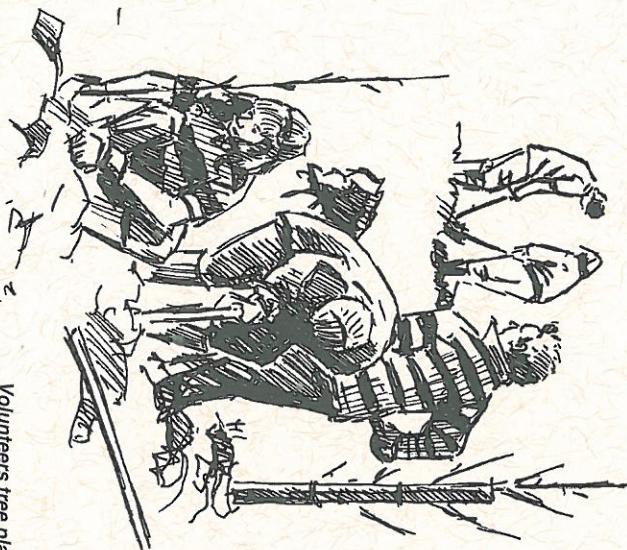


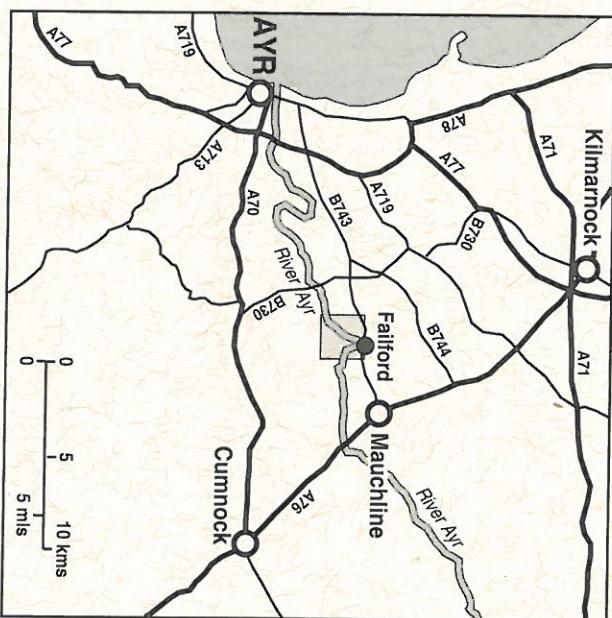
Conservation

The long term management of the reserve provides a challenging opportunity to re-create a mixed deciduous woodland. The aim is to selectively fell sections of the oak woodland over a long period of time and allow regeneration of a variety of deciduous trees. Eventually the majority of the coniferous woodland will be replaced by broadleaved trees. Through this management a greater variety of wildlife will be allowed to develop.



Volunteers tree planting

How to get there:



The reserve is located off the B743 at Failford where parking facilities are available near the entrance to the reserve.

— Scottish Wildlife Trust —

The Scottish Wildlife Trust is Scotland's leading voluntary organisation conserving Scotland's wildlife and natural environment. As a charity, we rely heavily on donations and membership subscriptions. Please join us and support our work – the need is urgent.

For further information and details of membership, please contact:

Scottish Wildlife Trust
Cramond House, Kirk Cramond,
Cramond Glebe Road, Edinburgh EH4 6NS
Tel: 0131 312 7765



You can help by:

- contacting the SWT if you see damage requiring attention
- noting and informing the SWT of wildlife you see
- volunteering for the SWT

Welcome to

Ayr Gorge Woodlands

Wildlife Reserve

STRATHCLYDE



SCOTTISH
WILDLIFE
TRUST



Welcome to Ayr Gorge Woodlands Wildlife Reserve



WORK ON THE Wildside

Ayr Gorge Woodlands line an impressively steep ravine in the valley of the river Ayr. Early maps record woodland along the gorge, which is so inaccessible that the habitat has remained relatively undisturbed. Today this is one of the most important woodland areas for wildlife in Ayrshire.

