

Notification Date: 29 January 1987

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER      SITE NAME: HALESEND WOOD

DISTRICT: MALVERN HILLS      SITE REF: 15 WQR

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD & WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL, Malvern Hills District Council

National Grid Reference: SP 740495      Area: 53.0 (ha.) 130.9 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150      1:10,000: SO 74 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1969      Date of Last Revision: 1975

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1987      Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Within The Malvern Hills AONB. Site boundary alteration (reduction).

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Halesend Wood lies on a ridge of Wenlock Limestone (Silurian) to the north of the Malvern Hills.

This woodland is exceptionally rich and includes twenty tree and shrub species. The majority of the site is dominated by ash *Fraxinus excelsior* with small-leaved lime *Tilia cordata* and sessile oak *Quercus petraea*. On other parts of the site the oak and lime are replaced by wych elm *Ulmus glabra* or field maple *Acer campestre*.

Associated tree species include silver birch *Betula pendula*, which is particularly abundant at the northern end of the wood, aspen *Populus tremula* and wild cherry *Prunus avium*. Wild service-tree *Sorbus torminalis* and yew *Taxus baccata* are abundant throughout most of the wood and show a considerable age range from seedlings to ancient trees. As well as small-leaved lime, a number of the rarer, native large-leaved lime *Tilia platyphyllos* occur, some as large old pollards. In addition there are natural hybrids between the two.

The shrub layer includes hazel *Corylus avellana*, holly *Ilex aquifolium* and goat willow *Salix caprea* as well as several characteristic calcicole species such as dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus* and wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*.

Amongst the locally uncommon plants found in the ground flora are wild daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*, toothwort *Lathraea squamaria*, southern wood-rush *Luzula forsteri*, greater butterfly-orchid *Platanthera chlorantha*, bird's-nest orchid *Neottia nidus-avis* and common twayblade *Listera ovata*.

Within the woodland are several old disused limestone quarries which have largely been colonised by trees and shrubs. They support a rich variety of ferns including maidenhair spleenwort *Asplenium trichomanes* hart's-tongue *Phyllitis scolopendrium*, broad buckler-fern *Dryopteris dilatata* and polypody *Polypodium vulgare*.

The woodland provides habitat for a number of animals including badger *Meles meles*, dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* and the native polecat *Mustela putorius*.