

Return of the Wildwood

Over many centuries, Man slowly removed most of the 'wildwood' from Scotland and then prevented its return with grazing or cultivation. Since SWT purchased Whitlaw Wood in 1985, the 'wildwood' has slowly been returning to the field at the south end of the reserve. This process can best be seen around the edges of the field where young trees and shrubs are sprouting up. Gradually, if left to its own devices, the woodland will slowly spread right across the field. SWT will allow this to happen, although a small area in the centre of the field will be kept open by mowing to provide a woodland edge habitat for flowers and butterflies.

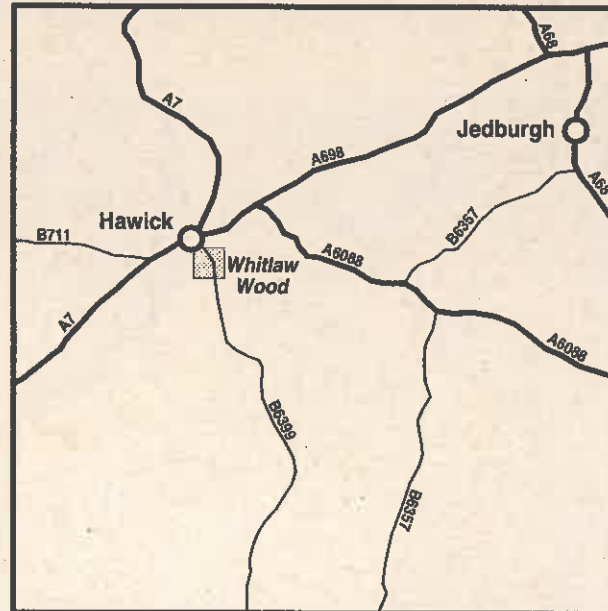


Natural regeneration of the Wildwood

Access to the reserve

Park in the parking area adjacent to the Hawick Golf Course. Follow the lane to the north of the car park to the conifer plantation. Shortly after entering the plantation an opening on the left leads into the reserve where a way marked path takes you around the field.

How to get there:



Grid ref. NT500132

(OS Landranger Map, Sheet 79)



The Scottish Wildlife Trust is the leading charity conserving wildlife and the natural environment in Scotland. It is a partner in The Wildlife Trusts, a network of 47 Wildlife Trusts covering the UK and managing over 2000 wildlife reserves. The SWT relies heavily on donations and membership income. Please join us and support our work – *the need is urgent.*

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Welcome to
Whitlaw Wood
Wildlife Reserve
BORDERS

