

Fern-allies and Ferns of Thorne Moors

The following species have been recorded on Thorne Moors

Lycopodiaceae	(Clubmosses)		
[Fir Clubmoss	<i>Huperzia selago</i>	(1815)	Claimed as a denizen of the Isle of Axholme in 1815, but there is no direct evidence to link the record with the eastern side of Thorne Moors].
Stag's-horn Clubmoss	<i>Lycopodium clavatum</i>	pre-c.1842-1966	Recorded only from the "Crowle turbaries" pre-c.1842 and from Snaith & Cowick Moor in 1966, the latter described as a "good colony" on a patch of bare peat.
Equisetaceae	(Horsetails)		
Water Horsetail	<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>	c.1876-1989	Noted in the 19th century under "Moor and moor edge plants," and as a plant of ditches exhibiting a "warp influence". Recorded in recent decades from the Thorne Waste peat canals. Current status uncertain.
Field Horsetail	<i>E. arvense</i>	(1969)-2008	Very widely dispersed and frequently encountered.
Marsh Horsetail	<i>E. palustre</i>	pre-c.1842-1989	Recorded from the "Crowle turbaries" pre-c.1842. Found in recent decades in peripheral drains and on warp alongside. Also occasionally on disturbed peat at Will Pits and the Thorne Waste peat canals. Current status uncertain.
Ophioglossaceae	(Adderstongue Ferns)		
Adder's-tongue	<i>Ophioglossum vulgatum</i>	1870s-2008	A warp-influence species, generally existing peripherally, in pasture and uncultivated areas. Also grows along the limestone-based canal towpath and on a linked tramway.
Osmundaceae			
Royal Fern	<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	1840-2008	A long-term victim of fern-fanciers and moorland exploitation. Although once growing more widely, since the mid-1970s has been confined to the Thorne Waste peat canals.
Polypodiaceae	(Polypodies)		
Polypody	<i>Polypodium vulgare</i>	pre-c.1876-c.1968	Known from Madam Wood pre-c.1876. Recorded elsewhere in 1964 and c.1968, the latter a single plant within the Thorne Waste peat canals. A fertile herbarium frond from 1964 is confirmed as <i>P. vulgare</i> L.
Dennstaedtiaceae			
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	(1828)-2008	Has probably spread markedly since the 1870s. Now abundant, especially on drier peat, thriving best on disturbed and cleared ground. Although growing on uncultivated warpland, only exceptionally found in the surrounding farmland.
Thelypteridaceae			
Marsh Fern	<i>Thelypteris palustris</i>	pre-1868-70s?	Described as occurring peripherally in "dykes and wet thickets", and in turbaries and turbary pools.
Lemon-scented Fern	<i>Oreopteris limbosperma</i>	pre-1947	Noted by J.M. Taylor, who died in 1947.

Aspleniaceae			
Hart's-tongue	<i>Phyllitis scolopendrium</i>	1907-90	Recorded "in some parts" in 1907, probably peripherally, and known on walls at Top Moor Farm since 1989. Current status uncertain.
Woodsiaceae			
Lady-fern	<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	c.1876-1980s	Recorded from Madam Wood c.1876, and the New Zealand area pre-1947. Apparently a warp-influence species, found in recent decades at Will Pits and at the margin of the main peat canal near the ruined Moorends Works.
Dryopteridaceae	(Buckler Ferns, Male Ferns)		
Soft Shield-fern	<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>	1986	Found at Will Pits, but destroyed soon afterwards.
Male-fern	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	(1895)-2008	A warp-influence species, inhabiting uncultivated, and often wooded, warpland.
Crested Buckler-fern	<i>D. cristata</i>	1856-72	Known from a "boggy bushy place" near the south-western edge of the moorland, "not on the 'Waste', exactly, but upon the less open border much nearer Thorne".
Narrow Buckler-fern	<i>D. carthusiana</i>	pre-1871-2008	A well distributed but uncommon species on peat and uncultivated peaty warpland, occurring especially in parts of the Thorne Waste peat canals. Grows in wetter areas than Broad Buckler-fern.
[Hybrid Narrow Buckler-fern]	<i>D.x deweveri</i>	1941-80s	Formerly known peripherally from Whitaker's Plantations, and was still in that region in the 1980s. Current status uncertain.
Broad Buckler-fern	<i>D. dilatata</i>	c.1876-2008	Widespread and common on peat and uncultivated warp. Grows around the base of Thorne Colliery spoilheap, but not actually on the tipped slag.
Blechnaceae	(Hard Ferns, Water Ferns)		
Hard-fern	<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	c.1876-1970	Formerly regarded locally as a rare and notable species. Probably a fern of the peat moorland, although first recorded from Madam Wood.

Nomenclature source:

C. Stace (1997) *New Flora of the British Isles*. Second edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bracketed dates refer to a published reference, not a dated occurrence.

For further details, see *Goole Times and Weekly Herald*, 30th August 1907; *Sorby Record* **26**: 46-52.

Useful websites include:-

Ferns in Britain and Ireland www.ferns.rogergolding.co.uk

Fern World - the web site of the British Pteridological Society www.nhm.ac.uk/hosted_sites/bps/index.htm