

Elmo the Peewit of Campfield Marsh

Elmo is a Lapwing, or Peewit as they are sometimes called. He was born on a beautiful spring day amongst the pink meadow flowers of Campfield Marsh. Peewits are plucky little birds and within a couple of hours the newly hatched chicks can walk around and get busy searching for snacks (slimy worms actually)! Elmo, being a brave little soul, was up and about in a flash and began to explore the fabulous floating world of Campfield Marsh. And, as you will see for yourself, this land is a very magical place full of troggles, boggles, mysterious marshes and creatures from far away.

Listen out for the "Peeweee-WIT" sounds and watch lapwings leaping and dancing in the sky above the wetlands!

When he was born Elmo looked like a little ball of fluff on two long, skinny legs, and unlike the other Peewit chicks had a tiny green Mohican feather that stuck out from the top of his head. As Elmo grew up, his pale fluffy feathers turned purple and emerald green and his little Mohican became a tall, shiny crest. Elmo was a very handsome, brave bird indeed – and a very bossy one too if truth be told! Peewits, you see, are very territorial birds; they will fearlessly defend their home against any pesky invaders, and that even includes birds of prey and the mischievous boggles and troggles of Campfield Marsh!

Did you know that the name Elmo actually means 'protector'? Elmo was given that name by all the creatures who live at Campfield Marsh because he really is the most brave and plucky bird around. Elmo is great at keeping the peace – and when

you live in a land where so many different types of creatures all meet together someone needs to take charge!

The Boglands of Campfield Marsh are over 80 per cent water, so a trip across the boardwalks really is like walking on a floating island!

For hundreds of years many different types of birds from all over the world (as far away as Africa and the Arctic in fact) have been meeting here and if you look out across the wetlands from the bird hide you will see what a busy place it is! Now, most of the creatures you will meet here are very friendly indeed but a few of them have a rather mischievous side. Let me introduce you to some of them...

Who's who?



Elmo

Campfield Marsh's main man; he was born and bred in the meadows here and has been helping to protect and look after everyone who lives and visits Campfield Marsh ever since. Keeping the boggles and troggles in check is his biggest challenge, so watch out for Elmo's spies on the trail!

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It's always nice to come home...

Now everyone needs a home, and homes come in all shapes and sizes at Campfield Marsh from meagre scrapes in the ground to luxury, detached tree-top dwellings with at least four bedrooms, central heating and en suite facilities!

Elmo likes to make sure that everyone has somewhere to lay their head at night (even troggles and boggles) and has set up a great place to practise shelter making on Bushcraft Island. If you manage to cross Boggle Bridge without being gobbled by a boggle you can practise making a shelter yourself!

Elmo uses Bushcraft Island to help any visitors from far-flung countries who would like to make a home and stay for a while. As you can imagine, African mud is quite different to Cumbrian mud and so little swallows need lots of practice to make a suitable nest for so many little ones.

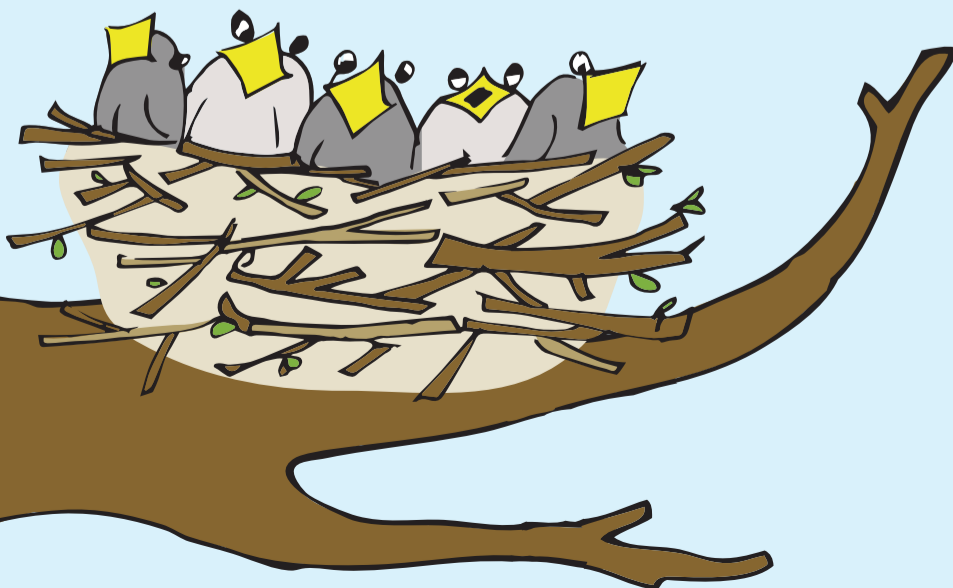
Many geese from the Arctic also fly here for the winter months and would love a nice cosy nest to sleep in.

