

Welcome to Norton Green Common Pond

Supported by:



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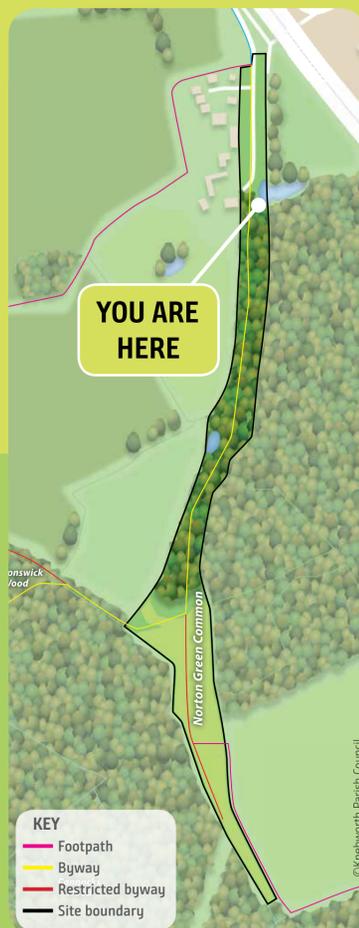
Knebworth Parish Council
Serving the community since 1894

History of the pond

The earliest inhabitants of Norton Green date back to the Romans in the First Century. The name Norton means north settlement.

In the past, the ponds were vital to the way of life for the local people of Stevenage, as they were relied upon to provide water.

The local people were required to keep their ponds in good order and there are records of residents being fined for not keeping their ponds clean.



SSSI

Much of the Common is of national importance due to the wide variety of plants, habitats and rare species that you can find here. The main part of the Common's open grassland glade and its surrounding woodland, is designated as a **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**, which means it's protected under UK law.

Please respect our precious habitats by taking your litter home and by keeping dogs under close control.

Wildlife

We now have two important wildlife ponds here at Norton Green, and a large variety of animals benefit from their presence. The ponds provide a wonderful habitat and the water is required by some very special animals to complete their lifecycle.

Dragonflies

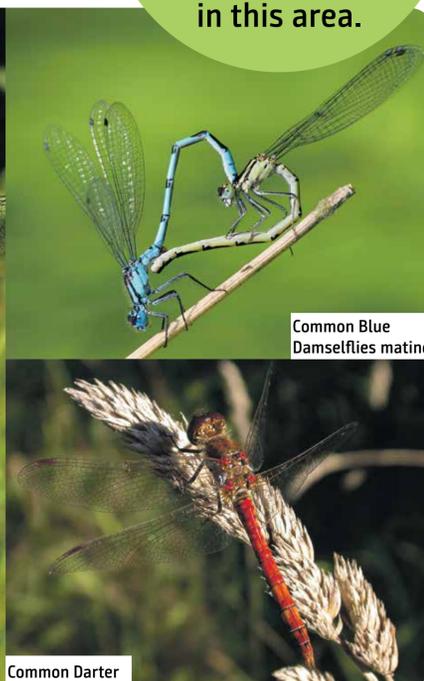
Dragonflies have sharp eyesight. They are powerful, agile fliers, some flying up to 30mph!

Did you know?

At least 15 different species of dragonfly have been recorded in this area.



Migrant Hawker



Common Blue Damselflies mating



Common Darter

Dragonfly Life Cycle

Dragonflies lay their eggs directly into water or into plant material. Dragonfly larvae hatch from the eggs, and live underwater, hunting other invertebrates. As the larvae grow, they shed their hard outer skin several times. When fully grown, the larvae crawl out of the water and moult one last time, emerging as a winged adult. Adult dragonflies are aerial hunters, feeding off other flying insects.



Newts



Great Crested Newt



Smooth Newt



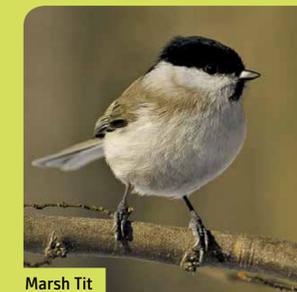
Palmate Newt

All three native species of newt are present in the ponds at Norton Green - **Great Crested Newt** (rare and legally protected), **Smooth Newt** and **Palmate Newt** (a rarity in Hertfordshire). You may also sometimes find frogs and toads here too.

Adult newts spend a lot of their time on land, but return to ponds in the spring to breed. The female lays its eggs individually wrapped up in plant leaves underwater, and after 2-4 weeks the eggs hatch into larvae. A newt larva is similar to a tadpole but has feathery gills around its head. It takes about 3 months for a larva to grow into a newtlet, at which point it leaves the water to hunt invertebrates on dry land.

Birds and Mammals

The ponds are also important drinking and feeding places for a range of birds and mammals. Look out for: **Marsh Tit, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Nuthatch, Goldcrest, Wood Pigeon, Fox, Deer, Hedgehog, and Pipistrelle Bat.**



Marsh Tit



Pipistrelle Bat



Great Spotted Woodpecker