



# Worcestershire Wildlife Trust



Who we are | What we do | How you can help | Nature Reserves | Wildlife | Discover & Learn | What's on

[Back to reserve map](#)

## Piper's Hill & Dodderhill Commons



**i** Due to resurfacing work, our car parks will be closed on Tue 7th May. We apologise for any inconvenience. Piper's Hill is very sensitive and we do not allow shelters or fires to be built there. Fallen timber is left to benefit wildlife. Shelters will be dismantled. Thank you.

### Also known as Hanbury Woods, this relict wood pasture reserve contains some of the oldest trees in the county

Also known as Hanbury Woods these two old commons are former ancient wood pasture where, historically, livestock grazed on grassland scattered with large trees. Woodlands have been grazed to create wood pasture since at least the Middle Ages. This was often associated with old commons where the owner granted rights to the commoners to graze their cattle, sheep and pigs. Trees were often planted and protected to grow large timber, giving rise to old, widely-spaced trees with a grassy woodland floor – something between woodland and parkland.

Today the nature reserve has over 240 veteran trees – some of the oldest in the county – which have grown over several hundred years. These old trees support a huge range of wildlife as well as being historically and culturally significant in their own right. The trees grew in open spaces where they developed widely-spreading branches. They were often pollarded (branches harvested for small timber, cut at head height or above, out of the reach of grazing animals) and allowed to re-grow. Many of the trees on the reserve bear the signs of pollarding – particularly ancient

### Join us

Protect local wildlife



### Reserve information

**Location**  
2 miles north of Hanbury village on B4091  
Bromsgrove  
Worcestershire  
B60 4AS

**Map reference**  
SO 960 649

**Great for...**  
ancient trees  
birdwatching  
fungi

**Best time to visit**  
Jan - Dec

**Get directions**  
[Find out here](#)

**Public transport**  
[Plan your journey](#)

**Opening Times**  
Dawn to dusk

**Size**  
15.50 hectares

**Status**  
Site of Special Scientific

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I want to find out more

*palmatus*, which requires a supply of dead elm, and the rare bracket fungus *Hericium cirrhatum* which can be found at the end of freshly cut beech trunks.

All three species of woodpecker are attracted by the old trees as well as tits and nuthatches. The dead wood is fantastic for saproxylic species of beetle – those dependent on dead or dying wood at some point during their life cycle. The old fish pond at the edge of the wood is inhabited by a variety of freshwater invertebrates and is worth visiting.

During the last century grazing on the commons reduced substantially and saplings began to fill in the spaces between the trees. These vigorous young trees have started to shade out the older oaks and sweet chestnuts and, left unchecked, this competition for nutrients and light can cause the veteran trees to die. We're gradually restoring the wood pasture by felling carefully selected beech trees – much of the dead wood is left on site to provide habitat for fungus and invertebrates. In time we hope to re-introduce grazing onto the reserve.

## Flagship Nature Reserves

This is one of 13 flagship reserves. We believe that a landscape-scale approach to wildlife conservation is essential. Wildlife needs space to adapt and move to cope with the consequences of climate change. Practically, this means that to deliver our biodiversity vision, we need to develop a coherent network of large areas linked by corridors that can provide benefits for people as well as for biodiversity.

### Why is Pipers Hill and Dodderhill Common a Flagship Reserve?

This is a nationally important wood pasture restoration site, our work will show how to protect and ensure the future of veteran trees and how to secure the long term management through grazing. This will involve extensive public consultation and involvement.

The reserve lies within the Forest of Feckenham, which has been identified as a target area for the Trust to try and expand its land holding, and increase biodiversity through partnership working with private landowners.

## Species and habitats

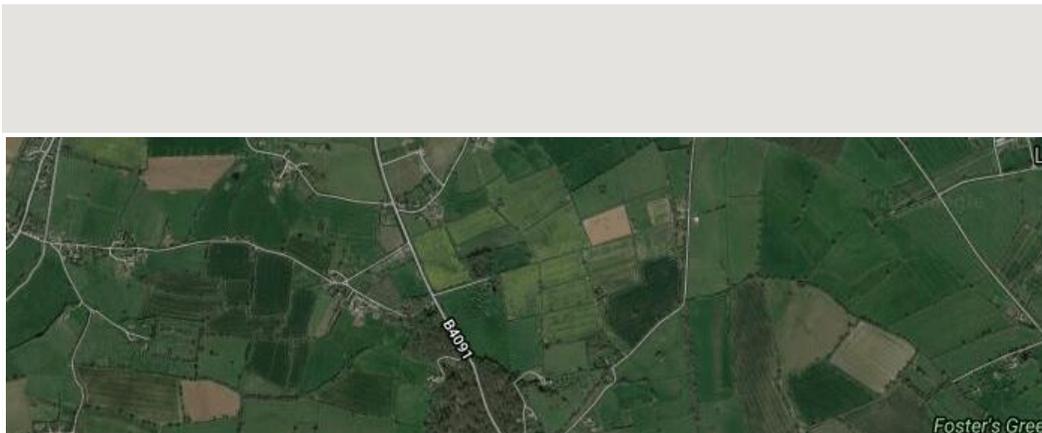
**Habitats** [Woodland](#)

**Species** [Jackdaw](#), [Nuthatch](#), [Hawthorn](#), [English Oak](#), [Sweet Chestnut](#), [Enchanter's Nightshade](#), [Porcelain Fungus](#)

## Nearby nature reserves

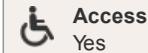
-  [Foster's Green Meadows](#)  
1 miles - Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
-  [The Christopher Cadbury Wetland Reserve at Upton Warren](#)  
2 miles - Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
-  [Hornhill Wood](#)  
4 miles - Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

## Nature reserve map



## Living Landscape schemes

Forest of Feckenham



**Access**  
Yes

No wheelchair access.

### Walking information

Some paths on difficult terrain. Public footpaths run through woodland and will be muddy and slippery underfoot when wet. Do not remove any fallen wood from reserve.



**Parking**  
Car park at northern end of reserve



**Dogs**  
Dogs must be on lead

**Grazing animals**  
no



**Reserve manager**  
Eleanor Reast  
Tel: 01905 754919  
[enquiries@worcestershirewildlifetrust.org](mailto:enquiries@worcestershirewildlifetrust.org)

## Downloads

Factsheets and guides for your visit

-  [Welcome sign with map \(1MB\).jpg](#)
-  [Family spotting sheet - Piper's Hill.pdf](#)
-  [Piper's Hill and Dodderhill Common management plan Sep14.pdf](#)



## Autumn at Piper's Hill & Dodderhill Commons

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by [Martin Addison FRPS](#)



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