

Keep Hill Wood

discover
enjoy
explore



Keep Hill Wood your Local Wildlife Site...

Once owned by the Carrington Estate, Keep Hill was used as common land with various people retaining rights to graze cattle, sheep and horses. The 15 hectare (37 acre) site was bought by Wycombe District Council in 1907 for the benefit of local people. At the time, the hill was largely an open chalk grassland with scattered scrub. There were also several Beech trees which would have been periodically pollarded. These much older trees, which predate the woodland you see today, can still be found around the site.

enjoy... below are some key facts to help you understand this woodland and how it is managed...

Pollarding is a traditional method of tree management. It involves cutting back the boughs of the tree almost to its trunk at a height of about 2m (above the browse line) in the winter to allow re-growth the following year. The re-growth can then be harvested again some years later for a variety of uses such as charcoal, firewood or even fodder for livestock. The final use depends on the species of tree and when it is cut.

Coppicing is another traditional form of woodland management, is usually associated with Hazel *Corylus avellana*. The stems are cut close to the ground resulting in vigorous re-growth of the stool (individual plant). This practise has existed for thousands of years resulting in a wide variety of flora and fauna associated with it. The Hazel nut is a food for many mammals such as the Yellow-necked Mouse. The coppice re-growth is used by many birds such as warblers, which depend on the middle stage re-growth for nesting. The sunny, open conditions of a newly cut coupe (an area of Hazel) are hugely beneficial to woodland flora and invertebrates particularly butterflies. The coupes are cut in rotation and provide a sustainable source of materials for sheep hurdles, thatching spars and hedge-laying. The decline of coppicing is one of the greatest threats to woodland biodiversity.

These processes help prolong the life of the tree. Veteran pollards and stools can achieve a far greater lifespan than uncut or maiden trees and support a diverse range of specialist invertebrates, epiphytes and fungi. They are a key element of well managed woodland.

Sycamore

Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* is a non-native species in Britain which has become naturalised after being introduced around the 16th century. Once thought to have little conservation value, this view has now changed as it is known to support several red data species and provides a food source to the Dormouse. It is the largest member of the Maple family in Europe. The smaller, Field Maple *Acer campestre* grows here too.

cover images: Mistle Thrush and Magpie Inkcap Fungi

Oak

English Oak *Quercus robur* grows its acorns on stalks and its leaves are stalk-less. Sessile Oak *Quercus petraea* Britain's other native Oak, has stalked leaves but its acorns are stalk-less. Both trees support an enormous amount of invertebrates, fungi and lichen.



★ This leaflet is printed on Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) accredited paper.

discover...

Get the kids involved too, help them to find some of these more common species:

Wild Garlic flowers in early summer	Badger please don't disturb!	Speckled Wood parrots rides and glades
Mistletoe mystical properties	Oyster Fungi grows on Beech	Holly berries in winter
Wild Parsnip attracts invertebrates	Sulphur Turtles on Ash tree	Yew a favourite for birds

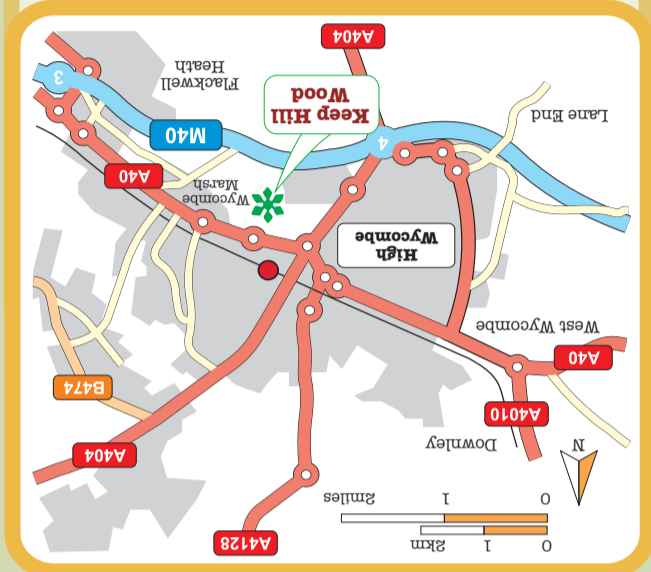
While you enjoy the wood, please don't forget to follow the Country Code:

Leave gates and property as you find them
Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
Keep dogs under close control
Consider other people

www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk



how to get there...



public transport... nearest mainline station: High Wycombe (Chiltern Line) 1 mile nearest bus stop: Chestnut Avenue

Ariva - Blue Route 52
Ariva - Purple-Route 55
First - K74 HW to Slough
Carousel - A40 HW to Heathrow
Carousel - 536 HW Amersham/Watford

For further information please contact us:
Wycombe District Council Woodland Service
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www.wycombe.gov.uk/woodlandservice

Partners...



Welcome

to your Local Wildlife Site...