What type of home do you think they would like... a stylish penthouse apartment perhaps?

See if you can...

design and build a shelter fit for Arctic visitors on Bushcraft Island. What natural materials could you use to insulate it and make it waterproof? How would you describe your shelter if you were selling it?

Remember to leave some lucky clover by Boggle Bridge as you pass onto the island!



Troggles

These mischievous little critters hang around in fours and love to cause chaos. They will often camouflage themselves on the branches of the Troggle Tree, and when they see you coming will scamper down the Lanning and hide behind the hidey holes just so they can jump out on you when you look through the gaps. They live in the swamps and marshes of the Troglands and love to hide just under the water in Troggle Marsh so they can see who is passing by. They are only as big as your hand but don't be fooled by their cuteness!

The spies

Elmo has recruited a few helpful allies to keep the boggles and troggles in order, so watch out for the Hawker and Emperor dragonflies patrolling the Lanning and dragonfly pools on the Boglands. The Wolf spiders, Snipe and Curlew are also great undercover agents and are never too far away.

Mildred

A rather exceptional buzzard who lives in the Raptor Forest; her name means 'gentle strength'. She is one of the biggest birds around, with very sharp talons and an eye for small rodents! She gets a bit lonely in the forest on her own, so can often be seen flying around the edge of the Wetlands. She is a bit of a wimp really and would rather be swanning around on the lake with all the other birds than hunting. The Peewits tend to chase

her off if she gets too close to the nests, so watch out for birdy squabbles. She is currently taking swimming lessons.

Bogsploration time...

Now if you are brave enough to venture past Troggle Marsh and manage to avoid getting troggles mud thrown at you, you might see a very strange tree just by the path called the 'nosey tree'. During the autumn months amazing bracket fungus grows on its trunk and looks like giant noses; look carefully and you might spot the grumpy old man! As you pass the Swamp of Stumps and enter the Raptor Forest keep an eye out for Mildred circling in the skies above, as she glides like a silent breeze keeping watch on all below.

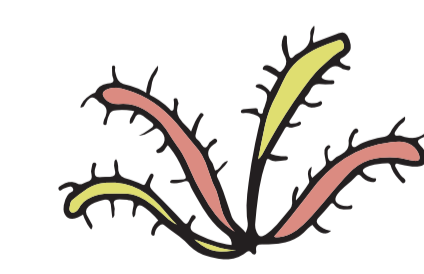
Once you leave the woodlands you are officially out on the Boglands – YIPEEEEE, you've made it past those naughty troggles! The Boglands are a mysterious and remote place full of fascinating flowers and animals. The boardwalks should keep you safe, but watch out for snakes, lizards and bog-snorkelling boggles, not to mention the flesh-eating plants!



Bog Myrtle

Try rubbing the leaves...

of the bog myrtle plant with your fingers and see how lovely it smells. It's nature's air freshener and it's great at keeping the midges at bay too.



Sundew

Sundew are amazing carnivorous plants that trap insects on their sticky stalks and gobble them up for dinner; look out for them next to the boardwalks.

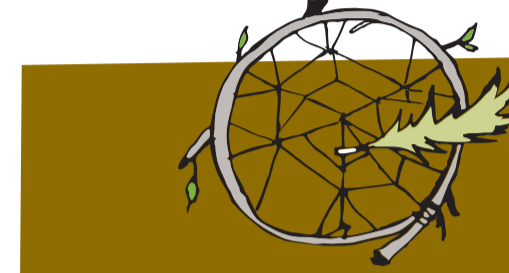
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Elmo has many spies out on the Boglands and you might come across them if you tread carefully. Listen out for drumming Snipe, barking Roe deer and Curlew calls across the heather; this is all code for 'WATCH OUT BOGGLES ABOUT!'

