

Notification Date: 11 July 1986

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER

SITE NAME: TIDDESLEY WOOD

DISTRICT: WYCHAVON

SITE REF: 15 W1F

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,  
Wychavon District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 928455

Area: 81.3 (ha.) 200.9 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150

1:10,000: SO 94 SW, SO 94 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

New site. Part owned and managed as a nature reserve by the Worcestershire Nature Conservation Trust.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Tiddesley Wood occupies a ridge of Lias Limestone and clays between the Bow Brook and the River Avon, to the west of Pershore. Historical documents show there has been woodland on the site since before the preparation of the Domesday Book in 1086.

The site has been selected as an example of ash-maple woodland which has developed on heavy basic soils. This type of woodland is unusual in the county, especially in the eastern part.

Most of the site is broadleaved woodland dominated by ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*, with field maple *Acer campestre* and coppiced hazel *Corylus avellana* in the shrub layer. In some areas the canopy also contains small-leaved lime *Tilia cordata* and silver birch *Betula pendula*, and in places there are stands of invasive suckering English elm *Ulmus procera*. Wild service-tree *Sorbus torminalis*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus* and wayfaring-tree *Viburnum lantana* are also present. In the past there have been attempts to replant parts of the wood with conifers. These have been generally unsuccessful, and in most places native broadleaved trees and shrubs have re-established.

The ground flora is rich and dominated by bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* or bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*. Wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa* and primrose *Primula vulgaris* are abundant in places, and a number of locally uncommon species occur, such as meadow saffron *Colchicum autumnale*, bird's-nest orchid *Neottia nidus-avis*, herb-Paris *Paris quadrifolia*, broad-leaved helleborine *Epipactis helleborine* and violet helleborine *E. purpurata*.

Along the western edge of the wood bordering the Bow Brook is a strip of tall fen and marsh vegetation with scattered scrub, part of which has been planted with grey poplar *Populus canescens*. This is a breeding site of the nationally rare marsh warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*. The wood itself supports a wide range of breeding birds and is an important county site for breeding nightingales *Luscinia megarhynchos*.

The invertebrate interest of the site is considerably enhanced by a long central ride which bisects the wood in a north-south direction. Twenty seven species of butterfly have been

recorded recently including white admiral *Ladona camilla*, purple hair-streak *Quercusia quercus* marbled white *Melanargia galathea* and the notable white-letter hairstreak *Strymonidia w-album*. The proximity of the wood to the river and brook make it an attractive feeding area for dragonflies. Twelve species have been recorded recently, including the rare club-tailed dragonfly *Gomphus vulgatissimus*. A rare beetle *Gnorimus nobilis*, considered to be an indicator of ancient woodland has been found on the site.