoir, High Rid has managed to attract some decent birds and further coverage would undoubtedly pay dividends. In winter especially there are Little Grebe, Tufted Duck and Goldeneye present, including a drake of the latter species which by 2009 had been present all-year round for eight years! The photo of that drake below taken in November 2009 proved once and for all just why it had never bothered to leave the reservoir; clearly it was not through choice. A great vista from the reservoir provides good airspace for raptors and anything overflying, plus the fields and hedges around the reservoir attract pipits, wagtails and thrushes at least. Good visible migration can often be observed during autumn, increased no doubt due to the site's proximity to the Horwich moors. Amongst High Rid's best birds have been a few Scaup, a Grey Phalarope in 1981, on the 27th November 1993 a drake Ring-necked Duck and in late winter 2007 a Long-tailed Duck which remained for a total of 37 days.



The long-staying 2007 Long-tailed Duck (Steve Collins)



First winter drake Scaup, November 2009 (Ian McKerchar)



The long-staying drake Goldeneye in November 2009. Now we know it's prolonged stay was not through choice! (David Winnard)

Ian McKerchar, December 2009

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