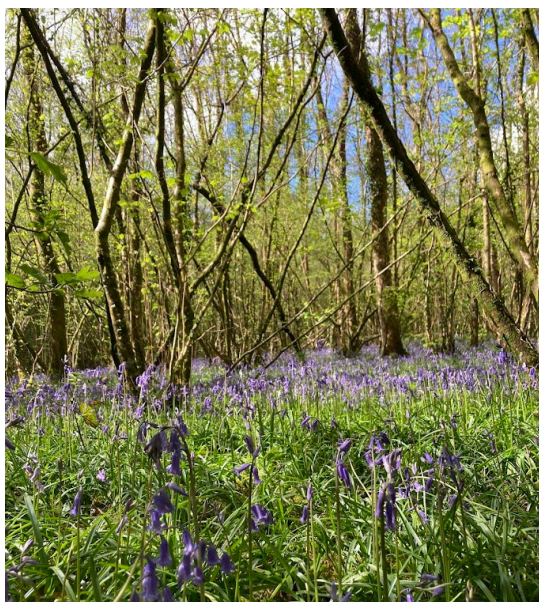


Booklet 1 Guide to Recording Woodland & Scrub Habitats in Rhondda Cynon Taf



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Rhondda Cynon Taf habitats mapping project

In order to conserve and enhance our biodiversity we need up-to-date information about habitats and species. Understanding habitats is fundamental to understanding how to protect and manage biodiversity. Between the late 1980s and the mid 1990s, the Countryside Council for Wales (now part of Natural Resources Wales) undertook a Phase I Habitat Survey of the whole of Wales. An amazing undertaking, which has proved invaluable to Welsh nature conservation. However, that information is now aging. So perhaps it is time for all of us who have an interest in finding, identifying and recording species, to start thinking about and recording their habitats as well? If that sounds interesting, and perhaps a new way to interpret and understand the biodiversity of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT), then read on.

Use this booklet in conjunction with the [Introduction to Recording Habitats in RCT](#) and the other 5 habitat booklets in this series.

RCT woodlands and scrub

RCT has lots of scrub, woodland, plantation and tree cover. It is one of the very few local authority areas in Britain to support over 30% woody cover. The JNCC *Handbook for Phase I Habitat Survey* (2010) recognises the following:

- [Semi-natural woodland](#) (ancient and secondary)
- [Plantation woodland](#) (both broadleaved and conifer)
- [Parkland and scattered trees](#)
- [Scrub](#)
- [Recently felled woodland](#)

Semi-natural woodlands can then be further categorised as **ancient** or **secondary** (this is a detail that can be added to a Phase 1 target notes).

The principle of ancient woodlands being those sites with soils, seedbanks and fungal mycorrhizal communities that have been long-undisturbed which can therefore support a diverse and complex woodland biodiversity. This often includes species which do not survive gross disturbance. Ancient woodland will often support characteristic ground floras including complex fungal, fern, bryophyte and lichen communities.

Secondary woodland is a habitat that has developed in more recent times on areas of land that were previously not woodland, and is therefore missing those ancient woodland soils. As such, these woodlands support less species, and have less complex woodland ground floras. They may also support elements of the pre-woodland habitat, for example marshy grassland or heathland.

Semi-natural woodlands have trees and understorey scrub vegetation which have naturally colonised the ground. The species mix is therefore derived from natural processes.

In contrast, plantation woodlands are deliberately planted, prescriptive mixes. Broad-leaved plantations are usually generic mixes of species selected to try to mimic semi-natural woodland. Conifer plantations are usually made up of harvestable, single species planting blocks aimed at optimising wood production. Plantations often have relics or ghosts of the pre-planting habitats, such as species typical of neutral and acid grassland, heath or peatbog habitat.

Recently felled woodland is most regularly seen in conifer plantations, often a prelude to replanting trees. Before the new tree crop grows, such sites can be prime Nightjar habitat. In managed, usually ancient woodland, you may occasionally encounter areas of recently re-cut Hazel coppice, a habitat of high nature conservation value.

For more information see rctlnp.wixsite.com/rct-actionfornature/woodlands

Why are woodland habitats important in RCT?

