



SURVEY 2018

Woodland Plant



Suffolk Wildlife Trust volunteers have carried out a botanical survey of ancient, secondary and planted woodland to the south of Rougham Estate.

Analysis of the sampling survey demonstrates the wide range of woodland flora present in the woodlands and the value of different broadleaved woodland management possible within large woodlands. High forest, coppice with standards and non-intervention woodland management results in structural and floral diversity. These communities of plants vary depending on soil type, moisture and management – including deer and woodland management.



Above:

Oxlip, a strong ancient woodland indicator, was found occasionally throughout the woodland.

© Juliet Hawkins

More overleaf

- In some areas ash coppice dominates with ground flora dominated by dog's mercury and patches of pignut, false wood brome and barren strawberry with several ancient woodland indicator species such as early purple orchid, wood spurge and herb Paris. Here, ash dieback will change the character of the woodland and ground flora but may result in a more varied canopy.
- Other areas were dominated by densely spaced sweet chestnut and oak standards ash, hawthorn, weak hazel and honeysuckle and a ground layer of bracken and wood anemone.
- Some plants were only found in very specific areas of woods such as yellow archangel, wild garlic and bluebell, wood sorrel reflecting changes in soil type. Others were only found in damp areas such as bugle and meadowsweet.
- Where ancient woodland sites have been 'coniferised' at Rougham, the ancient woodland floral indicator species hang on but rarely thrive; nor do they flourish where regular disturbance from vehicles results in more annual species.
- Also noted in the survey were essential features such as the presence of mature and veteran trees with dead wood, sap runs, loose bark and holes, all so important for bats and invertebrates; and the presence of climbers such as honeysuckle and ivy which are so important for butterflies, moths, other insects and dormice.

Rougham Estate Trust aims to use this survey information and Suffolk Wildlife Trust's recommendations to further improve the working woodlands for biodiversity. Sympathetic long term management of the woodland, restoring coniferised areas to broadleaves, increasing the standing dead wood component in the woods, and opening up the woodland rides are all management aspects that will restore ancient woodland flora and improve the habitat for insects, bats, birds and fungi.

-END-

Compiled and written by Juliet Hawkins of Suffolk Wildlife Trust

The trustees of the Rougham Estate Trust would like to thank all those involved in undertaking the work on this important survey, which will help guide woodland management at Rougham in the future.

18 January 2019



Above:

The botanical survey recorded veteran trees with holes, and the presence of moss and climbers, as well as plant species - above early purple orchid.

© Juliet Hawkins



Above:

Wild garlic, otherwise known as ramsons, was only recorded in two areas..

© Juliet Hawkins

Front page:

Suffolk Wildlife Trust volunteer surveying the woodland plants and other features in Rougham Estate woodland.

© Juliet Hawkins

Rougham Estate Trust

Estate Office, Rougham, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP30 9LZ
www.roughamestatetrust.org