

About Croxleyhall Woods

Old specimen trees indicate the past management system of 'coppice with standards' which declined in Hertfordshire about 80 years ago. Species such as hazel and ash were coppiced which means they were cut down to the ground to encourage regrowth that could be used for firewood, fencing, and building techniques such as wattle and daub. Trees such as oak were left to grow into large standards to be used as timber for building houses and ships. This form of woodland management was common in this region for centuries, providing a unique environment for our native flora and fauna to adapt and flourish.

Hazel Catkins



The woodland floor can tell us a lot about the historical use of the woodland. Banks may have been used as a means of keeping livestock out to prevent them from damaging the young coppice shoots. Woodbanks were also used to signify ownership boundaries which would have changed over the years. The large hollow found in the eastern compartment indicates the site of 19th century gravel pits. Lord Ebury, who commissioned the Watford to Rickmansworth railway line, sourced gravel here and transported it from site along the railway.






Today Croxleyhall Woods is managed for its wildlife. Come and visit the woods to find out more.

Butterflies such as the Speckled Wood can be seen along wide paths and sunny woodland edges, where higher levels of light provide flowering opportunities for the wildflowers on which they feed. The woods are managed to maintain these areas, through hazel coppicing and occasional tree felling.



Speckled Wood

Key

-  Pedestrian Entrance
-  Bench
-  Interpretation Panel
-  Woodland Walk
-  Public Footpath



Noctule Bat



Bats love the old trees found here. With their holes and cracks they provide the perfect site for roosting, and the ivy that climbs on them attracts the insects on which bats feed. The nationally scarce Natterer's bat has been seen here, as well as one of Britain's largest bats, the Noctule. Keep your eyes peeled at dusk to glimpse them hunting along the edges of the woods.

Photographs courtesy of Brian Sawford, Three Rivers District Council and CMS.

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