While only 2.5% land in the UK is woodland, 15% is woodland in Wales (173,000 hectares). RCT has even more at 25% tree cover. Of this woodland in Wales, less than a third is ancient semi natural woodland (42,000 hectares), or 4% of the total land cover. Ancient woodland is rare in RCT.*

RCT is one of the very few heavily wooded areas in the UK which also has a large population. Trees, hedgerows, and woodlands are an integral part of nature, supporting a wide range of insects, animals, birds and plant life. Looking after the trees, hedges and woodlands in our local environment is essential for the future health of nature and of people.

Trees can improve the environmental quality of our urban areas, delivering physical, social and economic benefits as well as mitigating climate change, improving storm water management, air quality, biodiversity, visual amenity and more.

See RCT Borough Council's Tree and Woodland Strategy 2022-2032 for more information:

rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/PlanningandBuildingControl/Trees/Relateddocs/TreeStrategyadoptedatCabinetSubCommitteeDec2022.pdf

* Figures taken from: [State of Natural Resources Report 2025 \(SoNaRR\)](#).

Identifying and recording a woodland habitat

Woodlands are habitats consisting mostly of trees over 5 metres tall. But also look out for wet woodlands with Willows, which can grow to a lower height than this.

When looking at woodland, first work out whether it is [ancient](#) or [secondary](#) by key indicator species. See also [planted woodland](#) as these have at times been planted on ancient woodlands as they can still retain some features.

Similar habitats

- If the habitat contains less than 25% trees, consult other booklets in this series.
- If there are plants such as Hawthorn growing to less than 5 metres tall including linear hedgerows: see the [Scrub Habitats section](#), page 16.
- Also cross reference with Mosaic Habitats such as Ffridd on valley-sides which can have a patchwork of scrub, grassland and woodland.

To record the habitat, use the [Introduction to Recording Habitats in RCT](#) booklet for step by step instructions. Then use this booklet for key species.

Try the Woodland Trust app (woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/tree-id-app) to help identify trees.

Staying safe

- Please take a common sense approach to recording. We do not advocate any form of trespassing, and please do not take any risks with regards to your own health and safety.
- Check the weather forecast, avoid recording in bad weather.
- Ideally avoid working alone. If not, always tell someone where you are going and when you will be back.
- Carry a mobile phone.
- Carry a basic first aid kit, and maybe a whistle for emergencies.
- Take appropriate equipment and clothing for the weather and site conditions. For example, walking boots or shoes, warm clothes, waterproofs, sunhat, suncream.
- Take an OS map and a compass if going to remote areas. Don't rely solely on your mobile to know where you are, especially in remote and upland areas with fewer landmarks or areas with limited phone or GPS signal. An OS map may also help you map habitats within an area. If you are not confident in reading maps, stick to established routes.
- Remember to always wash your hands before eating, particularly after touching plants, animals, fungi or water. Some plants and fungi are poisonous so don't be tempted to have a nibble!
- Ticks are small invertebrates that can bite humans and spread Lyme disease. High risk places include grassy and wooded areas. To reduce risk, cover your skin, tuck trousers into socks, and use insect repellent containing DEET. Check your body for any ticks on arriving home and safely remove any as soon as possible using a tick-removal tool. If you start to feel unwell or develop a rash in the following days, consult a GP. For more information see [nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease)
- Trust your own instincts. If you feel uneasy, leave and return home.
- Take care to avoid commercial plantations being actively managed. These habitats can also have very uneven ground.

Habitat Descriptions

Habitat guide symbols

The following symbols are used in the habitat guides to denote indicator species to record.



A key symbol means that a plant is a key feature of the habitat.



A hand symbol means this species is associated with the habitat, but not always present.



A beetle symbol means these animals are supported in this habitat.



This icon denotes invasive non-native species (INNS) which may cause damage to the habitat.

Semi-natural Woodlands and what to look for

Semi-natural woodlands are habitats in which the canopy is dominated by tree species mostly over 5 metres tall and which have not been planted. The main tree species of RCT are Sessile (*Quercus petraea*) and English Oak (*Quercus robur*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) and Silver (*Betula pendula*) and Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*). There is often a shrub or understorey of smaller tree saplings and seedlings, Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) (often coppice stools) and Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) which is sometimes very tall, plus Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*). Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) and Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) can be understorey species of more lime rich woodlands, and ancient Crab Apples (*Malus sylvestris*) can be characteristic of some woodlands. In wet woodlands, Alder often dominates the canopy, usually over a swamp or wetland plant ground flora. In upland or ffridd woods, an understory or ground flora of Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Wimberry/Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), ferns and mosses is often characteristic.

