

BRACKNELL FOREST WHITEGROVE COPSE



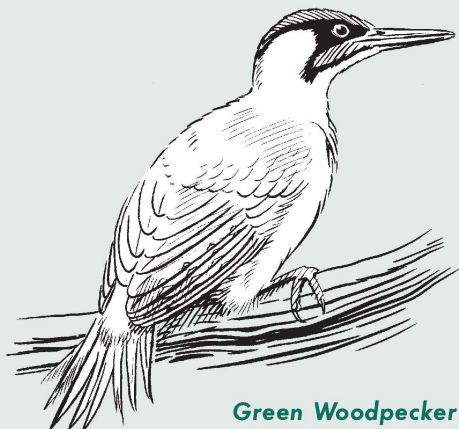
F. DEAD TREES ARE FULL OF LIFE

The large, dead oak tree here (still standing) will continue to provide a useful habitat well into the 21st century. Insects such as beetles, flies, and caterpillars can burrow through the decaying wood; millipedes, woodlice and earwigs hide under loose bark; bats, owls and woodpeckers live in hollow branches; and mushrooms and toadstools sprout from logs left on the ground.

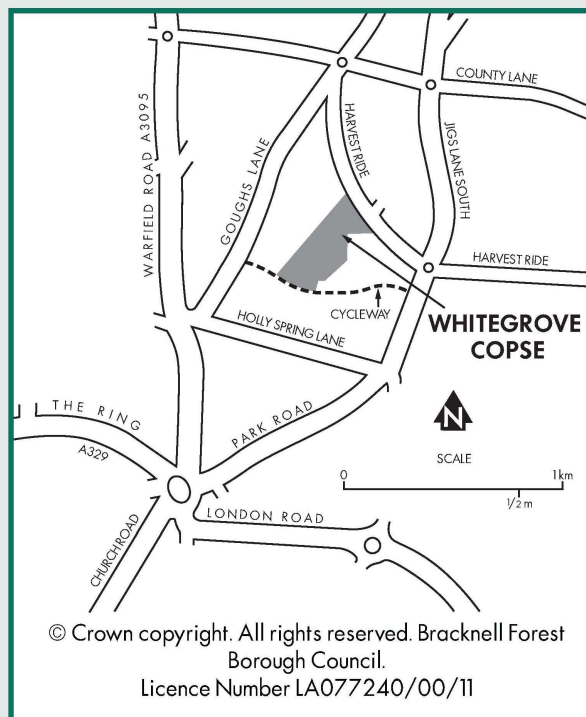
G. DUTCH ELM DISEASE

Many young elm trees, both alive and dead, can be seen here. Large elms used to be commonplace in the countryside before Dutch Elm Disease swept across the country in the 1960s destroying thousands of trees in its path. The disease was carried from one elm to the next by a small beetle burrowing in its bark. The small elms you see here have grown back from the surviving roots of original trees. Sadly, many of these fall victim to the disease even before they are 20 years old.

Information on other woodland and countryside sites managed by Bracknell Forest Open Spaces, Countryside & Heritage Service is available by calling The Look Out on 01344 354400.



Green Woodpecker



How to get there: Whitegrove Copse is about one mile north of Bracknell town centre. The main access point is on Harvest Ride, near the junction with All Saints Rise. There is no car park. There is also access from the cycleway linking Jigs Lane and Goughs Lane.

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This leaflet is available in large print, braille, or on audio tape on request, please contact 01344 354124 for further details

Parks and Countryside Service

W HITEGROVE COPSE

INTRODUCTION

Whitegrove Copse is an area of ancient woodland to the north of Bracknell, in the parish of Warfield. The Copse is a valuable wildlife habitat and landscape feature, as well as an attractive place for woodland walks. The site is designated as a Wildlife Heritage Site and is owned and managed by Bracknell Forest Borough Council.

