

1. Walk or bike ride to viewpoint Noordwaard

Coordinates: N51.78549, 4.781250



The Noordwaard is a huge wetland. It was recently made as a nature development and water management project to prevent nearby cities from flooding. The project ended in 2015. Part of the Noordwaard consists of mudflats, which, when flooded, form huge water basins. Vegetation is kept short by Scottish Highland cows, Konik horses and water buffaloes. There is also farmland which floods occasionally. The most interesting part of the Noordwaard is near Biesbosch Museumeland (see 4), where the landscape is more varied with higher vegetation.

In summer the mudflats attract lots of waders (e.g. Spoonbill, Avocet, and Black-tailed godwit which is Holland's national bird). In winter there are thousands of geese (mainly White fronted and Barnacle), ducks (Teal, Garganey, Gadwall, Wigeon) and hundreds of Great egrets.

The tall poplars around the mudflats are good resting places for White tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) and Osprey.

Willow bushes and reedbeds are interesting for amazing numbers of Bluethroat and Cetti's warbler and lots of other birds.

There are several observation points, but bird watching is perfect even from the dikes end cycle paths along the road.

Other birds: Peregrine Falcon, Northern Goshawk, Marsh harrier, Common snipe, Dunlin, Black-tailed godwit, Cetti's warbler, Common kingfisher, Bearded Tit, Great Bittern.

How to get there: From Dordrecht Central station take busline 620 to Werkendam. The bus crosses the Nieuwe Merwede river by ferry. Get off at the other side of the river. From there you can start your hike. The map shows possibilities to walk and cycle up to 17 km through the wetlands of the Noordwaard.

Or instead you can hire a bike from the station and follow the red-white bike signs to Werkendam. Cross the river ferry. Welcome to the heart of the Biesbosch!

Where to stay: There is a hotel at 1 km from the ferry: www.brabantsebiesbosch.nl, (coordinates: 51.778099, 4.761831) and a small campsite with a marvelous view on the wetlands 1 km from the ferry: www.biesboschvakantie.nl (coordinates: 51.778099, 4.761831).