

Orton Moss

Near Carlisle



What to see

Devil's bit scabious, marsh valerian. Woodcock, great spotted woodpecker

Orton Moss is a former raised mire which has been greatly modified by man's activities. The moss is divided into a large number of strips and fields which would traditionally have been used for peat cutting and grazing during the 19th and early 20th centuries. To early naturalists it was a very important wildlife site, particularly noted for its butterflies. It was once the haunt of the rare wood white, now extinct in Cumbria, the large heath, a species of open raised mire habitats, and the marsh fritillary which was last recorded in 1980. Most of the fields have now been abandoned and this has led to an increase in woodland cover and these species have disappeared. Bucknill's Field is maintained as a wet meadow by annual mowing or grazing. Devil's bit scabious, knapweed, meadowsweet and wild angelica are abundant in the wetter areas of the field. The woodland compartments contain small remnants of raised mire vegetation including Sphagnum moss and bog rosemary. Royal fern also occurs in two locations. The woodland is dominated by birch and Scots pine which has seeded naturally onto the former bog. Birds likely to be seen include willow tit, woodcock, great spotted woodpecker and willow warbler.

Bucknill's Field was purchased in 1964 with money donated by Cannon E J Bucknill. The two areas of woodland are leased from Natural England.

Location

Near Carlisle

Map reference

OS 1:50,000

Sheet No. 85

Grid reference NY 339 543

Access

Orton Moss can be extremely wet although the southern end of Bucknill's Field is always dry. There are no waymarked paths and, with the exception of Bucknill's Field, there are few internal boundaries so the two woodland areas are difficult to find.

Directions

By car From Carlisle take A595 towards Thursby. Once out of town take first right for Little Orton. Turn left at crossroads and take next right. Approx 1.2km/0.7 miles down this road a track goes off to the right. Park here and walk down track onto reserve (200 metres). Please take care not to obstruct field gates.

By bicycle The reserve is 1km/0.5 miles from Regional Route 10 Reivers Route.

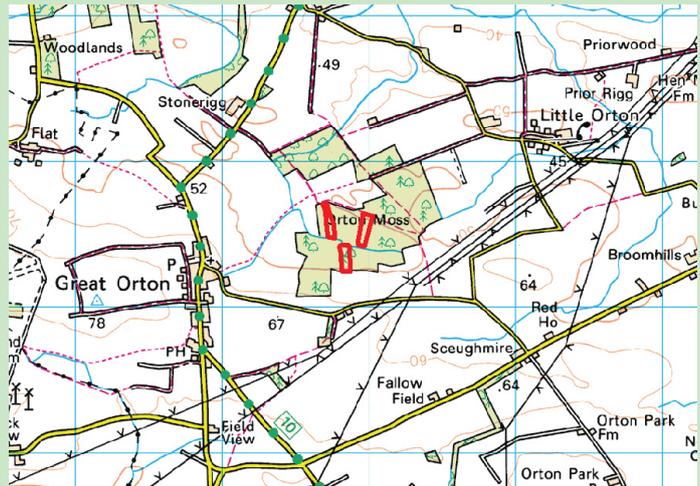
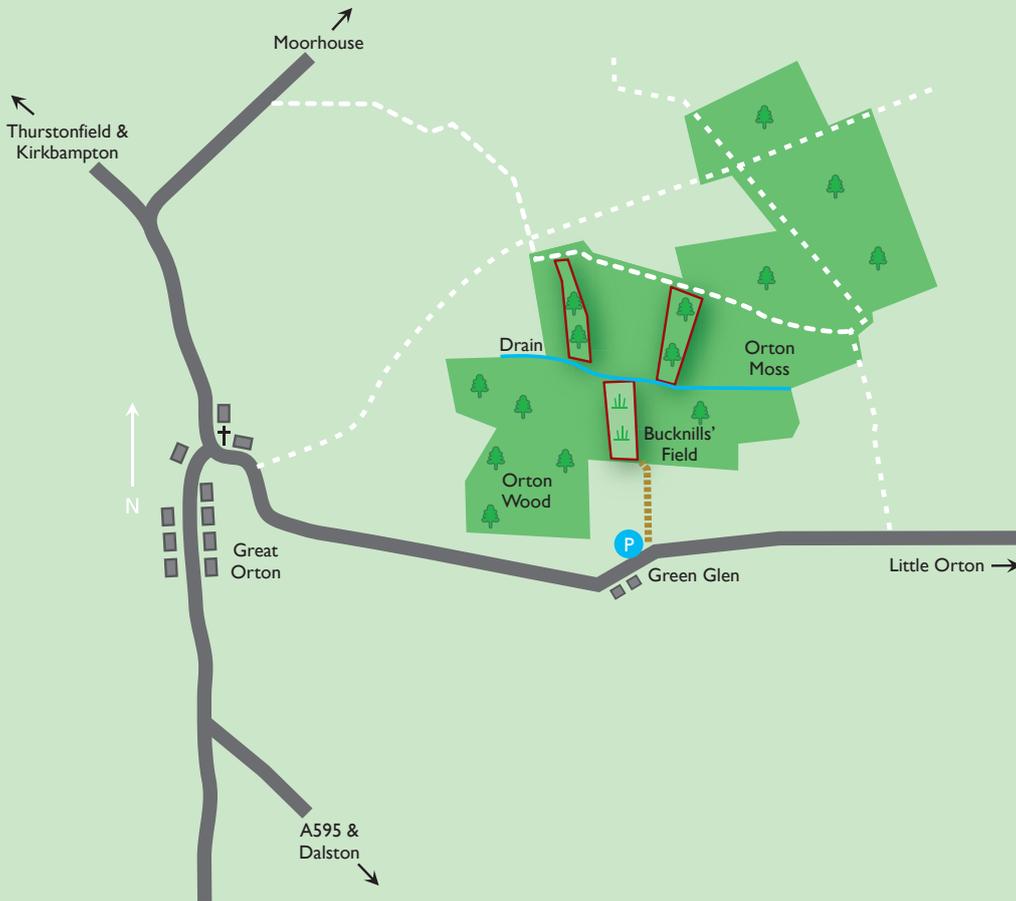
By public transport Buses run from Carlisle and Wigton to Great Orton.

Size

7.2 hectares

Status

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)



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