

Coed-y-Wenallt

Introduction

Coed-y-Wenallt is an ancient woodland which means it has been woodland since at least 1600AD. There are 44 hectares of native Oak, Hazel and Beech woodland. It is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in recognition of its value for wildlife. Cardiff Council own and manage the site.

Geology

The underlying rock is old red sandstone. It was formed in the Devonian period around 360-416 million years ago. During this time the sea retreated and the climate became drier.

History

The Wenallt lends itself as a vantage point. There is an Iron Age hill fort in the south of the site. The Iron Age dates from 800BCE to 55AD.

In 1980 a hoard of medieval silver pennies was discovered on the Wenallt. This remarkable treasure trove comprised over one hundred coins, most of them minted at Cardiff, buried around 1140BCE during the civil war between King Stephen and the Empress Matilda. A selection of the coins can be seen at the National Museum and Gallery of Wales in Cardiff.

Plants

Oak and Hazel grow well in the lower part of the woodland while the upper area is dominated by Beech. In the spring spectacular displays of Bluebell carpets can be seen beneath the Beech trees.



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Birds

Listen for the Great Spotted Woodpeckers drumming on dead trees. Look out for Nuthatches which are the only birds to climb head first up and down tree trunks. The harsh croak of Ravens can often be heard and Buzzards may be seen soaring overhead watching for small mammals and birds. Colourful Jays can be seen in the forest, in the autumn they collect and bury acorns ready for the winter.

Butterflies

Speckled Wood butterflies are common in these woodlands, look out for them from April to October particularly around their favourite food plants Bramble. The Comma butterfly can be seen in spring and late summer.

Mammals

Two of the nocturnal mammals living in the wood are Dormice and Badgers. Dormice build ball shaped nests in bushes. They eat flowers, pollen, fruit, nuts and insects in the tree tops. Badgers forage for worms and other food on the forest floor.

Fungi

Dead trees are left when it is safe to do so. The rotting wood provides food and habitat for many invertebrates and fungi. Look out for Oyster mushrooms on the Beech trees and Birch Polypore. **WARNING:** some species of fungi are deadly poisonous. Do not eat any fungi.

Recreation

In addition to their wildlife interest these woodlands provide access for walkers and horse riders. Please respect the interests of other users and protect wildlife by riding with care and ensure that dogs are kept under control at all times.



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The areas are patrolled by Countryside Wardens and Volunteer Wardens. Please ring 029 20445900 if you wish to report a problem.



KEY	
Short Circular Route	
Long Circular Route	
Footpath and Horse Route	
Main Paths	
Building	
River	
Access Point	
Car park	

