

Welcome



Silver Washed Fritillary

Why this is a special place:

- One of the Trust's largest nature reserves.
- Important reserve for butterflies and moths including the Silver Washed Fritillary and Double Line Moth.
- Two-way marked nature trails; a long one at 3 km and a short one at 1 km.
- The larger grassland areas are grazed by Shetland ponies and have thousands of Heath Spotted Orchids in flower in June and fantastic displays of Devil's Bit Scabious in late August.

Langford Heathfield Nature Reserve is a 226 acre (91.6 hectare) Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It comprises areas of heathy grassland, Bracken, Willow and Birch scrub and Oak and Ash woodland.



Common Lizard ©Heath McDonald

Species Rich Common Land

Much of the reserve is common land over which several local properties have the ancient rights of pasturage (grazing), turbary (turf cutting) and estovers (woodcutting for fencing and firewood). The public also have rights of access to the common.

Because of the damp conditions and common status of the reserve, it was not reclaimed or improved for agriculture, thus enabling the survival of many important wildlife species. Plants present include Sneezewort, Meadow Thistle, Petty Whin, Pale Heath Violet, Early Purple and Heath Spotted Orchids. Around thirty butterfly species have been recorded including notables such as the Small Pearl Bordered and Silver-Washed Fritillaries. The bird population is also diverse, and includes Tree Pipit, Woodcock and Sparrowhawk.



Heath Spotted Orchid

Reserve Management

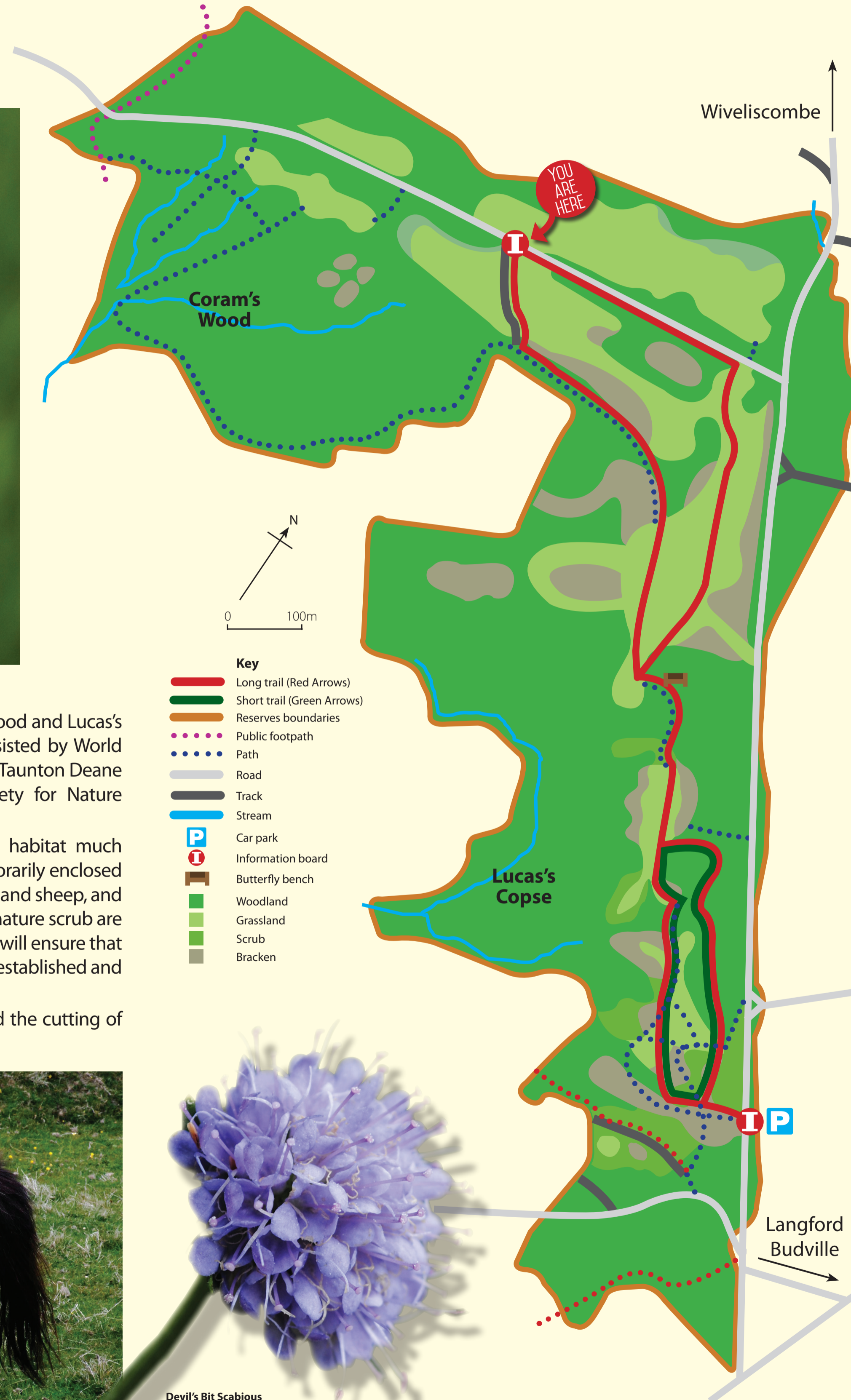
Most of the reserve was purchased in 1982 with Coram's Wood and Lucas's Copse added in 1985. The purchases were generously assisted by World Wide Fund for Nature, Countryside Agency, English Nature, Taunton Deane Borough Council, Somerset County Council, Royal Society for Nature Conservation and numerous individuals.

To ensure the survival and improvement of the wildlife habitat much management work is undertaken. The grasslands are temporarily enclosed with electric fencing in the Summer and grazed with ponies and sheep, and the Bracken and scrub are controlled. The woodlands and mature scrub are managed by a combination of coppicing and thinning. This will ensure that the next generation of Oak and Ash standards can become established and provides a healthy shrub layer.

The glades and paths are kept open by annual cutting and the cutting of blocks of Bracken on a three year rotation.



Shetland Ponies ©NZ_Willowherb



Devil's Bit Scabious



Sparrowhawk ©Harry Hogg

Wildlife Watch

Our nature reserves are fun and fascinating places to visit. Why not try out some of these activities and make it even more fun:

- Lots of animals make Langford Heathfield their home. Say as many as you can think of in 1 minute.
- Choose one animal that would live in Langford Heathfield and move like it to the next post. You could slither like a snake, soar like a Buzzard, flutter like a butterfly or scuttle like a mouse.
- If you've got some paper and a pencil why not have a go at doing some bark rubbing on a tree.

Access and Safety

- Please take care whilst visiting the reserve.
- The ground is uneven in places and can get very wet and muddy.
- Camping and fires are not permitted.
- Please clear up after your dogs and keep them under control.
- During the Summer months the grazing animals are enclosed using electric fences. Please do not touch these.

Are you able to help support our work?

Somerset Wildlife Trust works all year round to protect the wildlife you love in the county where you live. Alongside managing over 1,700 hectares of land across the county, we also provide wildlife-friendly land management advice, campaign and educate to make sure Somerset remains one of the most wildlife-rich places in the UK. With limited resources and funding we are only able to do this thanks to the help we receive from our members and supporters - and people like you who visit these special places and understand their value.

For information about how you can get involved and support our work, including becoming a member or volunteering on this site and others, please go to www.somersetwildlife.org or call 01823 652 400.



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Shetland Ponies



Sparrowhawk

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