

Welcome to Monkwood Nature Reserve



Worcestershire

There has been an actively managed wood on this site for at least 1000 years. Despite the loss of many native trees and the planting of non-native ones from the 1950s to 1970s, the active management still benefitted many species of wildlife and Monkwood is now one of the best woodlands in the county for butterflies; 36 species have been recorded here.

We coppice parts of the woodland. This involves cutting down trees almost to the base, which creates open, sunny rides and glades. This also leaves a range of different aged trees that can be used by a variety of wildlife. Allowing the sun to reach the woodland floor ensures a whole host of plants can thrive. It's this variety of wildflowers within a network of wide, open rides and paths that's so brilliant for woodland butterflies.

Did you know...?

Butterflies and moths are very fussy! The caterpillars of many butterflies and moths specialise in eating a small number of different plants, known as foodplants. White admirals, for example, rely entirely on honeysuckle in shady areas for their larval foodplant. The adults then require sunny glades with bramble and other nectar-rich flowers.

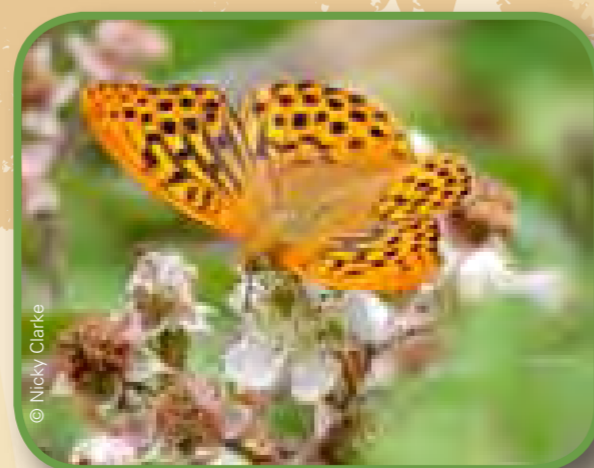
White admiral – These striking woodland butterflies are usually seen in narrow glades with plenty of bramble flowers. They spend their time alternating between the tops of trees and nectar-rich flowers.



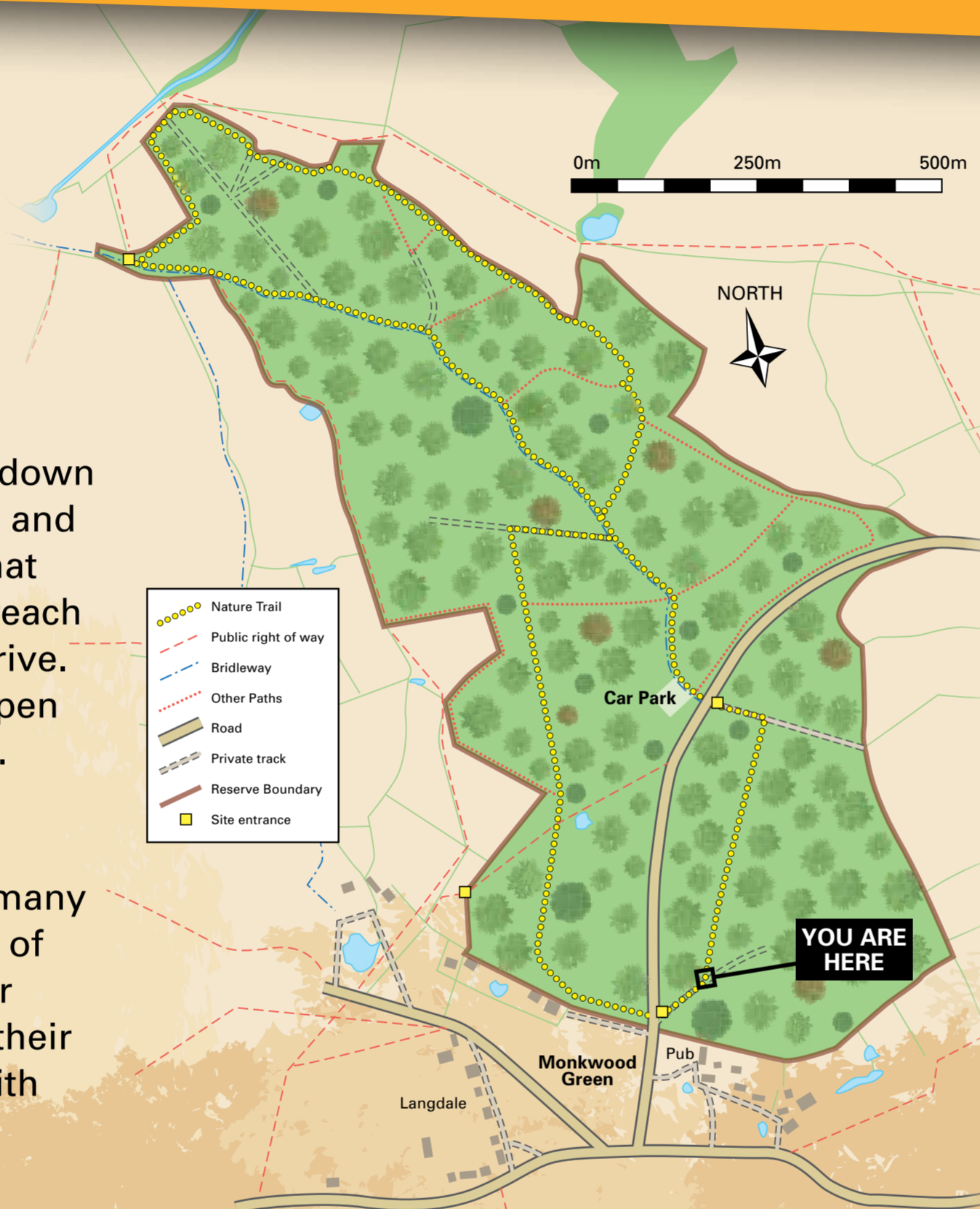
Drab looper – The management of our rides and glades encourages the growth of wood spurge, the foodplant of this scarce moth. These day-flying moths fly on warm, sunny days in sheltered but open woodland.



Silver-washed fritillary – These large butterflies are named after the silver streak on the underside of the wings. Their main foodplant is dog violet, found in shady areas, and the adults can be seen swooping along sunny rides.



The Trust relies on the support of volunteers, members and on donations and grants. For more information on how to help visit our website.



Managing for butterflies



The most biologically rich part of any woodland is the first ten metres of vegetation on either side of the rides. This is where a wide variety of plants can grow and it's these that support much of the woodland wildlife.

At Monkwood we coppice and mow these areas on a cycle; when the work takes place it can look dramatic. The short-term disruption caused by this work is far outweighed by the long-term benefit for much of the wildlife. Most of the work takes place during the winter when disruption to wildlife is minimal.

Not only does our work directly help wildlife but the sale of timber raises money for conservation work here and across our other nature reserves.

Monkwood is great for a relaxing dog walk but please keep your dog on a lead and clean up after it. Did you know that dog faeces can reduce the number of species growing here by over-nitrifying the soil? And that's no good for butterflies!

Helping Butterflies

Have you ever wanted to do something to help wildlife? Then why not join our active and friendly volunteer team to help us look after our butterflies and other species? If you're interested then give our Volunteer Co-ordinator a call on **01905 754919** or visit our website for more information.

Little Monkwood is jointly owned and managed with Butterfly Conservation.