According to local tradition it was in these woods that Robert Burns plighted his troth to Highland Mary before they parted never to meet again. Here it is said Alexander Peden (the renowned covenantor) preached to his congregation gathered on the opposite side of the river from the top of the sandstone steps, known locally as Peden's cave.

The Woodland

The reserve is mainly broadleaved woodland dominated in some areas by Oak, Birch and Ash. Areas of Larch are restricted to the northern half of the reserve. Beneath the larger broadleaved trees there is a sparse shrub layer of Holly, Hazel and Rowan. In spring the blaze of Bluebells dominates the woodland floor. Under the Oak woodland the dominant plant is Greater Woodrush. Other wild flowers include Wood Sorrel, Red Campion and Ransomes. On more acid soils Heather, Blaeberry and locally rare Cow-wheat occur. Other uncommon plants include Dutch Rush and Wood Fescue.



Oak

Within the Larch plantations little light reaches the ground and few plants grow. Where these trees have been felled thick growth of scrub and wildflowers has taken place.



Mammals

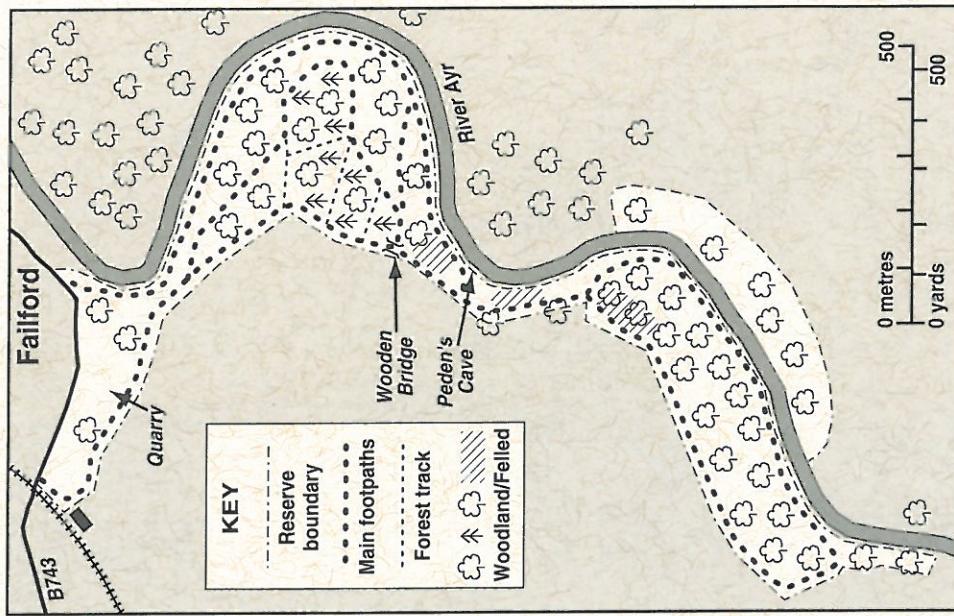
Many of the larger mammals including Otter, Badger, Red Squirrel and Roe Deer inhabit the wood.

Birds

Birds which may be seen nearer the river, include Kingfisher, Dipper and Grey Wagtail. On the river Mallards and Goosander may be found.

Other Wildlife

The gorge provides a habitat for some uncommon insects, several of which are near the western limit of their distribution. A diverse range of beetles (some rare) have been recorded in the woodlands. One of the more unusual beetles was found in the nest of a Great-Spotted Woodpecker!



The return walk to the wooden bridge will take approximately one hour. Continuing on to the southern half of the reserve will add an additional hour to your walk.

Grid Reference: NS457249
Area: 46ha
Managed by: Ayr Branch

OS Sheet: 70
Status: Part SSSI
Ownership: SWT

OPEN ACCESS ALL YEAR ROUND