

COUNTY: HEREFORD AND WORCESTER

SITE NAME: CHANSTONE WOOD

DISTRICT: SOUTH HEREFORD

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

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD AND WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL, South Hereford District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 356354

Area: 40.79 (ha.) 100.8 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 161

1:10,000: SO 33 NE and SO 33 NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1969

Date of Last Revision: 1975

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1983

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

An extensive area of ancient semi-natural native broadleaved woodland lying on a hill of Old Red Sandstone in the south west of Herefordshire. The soils derived from the Old Red Sandstone series are here markedly calcareous, and this is reflected in the richness and variety of trees, shrubs and ground vegetation found in the wood.

Most of the site is dominated by sessile oak *Quercus petraea* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior* with a high proportion of field maple *Acer campestre* in the shrub layer. Birch *Betula pendula*, yew *Taxus baccata* and wych elm *Ulmus glabra* are also present in small numbers. Large-leaved lime *Tilia platyphyllos*, one of our rarer native trees, also occurs. Besides field maple the shrub layer contains a number of other species including hazel *Corylus avellana*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and goat willow *Salix caprea*. The south eastern part of the wood is dominated by coppiced small-leaved lime *Tilia cordata* and sessile oak. Some hazel is also present.

The ground vegetation is rich and varied and reflects the basic nature of the soils. Dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, yellow archangel *Lamium galeobdolon*, enchanter's nightshade *Circaea lutetiana* and ramsons *Allium ursinum* are species which are found throughout the wood. Bluebell *Endymion non-scriptus* is also abundant and particularly in the area of small leaved lime coppice. Early purple orchid *Orchis mascula* and white helleborine *Epipactis helleborine* are amongst the less common species found.

The woodland provides a valuable habitat for birds such as pied flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* and redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*.