

THE END OF THE VALLEY at Cattawade, the river becomes salty

The river valley ends at the three arched railway bridge at Cattawade. There is a picnic site on the Suffolk side of the river.

When the river was used for trade river barges would have loaded and unloaded their cargoes here onto larger Thames barges. These took the goods to and from sea-going ships in the estuary ports at Mistley, Harwich and Felixstowe.



The famous towers at Mistley were once part of a grand church designed by the famous architect Robert Adam. When it was demolished the towers were left behind as a landmark for sailors making their way down the estuary.



Go birdwatching! Mistley is famous for its resident herd of swans. In autumn thousands of migrating birds join them and can be seen feeding on the mud.



LANDSCAPE YOUR GARDEN to help hedgehogs

In the last 10 years we have lost over half of the hedgehogs living in the countryside and a third living in towns and cities.

Wildlife friendly gardens can provide shelter and food for hedgehogs. They will be attracted to thick hedges and dense shrubs, compost heaps and log piles to eat the insects they find there. They will also use them for resting, nesting and hibernating. Gardeners need to check carefully before starting a bonfire as hedgehogs may be sheltering inside them. Garden ponds need to have a shallow end or other escape route to prevent hedgehogs from drowning.



Did you know that a hedgehog can travel up to a mile every night? A 13cm square hole at the bottom of a fence or wall helps them move from garden to garden.

When food is scarce in winter you can help them out by putting a dish of dog or cat food in your garden at night. In hot summers leave out a shallow dish of water. Hedgehogs are lactose intolerant so don't give them milk.



If you're interested in helping hedgehogs where you live Hedgehog Street can help you www.hedgehogstreet.org

STOUR VALLEY Discovery Fact Sheet



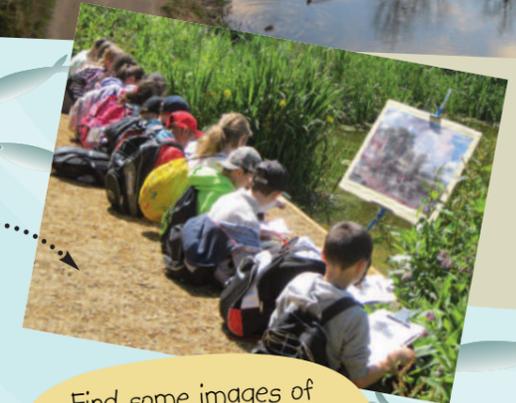
LANDSCAPE

THE LANDSCAPE OF THE STOUR VALLEY... from source to salt!

The Landscape is what you see when you look around you, a mixture of natural and manmade things. From trees to homes, from the river to the remains of mills beside it.



The Stour Valley on the Essex - Suffolk border is a special landscape. Some of England's most famous artists have been inspired by the area's big open skies, fields, trees and people. You can be inspired too; these children are sketching at the place where John Constable painted one of his most famous paintings, 'The Haywain', in 1821. A copy of his painting is in front of them.



Find some images of John Constable's paintings of the Stour Valley on the internet. Visit these places to compare the picture with what you can see today.

THE SOURCE or where the river starts its journey

The source is where a river begins; it is usually on high land a long way from the sea.



The source of the Stour is on Wrattling Common near Weston Green in Cambridgeshire. Small streams drain the common and some join together to make a river. The common is a natural boundary with chalk soil to the west and clay soil and flint in the Stour valley to the east. You can get your first sight of the river at Sipsey Bridge on the B1061 road; this is also where the counties of Cambridgeshire and Suffolk meet.



STOUR VALLEY EDUCATION NETWORK



JOURNEYING DOWN THE RIVER...

The Stour Valley Path

Guides to the Stour Valley Path are available from Tourist Information Centres and at www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org

The Stour Valley path begins in Newmarket. It takes the walker along a man-made ridge called the Devil's Dyke, which was built by the Saxons to keep the Vikings out of their land. The footpath meets the young Stour River near Great Bradley.



...things to see and do

Fruit Farming in the Dedham Vale

The climate and soil of the Dedham Vale is just right for growing apples, pears, plums and cherries.

