



Croxley Common Moor

Welcome to Croxley Common Moor

The moor is one of only a handful of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the Three Rivers District Council area and is also designated a Local Nature Reserve. It has an exceptional wealth and variety of wildflowers, including Near Threatened species such as petty whin.

Whilst all around the land has been built on or improved for modern agriculture, Croxley Common Moor remains little changed. With no nearby roads, it is an oasis of tranquillity. Please help to keep the moor special by using it considerably, thank you.



Black Knapweed



Birds-foot-trefoil



Small Copper



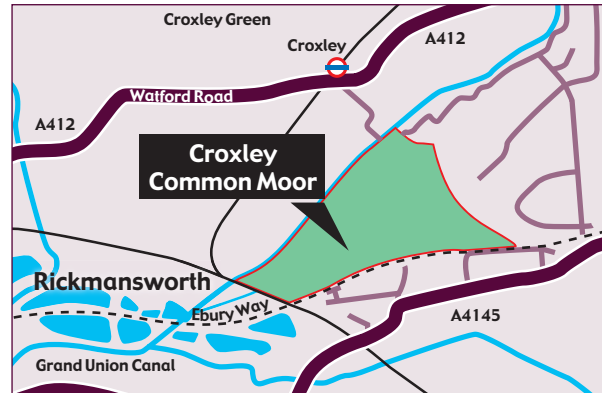
Hemp-agrimony



Do Not Litter No BBQ's or Fires No Hunting or Shooting No Metal Detecting No Motorcycles

These activities can all harm Croxley Common Moor's beauty and wildlife, and are prohibited by national law and/or local byelaws. We ask our visitors to respect the Moor, and other people using it.

How to get to Croxley Common Moor



There is no car park for the Moor, however it is accessible on foot via the Grand Union Canal and the Ebury Way.

The site can be freely explored, however, please note that there are no surfaced paths and some areas are very boggy, especially in the winter.

By rail:

The Moor is only a 5 minute walk from Croxley Underground Station.

By bus:

There are regular buses from Rickmansworth or Watford to Croxley Green. Contact Intalink on 0871 200 2233 or at www.intalink.org.uk.

40 Hectares of Historic Grassland



Produced by Fitzpatrick Woolmer - 01634 711 771

Croxley Common Moor is owned and managed by Three Rivers District Council
01923 776611 www.threerivers.gov.uk

The Countryside Management Service works with communities across Hertfordshire to help them care for and enjoy the environment.

Tel: 01727 848 168 www.hertslink.org/cms

Friends of Croxley Common Moor
www.croxleycommonmoor.org.uk



A Local Nature Reserve & Site of Special Scientific Interest



Variety of Wildlife

Over 250 different types of plants have been found on the moor and the small scale changes in the lie of the land dramatically increases the variety.

Where the ground is raised, the freely draining sandy soils and gravels produce exceptionally dry ground, poor in nutrients favouring many flowering plants.

Where the ground falls into hollows due to minor gravel workings or the ancient course of the river the soil becomes water logged, leading to an altogether different collection of plants.

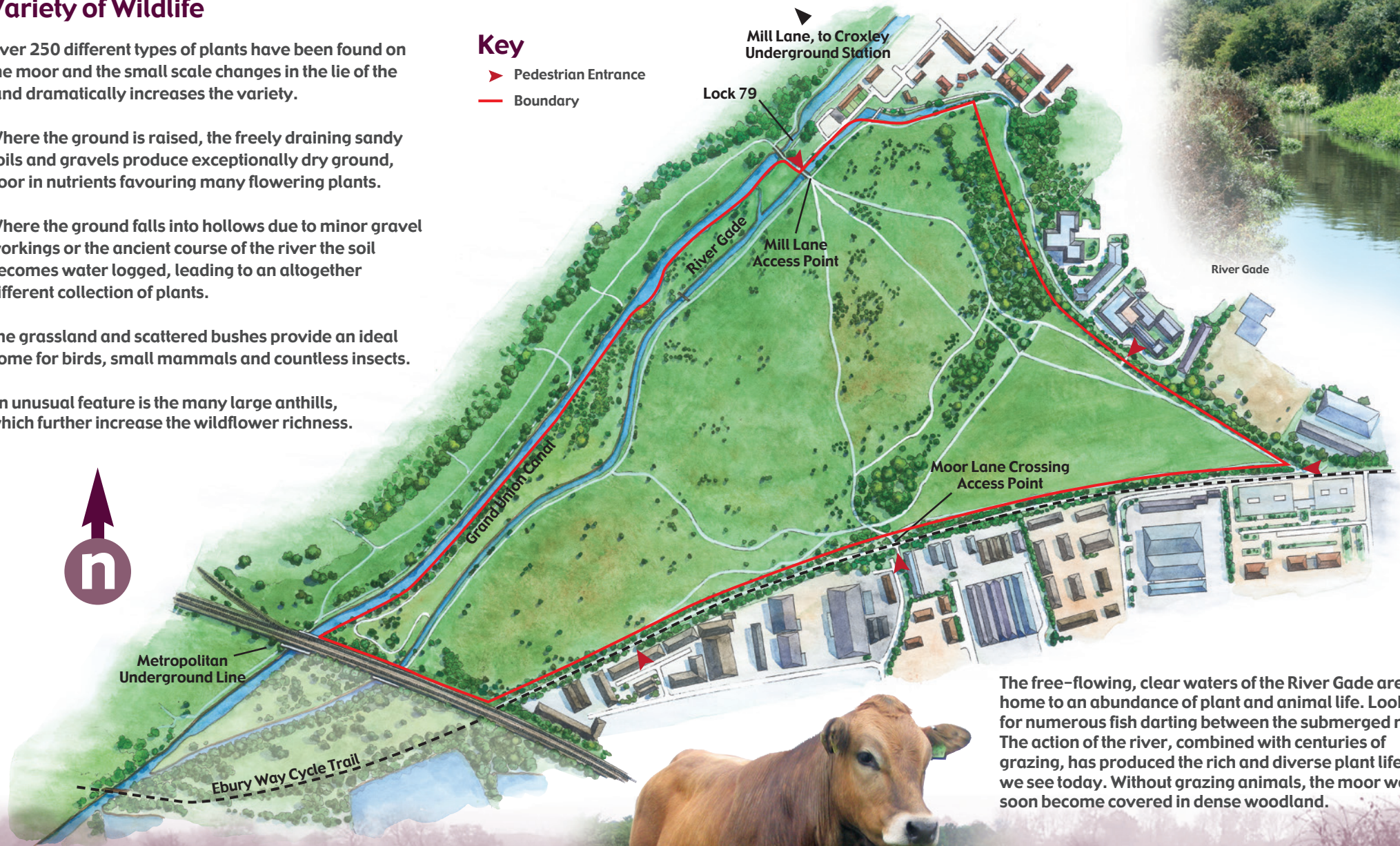
The grassland and scattered bushes provide an ideal home for birds, small mammals and countless insects.

