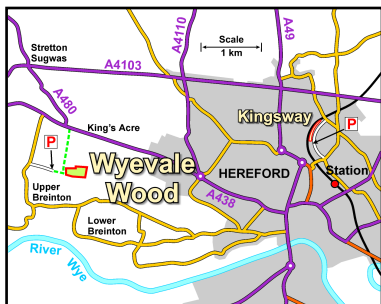


Wyevale Wood

Breinton SO472407 (Explorer 189)

Secondary Woodland.



Visitor Guidelines

The reserve is generally level with wide paths. There is a spacious observation hide near the entrance, overlooking a feeding station well-used by squirrels and woodland birds. Wheelchair access to the hide is via a gently sloping wooden ramp. However, following heavy winter rains, the whole site can be quite wet and muddy.

Description

Wyevale Wood, formerly called Green Lane Wood, is *secondary woodland* on an *ancient woodland* site. The soils in the wood are neutral in reaction, deriving from underlying Old Red Sandstone marls and glacial deposits including gravels. Green Lane itself was originally part of a drover's road from the Welsh hills to Hereford and on to London. The drovers had an overnight stopping place at the "King's Acre", an area just east of the wood where there was a drinking pond for the animals. Clues to the *ancient* origin of this site are provided by the fine wood bank and ditch still clearly visible along the north boundary, while the gnarled bases of some of the trees indicate former management as *coppice*. Later management has obscured the picture however; many Oaks have been planted earlier last century, while the Hazel understorey was removed and the wood sold to make crates. Furthermore, subsequent continuous grazing had prevented re-establishment of a *shrub layer* by natural regeneration.

Until 2001, the north-eastern part of the reserve was maintained as a *wood pasture*, grazed by sheep in the spring and summer months. Since then, the stock control fence has been removed and all grazing has ceased. Well-grown Oaks of similar age dominate this end of the reserve, with a few old Hawthorns along the north boundary, and scattered Holly bushes making up the only *shrub layer*. The *understorey* is now returning, with Stinging Nettles, Foxgloves, Bramble, and various grasses forming a low and impoverished ground flora. In winter the effect of previous grazing is most striking, with clear uninterrupted views through the Oak trunks from one end of the wood to the other. To the south, there is an open *pasture* area containing some memorial trees; this was extensively planted up in 2001 with more native tree species, around a large open glade. In 1991, a variety of trees and shrubs were planted into the western section, thanks to funds provided by the

National Grid. A small stream runs along the southern boundary, parallel to the public footpath. This part of the wood has some large standing dead timber, which is proving attractive to woodpeckers. The middle of the western end forms an open glade, with small patches of bramble which provides cover for animals and birds using the feeding station. The observation hide and access ramp were built in 1992 using monies generously provided by Barclay's Bank PLC Reserve Fund.

Present Management

The reserve is being allowed to develop as *high forest* with natural regeneration.

Acquisition Details

Freehold generously donated to the Trust in 1990 by Wyevale Holdings Ltd. and Mr. H. Williamson, a former Vice-President of HNT.

General Information:

Best time to visit: Spring and summer.

Habitat: *Secondary woodland.*

Size: 4 hectares (10 acres).

Specialities: Broad-leaved Helleborine (7-9), Bluebell (4-6), Ladies Smock, (4-6), Goldilocks (7-9), Great Spotted Woodpecker, Nuthatch.

Parking: There is space for 2-3 cars near the wooden barrier at the end of the lane.

Nearby reserves: Kingsway.

