



Cliburn Moss National Nature Reserve



Welcome to Cliburn Moss National Nature Reserve

Cliburn Moss National Nature Reserve is a basin mire which supports an unusual range of fen, bog and heath communities with several rare and scarce plant species.



© Chris Mawby/Natural England



© Denhamgreen/Natural England

Blackcap

The wildlife experience

Spring

Birdsong fills the air as spring days slowly lengthen. Resident woodland species are joined by migrants such as blackcaps, willow warblers and tree pipits. Red squirrels can be seen feeding and playing around dawn and dusk.

Summer

In May and June, there is a fine display of cotton grass in open areas of mire habitat, where the tiny emerald green hairstreak butterfly can also be found. The pink and yellow flowers of ragged robin and bog asphodel dominate areas of fen.

A visit in late summer is always rewarding, with the flowering heather creating a purple haze across the heathland.

Autumn

Speckled Wood butterfly is a recent colonist and can be seen along any shady rides. Many species of fungi can be found growing on the ground and on trees.



© Rob Petley-Jones / Natural England

Green Hairstreak butterfly



© J Ogden / Natural England

Dyers greenwood

Winter

A time of tranquillity on the reserve. The calls of winter thrushes such as Fieldfare and Redwing fill the air. Woodcock and Snipe can also be found.

Star species

The wide range of habitats supports a variety of species of plants and animals. Some of these have only been recorded recently such as glow-worm and the small skipper butterfly.

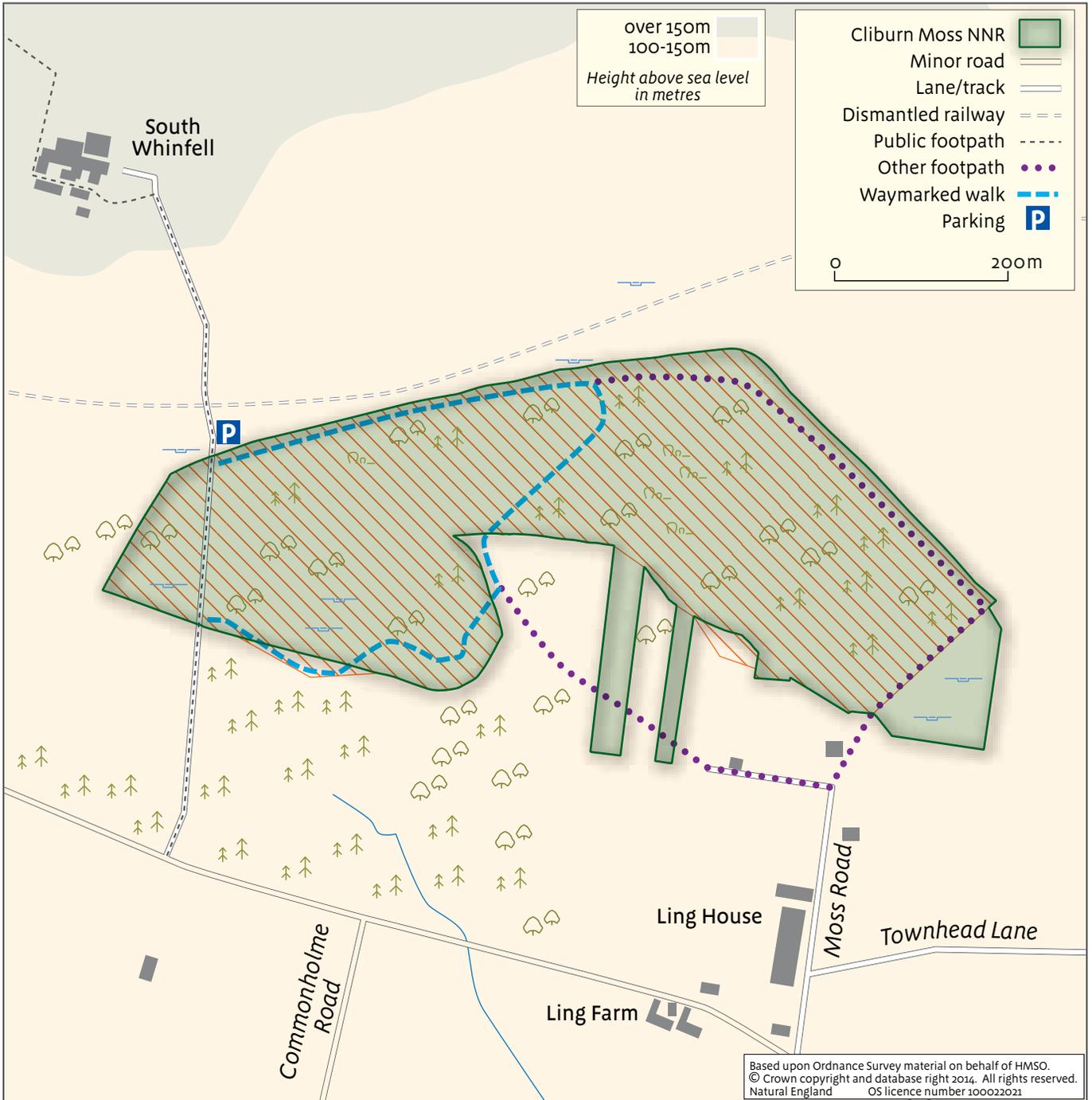
The solitary mining bee *Ardrea ruficrus* is an early spring species which nectars on Willow catkins. It has a distinct northern distribution with most records from south Scotland and Yorkshire. This population is one of only three in the North West of England.

