

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER

SITE NAME: CREWS HILL WOOD

DISTRICT: MALVERN HILLS

SITE REF: 15WPV

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

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

National Grid Ref: SO 733529

Area: 7.4 (ha.) 18.3 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150

1:10,000: SO 75 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1975

Date of Last Revision 1975

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Crews Hill Wood lies on a ridge of Wenlock Limestone which forms the northern tip of the Suckley Hills in Worcestershire.

The site has been selected because it contains a number of different types of woodland including a substantial area of hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*. Oak woodland with hornbeam is well represented in eastern Britain, but this is one of the few examples known from western Britain.

The woodland lies on calcareous soils derived from the underlying limestone. Throughout the wood the canopy is dominated by sessile oak *Quercus petraea* in association with a wide variety of other tree and shrub species. Of particular interest is the northern end of the site where sessile oak is associated with hornbeam and ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, together with an understorey of hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, field maple *Acer campestre* and elder *Sambucus nigra*. The remainder of the site supports three other woodland types in which sessile oak and ash are in association with (i) beech *Fagus sylvatica*, silver birch *Betula pendula*, large-leaved lime *Tilia platyphyllos* and wild service-tree *Sorbus torminalis*, (ii) small-leaved lime *Tilia cordata*, field maple and birch, and (iii) wild service tree and yew *Taxus baccata*.

The ground flora is dominated by bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. and ivy *Hedera helix* with dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, sanicle *Sanicula europaea* and wood melick *Melica uniflora*. Locally uncommon plants include spurge laurel *Daphne laureola*, stinking iris *Iris foetidissima* and toothwort *Lathraea squamaria*.