

# The Whittling Wood

## Chedzoy Nature Walk



*Not all plants are edible and some are unsuitable for children, during pregnancy or when suffering from certain medical conditions. Please research their suitability based on your personal needs and enjoy!*

The Whittling Wood is a transitional woodland planted with species suitable for coppicing. Whilst the trees establish we have utilised the ground space to lightly under-sow perennials and daffodils, and left bare areas to allow wild flowers to naturally regenerate. The sixty trees will go on a five-to-seven year coppice rotation, providing stakes to lay the hedges in zones 3 and 4 along with wood for craft projects around the village.

Look out for the ancient beech tree in the churchyard it's estimated to be around 250 years old, in the spring there is a carpet of primrose, snowdrop and violas underneath. If you have time it's worth a detour around the 12th century church of St. Mary's, if you look closely at the wall on the south side of the church you might see the colony of free living honey bees flying in and out.

#### [87] **Silver Birch** *Betula pendula*

Considered a symbol of purity the iconic silvery white, peeling bark and graceful catkins will cast a twinkling light along the edge of the wood. The silver birch is monoecious, meaning both male and female catkins are found on the same tree, and although it doesn't require insects for pollination it still provides food for more than 300 insect species! Look out for ladybirds, moth caterpillars pebble hook-tip and buff tip, and birds like the long tailed tit, greenfinch and siskin.

#### [88] **Hazel** *Corylus avellana*

Hazel has long been known as the tree of knowledge and is now wildly used as an important wildlife conservation species. In the spring the pretty hazel catkins appear and, once pollinated by wind, will produce a good crop of nuts in the autumn attracting; woodpeckers, nuthatches, jays, squirrels and mice. When hazel is coppiced it produces many shoots forming an enclave that is the perfect home for the hazel dormouse and ground nesting birds.

- Nuts can be eaten fresh 'in the green' or roasted

[89] **Rowan** *Sorbus aucuparia*

Sometimes called the Mountain Ash, the rowan is a tree steeped in mythology, in Ireland the tree was often planted near houses to protect against evil spirits and the wood was used as a pocket charm against rheumatism. Rowan is still used today to make divining rods and furniture. The flowers provide a good source of pollen and nectar for insects and the berries are eaten by many bird species. Look out for welsh wave, autumn green carpet and apple fruit moth caterpillars on the leaves.

- Berries are edible and rich in vitamin C, although they taste tart!
- **Berries must be cooked before eating**

[90] **Wild Cherry** *Prunus avium*

Cherry trees are hermaphrodite, meaning the male and female reproductive parts are within a single flower. They require insects for pollination and in early spring queen wasps and bumblebee queens who need to establish new colonies may be seen collecting pollen from the flowers to feed their young. Look out for caterpillar moths cherry bark, orchard ermine and brimstone on the leaves, and between May and June the blackbird and song thrush eating the cherries.

- Cherries are edible, can be eaten raw but best cooked
- **Cherry stones are poisonous and must be removed**



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## Bibliography

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