WOODLAND TRAIL

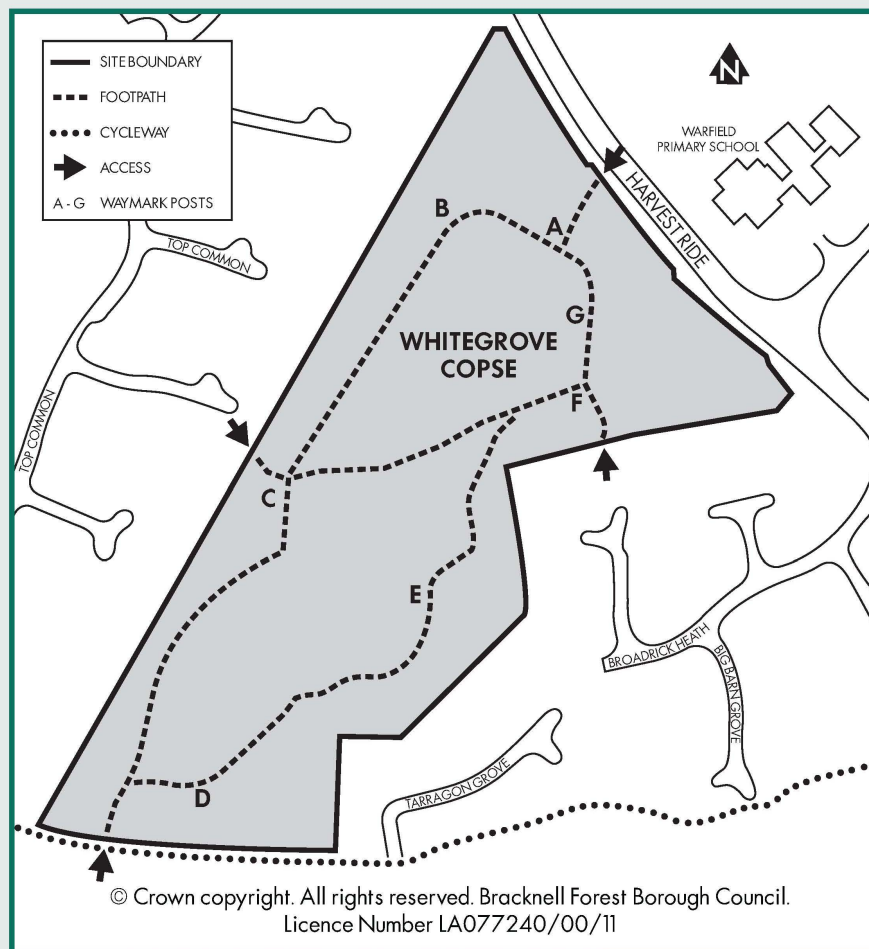
From the entrance on Harvest Ride follow the waymarked woodland trail through Whitegrove Copse. The trail will take you through several different parts of the Copse, each with its own interesting features. Please keep to the footpaths and keep dogs under control.

A. CONIFER TREES

This corner of the copse includes a small block of coniferous trees - mainly Scots Pine and Douglas Fir, both of which are evergreen, as well as Larch trees, which shed their needles in autumn. Listen for coal tits and goldcrest singing in the treetops.

B. BIODIVERSITY

Whitegrove Copse is probably at least 400 years old. During its lifetime local people would have cut trees here for firewood and building. Ancient woodland contains a high diversity of plants and animals and this part of the copse includes many different species of shrubs and trees - turkey oak, sycamore, hazel, rowan, elder, hawthorn, silver birch, aspen and holly among them.



C. THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

These two evergreen plants, common to woodland areas, are vitally important as food and shelter for many creatures. Birds such as the song thrush often choose to nest in a dense holly tree, and the red berries, which are found only on female bushes, provide useful winter food.

The ivy spreads across the ground and climbs up trees. The branches that drape down produce flowers in September, acting as a source of nectar for bees and hoverflies.

D. WOODLAND GLADE

Surrounded by large silver birch trees, this woodland clearing forms a sheltered sun-trap, which attracts basking butterflies and dragonflies on sunny days. Birds such as blackcap and the chiff-chaff can be seen and heard in April and May. In late summer you may hear the distinctive chirp of dark bush crickets from the bracken and undergrowth.

E. WOODLAND MANAGEMENT AND COPPING

At this point you are surrounded by multi-stemmed hazel shrubs. Younger stems grow strong and straight and make useful poles, fence posts and stakes. The older stems twist and lean and produce crops of hazelnuts in the autumn. When shrubs such as hazel are cut down, the stumps do not die. Instead they often send out many shoots which may grow to nearly 3m tall in the first year after cutting. This results in coppicing - the spread of a small area of trees and undergrowth.