

Talk given at the Paludiculture Community Workshop 10.1.24

NW Wetlands: formation & early history

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Abstract

This presentation gave a brief explanation of different types of peatlands found in NW England, focussing on blanket and raised bogs. The small percentage of remaining intact peatland remnants was illustrated with reference to Holcroft Moss and surrounding 'Manchester mosslands' using a DTM and historic Ordnance survey maps. Contrasts were made between the types of lowland mires and their landscape settings in the Lancashire Coastal Plain and the Meres & Mosses Region (Cheshire–Staffordshire–Shropshire Plain). Differences in peatland development in these two areas have been highlighted by recent undergraduate dendrochronological research at Manchester Metropolitan University, with bog oaks / fen conditions dominating for millennia in Lancashire, whilst more complete hydroseral succession, from fens to raised bogs (with the remains of mire-rooting pine woodlands preserved as subfossils in the peat), more common in the Meres & Mosses Region. Also discussed were human and natural climatic influences on the formation of blanket (& lowland) mires, the importance of wetlands as environmental archives and in modern environmental planning. Damage, restoration and celebration of a lowland peatlands was illustrated by a case study of Lindow Moss and the forthcoming 'Discover Lindow 2024' season commemorating the 40th anniversary of the discovery of Lindow Man.

References

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