

The common breeding birds on the pond are mallard, coot, pochard, moorhen, common tern, little and great crested grebe. The pond is also visited by gulls that come to bathe and roost.



Continue along the path, keeping to the board walks as the surrounding land is marshy.

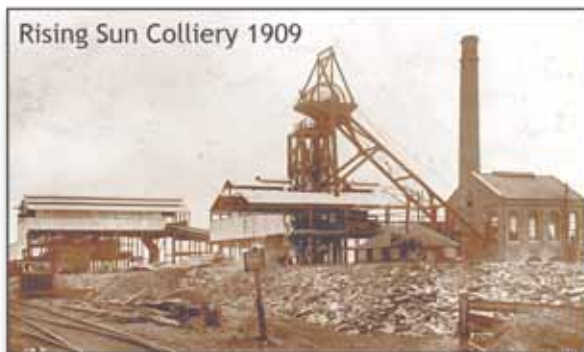
The dominant tree species in the plantation are lodgepole pine, Swedish whitebeam and grey alder which are not native to this country. They have survived on the poor soil better than the native species that were originally planted.

Native species have, however, been planted along the path. The plantation contains a selection of woodland birds with robins, chaffinch and blackbirds, long-tailed, blue, great, and coal tits, being the most obvious.

With luck you may spot the much scarcer willow tit.

The damp pasture on the left has rushes and both northern marsh and common spotted orchid and their confusing hybrid. The plants are kept low by grazing rabbits and is a good area to look for small frogs, dragonflies and butterflies.

Rising Sun Colliery 1909



Fatkin the Mole, once part of the sculpture trail, can now be found in the grounds of the countryside centre



Continue along this woodland path to the dipping pond. Turn right through the wooden arch. The arch represents a hare's hips and, like Fatkin the mole, was once part of a sculpture trail. Follow the track along the field boundary until the access road to the Countryside Centre is reached.

The uneven ground to the right of the field shows the remains of early bell pits. These were a common method of extracting shallow coal from the ground in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

Turn right and walk back to the centre.



Design: Jasmine McMullon

## NORTH TYNESIDE WAGGONWAYS



## RISEING SUN WALK

A DELIGHTFUL WALK THROUGH  
COUNTRYSIDE WITH STUNNING VIEWS  
FROM THE TOP OF SCAFFOLD HILL

START : RISING SUN  
COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE  
DISTANCE : 4.6 KMS (2.8 MILES)  
TIME : 1.5 HOURS  
TERRAIN : GENERALLY EASY - TWO  
GENTLE SLOPES



Leave the Rising Sun Countryside Centre via the main gates turning left onto the bridleway. Glimpses of Swallow Pond can be caught through the foliage on the right.

This path is a good place for butterflies. In particular, comma will be seen along the hedgerow, whilst the small skipper prefers long grass and will be found in the adjacent fields.

Both species have recently colonised Northumberland as their range has moved northward over the country.



After approx 250m turn right along another bridleway, keeping Swallow Pond on your right.

This bridleway follows the cause of a former 18th-century wooden waggonway which once linked a small pit at Holystone to a coal staith at Wallsend.

After 0.5km, the bridleway ends at a T-junction.

Turn left and follow the former waggonway for approx 500m until a path on the right is reached.

This is the Killingworth Waggonway, one of the most historically significant colliery railways due to its role as a testing ground for the early locomotive experiments of George Stephenson from 1814 to 1818.



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Walk down the short ramp and follow the path alongside the stream. This area is known locally as Battle Hill Dene. Eventually this path ends at a T-junction. Turn right onto the former Rising Sun Colliery Branch Line.

The Rising Sun Colliery, opened in 1908, was connected to the Killingworth Waggonway and to the North Eastern Railway by a laborious route. The Rising Sun Colliery Branch Line, completed in 1942, simplified the running of the coal from the Rising Sun Colliery.

Continue along the path until Kings Road North is reached. Turn right.

Remains of a former level crossing can still be seen where the former railway line crosses Kings Road North.

After 100m, turn left onto a path heading up the former Rising Sun Pit heap. Continue along this path until the summit is reached. Just to the right after leaving the tarmac road is the site of the former Rising Sun Colliery.

Originally sunk in 1906, the colliery produced coal up until 1969. In the early 1960s, it was Europe's largest deep coalmine employing 1500 men.

Descend the hill via the path on the left. Look for the Waggonway logo marker and cross the stile onto a farm track.

At this crossroads continue straight on following the field boundary towards a mixed plantation.



Here you will see and hear typical hedgerow birds. In Spring and Summer, yellowhammers will sing their "little bit of bread and no cheese song" and the harsh rattling, churring song will be the diminutive wren. Check the ragwort for the black and yellow caterpillars of the cinnabar moth.

Turn right at the crossroads, skirting the plantation.

The plantation edge has a good selection of native species including oak, birch and chestnut. The path soils here are poor in nutrients and consequently the vegetation is low and flower rich as the long grasses that would shade them out cannot grow.

The path ends on the Killingworth Waggonway, opposite an entrance to the nature reserve. Do not enter the reserve here but turn right and enter the reserve 100 metres further along the waggonway.

The path leads to a bird screen with excellent views of Swallow Pond.