



*Rides provide important edge areas (Gary Battell),  
Bullfinch (Neil Rolph), Small Phoenix (Paul Kitchener).*

# Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodlands

In Suffolk this includes all semi-natural woodland – except wet woodlands and wood pastures and parklands – growing on the full range of soil conditions.

Many are ancient woods and tend to be small, less than 5 ha.

Often there is evidence of past coppicing, particularly on moderately acid to base-rich soils. On very acid sands the type may be represented by former wood-pastures of oak and birch.

# IMPORTANCE FOR WILDLIFE

Woodlands support a great variety of species and are a rich food source. Plants such as native Bluebell, Early Purple Orchid, Wood Anemone, Herb-Paris and Unspotted Lungwort can be found, and nectar attracts many insects. The Hazel Dormouse often uses tree cavities to hibernate. Deadwood is a food source for stag beetle larvae. Woodlands are an important habitat for fungi, with c.420 species recorded in just one woodland.



## IMPORTANT ASSOCIATED SPECIES

### Birds

Hedge Accentor (Dunnock) *Prunella modularis*  
Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*  
Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*  
Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*  
Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*  
Common Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*  
Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*  
Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*  
Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*  
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*  
Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*  
Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*  
Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*  
Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*  
Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*  
Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*  
Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*  
Woodlark *Lullula arborea*  
Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

### Mammals

Barbastelle Bat *Barbastella barbastellus*  
Brandts Bat *Myotis brandtii*  
Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*  
Common Pipistrelle Bat *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*  
Soprano Pipistrelle Bat *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*  
Daubenton's Bat *Myotis daubentonii*  
Nathusius' Pipistrelle Bat *Pipistrellus nathusii*  
Natterer's *Myotis nattereri*  
Noctule Bat *Nyctalus noctula*  
Serotine Bat *Eptesicus serotinus*  
Whiskered Bat *Myotis mystacinus*  
Dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*

### Beetles

Poplar Leaf-rolling Weevil *Byctiscus populi*  
Alder Flea Weevil *Orchestes testaceus*  
Stag Beetle *Lucanus cervus* (woodland edges)

### Butterflies

White Admiral *Limenitis camilla*  
Purple Emperor *Apatura iris*

### Moths

Olive Crescent *Trisateles emortualis*  
False Mocha *Cyclophora porata* (oak trees)  
White Spotted Pinion *Cosmia diffinis*  
Grey Dagger *Acronicta psi*  
Knot Grass *Acronicta rumicis*  
Flounced Chestnut *Agrochola helvola*  
Brown-spot Pinion *Agrochola litura*  
Mouse Moth *Amphipyra tragopoginis*  
Large Nutmeg *Apamea anceps*  
Dusky Brocade *Apamea remissa*  
Sprawler *Apamea remissa*  
Centre-barred Sallow *Aethmia centrargo*  
Dark Brocade *Blepharita adusta*  
Mottled Rustic *Caradrina morpheus*  
Streak *Chesias legatella*  
Latticed Heath *Chiasmia clathrata*  
Oak Lutestring *Cymatophorima diluta* (oak trees)  
Figure of Eight *Diloba caeruleocephala*  
Small Phoenix *Ecliptopera silaceata*  
September Thorn *Ennomos erosaria*  
Dusky Thorn *Ennomos fuscantaria*  
August Thorn *Ennomos quercinaria*  
Spinach *Eulithis mellinata*  
Garden Dart *Euxoa nigricans*  
White-line Dart *Euxoa tritici*  
Double Dart *Graphiphora augur*  
Small Emerald *Hemistola chrysoprasaria*  
Ghost Moth *Hepialus humuli* (woodland rides)  
Rustic *Hoplodrina blanda*  
Rosy Rustic *Hydraecia micacea*  
Brindled Beauty *Lycia hirtaria*  
V-moth *Macaria wauaria*  
Lackey *Malacosoma neustria*

Dot Moth *Melanchra persicariae*  
Pretty Chalk Carpet *Melanthia procellata* (chalky soils)  
Rosy Minor *Mesoligia literosa*  
Shoulder-striped Wainscot *Mythimna comma*  
Dark Spinach *Pelurga comitata*  
Shaded Broad-bar *Scotopteryx chenopodiata*  
White Ermine *Spilosoma lubricipeda*  
Buff Ermine *Spilosoma luteum*  
Hedge Rustic *Tholera cespitis*  
Feathered Gothic *Tholera decimalis*  
Blood-vein *Timandra comae*  
Pale Eggar *Trichiura crataegi*  
Cinnabar *Tyria jacobaeae* (woodland rides)  
Oak Hook-tip *Watsonalla binaria* (oak trees)  
Sallow *Xanthia ictertia*  
Dark-barred Twin-Spot Carpet *Xanthorhoe ferrugata*