If you visit in the summer months the Boglands are a sea of multicoloured flowers from white fluffy cotton grass to bright yellow Asphodel. Mildred loves flying over the Boglands and has even been spotted in the Emperor dragonfly pools practising how to float. She is desperate to learn how to swim so she can blend in with all the other birds on the wetlands but still has to use a rubber ring as buzzards aren't very buoyant unfortunately! Mildred also has quite a sensitive nose and can't stand the pong of boggles, so she always keeps a sprig of myrtle with her to freshen the air.

Bugs and bees...

Wolf spiders are amazing hunters and actually catch their prey by ambushing them! They aren't the best web builders in the world but they are great at jumping out on folks by hiding under stones and in little burrows! Did you know that there are literally hundreds of them living in the Kale fields? Elmo likes to let people know when the Wolf spiders are in town by hanging willow webs on the Damson trees. Maybe you could make your own to hang there too? Birds and voles also love hanging out in the Wolf spider field as it's planted with special crops to help the local wildlife.



How to make a willow web...

Find a bendy branch such as willow and twist it around itself so it makes a hoop.

Use some twisted willow bark to make string and then use this to tie the ends together and make the web.

Collect feathers and interesting things you find on your journey and hang them on your web to show where you have been.

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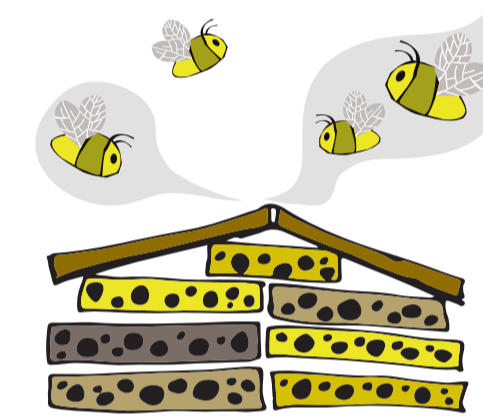


Wolf spiders don't say very much but if they do spy any troggles on the loose they will whisper a little rhyme into Elmo's ear...

*"We spy troggles on the troggles tree
A web we'll make so they will flee,
Birds and bees let Elmo know,
So back to Troglands they will go!"*

Elmo likes to return to the wetlands during midmorning for some elevenses (usually a juicy worm or two) and to check on all the other creatures, great and small. He will often run a taxi service over to the bug hotel, especially if the weather is a bit grizzly! Bumble Bees aren't massive fans of the rain, and often a bedraggled bee or two will hop onto Elmo's wing and catch a ride. The bees love it when the wildflower meadows are in bloom, and so will you if you visit during the spring and summer months.

I wonder who you might see in the bug hotel today? Take a peek!



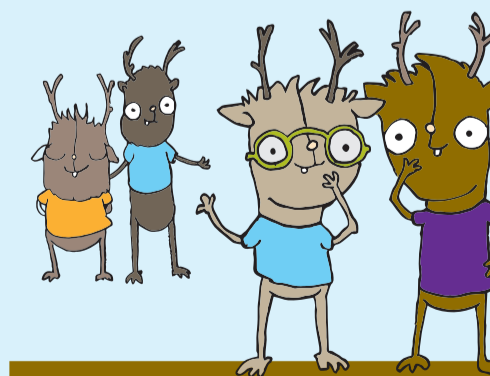
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Talking of boggles and troggles...

Troggles have been known to play all sorts of tricks on visitors, especially birds from far away, and so Elmo has made a very helpful compass to get everyone back to where they came from – and that includes you too! Troggles love to turn signposts in the wrong direction and send African swallows to the north pole, and they might even have you walking around in circles too, so make sure you read your map carefully!

*"Have you ever seen a troggles in a hidey holey hoo
Or a whiffy squiffy boggle just a waiting to shout BOO
Try looking in a boggle hole or in the Troggle Tree.
Or waiting by the troggles marsh before you turn and flee
They're really rather naughty and will play a trick or two"*

So remember lucky clover and be sure to use it too!



Can you see...

Elmo's compass on the map? Use the needle to help you find your way home and make sure you choose the right path.

Campfield Marsh really is a wonderful place to explore...

Discovery zone

Crawl through the giant badger sett and look out for a friendly badger.

Take a trip onto Troggle Island and see what you can catch in your net; hopefully not a naughty troggles!

Hop over the leap frogs, take a peek in the bug hotel and have a picnic in the wildflower meadows.

Troglands & Boglands

Cross Boggle Bridge onto Bushcraft Island and try your hand at shelter building.

Walk across the floating Boglands on the new boardwalks and find Elmo's compass.

