



## Contacts

### **Derbyshire Wildlife Trust**

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*Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is a registered charity with more than 9000 members supporting its work to protect the county's wildlife.*

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[www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk)

*To find out how to join, visit our website or phone 01773 881188.*

### **Small Woods Association**

The Old Bakery  
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Shropshire  
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### **Forestry Commission**

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[www.smallwoods.org.uk](http://www.smallwoods.org.uk)

[www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

### **East Derbyshire Woodlands Project**

Derbyshire County Council  
County Hall  
Matlock  
Derbyshire DE4 3AG

01629 580000

## Further Information

Brooks & Agate (2001-2003) *Woodlands — a practical handbook*. BTCV.

Available online at <http://handbooks.btcv.org.uk/handbooks/index>

Warren & Fuller (1993) *Woodland rides and glades: their management for wildlife*. JNCC, Peterborough.

Kirby (2001) *Habitat management for invertebrates: a practical handbook*. RSPB, Sandy.

## Derbyshire Wildlife Trust



In many woods, the open space, the rides, glades and margins are often the areas where the greatest diversity of wildlife is to be found. They provide open, warm, sunny conditions within which many plants and animals thrive.

These warm woodland habitats, and the species which depend on them, have become increasingly scarce as broadleaved woodland has been replaced by conifer plantations and as woodland canopies have become denser through the decline of woodland management, particularly coppicing.

## *rides, glades and margins*



Supported by



# rides, glades and margins

## Plants

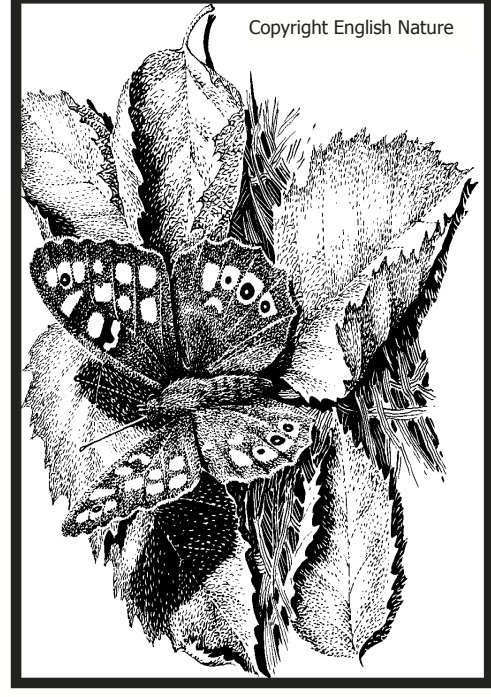
Rides and glades tend to develop a completely different flora from the rest of the wood. The combination of open, sunny conditions alongside the more shaded, cooler parts of the wood provides a range of micro-habitats which are often found nowhere else within the wood. For example, the edges of rides and the woodland margins are often the only areas in the wood where shrubs are able to thrive.

Those rides and glades which are wide and sunny tend to have the greatest variety of plant species. This will include many species more usually found on old grassland, plants such as devil's-bit scabious and common vetch, growing alongside more typical woodland species, plants such as hedge woundwort, creeping jenny and common figwort. Several rarer species particularly favour woodland rides, including common gromwell, wood small reed and broad-leaved helleborine.

## Animals

A huge number of invertebrates occur in woodland rides and glades. For many species, these habitats are the only areas which provide exactly the right conditions for them to breed in. For example, several longhorn beetle species which breed in dead or decaying wood rely as adults on the presence of nectar-producing shrubs such as dogwood and privet in warm, sunny areas extremely close by. Other species which feed in or on grassland plant species need dense undisturbed tussocks or log piles in which to hibernate. Yet more species, including several rare woodland butterflies, feed solely on woodland plants but can only survive in warm conditions, conditions which are only to be found in the sunnier conditions of rides and glades.

Well-structured rides, glades and woodland margins, with a gradual transition from grassland through bushes to trees will provide a range of nesting sites for woodland birds, as well as feeding and breeding areas for mammals.



## Management

Additional diversity can be created by cutting scallops or bays into the ride edge, which should be cut on a rotational basis.

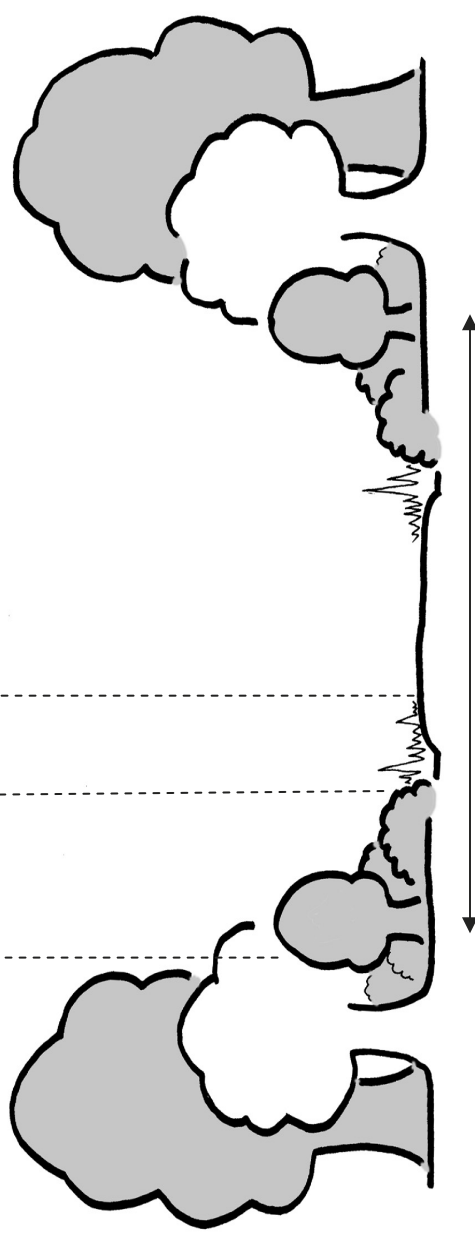
Rotational cutting can be alternated from side to side of the ride, as well as being staggered along its length.

Advice should be sought before creating any new rides or glades to ensure they do not damage existing important wildlife habitats.

**coppice zone.** up to 10 metres  
cut every 5-20 years

**taller herbs and scrambling plants**  
cut every 2-4 years

**short vegetation zone**  
cut every 1-2 years



20 metres or more

equal to or greater than the height of the adjacent trees

## Timing of management

Cutting of trees and shrubs should be left until the winter to allow invertebrates and birds to complete their lifecycles. However, this is sometimes not possible and on these occasions trimming can be brought forward to earlier in the autumn. The rides themselves should be treated as grassland and cut in late summer, by which time the flowering plants will have been able to set seed.