

Local Nature Reserves of Epping Forest District



Chigwell Row Wood LNR

Reserve Area: 15.6 Hectares

Access: The site has a 370m hardened pathway linking up with the recreation ground promoting safe and easy access for everyone. There is also a network of rides throughout the woodland.

Parking: Lodge Close, Chigwell Row, or lay-by off Romford Road, Chigwell Row, opposite All Saints Church.

LNR declaration: 2000

Wildlife Site Designation: Ep85 and Ep86 1992



Dwarf Gorse



Sulphur Tuft



Lousewort

Site Description: Chigwell Row Wood is a remnant of Hainault Forest which survives to the west of the Romford Road. This hugely significant and valuable site is home to a variety of habitats, from ancient woodland, with its magnificent veteran trees and dead wood insects, through to relic heathland and its rare plants such as Lousewort (pictured above). Since 1950 the land has been managed as a Charitable Trust, first by Chigwell Urban District Council and since 1974, by Epping Forest District Council.

Site Management: Chigwell Row Wood is managed by selective clearance of scrub to prevent encroachment onto the rides and glades. This also opens up the canopy in selected areas to allow ground flora to flourish. The rides, glades and heathland are cut annually to prevent invasive grasses taking over and out competing the wildflowers.

Church Lane LNR

Reserve Area: 3.25 Hectares

Access: This site can only be accessed via public footpaths. Footpath 41 runs from North Weald Allotments to Church Lane LNR.

Parking: There is a car park at North Weald Village Hall. Footpath 41 can then be accessed via the High Road.

LNR declaration: 2002

Wildlife Site Designation: Ep118 1999



Bee Orchid



Comma Butterfly



Ragged Robin

Site Description: Created primarily as a flood alleviation project in 1989 to protect the village of North Weald from flooding. The banks surrounding the large stream fed pond at the centre of the site can hold a massive 35 million litres of water in the event of a flood. These banks and areas of water also provide a great habitat for wildlife such as amphibians, dragonflies, butterflies and birds as well as the wide variety of flowers and grasses that can now be found here.

Site Management: Church Lane Flood Meadows is managed as a wildflower meadow. It is cut annually to prevent invasive grasses from out competing the wildflowers. The willow around the pond in the centre of the site is coppiced on rotation (different sections are cut every 2 to 3 years). The stems are used as stakes and binders for hedgelaying in the winter.

Home Mead LNR

Reserve Area: 1.8 Hectares

Access: Kissing gate off England's Lane, with a hardened path leading a circular route around the reserve.

Parking: There is roadside parking on England's Lane, Loughton. Please be respectful of the local residents.

LNR declaration: 2004

Wildlife Site Designation: Ep66 2009



Snowdrop



Fly Agaric



Buff Tailed Bumblebee

Site Description: Home Mead is a peaceful Reserve on the outskirts of Loughton. It is a lovely mix of developing woodland, scrub and acid grassland. In the summer a small wildflower meadow offers nectar for Bumblebees and in the autumn the striking red toadstools of Fly Agaric can be seen in the meadow.

Site Management: This site is managed for its mosaic of scrub and grassland. The scrub is cleared in rotation and allowed to grow back to create a diverse age structure which is beneficial to several different species of birds, invertebrates and fungi. The grassland is cut annually to prevent scrub and invasive grasses encroaching and out competing the wildflowers.

Linder's Field LNR



Reserve Area: 3.85 Hectares

Access: There is a footpath leading from Roebuck Lane, Buckhurst Hill.

Parking: There is roadside parking on Roebuck Lane, Buckhurst Hill. Please be respectful of local residents.

LNR declaration: 2000

Wildlife Site Designation: Ep38 1998



Slow Worm



Wood Anemone



Common Blue Damselfly

Site Description: This is one of the two sites to win the Living Landscape award 2012. Linder's Field is far more than just a field: it is a wonderful mixture of grassland, ancient woodland (once Little Pluckett's Wood), scrub and two small ponds. Once a garden owned by Charles Linder, this piece of land has been managed as a Nature Reserve by Epping Forest Countrycare since 1990 and is host to a variety of wildlife including reptiles, moths and damselflies. In the spring Bluebells and Wood Anemone can be found growing in the wood.

Site Management: The grassland in Linder's Field is managed for wildflowers. Green hay strewing has been undertaken to improve the species richness of the grassland which is cut annually to prevent invasive species out competing the wildflowers. The Woodland area is managed by clearing the bramble and selectively felling Oak saplings. This reduces the competition between saplings allowing those that are left to grow into healthy mature trees.

Nazeing Triangle LNR

Reserve Area: 0.6 Hectares

Access: There is a gate off Back Lane, Nazeing. A hardened path leads you onto a boardwalk which takes you out onto the pond.

Parking: There is roadside parking on Back Lane.

LNR declaration: 2001

Wildlife Site Designation: Ep33 1998



Grey Heron



Common Darter



Great Crested Newt

Site Description: Nazeing Triangle is a tranquil spot for a peaceful picnic by the pond. Ideal if you are walking in the local area and want somewhere to stop for a break. In the summer it is alive with dragonflies and damselflies and the ground is carpeted in wildflowers such as Ox-eye Daisy and Selfheal. The pond is home to Moorhen, Duck and the very special Great Crested Newt. If you come in the evening with a torch you may even catch a glimpse of them.

Site Management: Nazeing Triangle pond is managed by pulling excess Reed Mace from around the boardwalk and cutting approximately a third of the reed bed every year. This prevents the old reeds from dying back and creating a thatch which causes the pond to dry up at the edges. The small area of wildflowers is cut annually to prevent invasive species out competing the wildflowers.