Semi-natural woodlands can then be further categorised as ancient or secondary.

Ancient woodlands are sites that have existed continuously since 1600. They are either shown on early maps, or where other archaeological or ecological evidence provides evidence of continuity. Their long history has allowed undisturbed complex soils, plant seedbanks and diverse fungal mycorrhizal communities to develop, and therefore such sites support a diverse and complex woodland biodiversity. This often includes species which do not survive gross disturbance. Ancient woodland will often support characteristic ground floras, fungal, fern, bryophyte and lichen communities.

Secondary woodland is a habitat that has naturally developed in more recent times, on areas of land that were previously not woodland, and is without ancient woodland soils. As such, these woodlands support less species, and have less complex woodland ground flora, fungi, fern, bryophyte and lichen communities. They may also support elements of the pre-woodland habitat such as marshy grassland or heathland.

When looking at semi-natural woodland, look for ancient key indicator species. (See also planted woodland as these have at times been planted on ancient woodlands so they can still retain some features).

Finding a good diversity and distribution of ancient woodland indicator species in a woodland can indicate that the woodland has been there for a long time and could be ancient.

List of ancient woodland indicator ground flora species in RCT

The following are some characteristic ground flora species found in RCT, list prepared by RCT Borough Council's Senior Council Ecologist. Some are quite common, and some are rare.

Note: these species are not always just found in woodlands, and finding a few does not necessarily indicate an ancient woodland.

Scientific Name	English Name
<i>Adoxa moschatellina</i>	Moschatel
<i>Allium ursinum</i>	Ramsons/Wild Garlic
<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>	Wood Anemone
<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	Lady Fern
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard Fern
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Heather (upland and ffridd woods)
<i>Caltha palustris</i>	Marsh Marigold (wet woodland)
<i>Carex strigosa</i>	Thin-spiked Wood-sedge
<i>Chrysosplenium oppositifolium</i>	Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage
<i>Conopodium majus</i>	Pignut
<i>Avenella flexuosa</i>	Wavy Hair Grass (open upland and ffridd woods)
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i>	Scaly Male Fern
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	Broad-leaved Helleborine
<i>Galium odoratum</i>	Woodruff
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	Bluebell
<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>	Tutsan
<i>Lamiasium galeobdolon</i>	Yellow Archangel
<i>Lathraea squamaria</i>	Toothwort
<i>Luzula sylvatica</i>	Great Woodrush
<i>Lysimachia nemorum</i>	Yellow Pimpernel
<i>Melampyrum pratense</i>	Common Cow-wheat

Scientific Name	English Name
<i>Melica uniflora</i>	Wood Mellick
<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	Dog's Mercury
<i>Melium effusum</i>	Wood Millet
<i>Neottia ovata</i>	Common Twayblade
<i>Orchis mascula</i>	Early Purple-orchid
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	Wood Sorrel
<i>Paris quadrifolia</i>	Herb Paris
<i>Polystichum aculeatum</i>	Hard Shield Fern
<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>	Soft Shield Fern
<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	Primrose
<i>Ribes rubrum</i>	Wild Raspberry
<i>Sanicula europaea</i>	Sanicle
<i>Scirpus sylvaticus</i>	Wood Club-rush
<i>Stellaria nemorum</i>	Wood Stitchwort
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	Wimberry/Bilberry (upland/ffridd woodland)
<i>Veronica montana</i>	Wood Speedwell
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	Dog Violet
<i>Viola reichenbachiana</i>	Pale Dog Violet
<i>Viola palustris</i>	Marsh Violet (wet woodland)

Temperate Rainforests/Atlantic Woodland

Mosses, fungi and lichens are abundant in Temperate Rainforests (also known as Atlantic Woodland). This is a globally rare type of woodland, restricted to areas of high rainfall, good air quality and mild temperature. Britain's rainforest zone is down the western side, with Wales almost completely within this zone and RCT is in this hyperoceanic climate. You can look at the map of climate and known fragments of rainforest from the Lost Rainforests of Britain here:

map.lostrainforestsofbritain.org

These special woods have high numbers of epiphytes (plants growing on other plants) such as ferns, mosses, liverworts and lichens. When you visit a woodland with an abundance of tree lichens, and luxuriant moss/liverwort flora then please record this in your observations, for example by writing a Phase 1 target note. These observations help to direct attention for future surveying and a better understanding of what 'temperate rainforest' means in an RCT context.

