

Historically woodlands dominated the British landscape, but now Britain is one of the least wooded countries in Europe. Mature woodlands can support a variety of species including dormouse, bats, insects such as the wood white butterfly and flowering plants.

General guidelines for the management of semi-natural broadleaved woodland:

Non-intervention management, i.e. choosing not to undertake any management work in all or part of a woodland, is a recognised and acceptable form of management for wildlife.

Coppicing of hazel can be re-introduced on a 5-7 year or longer rotation cycle, this allows maximum sunlight penetration to ground vegetation, and should encourage the range of woodland flowering plants.

If dormice are present and management is to encourage these, then coups for coppicing should be small (clumps of 5-6 stools of hazel only) and scattered. This enables dormice to continue movement from tree to tree while still maintaining the age variation of hazel and therefore dormouse food supplies.

Retaining some standard trees within coppiced areas reduces the rate of growth of the coppice stools and retains the woodland ground flora.

Standing or already fallen dead wood is an excellent habitat for insects and the birds that feed on them, so leave in place wherever possible rather than burn, and resist over-tidiness.



Hazel coppice

Fence off the woodland to any stock. Generally grazing stock in woodlands reduces the diversity of the ground flora.

Ivy provides food and refuge for insects and birds and normally should not be cut from trees.

Rides and glades are important for the extraction of timber products, and the extra light entering the woodland encourages wildflowers and insects.

Rides and glades are especially valuable for woodland butterflies. Well structured rides and glades graduate from low vegetation through tall grass and herb communities, scrub and ultimately woodland.

Rotational management of glades and rides, particularly scrub clearance, in winter is recommended

Standing or already fallen dead wood is an excellent habitat for insects and the birds that feed on them, so leave in place wherever possible rather than removing, and resist over-tidiness (where safety permits).



Wood anemone



Some areas of the woodland may benefit from careful thinning to vary its structure and introduce a variety of conditions for wildlife.

Natural regeneration of native species is encouraged to allow the woodland to continue for the long-term.

Non-native species (such as sycamore, rhododendron and laurel) are generally best removed from woodlands. If large enough these trees/shrubs could be used as fuelwood. These species if allowed to grow often shade out woodland ground plants and prevent native seedlings from growing. If not suitable for burning it is recommended that unwanted trimmings/branches from felling/thinning or coppicing can be stacked to rot down; providing important refuge sites for insects and small mammals.

Linking woodlands within your landholding with ditches, hedgerows, lines of trees and beetle banks allows wildlife to move from one woodland area to

Sources of further information and funding may be available from:

Forestry Commission: *English Woodland Grant Scheme:*

Provides funding for planting of new woodlands and management of existing woodlands.

Web address: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs>

Email: southwest.fce@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 01626 890666

Ward Forester Scheme: A new scheme developed by Devon County Council and Forestry Commission to aid owners of small woodlands to increase woodland productivity and gain financially from their woodlands.

Web address: <http://wardforester.co.uk/>

Email: wardforester@devon.gov.uk

Tel: 01392 382157

Natural England: *Entry Level and Higher Level Stewardship*

Web address: <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/information-for/farmers-and-land-managers/>

Email: devon@naturalengland.org.uk

Tel: 0300 0601110

Devon Wildlife Trust

Website: www.devonwildlifetrust.org

Email: contactus@devonwildlifetrust.org

Tel: 01392 279244



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