Uncommon plants include dyers greenweed and bog bilberry.



© Barry Crowley / Natural England

Glow-worm



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Managing the National Nature Reserve

The reserve is managed by Natural England to maintain the variety of habitats and species present on the reserve, whilst also providing a safe and enjoyable experience for visitors.

Areas of fen, heath and mire which have been damaged through historic peat cutting and drainage are being restored. Trees are being removed and the water level raised and controlled in order to maintain areas of mire and wet heath. Tree removal is also taking place in drier areas to restore open areas of heathland.

Water quality is also carefully managed to protect species which suffer if high levels of phosphates and nitrates occur in the water.

Grazing by cattle and ponies helps to control scrub and tree cover and maintain floristic diversity.



© Colin Auld / Natural England

Cattle grazing

Mans influence and Historical Features

The small size of Cliburn Moss is typical of other basin mire sites in Cumbria. The Ordnance Survey map of 1863 shows much of the reserve as rough pasture, with a main marshy area in the west. This area is now rather dry, as a consequence of drainage and the main current wet areas are located towards the eastern end of the basin, in a location which was mapped as rough ground and scrub in 1863.

Peat cutting was practiced by stint holders in the 18th and 19th centuries who also removed trees for fuel. Major drainage is known to have taken place between 1968 and 1977. It is likely that as the moss became drier, regeneration of Scots pine and birch occurred naturally from plantations to the south, north and east.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1898 shows plantations (mixed conifer and broadleaved) to the south and a sporadic covering of conifers throughout the remainder of the Moss. The evidence of the map and the indications on the ground suggest that much of the current pine is primary woodland with a scattering of mature parent trees.

Since becoming a National Nature Reserve in 1996, the site's conservation objectives have promoted a programme of tree removal.

Site facilities

The designated car parking area and reserve entrance is 450m along the track signed to South Whinfell farm on the right hand side. There is space for 8 or so cars. Please park sensibly. A map of the NNR with general information is located here.

A cycle rack is at the reserve entrance. Please do not cycle within the NNR.

The nearest toilets and refreshment facilities are in local towns and villages.

Events

Throughout the year we run a number of events catering for a wide range of people and interests. For more information please check out our web site www.naturalengland.org.uk and follow the links for countryside visitors and National Nature Reserves. Alternatively look out for posters at the reserve entrance which are displayed prior to events taking place.

Dogs

Well controlled dogs are welcome on the NNR. We aim to maintain a high quality visitor experience so we therefore ask you to be responsible and remove any dog-poo and take it home.

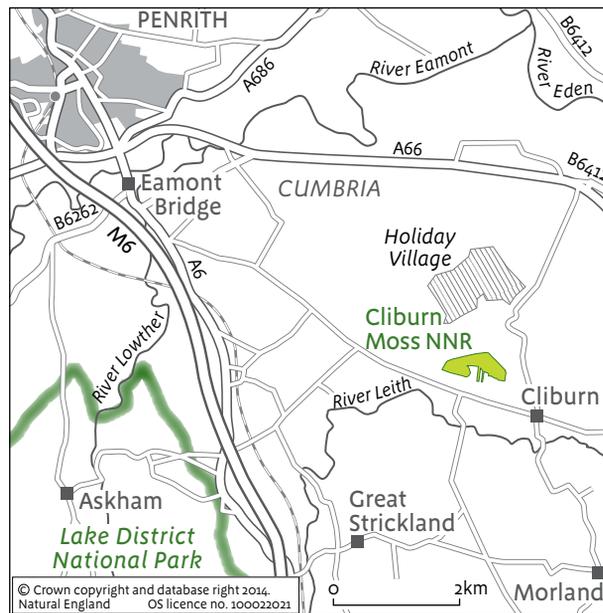
Please keep your dog on a lead at all times to protect grazing animals and ground nesting birds and other wildlife such as red squirrels.

Access around the Reserve

Much of the site is designated Open Access land.

There is a way-marked route which passes through the main habitat types, starting from the car parking area. It is about 1.3kms in length and will take around 30 minutes to walk. Although the site is flat, the rough terrain makes it unsuitable for wheelchair users. We recommend that visitors remain on marked trails as the reserve lies on thin peat soils which are easily eroded and damaged.

A longer route goes around the perimeter of the reserve and returns to the car park.



How To Get There

Bicycle and Car

The reserve is accessed by the minor road from Cliburn to the A6. There is parking near to the reserve entrance.

The reserve is near Route 71 (the Eden Valley Cycle Route) of the Sustrans National Cycle Network. Bikes are not permitted on the reserve but a cycle rack is available at the car park.

Bus

Route 132 runs from Penrith Bus Station to Cliburn village on Fridays only. For more information, see the Traveline website.

Train

The nearest train station is in Penrith. There is only one bus to Cliburn on a Friday, but taxis are available from the station.

Front cover photograph:

Cotton-grass

© Chris Mawby / Natural England

In emergencies, contact 0300 060 6000.

For further information on Cliburn Moss National Nature Reserve contact the reserve office on 016973 50005 or by post to Natural England, Unit 2, Kirkbride Airfield, Kirkbride, Wigton, Cumbria CA7 5HP.



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