Temperate Rainforests/Atlantic Woodland: What to look for

Resources to help identify temperate rainforests are here: Lost Rainforests of Britain. Plantlife has a guide in Welsh and English to help identify epiphytes: plantlife.org.uk/advice-learning/managing-temperate-rainforest



Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*), Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*) and Greater Fork-moss (*Dicranum majus*). Use the description on the British Bryological Society website to identify the large Greater Fork-moss:

britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/learning/species-finder/dicranum-majus

There are lichens that indicate temperate rainforests on trees and rocks. Some examples to be aware of are:

On acid bark e.g. Birch, Alder and Oak:

- Smooth Loop-lichen (*Hypotrachyna laevigata*)
- Witches Whiskers (*Usnea florida*)

On Ash, Hazel, willow, Rowan, old oak trees and less acidic rocks:

- Tree Lungwort (*Lobaria pulmonaria*)
- Tattered Jelly Skin (*Scytinium lichenoides*)

Planted Woodlands (conifers and broad-leaved)

In RCT, planted woodlands, or plantations, are mainly commercial conifer plantations, but there are also some broad-leaved woodlands planted with the aim to increase native tree coverage and store carbon to mitigate climate change.

Large areas of RCT support state owned commercial tree plantations of non-native conifer trees, closely planted in harvesting rows with robust roads and tracks for access by forestry machinery and often, deep drainage ditches.

In the earlier stages of plantation growth, the original pre-planting relic or ghost habitats may still be present. In RCT, this often includes areas of peat bog, heathland, acid grassland and marshy grassland. As conifer plantations mature, heavy shading and needle fall reduce the understorey and ground flora diversity, although ferns and mosses and liverworts will be present, such as carpets of acid-tolerant mosses like Common Tamarisk-moss (*Thuidium tamariscinum*). On harvesting and removal of the conifer crop there is often a revival of the bog, heathland and grassland vegetation.

Broad-leaved plantations are usually generic mixes of species, attempting to mimic the complexity and structure of semi-natural woodland. They often have ghost habitats, such as species typical of neutral and acid grassland, or heath.

If you are following Phase I methodology then map as either broad-leaved, conifer, or mixed plantations, with dominant or characteristic species coding and/or target notes. You may also need to record a plantation as recently felled, see page 16.

Conservation value of conifer plantations

Despite their artificial nature, and the often-negative impacts of habitat loss associated with their establishment, planted woodlands do have a nature conservation value. They are often under-recorded, so there are opportunities to fill gaps in our knowledge. In the early stages of plantation establishment, the relaxation of grazing management may lead to the original habitats having a final flourish. On sites sacrificed for tree planting it is possible to belatedly discover previously unknown wildflower grasslands in this way. The areas alongside tracks and watercourses may support remnant areas of the original habitats for longer. Where limestone has been imported to create forestry roads, conditions for neutral and calcareous grassland species can occur, leading to areas of

unexpected flower rich lowland grassland in upland locations such as Thyme, Kidney Vetch and Pyramidal Orchid. Sometimes plantations have been planted over ancient woodlands, and remnants of ancient woodland ground floras can persist. Likewise, in track rides and clearings, remnants of the original heathland, marshy grassland or peat bogs can be found. Wet woodlands can grow in between planted areas.

Other conifer plantation biodiversity highlights are, Nightjar and Tree Pipit breed in felled plantations, Goshawk nest in tall conifers, and Crossbill and Coal-tit are common in spring. Plantations support endangered species such as Water Vole, Fir Clubmoss and Stag's-horn Clubmoss.

