

Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland in Shalford

There are a number of wildlife sites and ancient woodland located either within or on the border of Shalford. These are shown on the map prepared by Essex Ecology Services Ltd.

Wildlife sites - are identified on account of their flora and fauna which are of county or regional wildlife value.

Ancient woodland - is that which has had a continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 A.D. and has only been cleared for underwood or timber production. They are important as many form surviving fragments of primeval forests, the climax vegetation of this country, and they have had a long time to acquire species and to form stable floral and faunal communities.

Both wildlife sites and ancient woodland are shown on local planning maps in order that they can be protected from development which could destroy or adversely affect their nature conservation value and most wildlife sites are now accepted by Local Authorities and given protection under Local Plan policies.

Wildlife Sites

Reding Spring (1.3 ha) map reference TL 715285 W26

The canopy of Reding Spring comprises Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), with a small stand of Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). Drier slopes support scrub of Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Spindle Tree (*Euonymus europaeus*) and Elm (*Ulmus* sp.). The damp conditions support Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*) and Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*) with much Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) elsewhere

Ash Ground (6.5 ha) map reference TL 701278 W15

Ash Ground comprises a linear woodland along Pods Brook, having a canopy of Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) to the south and Alder, Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) forming a more open canopy to the north. Of particular interest is the marshy ground flora which is characterised by Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*), Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Tufted Hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) and Rushes (*Juncus* spp.).

Lady's Hole Alder Coppice (1.0 ha) map reference TL 713302 W25

Alderwood such as this is a scarce habitat in Essex. The canopy of this small copse is dominated by old coppiced Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), with some Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). The understorey is dominated by Grey Willow (*Salix cinerea*), with some Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Elm (*Ulmus* spp.) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*). Large Bittercress (*Cardamine amara*) has been recorded in the flora.

Sheering Hall Spring (4.3 ha) map reference TL 735265 W35

Much of this wood has been replanted with broadleaved and coniferous species. However, Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice survives at either end. Poplar (*Populus* sp.) forms a high central wood canopy over Elm (*Ulmus* sp.), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*). A rather poor ground flora includes Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*).

Great Codham Hall Wood (4.2 ha) map reference TL 738285 W37

Situated in a poorly drained stream valley, this marshy wood typically comprises a canopy of Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), planted Willow (*Salix* sp.) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). The drier upper slopes of the valley to the north and east support Willow and Birch (*Betula* sp.) scrub. The marshy ground flora comprises Giant Horsetail (*Equisetum telmateia*), Lesser Pond Sedge (*Carex acutiformis*), Hemp-agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*) and Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*). Other species of note include Lady's Smock (*Cardamine pratensis*), Southern Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*) and Common Spotted Orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*).

Pods Brook Complex (17.0 ha) map reference TL 716262 M1

This site consists of Yorney Wood, grassland and semi-natural woodland along Pods Brook and planted wood at Chapel Hill. Yorney Wood has a canopy of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and streamside Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) with some Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) on drier ground upslope. Alder wood (both old coppice and standards) runs along the brook valley, with other canopy trees of Ash and Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*). The marshy ground cover includes Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*), Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*), Lesser Pond Sedge (*Carex acutiformis*), Reedmace (*Typha latifolia*) and Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*).

Upslope to the north-east is a strip of acid grassland, an unusual habitat for this area, which supports a diverse assemblage of characteristic plants. The turf is dominated by Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and Common Bent-grass (*Agrostis capillaris*), amongst which can be found Parsley Piert (*Aphanes arvensis* agg.), Common Stork's-bill (*Erodium cicutarium*), Mouse-ear Hawkweed (*Hieracium pilosella*), Bird's-foot (*Ornithopus perpusillus*) and Sheep's Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*). This strip grades into woodland via a band of Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and Wood Sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*).

Beazley End (12.8 ha) map reference TL 732291 M2

This site lies adjacent to the River Pant and represents an area of marshy grassland and wet woodland. Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) wood dominates the large block of wood to the north, situated on numerous small springs, which supports a rich marshland flora. Typical species include Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*), Lesser Pond Sedge (*Carex acutiformis*), Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*), Alternate-leaved Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium alternifolium*), Giant Horsetail (*Equisetum telmateia*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*).

Immediately adjacent to the River Pant are a series of wet, marshy grasslands which support what is now a rare assemblage of plants in Essex. Characteristic species include Lesser Pond Sedge, Brown Sedge (*Carex disticha*), Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Marsh Thistle (*Cirsium palustre*), Marsh Bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), Tufted Hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) and Yellow Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*).

To the south, Alder woodland occurs as small strips along the river margins, with a ground cover of Lady's Smock (*Cardamine pratensis*), Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*) and Lesser Pond Sedge.

Ancient Woodland

Shalford Park/Levelly Wood (12.5 ha) map reference TL 719286 W29

This large ancient wood comprises a good mix of stand types. To the south, Levelly Wood and Will's Alley have a canopy dominated by coppiced Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), whilst the mid section of the wood has a canopy of Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards with Spindle Tree (*Euonymus europaeus*) in the scrub layer. The north section comprises open, storm damaged woodland of Sycamore and Oak on the sandy well drained soil with Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) in the poorly drained stream valley to the west. The varied ground flora typically includes Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) on the sandy soil to the north with Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg), Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) and Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) being typical of the ground flora elsewhere. The wet streamside areas support some of the more interesting species including Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*), Wood Sedge (*Carex sylvatica*), Early-purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*) and the rarer Alternate-leaved Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium alternifolium*).

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