

A Brief History



Hoe Common came into being as part of an Inclosure Act in 1811. Before the inclosure, a much larger area stretching as far as Gressenhall Museum had been common land. Twelve acres of this land were allotted to the charity, the rest was taken into private ownership.

Hoe Common was an allotment for the poor, where gorse was cut for fuel and bracken gathered for animal bedding. Once these were no longer needed, the Common became neglected and overgrown.



© Norfolk County Council photo by RAF 31 January 1946

This 1946 RAF aerial photograph shows the network of World War I or II practice trenches. Management of the Common has to preserve these important historical features. The trenches were used by the Home Guard in World War II. Notice how few trees there were in 1946. **More about the Common and its management can be found at www.hoeandwortharchive.org.uk**

Hoe Bird Walk

For more than thirty years, Hoe Common has been the meeting place for Hoe Bird Walk, a monthly birdwatching group. Over the years, the group has recorded more than 130 species.



Linnet

If you would like to join the group, the meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month, starting at 8am. These walks are advertised here:

Facebook: Hoe Bird Walk

Norfolk Wildlife Trust:

www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/whats-on

Why not extend your visit?

Visit NWT Hoe Rough – walking distance from Hoe Common is this Site of Special Scientific Interest. Numerous notable plants occur including green-winged and early marsh orchid, as well as around 200 invertebrate species.

Find out more: www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Explore the Wensum Valley Way – 12-mile footpath route in Norfolk, which opened in Spring 2013. It links the Nar Valley Way at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse museum to the Marriott's Way at Lenwade. **Find out more:**

www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/norfolk-trails

PLEASE NOTE:

Dogs are welcome on Hoe Common but should at all times be under close control, especially during the bird nesting season (March-July) and when there are grazing animals on site. Dog owners should also note that adders are present and are generally active between March and September.

Please respect the area and heed the countryside code at all times. Thank you, enjoy your visit.

Cover: Small copper butterfly by Chris Gomersall/2020VISION.
Inside: Holly Pearson, Peter Dent, Elizabeth Dack, John Bridges



Hawk
and
Owl
Trust



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WILDLIFE IN
COMMON



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HOE COMMON

A County Wildlife Site



Hoe Common is a County Wildlife Site managed by Trustees. It is an area of relict dry heath (a habitat which is increasingly rare in Norfolk) bordered by woodland and an ancient hedge bank. Take the time to explore Hoe Common, and on each visit you will find something new.

Heather and gorse are more valuable habitat for insects and birds than bracken. Some parts of the open heath have been cleared of bracken to allow heather to regrow.



Small heath butterfly

Traditionally, the gathering of wood and gorse for fuel and of bracken for animal bedding by villagers would have maintained the Common as open heath. In the absence of these activities, the modern conservation of heath involves the control of encroaching woodland and bracken.



Fly agaric

Butterflies, moths and other insects benefit from the management of the open heathland. Keep your eyes peeled for small copper and small heath butterflies and green tiger beetles, all of which like the sandy heath conditions found on the Common.

In autumn the woodland hosts a fascinating diversity of fungi, including the spectacular fly agaric.

Around the Common perimeter there is an oak and birch woodland fringe which has grown up in the last 60 years. If left unmanaged it would soon cover the whole Common.



Access points

● Public right of way off Worthing Road, Hoe
Grid ref: TF 98951724 Postcode: NR20 4FP
What3Words: prettiest.landscape.thigh

● Public right of way off Holt Road
Grid ref: TF 98351718 Postcode: NR20 4BH
What3Words: fabric.clubbing.blocks

The Common is home to some increasingly rare reptiles, including adders, common lizards and slow-worms. Whilst you walk through the heath look out for them as they bask in the sunshine.



Common lizard

Conservation work on the Common aims to manage the woodland and to keep the central area open, clearing the birch scrub and some of the gorse to encourage the growth of heather. Periodic cutting of the heather will keep it strong. Occasional grazing will help make the management self-sustaining.