For more information see rctlnp.wixsite.com/rct-actionfornature/conifer-plantation and wildlifetrusts.org/habitats/woodland/coniferous-plantation

Planted Conifer Woodland: What to look for

Closely planted trees with straight trunks and little understory. They can be seen at a distance on hillsides in regular shaped blocks. In RCT, monocultures of Sitka Spruce cover peaty uplands, with a wider range of tree species on the valley sides such as European Larch, Western Hemlock, Corsican Pine.

Trees are conifers, with needle-like leaves, and apart from Larch are evergreen, and don't lose their leaves in winter.

Look for different habitats such as heathland and wet woodlands along the edges of roads and rivers.

The most commonly planted trees in RCT include:

 **Sitka Spruce** (*Picea sitchensis*) with cones that have crinkled, toothed scale margins.

European Larch (*Larix decidua*), a deciduous conifer with needle-like leaves growing in tufts.

Western Hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) has drooping branches with bright green new growth in spring contrasting sharply with the older dark green leaves.

Corsican Pine (*Pinus nigra*) with cones that have thick scales with rounded ends.

Planted Broad-leaved Woodland: What to look for

These woodlands have generic mixes of native broad-leaved tree species also found in semi-natural woodlands. You can recognise a planted broad-leaved woodland by its regular planting of similar aged trees, plantings of the same species in small clusters, or groups, and the presence of planting canes and tubing.

Broad-leaved plantations often have relics or ghosts of the pre-planting habitats, such as species typical of neutral and acid grassland, or heath. Look at the relevant booklets and sections to identify these ghost habitats.

Recently felled woodland

Recently felled woodland is most regularly seen in conifer plantations, often a prelude to replanting trees. Before the new tree crop grows, such sites can be prime Nightjar habitat.

In managed, usually ancient woodland, you may occasionally encounter areas of recently re-cut Hazel coppice, a habitat of high nature conservation value.

Recently felled woodland: What to look for

Conifer plantations are cut down wholesale, leaving large areas with tree stumps and associated branch debris, before the stumps are removed later by machinery and replanted. The area can remain as tree stumps for long periods of time while former vegetation can start to regrow.



For felled conifer plantations, look for tree stumps in rows. Ground flora will give clues to former ghost habitats the plantation was planted on.

Note: Hazel coppice after cutting would not count as felled woodland as part of maintaining the woodland is to coppice it periodically. Hazel coppice should therefore be categorised as woodland.



Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*)

Scrub

Scrub is an important habitat, which can too often be mistaken as woodland. Woody vegetation dominated by Grey (*Salix cinerea*) or Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* species), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Dog roses (*Rosa canina* agg.), Field-rose (*Rosa arvensis*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), European Gorse (*Ulex europaea*) and Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) is scrub. There can be some mature trees and often sapling and seedling trees, but the dominant species are scrub species.

Scrub is a successional habitat, a stage between open grassland, marsh and heathland and semi-natural woodland. Scrub can be found in dry and wet locations, in isolated pockets, or as invading fronts of existing woodlands.

In many circumstances, scrub is a threat to valuable open ground habitats. However, early-stage scrub habitat can be extremely species rich and valuable habitat, and management to try to stop such sites developing into woodland is often ecologically very desirable, although difficult to achieve. Unfortunately, the secondary woodland which often succeeds scrub is usually of lesser ecological value than either the open ground habitats or scrub that preceded it.

For more information see: rctlnp.wixsite.com/rct-actionfornature/scrub

Scrub: What to look for

Scrub includes areas covered by large shrubs (around 1 to 5 metres). For places with low dwarf shrubs of plants such as Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and Western Gorse (*Ulex gallii*) see Booklet 3: Heathland.

The plant species composition is not a defining feature of scrub as it is the structure that defines the habitat. However, the woody shrub species listed below are likely to be the most common species:

Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)

European Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)

Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)

Willow (*Salix* species)

Parkland and Scattered Trees (including Wood Pasture)

Areas of grazed or mown park grassland interspersed with large, sometimes veteran trees such as oaks (*Quercus* species), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) or Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) are a particular type of woodland habitat. These veteran trees are important habitats for invertebrates, lichens, fungi, ferns and bryophytes.

