

Norley Wildlife Group

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FLAXMERE MOSS

We are privileged in Norley to have a number of important wildlife sites. Some of these have national or international status and others are designated 'Local Wildlife Sites'.

Flaxmere Moss is common land and a wetland site of international importance (Ramsar site). It is also designated as a UK Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under the responsibility of Natural England. Flaxmere is a peat bog with areas of schwingmoor (floating peat raft). Historical peat cutting has resulted in formation of small deep pools and narrow channels of open water. There is also an area of dry bog and it is bordered on all sides by deciduous woodland.

Flaxmere was included in the Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) - led habitat improvement project 'Delamere's Lost Mosses' (2013-2018), which aimed to restore mosses and improve habitats for wildlife. The mosses host some very specialised plants and Flaxmere itself has bog asphodel, bilberry, cranberry, bog rosemary and large areas of sphagnum mosses. The mosses also act as a carbon sink, storing carbon and helping to limit the effects of climate change. At the end of this project, the central bog area of Flaxmere was reclassified from 'Unfavourable – declining' to 'Unfavourable – recovering'.

Members of Norley Wildlife Group were involved as CWT volunteers in the Lost Mosses project, carrying out scrub clearance and habitat surveys. CWT were no longer funded to continue management of Flaxmere when the project ended, and NWG were tasked with continuing the maintenance activities. This mainly involves clearing regrowth of birch and conifers, control of invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed, and monitoring the site.

A couple of recent surveys of Flaxmere have been undertaken: by Defra in 2024 under its Natural Capital and Ecosystem Programme (NCEAP) and in January 2025 by Natural England – Condition Assessment. This showed the site to be 60% 'Unfavourable – Recovering' and 40% 'Unfavourable – No change'. Natural England have advised NWG that such sites take many years to show good recovery, hence the importance of continued maintenance. Recent discussions with Natural England have also agreed that they will seek funding for a hydrological survey and plan for Flaxmere. This will give a better understanding of water flows and retention to allow the Moss to continue its restoration, whilst allowing water in the surrounding areas to drain adequately. NWG will continue maintenance with support from CWAC and Norley Parish Council. NWG have also conducted a habitat survey of Flaxmere in 2025 which will be reported to CWT, RECORD (Local Environmental Records Centre for Cheshire) and to Natural England. A moth survey on Flaxmere was also carried out this summer.

We would love others to be involved in helping to maintain this beautiful site and you would be welcome to join us on our next workday on **Sunday 30th November**. We will be meeting at the start of the bridleway which runs alongside Flaxmere on School Lane at 10.00am. The site can be wet with uneven ground, so wellingtons are recommended and clothing suitable for the weather on the day. Tools (loppers and bowsaws) will be available but bring your own if you wish. Contact us on Info@wildnorley.com for any queries and to let us know you will be coming along on 30th.

See pictures for this section on next page.

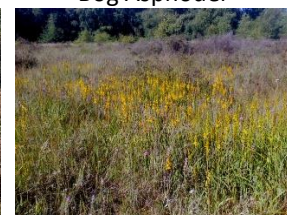
Flaxmere Location



View across Flaxmere

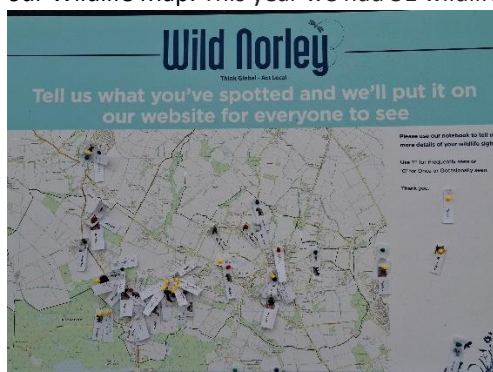


Bog Asphodel



WILDLIFE MAP

Many thanks to all those who visited the NWG stand at the Norley Garden Show in September and added to our Wildlife Map. This year we had 51 wildlife tags pinned on the map, our highest so far.



Map can be omitted if not enough space

Here are the results for 2025:

Area of Norley	Wildlife	Area of Norley	Wildlife
Delamere Forest	Adder	Town Farm Lane	Greater Spotted Woodpecker
	Buzzard	Post Office Lane	Comma Butterfly
	Red Kite		Gatekeeper Butterfly
Kingsley / Guest Slack	Bat		Grass Snake
	Pheasant		Red Fox
	Red Kite		Shaded Broad-bar Moth
	Shrew	School Lane	Buzzard
Delamere Park	Hare		Cockchafer Beetle
	Red Fox		Starling
Marsh Lane	Barn Owl		Swallow
	Kestrel		Weasel
	Greater Spotted Woodpecker	Forest Lane	Kingfisher
Fingerpost Lane	Red Fox		Yellow Wagtail
West View Road / The Waste	Blue Tit	Delamere Road	Barn Owl
	Buzzard		Buzzard
	Coal Tit		Green Woodpecker
	Goldfinch		Common Hawker
	Grasshopper		Nuthatch
	Great Crested Newt		Red Fox
	Great Tit		Red Kite
	Greenfinch		Sparrowhawk
	Stock Dove	Flaxmere	Grass Snake
	Toad	Hatchmere	Jay
Norley Lane	Bat		

Badgers were also seen in several locations

If you would like to learn more about Norley Wildlife activities, then take a look at our website www.wildnorley.com or Facebook (wildnorley) or contact us on Info@wildnorley.com. We have regular meeting and workdays and you would be welcome to join us.

The Team at Norley Wildlife Group