Meadows & Wetlands

Visit the bird hide and see who you can spot on the wildlife-packed wetlands.

Make your own willow web and take it to the Damson trees in the wolf spider field.

fun local story walks

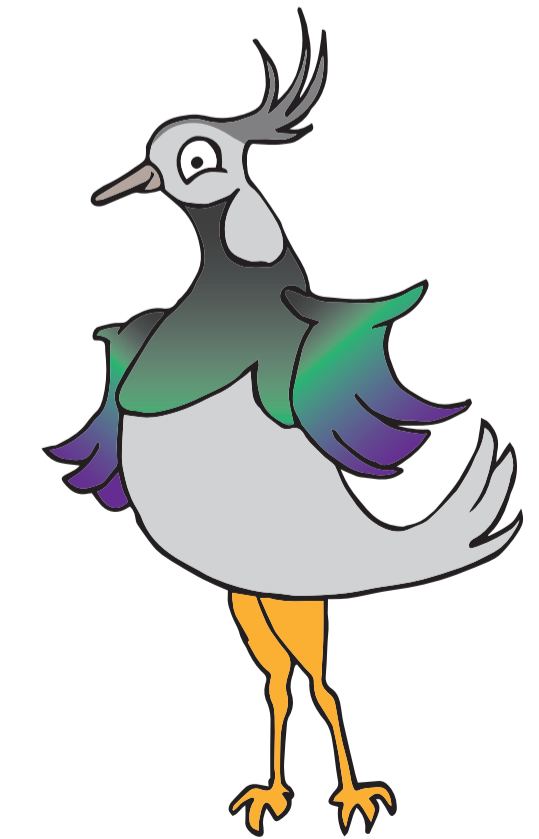
for children and the young at heart

Walks around

Carlisle & the Solway

Elmo the Peewit of Campfield Marsh

By Anja Phoenix



Easy to follow Map & Story

Explore, Spot things & Search for clues on the way



accessible.
area and pond dipping platform is wheelchair
so walks or boots are recommended. The picnic
and grassland. It can get a little muddy in places
favourite picnic spot somewhere on the reserve.
the pond near the parking area. Or find your own
and have your own explorer's picnic overlooking
Explorer's treat Watch the birds feeding
(5 km each way)
The route is on gravel paths, boardwalk
and grassland. It can get a little muddy in places
is 2.5 km and the red loop is 4.5 km. You can
disposed through the reserve. The blue loop
also walk through the reserve from the Wetlands
Centre to Glasson Moss via Roggerscough Farm
Length There are two circular walks
situated through the reserve. The blue loop
is 2.5 km and the red loop is 4.5 km. You can
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Centre to Glasson Moss via Roggerscough Farm
There are cycle racks on site near the car park.
Bowness on Solway as above.
Kirkbride and then follow the road signs to
From Wigton, follow the B5307 north towards
Bowness on Solway. Follow directions from
Explorer extra There are lots of other
places to visit on the Solway if you are feeling
adventurous. At Finglandrig Wood National
Nature Reserve, between Kirkbride and
Kirkcubbin, you can explore a woodland and
trekking over the bog. Visit the other Solway
peatbogs at Glasson Moss (right next door
to here!) as well as Drumburgh Moss and
Wedholme Flow, not far from here.
There are cycle racks on site near the car park.
Bowness on Solway as above.
Kirkbride and then follow the road signs to
From Wigton, follow the B5307 north towards
Bowness on Solway. Follow directions from
sign that directs you to the large parking area.
you pass through Bowness on Solway towards
Cardnook, look for the Solway Wetlands Centre
the coast road to Bowness on Solway 2 km after
and 19 km north of Wigton. From Carlisle, follow
Nature Reserve is about 13 miles west of Carlisle
the Solway estuary. The reserve is made up of a
mosaic of different habitats: Saltmarsh, Peatbog,
farmland and wet grassland provide homes for a
great variety of wildlife. There are lots of different
types of farmland and wetland birds and insects
and adds and common lizards can sometimes
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Top tips for using this trail The story
is divided up into 6 parts. You can read it all in one
board, follow the waymarked track leading into
the reserve. Natural England ask visitors to stick
to the paths to avoid disturbing wildlife as the
reserve is particularly sensitive.
Wildlife Campfield Marsh sits on the edge of
the Solway estuary. The reserve is made up of a
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Let's get doing...