Some areas of locally important relic parkland habitat occur in RCT, and sites may still be unrecorded. A form of wood pasture also occurs in RCT where areas of ffridd or grassland with scattered trees are periodically grazed by sheep, ponies or cattle. Dare Valley Country Park has some good examples of this type of wood pasture.

For further information see rctlnp.wixsite.com/rct-actionfornature/woodpasture-parkland

Where to see woodland and scrub in RCT

Become familiar with key habitats in RCT by visiting the network of 29+ sites managed for nature. These important areas are nature hotspots and connected stepping stones in the wider countryside.

For more information click on the links for each site, or see the RCT Living Landscapes website: rctlivinglandscape.wales

Habitat	RCT Sites	Location - What3Words
<u>Scrub</u>	Albion Tip	<u>owners.number.quick</u>
	Cefn y Hendy	<u>repayment.fines.scarecrow</u>
	Cwmaman Tip	<u>bigger.trump.birthing</u>
	Dare Valley Country Park	<u>retraced.offhand.doted</u> or <u>storybook.ownership.dislodge</u>
	Llanharry Quarry	<u>lavender.broth.remix</u> or <u>folks.cascaded.outbursts</u>
Semi-Natural Woodland examples of wetter woodland	Brynna Woods	<u>liners.access.relishing</u>
	Dare Valley CP	<u>retraced.offhand.doted</u> or <u>storybook.ownership.dislodge</u>
	Glyncornel LNR	<u>invent.neat.pasta</u>
	Pant Marsh	<u>indicated.suppose.organ</u>
	Parc Dowlais	<u>encrusted.epidemics.bank</u> or <u>elect.fondest.rejoin</u>
Semi-Natural Woodland, examples of drier woodland	Brynna Woods	<u>liners.access.relishing</u>
	Cefn Yr Hendy	<u>repayment.fines.scarecrow</u>
	Craig Yr Hesg	<u>violin.tiny.moves</u> or <u>dots.towers.coins</u>
	Dare Valley CP	<u>retraced.offhand.doted</u> or <u>storybook.ownership.dislodge</u>
	Glyncornel	<u>invent.neat.pasta</u>
	Llanharan Quarry	<u>lavender.broth.remix</u> or <u>folks.cascaded.outbursts</u>
	Pant Marsh	<u>indicated.suppose.organ</u>
	Ty Rhiw	<u>thinks.grit.swung</u>
<u>Planted Woodland</u>	NRW forestry estate	<u>lectured.flatten.newspaper</u>
<u>Wood Pasture and Parkland</u>	Dare Valley CP	<u>retraced.offhand.doted</u> or <u>storybook.ownership.dislodge</u>

Summary: Key woodland & scrub species by habitat

See also pages 10 and 11 for indicators of ancient woodlands.

Habitat	Key Species
Planted Conifer Woodland	Corsican Pine (<i>Pinus nigra</i>) European Larch (<i>Larix decidua</i>) Sitka Spruce (<i>Picea sitchensis</i>) Western Hemlock (<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>)
Scrub	Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>) European Gorse (<i>Ulex europaeus</i>) Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) Willow (<i>Salix</i> species)
Semi-natural woodland	Alder (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>) Downy Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>) English Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>) Field Maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>) Sessile Oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>) Silver Birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>) Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>) Wych Elm (<i>Ulmus glabra</i>)
Temperate Rainforest/Atlantic Woodland	Downy Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>) Greater Fork-moss (<i>Dicranum majus</i>) Sessile Oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>)

	Smooth Loop-lichen (<i>Hypotrachyna laevigata</i>)
	Tattered Jelly Skin (<i>Scytinium lichenoides</i>)
	Tree Lungwort (<i>Lobaria pulmonaria</i>)
	Witches Whiskers (<i>Usnea florida</i>)

Alphabetical list of key woodland & scrub species

Key Species by Common Name	Habitat
Alder (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>)	Semi-natural woodland
Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	Semi-natural woodland
Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>)	Semi-natural woodland
Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>)	Scrub
Corsican Pine (<i>Pinus nigra</i>)	Planted Conifer Woodland
Downy Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>)	Temperate Rainforest Semi-natural woodland
English Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>)	Semi-natural woodland
European Gorse (<i>Ulex europaeus</i>)	Scrub
European Larch (<i>Larix decidua</i>)	Planted Conifer Woodland
Field Maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>)	Semi-natural woodland
Greater Fork-moss (<i>Dicranum majus</i>)	Temperate Rainforest
Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>)	Scrub
Sessile Oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>)	Temperate Rainforest Semi-natural woodland
Silver Birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>)	Semi-natural woodland
Sitka Spruce (<i>Picea sitchensis</i>)	Planted Conifer Woodland

