



wild & wonderful!

wildlife in Northumberland National Park



There is an amazing range of wild and wonderful places to discover and explore in Northumberland National Park. There are fantastic habitats that provide homes for thousands of creatures. Some of these special places and the animals and plants that live there need help to ensure that they remain here for generations to come.

how **wild** are you?

There are lots of things you can do as a landowner, resident or visitor to help the National Park's wildlife. Have a look at the list below and see how many you do or could do.

- Volunteer - join your local conservation group. Volunteers building an otter holt (22).
- Plant trees and leave areas wild by avoiding excessive tidying.
- Feed garden birds.
- Put up nest boxes (23) in the garden or in woods and hedgerows for birds, bats and insects.
- Use peat-free compost in the garden as peat compost comes from delicate bog habitats.
- Look at developing your own environmentally friendly business practices.
- Respect wildlife by keeping your dog on a lead during the bird breeding season (24) and by being careful with matches in moorland areas.
- Enjoy wildlife in your area by picking up guidebooks, or join a Great Days Out event (25) run by Northumberland National Park Authority.
- Use public transport and make use of the footpaths and bridleways across the National Park to discover wildlife and wild places.
- Within the National Park tell us about bat roosts in your house/buildings or where you see flower rich verges or fields.



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All photographs ©: Alan Potts - (front cover) Blindburn Upper Coquetdale, winter river (detail). Laurie Campbell - (front cover) otter, bilberry, 2,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,14,16,21,24. Simon Fraser - 1, 4, haymeadow (detail), woodland (detail). Mike Hunter - 15. Shaun Hackett - 3,25. Hans Cristoph Kappel/Naturepl.com - 20. Jan Halady/rspb-images.com - 17. NNPA - 18,19,22,23. E.J. Steele - 13. Design: Julia Dobson Design and Illustration. Printed on enviro-friendly paper.

why the National Park is special

Heather Moorland

Most of the heather moorland (1) in the world is found here in the UK. In late summer the National Park is a purple haze when the heather flowers are in bloom. It is thought that about a third of all heather moorland has been lost from Britain in the last 50 years. Lots of insects and birds make their homes on moorland. In Northumberland the mountain bumblebee and emperor moth (3) can be seen amongst the heather and a small bird of prey, the merlin (2), sometimes makes its nest on the moorland. Curlews (24), the National Park emblem, are found on moorland edges.



1



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3



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Hay Meadows

A blaze of colour in summer, the few remaining flower rich meadows (4) in the National Park are some of the best in Europe. There used to be more of these meadows but most have been lost in the last 50 years. Traditionally managed by farmers to provide a crop to feed their animals, these meadows have developed into a haven for flowers and grasses. Plants you may see in meadows include wood cranesbill (6), lady's mantle and eyebrights (5).



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6

Bogs

Northumberland has some of the best bogs in the world! These peaty habitats are important in storing carbon to help protect against global warming and they also hold water in the uplands, preventing flooding downstream in urban areas. Many bogs have been drained in the past so their number and extent have declined. Carpets of sphagnum moss and special plants like cranberry (8) and bog rosemary can be found in the National Park. Greater sundew (7), a carnivorous plant, is found on some of the best (and wettest!) bogs here.



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Ancient Woodlands

Woods are part of the British landscape but many in the National Park have been cleared over the centuries and only fragments remain along rivers and in upland gullies and cleughs. These woodlands are great for lichens, birds and mammals such as badgers and squirrels (11). Aspen (9) and juniper (10) are upland species that grow here.



12

Rivers and Burns

The National Park contains some of the cleanest rivers and burns in the UK. They are home to salmon (12), sea trout, otters and plants such as water-crowfoot (13).



13

special species



Large heath butterfly (15)

The large heath butterfly is a real Northumberland National Park speciality. About three quarters of the English and Welsh population lives here on bogs feeding on special plants such as cotton grass (14). Protecting and improving their bog homes will make sure the National Park remains their stronghold.



14



15

Red squirrel (16)

Northumberland is one of the last refuges in England for this charming native squirrel. They thrive in native and conifer woodlands here but have disappeared across most of the country. Protecting and creating new woodlands with the right sort of trees will help us make sure that red squirrels are still around for future generations to see.

16



Ring ouzel (17)

This mountain blackbird migrates from North Africa to the National Park where it spends the summer on moorland and in rocky gullies feeding on berries and insects. It has declined in Britain and in the National Park. Planting trees with berries such as rowan and protecting moorland and bogs will provide food and nesting places.



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Jacob's ladder (18)

This is a rare plant found in 2 sites in Northumberland, both in the National Park. It is the wild version of the plant you may have in the garden. It survives on rocky ledges where grazing sheep cannot reach it - so protecting these sites is important. Some plants have been grown from collected seed and will be used to increase the numbers in the wild.

Chives (19)

Not the kind you put on your salad, but a wild variety which grows on rocky outcrops along Hadrian's Wall. This plant is scarce in the UK and only occurs in 3 locations in the county. Protecting it from grazing stock will allow it to flower and spread.

Bats (20)

8 species of bat including the brown long eared (20) are found in the National Park and all are protected under European law. They can be seen flying around houses, woodlands and by rivers at dusk, using their echo-location to find insects. Protecting roosts and planting trees or hedges will help them.

20



Black grouse (21)

Once common in the uplands this bird is now very scarce in England. The spectacular lekking (displaying) males can be seen in spring if you get up early enough! The Otterburn Training Area is the best place to see them in the National Park. Tree planting and bog restoration will provide food for this bird.