Roding Valley Meadows LNR



Reserve Area: 56.5 Hectares

Access: There are a number of access points onto the Reserve, the main one being by the David Lloyd Centre off Roding Lane. There is a network of paths throughout the site.

Parking: Car park next to David Lloyd Centre, Roding Lane, Chigwell.

LNR declaration: 1986

Wildlife Site Designation: Ep61 1992



Otter



Bullfinch



Black-tailed Skimmer

Site Description: This is the largest of Countrycare's nine Local Nature Reserves and the only one to be awarded the Green Flag Award. These beautiful meadows are thought to be the largest surviving complex of flood plain meadow and marshes in Essex. Amongst the trees and fields species such as Bullfinch and Black-tailed Skimmer can be seen. If you are really lucky you may even see signs of Otter near the river.

Site Management: Roding Valley Meadows is managed by Essex Wildlife Trust. This is a traditionally managed site with a combination of hay making and grazing in the fields. The ancient hedgerows are maintained using traditional hedgelaying techniques in the winter.

Roughtalley's Wood LNR

Reserve Area: 3.4 Hectares

Access: There are kissing gates off Pike Way and Epping Road, North Weald. There is a hardened pathway which takes you on a circular route around the reserve.

Parking: There is roadside parking in Pike way, North Weald. Please be respectful of the local residents.

LNR declaration: 2000

Wildlife Site Designation: Ep114 1992



Broad-leaved Helleborine



Silver-washed Fritillary



Pyramidal Orchid

Site Description: Roughtalley's Wood is a small section of a once much larger ancient woodland. Hidden amongst the trees are hints to its history as part of RAF North Weald, including a pond created by a bomb. As well as its interesting past Roughtalley's Wood is home to some rare plants and butterflies such as Pyramidal Orchid, Broad-leaved Helleborine and Silver-washed Fritillary.

Site Management: Roughtalley's Wood is managed for both woodland and wildflowers. Glades have been created through clearance work and are kept open through annual cuts. Glades are important for several species of invertebrates which are dependent on both woodland and grassland habitat at different stages in their life cycles. Annual clearance of bramble and scrub takes place in Roughtalley's Wood as well as coppicing of Hazel and pollarding of Hornbeam trees.

Thornwood Common LNR

Reserve Area: 3.4 Hectares

Access: The only access to this reserve is via footpath 76 off High Road, Thornwood.

Parking: Roadside parking in Thornwood. Please be respectful of the local residents.

LNR declaration: 2004

Wildlife Site Designation: Ep92 2009



Greater Knapweed



Ladies Smock



Common Toad

Site Description: Thornwood Common is primarily managed as a flood alleviation site, however it is also managed for wildlife. The scrapes and ponds created on the site make a wonderful wetland habitat with reports of both Jack Snipe and Kingfishers having been seen. There is also an area of wildflower meadow rich in species such as Greater Knapweed and Ladies Smock.

Site Management: Thornwood Common is cut annually to reduce the number of invasive species competing with the wildflowers for nutrients. The scrapes on the wet meadow are dug out every few years to prevent them silting up, as are the ditches which run through the site. The trees on the banks of the central ditch are coppiced on rotation to allow a mosaic of light and shade onto the stream.

Weald Common LNR



Reserve Area: 1.86 Hectares

Access: There is access to Thornhill 2 via a kissing gate by North Weald Village Hall car park. There is no public access to Thornhill 1, however the wildflower meadow can be viewed from the road.

Parking: There is parking at North Weald Village Hall.

LNR declaration: 2002

Wildlife Site Designation: Ep124 1992

Wasp Spider



Ladies Bedstraw

Betony



Site Description: Weald Common LNR is the other site to win a Living Landscape Award 2012. It is made up of two meadows separated by fields owned by North Weald Parish Council. These two wildflower sites are at their best during spring and summer when the meadow attracts invertebrates such as Wasp Spiders and Meadow Grasshoppers. Thornhill 1, although only visible from the road, is well worth a visit because it is one of only a handful of sites in Essex which has Betony growing on it and has a particularly fine display of Cowslips in late spring.

Site Management: Weald Common is cut annually to prevent invasive grasses from out competing the wildflowers. The pond and the ditch running through the site are dug out every few years to prevent it silting up. The hedgerows surrounding the site have all been laid to help create a better habitat for birds and a wildlife corridor for mammals and to help prolong the life of the hedge. These hedgerows are cut every three years to help prevent them becoming leggy and gappy.

Volunteer with Countrycare



We have a dedicated group of volunteers who come out on a Thursday but we are always on the look out for more people to join us.

We work on nine Local Nature Reserves and several Local Wildlife Sites throughout the District. The work Countrycare carries out includes woodland, grassland and pond management. We also work to improve access to Nature Reserves and to improve understanding of conservation practices.

No previous experience is needed, just a willingness to undertake physical work and sometimes get a little muddy. A pick up from Loughton Train Station is arranged every Thursday morning at 9:30 for those who don't have their own transport, and we drop off again usually around 4pm.



For more information about the sites in this booklet contact Countrycare at:

Mail: Epping Forest Countrycare, Epping Forest District Council, Planning Services, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, Essex CM16 4BZ

Email: contactcountrycare@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01992 788203

Or visit our website at www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/countrycare



Photos by Countrycare staff and Martin Rogers

1 Chigwell Row Wood

2 Church Lane

3 Home Mead

4 Linder's Field

5 Nazeing Triangle

6 Roding Valley Meadows

7 Roughtalley's Wood

8 Thornwood Common

9 Weald Common

