

North West Zone Biodiversity Area

Gatwick Airport works with the Gatwick Greenspace Partnership to manage this area for wildlife

River Mole

This stretch of the Mole was created as part of a river realignment project completed in 1999. The channel was carefully excavated to mimic naturally occurring river features with riffles, glides and backwaters to benefit fish, plants and invertebrates.

A wildflower seed mix containing native meadow and aquatic plants was sown along the entire corridor, which now acts as a valuable ecosystem - a functioning floodplain meadow.

Depicted below are just a few of the species inhabiting this diverse area.



Bullhead
(*Cottus gobio*)

Usually found lurking on the river bed, this fish is an ambush predator, snatching small invertebrate prey such as shrimp and insect larvae with its large mouth. After females spawn, it is the males who guard the eggs.



Kingfisher
(*Alcedo atthis*)

With a flash of electric blue and a shrill piping call, these stunning birds can be seen and heard all year round, flying up and down the river.

Brockley Wood



Harvest Mouse
(*Micromys minutus*)

Britain's smallest rodent lives here too, making a home in tightly woven nest balls hidden in tussocks of grass. Fruit, grass seeds and small invertebrates make up a large part of their diet.



Long-horned Bee
(*Eucera longicornis*)

Named after the incredibly long antennae of the males, this wonderful solitary bee has declined nationally, so we are fortunate to have such a rare insect living on our site. They love to feed on the nectar rich flowers of the trefoils and vetches.



Black Poplar
(*Populus nigra subsp. betulifolia*)

A rare native wetland tree in the UK, the first saplings were planted at Gatwick in 2014 as part of a wider reintroduction programme by Kew Wakehurst Place.



Four-spotted Chaser Dragonfly
(*Libellula quadrimaculata*)

This beautiful aerial predator has distinctive dark wing spots, easily visible when alighted on the riverbank vegetation.



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