

Norley Wildlife Group

Beavers at Hatchmere

Many of our readers will be aware of the Beavers behind Hatchmere but will not have seen one close up. The beaver enclosure was set up by Cheshire Wildlife Trust in 2020. In 2025 some of NWG members and other CWT volunteers were invited by Alice Buller, Living Landscape Officer at CWT, to help in trapping the family for the purpose of sexing, weighing, and chipping. This would help plan for the future of the population, control numbers and when appropriate remove younger kits, as they are known, to other site developments in conjunction with the Beaver Trust. The beavers' dam building and tree felling have transformed the enclosure and slowed the flow of water into Hatchmere lake, thereby reducing the silt content which was one of the objectives of the CWT beaver project.

Between November and December 2025 the role of the volunteers was to be on site by around 7AM to inspect the traps for a catch. Beavers are active and eager to feed as dawn breaks. If empty, the volunteers closed the traps for re baiting and, if triggered, contacted Alice so that her team could visit the enclosure and handle the beavers. We have below four images which follow the process, from left to right: the catch in a net, the weighing, tagging and release. Bait used to attract the beavers were carrots and apples. What an opportunity it was to share this experience and learn more about these fascinating creatures!



Asian Hornet Alert !!

A highly aggressive predator of native insects that poses a significant threat to honey bees and other pollinators. Originally from Asia, in 2004 this invasive non-native species was accidentally introduced to France where it has spread rapidly and into neighbouring countries. Since 2016 a number of sightings have been recorded in the UK. Slightly smaller than the native European hornet. May be confused with other species, shown below in actual size for comparison.

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Yellow-legged
hornet



European hornet



Median wasp



Hornet mimic
hoverfly



Woodwasp

Please report sightings immediately with a photo:

- with the iPhone and Android recording app: Asian Hornet Watch
- online at: nonnativespecies.org/asianhornet
- by email: alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk

Find out
more and
report a
sighting:



Toad Patrols 2026

Whilst the number of toads continue to be on the decline in the UK, Norley is bucking the trend.

Mature toads return each year to the ponds where they were born with their migration being between February and March when the weather conditions are favourable.

There are now five ponds around Cow Lane, Bag Lane and Moss Lane which have been identified and included on the Department of Transport register of amphibian migratory crossings.

Volunteers from Norley and the surrounding areas carry out evening patrols during these periods. This year 21 volunteers working on a rota basis took 1,440 toads a further 140 frogs and newts to safety. Sadly, we recorded 150 that didn't make it, but casualties are inevitable given the numbers migrating. On the positive side, the majority of drivers during this period were incredibly patient and courteous with many slowing down for a chat and thanking the volunteers for the work they were doing without which the mortality rate would be huge.



It's Spring Garden Survey time! 1st March – 31st May 2026

We would be very grateful if you could fill out our Spring Survey – see opposite page. It runs from March to May, it doesn't take long, and it provides essential wildlife information for us. Or go online and fill out our survey form on our website and Facebook.

Forthcoming Events: (Full list available online)

- May TBC WI Plant Swop
- July 17-Aug 9 Big Butterfly Count

Our Volunteer Work Days:

- 20th May 10am Brines Moss balsam removal
- 14th June 10am Brines Moss balsam removal
- 22nd July 10am Wickentree bracken switching
- Other dates to follow – see Facebook

We have many jobs to do, and any extra help would be fantastic.

For more information on any of these volunteering opportunities please contact us.

The Team at Norley Wildlife Group

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Facebook – [WildNorley](#)

Website – www.WildNorley.com