SCOTTISH
WILDLIFE TRUST

Welcome to Whitlaw Wood Wildlife Reserve

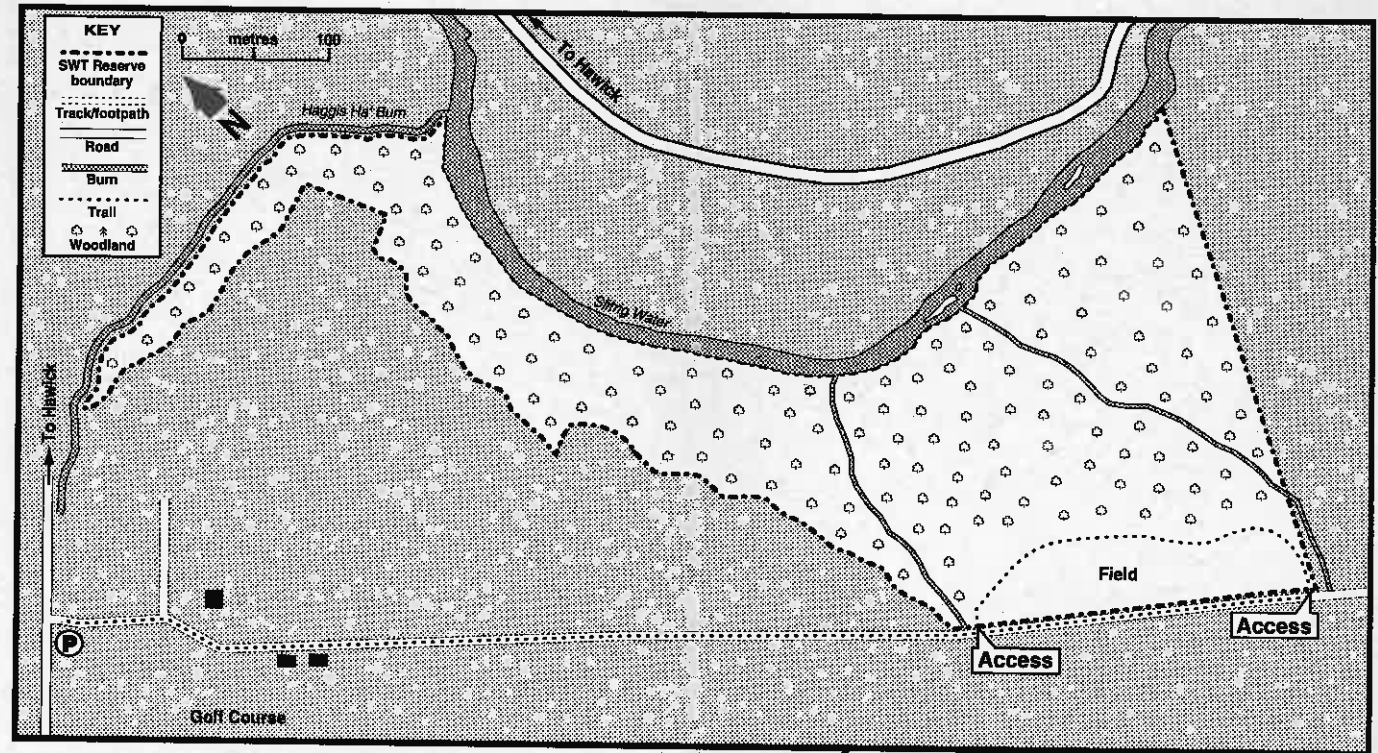
Whitlaw Wood Wildlife Reserve is owned and managed by Scottish Wildlife Trust and lies approximately 1.5 kilometres south of the centre of Hawick. Access to the woodland itself is difficult due to the steep slope on which it stands but the wood can be viewed from the field at the southern end of the site. We hope you will enjoy your visit to this reserve.

A Natural Tapestry

Whitlaw Wood contains one of the greatest diversities of tree and shrub species of any woodland in the Borders. Ash, beech, sycamore, elm, cherry, rowan, oak, alder, willow, hazel, hawthorn and many other tree and shrub species are present on the reserve. The ground flora also exhibits great diversity with over 200 species having been



Great spotted woodpecker

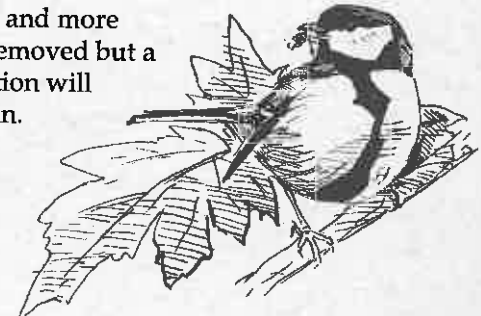


found on the reserve including wood anemone, wood sorrel, primrose, wood sage, wild garlic and birdsnest orchid. The wood provides a haven for animals. Birds like sparrowhawk, spotted flycatcher, woodcock, green woodpecker and great spotted woodpecker have all been recorded and many tit and warbler species nest on the reserve. Red squirrels and roe deer use the reserve.

Alien Invaders

Most of the elms in Whitlaw Wood have died as a result of Dutch elm disease. Their place has often been taken by sycamore, a non-native species. Sycamores are the Jekyll and Hyde of the conservation world. On the one hand they carry a huge

amount of aphids and caterpillars which provide food for birds like tits and they also support a wide diversity of lichens. On the other hand it is highly invasive and can out compete native tree species causing a wood to become less 'natural'. At Whitlaw Wood some sycamore has been felled in order to contain it within certain limits and more needs to be removed but a good proportion will always remain.



Great tit with caterpillar