Smooth Loop-lichen (<i>Hypotrachyna laevigata</i>)	Temperate Rainforest
Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)	Semi-natural woodland
Tattered Jelly Skin (<i>Scytinium lichenoides</i>)	Temperate Rainforest
Tree Lungwort (<i>Lobaria pulmonaria</i>)	Temperate Rainforest
Western Hemlock (<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>)	Planted Conifer Woodland
Willow (<i>Salix</i> species)	Scrub
Witches Whiskers (<i>Usnea florida</i>)	Temperate Rainforest
Wych Elm (<i>Ulmus glabra</i>)	Semi-natural woodland

Key Species by Scientific Name	Habitat
<i>Acer campestre</i> (Field Maple)	Semi-natural woodland
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (Sycamore)	Semi-natural woodland
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i> (Alder)	Semi-natural woodland
<i>Betula pendula</i> (Silver Birch)	Semi-natural woodland
<i>Betula pubescens</i> (Downy Birch)	Semi-natural woodland Temperate Rainforest
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (Hawthorn)	Scrub
<i>Dicranum majus</i> (Greater Fork-moss)	Temperate Rainforest
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> (Beech)	Semi-natural woodland
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Ash)	Semi-natural woodland
<i>Hypotrachyna laevigata</i> (Smooth Loop-lichen)	Temperate Rainforest
<i>Larix decidua</i> (European Larch)	Planted Conifer Woodland
<i>Lobaria pulmonaria</i> (Tree Lungwort)	Temperate Rainforest
<i>Picea sitchensis</i> (Sitka Spruce)	Planted Conifer Woodland

<i>Pinus nigra</i> (Corsican Pine)	Planted Conifer Woodland
<i>Prunus spinosa</i> (Blackthorn)	Scrub
<i>Quercus robur</i> (English Oak)	Semi-natural woodland
<i>Quercus petraea</i> (Sessile Oak)	Semi-natural woodland Temperate Rainforest
<i>Scytinium lichenoides</i> (Tattered Jelly Skin)	Temperate Rainforest
<i>Salix</i> species (Willow)	Scrub
<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i> (Western Hemlock)	Planted Conifer Woodland
<i>Ulex europaeus</i> (European Gorse)	Scrub
<i>Ulmus glabra</i> (Wych Elm)	Semi-natural woodland
<i>Usnea florida</i> (Witches Whiskers)	Temperate Rainforest

Useful resources

- **Britain's Habitats:** A field guide to the wildlife habitats of Great Britain and Ireland, Lake, S. *et al.* Wild Guides. 2nd Edition, 2020
- rctlnp.wixsite.com/rct-actionfornature/woodlands **Rhondda Cynon Taf Action for Nature Plan:** Woodland, Scrub and Hedgerow Actions.
- gov.wales/national-forest Information about the Welsh Government's **National Forest for Wales** scheme.
- naturalresources.wales/guidance-and-advice/environmental-topics/trees-woodlands-and-forests/identifying-ancient-woodlands Guidance and information about **Ancient Woodlands** by Natural Resources Wales.
- treeguideuk.co.uk/tree-identification **The Tree Guide UK.** Learn to identify trees at any time of the year using key characteristics such as leaf shape, buds, catkins, white flowers.

- wildlifetrusts.org/habitats/woodland **The Wildlife Trusts'** website has a wealth of general information about species and habitats in the UK..
- woodlandtrust.org.uk **The Woodland Trust** a charity that creates and protects woodlands in the UK. The website includes species identifications and habitat descriptions.
- Criteria for the Selection of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in the County Boroughs of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda CynonTaff (The 'Mid-Valleys Area').
rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/PlanningandBuildingControl/LocalDevelopmentPlans/LDPEvidenceBaseLibraryandAnnualMonitoringRe/RelateddocumentsEvidenceBase/EB46.pdf