### Spiders

Serrated Tongue Spider *Centromerus serratus*

### Fungi

Bearded Tooth *Hericium erinaceus*  
Coral Tooth *Hericium coralloides*  
Orange Chanterelle *Cantharellus friesii*

### Lichens

*Lecania chlorotiza*

### Plants

Crested Cow-wheat *Melampyrum cristatum*  
Fly orchid *Ophrys insectifera*  
Unspotted lungwort *Pulmonaria obscura*

\*Suffolk Priority species

\*\*Priority - Research Only. Common and widespread, but rapidly declining.



Images: Top – Coral Tooth (Arthur Rivett). Bottom, left to right – Grey Dagger (Paul Kitchener), Hawfinch (Neil Rolph), Stag Beetle (Paul Kitchener), Crested Cow-Wheat (Ben Heather), White Admiral (Stuart Read).



## FACTORS AFFECTING HABITAT IN SUFFOLK

- Excessive deer browsing leading to change in woodland structure, impoverishment of ground flora and low rates of coppice growth.
- Habitat fragmentation and isolation from other woodlands.
- Poor management leading to changes in woodland structure and composition; lack of coppicing.
- Disease e.g. Chalara Ash Dieback, Acute Oak Decline, Dutch Elm Disease.
- Removal of dead wood destroys the food source for stag beetle larvae and other saproxylic insects.
- Changes in agricultural practice e.g. cultivation hard up to woodland boundaries.
- Clearance of woodlands for development (e.g. trunk roads) and agriculture.



## HABITAT MANAGEMENT ADVICE

- Manage woodlands according to the UK Forestry Standard
- Maintain structural diversity with mature trees and scrub of varying age to provide a wide range of habitats. Ensure continuity of woodland by regeneration or replanting when necessary.
- Maintain 'naturalness' of woods where possible, avoiding sudden and drastic modification of woods
- Maintain woodland 'edge habitat' to encourage a wide variety of flora and fauna.
- Maintain open spaces such as ridges and clearings to provide sheltered sunny areas. This encourages the growth of flowering plants which provide nectar and pollen for insects. If possible, the open areas should include bare ground and low and high vegetation.
- Leave any wet areas such as streams and ponds undisturbed.
- Maintain a range of dead wood, particularly for saproxylic invertebrates, in both shady and sunny situations. This will also encourage fungi which provide food for invertebrates and birds.
- Maintain the undisturbed soil structure.
- Allow natural regeneration of woodlands wherever possible.

*Fly Orchid (Stuart Read).*



## VISION FOR SUFFOLK

1. Improve knowledge of extent and quality of lowland mixed deciduous woodlands, especially those under 2 ha.
2. Maintain the existing extent of lowland mixed deciduous woodlands to ensure no net loss.
3. Re-create lowland mixed deciduous woodlands as opportunities arise.
4. Encourage the restoration and improvement of degraded lowland mixed deciduous woodlands.



## WHERE TO FIND FURTHER INFORMATION

Forest Research publications

- <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/?theme=forest-management&page-type=research-topics>

JNCC Habitat Description (pdf)

- <https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/2829ce47-1ca5-41e7-bc1a-871c1cc0b3ae/UKBAP-BAPHabitats-30-LowlandMixedDecWood.pdf>

MAGIC website – interactive mapping information including designations • <https://magic.defra.gov.uk>

*Making Space for Nature, a Review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network* 16 Sep 2010.

Chaired by Professor Sir John Lawton CBE FRS. Defra website (pdf) • <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20130402151656/http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/biodiversity/documents/201009space-for-nature.pdf>

Natural Environment White Paper June 2011 – *The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature* (pdf)

- [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/228842/8082.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228842/8082.pdf)

Peterken, G.F., 1981 *Woodland Conservation and Management*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Rackham, O. 1980 *Ancient Woodland*. London: Arnold

Suffolk Wildlife Trust Habitats Explorer • <https://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/habitats/woodland>

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*Images: Bluebells at Minsmere (Emma Aldous), Unspotted Lungwort (Stuart Read).*