

Nazeing History

Nazeingwood Common operates under a unique arrangement. Typical commons would normally have one owner with several individuals holding commoners' rights. However, since around 1600 the owners of ninety-eight ancient properties in Nazeing have actually owned the commons themselves. Each property has common rights for grazing sheep and cattle. This right is no longer exercised and today the Common is rented to a local farmer.

The Common would have originally been a very wet, marshy area. Looking from almost any part of the route you can see how the Common acts as a bowl to collect water from surrounding land. Over time ditches were dug and the land gradually drained to provide better grazing land. However, following the outbreak of the Second World War, it was ploughed up for crops.

The Common was also used as a dummy airfield during the war. Complete with wooden aircraft, it was designed to mislead German bombers and lure them away from nearby North Weald Airfield. However, it worked rather too well, and fooled an RAF bomber crew. They attempted to land on the non-existent runway, and ended up crash-landing in the marshy soil. Fortunately the crew escaped unharmed.



Hornbeam Pollard. Copywood

About the Walk



Black tailed skimmer, Nazeing Triangle Local Nature Reserve.

Nazeing Country Walk is a circular route following the ancient track ways and footpaths around the edge of Nazeingwood Common. The circuit is about 4 miles long.

Start between the pubs in Epping Green, CM16 6PU.

The paths on the walk are in good condition. However some, and particularly Epping Long Green, will become muddy after wet weather. There are two road crossings. Please take care when crossing. Please follow the Country Code. Keep to footpaths, keep dogs on a lead near livestock or where requested by land owners.

For any footpath queries please contact Essex County Council on 08457 430 430.

For more information about Countrycare visit:

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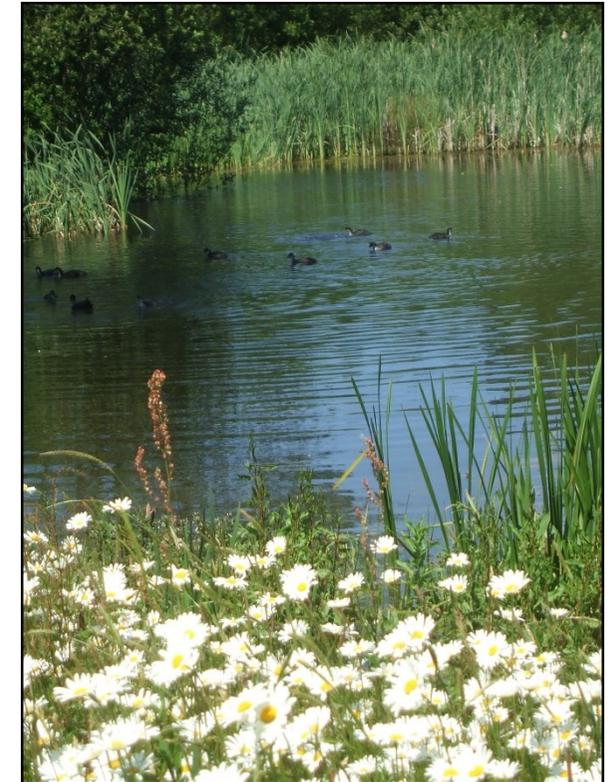


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Nazeing Country Walk



Nazeing Triangle, Local Nature Reserve



Points of Interest

1. Epping Long Green

Imagine walking along Epping Long Green eight hundred years ago. This was a busy, bustling track way running straight into London. Situated on a ridge, travellers and their horse-drawn carts avoided the surrounding marshland. However, the Long Green wasn't the attractive grass covered lane you see today, but a sticky quagmire churned up by cart-wheels and horses' hooves. To avoid it, the travellers on foot used the drier path running along the north side of the lane.

2. Hunting Dragons

A sunny day between June and September is the best time to stop and watch the dragonflies over this pond. Voracious predators for their size, their large eyes allow them to spot prey the size of a small midge from twenty meters away. Larger species such as the Emperor can fly faster than most people can run and will seldom miss their prey.



Southern Hawker

3. Copy Wood Field

This is an ancient grassland that has only survived by virtue of its small size. Too small for a tractor, Copy Wood Field has remained as a grassland for hundreds of years. Look for grassy hummocks created by Yellow Meadow Ants, a sure sign that the soil has not been ploughed for many years.



Ragged Robin



Cowslip

4. Copy Wood

Copy Wood is an unusual woodland that has only survived because of its isolation. Dominated by elm, it has mostly survived the ravages of Dutch Elm Disease because there is no link to any other woodland. In the early 1900's, the local farmer would regularly coppice the trees. He transported the timber across the Common to the main road along four different paths. Infuriated by this, the Trustees of the Common took him to High Court where the judge forced him to use only one path. The Trustees were victorious in winning damages amounting to three pounds, twelve shillings and eight pence, but paid more than £430 in costs.

5. Historic Buildings

Along this stretch of road there are various buildings with interesting pasts including the oldest wooden building in Nazeing, the old post office, which dates back to the 1400's. There is also an old workhouse and poorhouse. Poor houses were usually a shelter for the old and infirm, whereas the workhouse was intended to provide employment for the able-bodied poor.

6. Nazeing Triangle

This little site is well worth a visit. It is managed by Countrycare for Nazeing Parish Council. The Triangle has open access and provides the perfect picnic spot. During the summer it is possible to watch mallards and moorhens on the ponds, dragonflies hawking overhead, and common blue butterflies in the grassland.



7. Lodge Farm

Lodge Farm holds amazing views across Nazeingwood Common, albeit in a very exposed position. Originally called Nazeing Lodge, this was the site of the main building on the Common. Henry VIII ordered the original lodge to be built in 1542. By normal standards, it was rather flimsy and only cost thirteen pounds, fifteen shillings and 1/2 pence. It only lasted around one hundred years until the house that you see today was built.

