



Worcestershire Wildlife Trust



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Work to restore meadow begins

Tuesday 19th February 2019



Almost two kilometres of fencing is being replaced on a Vale of Evesham nature reserve in order to allow livestock to graze the site.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust's [Windmill Hill](#) is an important grassland with scarce wildflowers like twayblade, fairy flax and wild liquorice growing there. The particular mix of plants exists because of the limestone that underlies the reserve – an unusual habitat in Worcestershire.

The reserve is too steep to be mown by machinery in the summer once the flowers have dropped their seeds so livestock are brought in. Grazing keeps down the more vigorous grasses and allows the delicate wildflowers to grow.



David Molloy, Conservation Officer responsible for the nature reserve, explains "Grazing has taken place here for centuries and it is essential to ensure the survival of these scarce plants but much of the fencing is currently in a state of disrepair; the site will only be attractive to a local grazier if the stock fencing is secure.

"In order to install the fence, visitors may notice that we will be removing some vegetation and scrub that has grown over the current fence. This will mostly be at the bottom of the hill and consists mainly of hawthorn and young ash.

"Whilst scrub can be a valuable habitat for many species, its removal in this case will not only allow us to install the

reserve.

The work will take place in two stages – the first to remove the scrub and the second to install the fence. Each will take about a week but there will be a gap in between.

The site, near North Littleton, is just 15 acres in size but is one of the best remaining limestone grasslands in the county.

The wildflowers on the nature reserve support a diverse range of insects with butterflies being the most obvious. From spring through summer marbled whites are joined by common blues, small skippers and small heaths.



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