



**Herefordshire
Wildlife Trust**

Distance 4 miles

Start: there is roadside parking at foot of the drive to Priory (now Aspris) Fostering Services.
What 3 Words: weekday, spruced, cake

Nic Howes' Wild Walks: Littley Coppice and north Malvern Hills

The entrance to
Littley Coppice

Follow the fingerpost pointing to Bell Inn, up a farm track for a short distance and then through the metal farm gate, left off the track and into a field. Keep parallel to the hedge on the left, up to the next metal farm gate with a stile to its left. Through the gate/stile, aim for the shallow hollow way and follow this to the metal farm gate into Littley Coppice (point 1).

The track ahead crosses the steep slope of Littley Coppice, where Herefordshire Wildlife Trust volunteers have recently coppiced mainly hazel, constructing "deer baskets" over the coppice stools to protect them from deer browsing. At the top of the track is a wooden kissing gate at the exit from the reserve, beyond which the route continues along a clear path to another wooden kissing gate (point 2). Follow the path with woodland on the left and an abandoned sports field on the right. Exit the path through a small metal gate and immediately turn right-angle left over a stile to the right of a metal farm gate and onto a track (point 3).

At the next path junction, keep straight ahead through a decorative metal kissing gate. Table Hill appears ahead on the left, with Sugarloaf Hill to its right, behind trees. Aim across the field, initially for Table Hill, passing an abandoned stile mid-field. Beyond the corner of a board fence, cross a stile to the right of a metal farm gate and simultaneously leave Herefordshire for Worcestershire (point 4).

Continue along a wood-chip path to meet a drive and turn left along it until it emerges on a bend on a surfaced public road (point 5). Turn right and then take the first drive on the left, past a sign for "Coachmans and Ostlers". Just after an electricity substation, turn sharp left up a path off the drive, beneath a gas light

(point 6). Ascend a grassy bank, passing another gas light; enter a drive and ascend it, passing the community-owned Brewers Arms pub on the right. Climb a short flight of steps to reach a surfaced public road (point 7).

Cross the public road and walk up the tarmac drive opposite, named "The Dingle". Pass a quarry in the ancient rocks of the Malvern Hills and then reach the end of the tarmac by Sugar Loaf Cottage; keep straight on up the path towards the saddle on the Malvern Hills ridge. At the saddle (point 8) turn left along the well-made path along the eastern flank of Sugarloaf Hill, towards North Hill. At a "scissor" crossing (point 9), take the left fork and then the next right fork to reach another saddle (point 10). The walk description continues to point 11 below, but it is worth noting that an extension to the walk is possible round or over North Hill and Table Hill to reach point 11 by a longer route.

Continue ahead from point 10 along a clear path and look for a grassy path that appears soon on the left, descending steeply towards West Malvern, starting just before a bench. On entering a small wood, the path zigzags and then emerges by another gaslight (point 11). Cross the track by the gaslight and descend a grassy slope to a metal gate that leads to steps down to reach tarmac. Walk down the tarmac road towards "Elim" and look out for the Sugar Loaf Café and Shop on your right (point 12).

Cross West Malvern Road and descend Croft Bank to the right of Elim Conference Centre. Turn right at a fingerpost just before a grit bin, into Croft Farm Drive (point 13). Pass straight through Croft Farm yard and keep ahead over a stile to the right of a metal farm gate, leaving Worcestershire and entering Herefordshire. Go through a metal



One of the iconic gaslights of the Malverns which this route passes



gate and a great view opens ahead across the foothills of the Malvern Hills into east Herefordshire, with the needle-like aerial of Ridge Hill on Marcle ridge visible in the distance on the left.

Descend the field ahead to a waymarked post (point 14) and turn right there, along a track for a short distance before branching left off it, through a gap in the hawthorns and crossing the steep slope down to the wood ahead (point 15). Another waymarked post points along the NE edge of the wood and down a short, rocky holloway to a stile that leads to a surfaced drive (point 16). It is theorised that a "proglacial" lake may once

have stretched miles south from this point, ponded up between the Malvern Hills and an Anglian period glacier moving in from the west. Turn right down the drive, cross a small brook and ascend the tarmac; it is worth pausing near the top to look back at the view of the Malvern Hills ridge. At the gate to Bank Farm (point 17) follow the tarmac round to the left and when it ends, turn left through the second metal farm gate beyond the repurposed railway goods van.

Follow the valley bottom down to go through a waymarked metal farm gate to the right of a pond (point 18). Pass between

two woods and then through another metal farm gate. Aim straight across the field for a metal farm gate at the lower corner of the wood ahead (point 19). Pass through this gate and continue along the track at the bottom edge of the wood to a metal farm gate out of the wood and then along the outside of its lower edge, on the right. At the corner of the wood (point 20) follow the tractor ruts to their righthand bend and then turn off left to a metal kissing gate into Rose Farm yard. Pass through a wooden farm gate and descend the drive to meet a surfaced lane; turn left to return to the start.



Table Hill