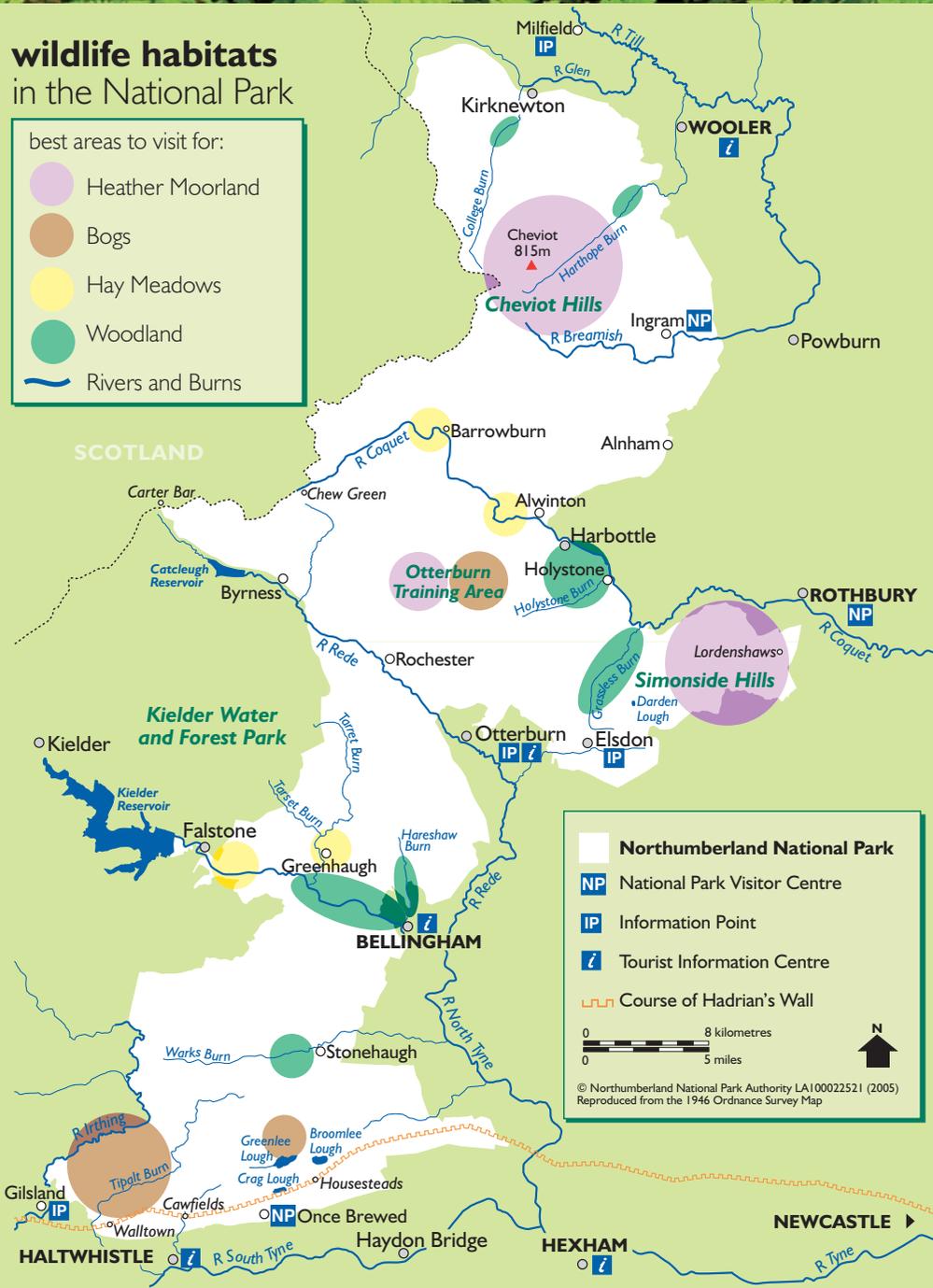
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wildlife habitats in the National Park

best areas to visit for:

-  Heather Moorland
-  Bogs
-  Hay Meadows
-  Woodland
-  Rivers and Burns



action for wildlife

By conserving the places where they live we can help common plants and animals. Others like the rarer species above may need extra help. With partners, the Northumberland National Park Authority and English Nature have set targets to increase numbers of these creatures and improve the places they live.

Heather Moorland

We will increase the amount of heather cover in the National Park by balancing the right numbers of grazing sheep with the correct type of heather burning. Some reseedling of grassy areas that have lost heather cover may also take place.

Hay Meadows

We will bring back traditional management of late summer cuts and adding only farmyard manure. To restore some meadows, seed is being collected from others then spread to increase the numbers of flowers.

Rivers and Burns

We will prevent pollution and bank erosion and remove obstacles to migrating fish.

Bogs

We will block up drainage ditches that were dug across bogs in order to restore the delicate peat habitats. We will remove trees that were planted on the bog surface to re-wet the peat.

Animals and Plants

Recording where species live helps us to protect them in the future. Surveys for bats, frogs, newts, crayfish and large heath butterfly help us to understand what they need to survive and to tell others, including landowners and managers, where they are.

Woodland

We will plant areas of new broadleaved woodland and protect remaining pieces. The aim is to link up existing woodland and other valuable habitats.

For further information call NNPA: 01434 605555
or English Nature: 01661 845500

www.northumberland-national-park.org.uk
www.english-nature.org.uk