

Biodiversity at Kelmarsh

Kelmarsh Hall Estate covers a total area of some 1,361ha (3,363 acres) and is a typical Midland agricultural landscape. The estate consists largely of arable cropland with pasture, woodlands and parkland. Farm land is the largest land use type and the farm features, such as ponds, hedgerows, mature trees, small watercourses and rough grassland comprise the major proportion of wildlife habitats within the Estate.

Priority Species

The Estate in its current condition supports 51 species listed as UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority species relevant to Northamptonshire. Major species recorded include Otter, Swan Mussel, Barn Owl, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Spotted Flycatcher, Tree Sparrow, Marsh Tit, Great Crested Newt, and Grass Snake. 6 species of bat have been recorded along with numerous rare fungi and lichens. Butterflies and Moths including White Letter Hairstreak and Wood White have also been recorded.

Habitats

Priority Habitats (as detailed in the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan) have been recorded on the Estate.

1. Species-rich and/or Ancient Hedgerows

- A number of hedges recorded on the estate qualify as species rich (contain 5 or more woody species). These hedgerows contain veteran trees usually Oak or Ash and support a wide good range of wildlife.

2. Eutrophic Standing Water

- The lake to rear of the Kelmarsh Hall qualifies as eutrophic standing water which supports a wide range of aquatic and marginal plants and also a strong suite of other species such as birds and invertebrates. Notable species Otter, Swan Mussel, Kingfisher



3. Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

- Numerous woodland blocks supporting important plant and animal assemblages and also semi-natural habitats

4. Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land

- The former railway line that forms the Brampton Valley Way supports a species rich mosaic of grassland and scrub that provided a range of habitat niches for invertebrates (e.g. butterflies) and birds.

5. Ponds

- Numerous small farm ponds identified and mapped with good range of conditions and species recorded.

6. Rivers

- The Ise (although relatively small at this point) provides an important linear feature running through the estate supporting numerous plant and animal species.

7. Wet Woodland

- Small sections of alder and willow carr along the banks of the Ise and in wider channel sections (e.g. The Dales) Notable species include Otter, Kingfisher

8. Wood-pasture and Parkland

- The grassland to the south of Kelmarsh Hall with its scattered mature trees provides an area of parkland character as does the more formal tree planting around the Hall.

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