

4 Helping wildlife on View Island

Reading Hydro volunteers made habitats to attract bats, birds and insects. They also made a safe passage for fish.

Bats

The trees provide good places for bats to roost. We've made bat boxes to attract them. Some of the boxes are on trees. Others are built into a wall of the turbine house.

Come in summer around sunset or sunrise. You might see a Daubenton's bat catching insects over the water. A Noctule bat might be flying high above the tree-tops.

Have you ever seen a bat? Where? When? What did it look like?

Noctule bat



Daubenton's bat



Insects

Centipedes, woodlice and beetles like to live in decaying wood. We've left piles of logs and sticks on View Island to provide homes for them.

The decaying wood and leaves also give frogs and hedgehogs somewhere to hibernate in winter. They like to feed on burrowing insects.

Do you know any other animals that hibernate?

If you are lucky you might see the magnificent Stag beetle. The male can grow to 8 cm long.

How many insect homes can you find near the fish pass?



Stag beetle



Common woodlouse



An insect home



Chub

Fish

We built the fish pass to help fish swim up the river. It has both slow and faster flowing water. This is to attract different fish, such as chub and pike.

Small chub often swim together in shoals.

Can you see any in the water?

Pike



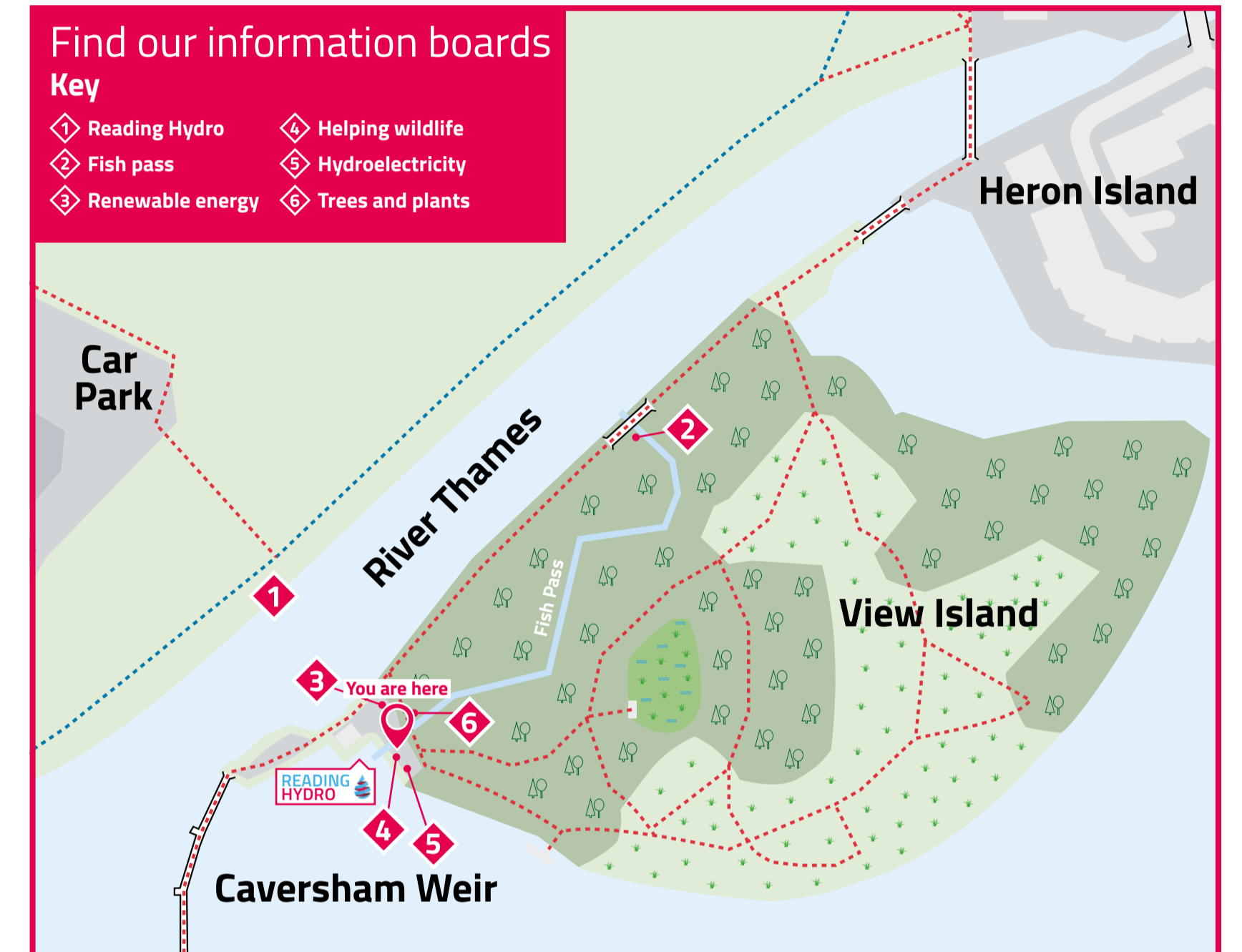
Eels

Eels were once common in the River Thames. They are now critically endangered. Our fish pass lets young eels, called elvers, swim up the river past the weir and turbines. They then spend up to 25 years growing in the river, to up to 10 times their size. During this stage of their life cycle they are called yellow eels. When they are big enough they swim back to the Sargasso Sea to spawn.

What is the name of the eels that you might see in the fish pass?

See more information on Board 2 The Fish Pass

Eel

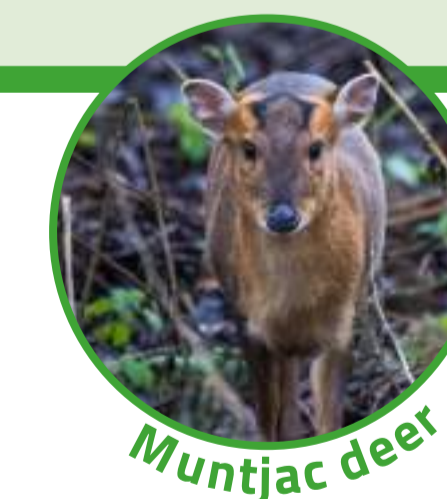


Other animals

In the spring, summer, and autumn you might see frogs, hedgehogs or deer on the Island.

Do you know where frogs and hedgehogs go in the winter?

Hedgehog



Muntjac deer



Common Frog

Birds

The trees on View Island are an excellent habitat for birds. We've made bird boxes and attached them to some of the trees. They will encourage birds like blue tits and wrens to nest.

See if you can spot a starling, grey wagtail, mute swan, or a brightly coloured kingfisher.

These birds are all in decline in the UK – you can find out more at bto.org

Blue tit



Common starling



Grey wagtail



Kingfisher