An unusual feature is the many large anthills, which further increase the wildflower richness.



Key

- ▶ Pedestrian Entrance
- Boundary



The free-flowing, clear waters of the River Gade are also home to an abundance of plant and animal life. Look out for numerous fish darting between the submerged reeds. The action of the river, combined with centuries of grazing, has produced the rich and diverse plant life that we see today. Without grazing animals, the moor would soon become covered in dense woodland.



Corporate & Group Volunteers

The Moor provides an ideal opportunity for staff from local businesses to volunteer their time, often as part of their companies' Corporate Social Responsibility programme.

A variety of tasks offer employees the opportunity to bond and develop teamwork skills, as part of an enjoyable day out in the fresh air.

Volunteers from the Friends can be available to guide tasks and offer training in the safe use of tools. Tools and safety equipment can be provided, if required, but donations are welcome.

Other groups, such as schools, youth groups and faith groups are also welcome, either during the monthly Sunday task or, for larger groups, on a weekday.



Volunteer photos courtesy of Peter Lewy



Brash is carried to the fire and burnt

Contacts

For further information or to volunteer please contact:

The Friends of Croxley Common Moor
Graham Everett - 01923 251157
www.croxleycommonmoor.org.uk

Three Rivers District Council
01923 776611
www.threerivers.gov.uk

Countryside Management Service
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/cms

The Friends of Croxley Common Moor



How the Moor is managed and how you can get involved



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Croxley Common Moor is situated within the parish of Croxley Green, two miles to the south west of Watford town centre.

The Moor is a valuable site for nature conservation. It is a Local Nature Reserve, and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), meaning it is legally protected for its diverse plant communities. Of note are the unimproved acid and neutral grassland, that have never had fertilizers added to them. The site contains a rich variety of birds and insects. The Moor is owned by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) who have a legal obligation to conserve it. *heath*



Small heath *Common knapweed* *River Gade*

The open character and special plants of Croxley Common Moor are a result of centuries of commoners grazing livestock. In the past this form of management prevented trees and scrub from developing on the site. In the last 50 years however, cattle grazing on the Moor became less common causing dense scrub to develop.

Today, this mature scrub still exists on areas of important grassland.



Scattered scrub on the Moor is desirable habitat for birds, providing food, nesting sites and places from which to display to a potential mate. It also provides an important microclimate (warm and dry) for insects and grass snakes.

However, too much scrub threatens the open character of the Moor, shading out the finer grasses and important flowering plants. If the scrub is not removed the Moor would become secondary woodland with the loss of these important and rare plant communities.



How is the Moor Managed?

Volunteers play an extremely important part in managing scrub on the Moor.

The Friends of Croxley Common Moor normally meet on the second Sunday of the month (see website for details). Between September and March scrub is cut. At this time of year there is no risk of disturbing nesting birds and flowering plants. In other months, the Friends work removing poisonous ragwort plants and clearing litter.

The Friends work to a conservation management plan drawn up by CMS and TRDC, which identifies areas of scrub to be removed. Tools and training are provided by volunteer task leaders. New members are always welcome.



Scrub is removed using hand-tools such as bowsaws and loppers. The brash is then burnt and the ash is removed at the end of the season.

The same fire location is used wherever possible, to minimise changes to the soil composition caused by heat and ash build up from the fire. Initially, where scrub has been removed, there is a bare patch of ground and this demonstrates well just how little plant-life can exist underneath dense scrub. In spring however, more desirable vegetation soon returns.

Cattle consume much of the grass and low, palatable vegetation. About 30 cows graze the Moor between June and October when ground conditions are drier.



Contractors are used to remove bigger scrub and trees that cannot be managed using hand tools. Contractors are also used to maintain fences to ensure the Moor is stock-proof.