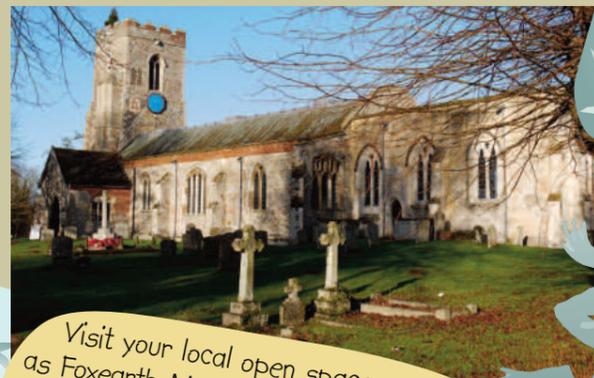
Since the 1950s many orchards have disappeared but you can still find a few locally. Peach and Pippin in Lawford is open for farm visits on certain days www.peachandpippin.com. Look out for signs to 'Pick Your Own' in the summer months, where you can pick your own fruit and vegetables.



THE YOUNG RIVER - From Weston Green to Glemsford

This is the most rural part of the valley; gently rolling hills are used for farming vegetables and cereals.

The river is a fast flowing stream at the base of the valley. Kedington church was partly built of local flint on the site of a Roman villa and the remains of a hypocaust are under the church floor! Kedington has been called the Westminster Abbey of Suffolk because it is the home of the tombstones and memorials of the Barnardiston family who once lived in the hall next door.



Visit your local open spaces, such as Foxearth Meadows arocha.org.uk Clare Castle Country Park clarecastlecountrypark.co.uk and Sudbury Common Lands sudburycommonlandscharity.org To find out about the geology of the area take a look at Geo Suffolk's website www.geosuffolk.co.uk



Some varieties of fruit come from this area, for example:
 • D'Arcy Spice apples,
 • Sturmer Pippin apples,
 • Discovery apples and
 • Polstead Black cherries.



Why don't you try growing some of your own food from seeds? Runner beans and potatoes work well in a garden, radishes and lettuces can be grown in a pot on a windowsill.

THE MATURE RIVER- Nayland to Cattawade.

The Dedham Vale is protected and preserved as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).



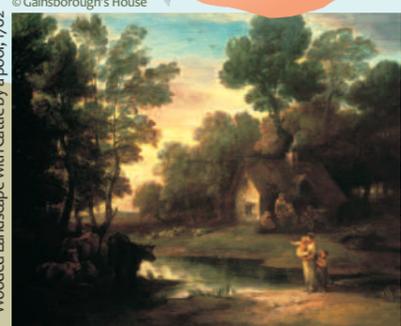
The river widens as it meanders slowly across low lying meadows used for grazing cows. In wet weather it can flood the surrounding fields.

THE MIDDLE OF THE RIVER VALLEY - From Glemsford to Nayland

Here the river widens as tributaries join it.

The valley becomes broader and flatter and the water moves more slowly. Chad Brook joins it at Melford, the River Glem at Glemsford, the River Box at Thorrington Street and the River Brett at Higham.

Create a famous landscape: one of the greatest Stour Valley artists Thomas Gainsborough liked to experiment when he was a student. He made miniature models of landscapes using broccoli for the trees, pebbles for rocks and glass for water; finally he added toy animals. Then he sketched and painted his home made landscape. Can you make your own mini landscape like Gainsborough did, then draw and paint what you see?



Follow the riverside footpath or hire a rowing boat to explore the most famous part of the river between Flatford and Dedham. Look out for Willy Lott's House and the dry dock at Flatford, the old pollarded willow trees and the cows in the fields. Visit National Trust Flatford to see the John Constable exhibition and riverside tearoom. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/flatford-bridge-cottage The Field Studies Council run courses from Flatford Mill. www.field-studies-council.org

Today you can see white and black Friesian cows grazing beside the river but there are also a few herds of the traditional Dedham Vale breed, the Red Poll.



Make your own meandering river with your finger on a slope of soil or sand. Trickle water from a watering can down it. See the water travel down the meander as you pour.

