

History

The area of land known as the Outwoods has been wooded for many centuries. There are records showing that the site was managed as a woodland 500 years ago, which makes the Outwoods one of the oldest surviving woodland sites in Charnwood.

Between 1914 and 1947 much of the woodland was felled with some areas being left to regenerate naturally while others were replanted with conifers and sycamore. The area to the south of the car park, along Woodhouse Lane, contains one of the few remaining examples of the original oak woodland.

The 110acre (44.6 ha) woodland site was bequeathed to the people of Charnwood during the 1940s thanks to the generosity of Mr Alan Moss and Mr George Harry Bowler.

Geology and Wildlife

The Outwoods stands on some of the oldest rocks in Britain. These rocks were formed 700 million years ago in the pre-Cambrian era. Rare fossils have been found in these rocks which are of international importance to the study of early life forms. Some of the fossils found in the Outwoods can be viewed in the New Walk Museum in Leicester and Charnwood Museum in Loughborough.



Fly agaric

Cow wheat



Because of the nature of the underlying rock many of the plants growing in the Outwoods are rare elsewhere in the county. Examples of some of the acid loving plants found in the Outwoods include cow wheat, pill sedge and sessile oak.

Despite the large scale felling that took place during the two world wars many of the woodland plants and animals originally found on the site, such as bluebell and wood anemone, have survived. The Outwoods also supports a wide variety of woodland birds, including more unusual ones such as green woodpecker and woodcock.

The Outwoods has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest because of its outstanding geology, flora and fauna. The area now forms part of the eastern boundary of the National Forest which covers 200 square miles of Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire.



Management

The Outwoods Management Committee is working with Charnwood Borough Council and Natural England to re-establish traditional oak woodland over much of the area. This process, which involves the removal of non-native trees and shrubs such as sycamore, rhododendron and larch will take many decades.

Charnwood Borough Council,
Southfields, Loughborough.

01509 263151



The OUTWOODS

Charnwood Wildlife





The routes of the two walks shown on this map are marked with coloured flashes. These routes are relatively even and dry, but please be aware that this is a woodland and sturdy footwear is recommended. Because of the nature of the terrain there are some steep climbs on both walks.

You are very welcome to explore the woods without following one of the two signed routes should you wish to.

- Parking
- Toilets
- Benches
- Picnic Benches
- Surfaced Paths
- Easy Access to the Bird Feeding Station
- Shelter
- Bird Feeding Station



Short Walk - 1.3km (0.8miles)

This walk should take an adult approximately 20 minutes to complete, and involves a relatively steep (1:5) climb.

Long Walk - 3km (1.8miles)

This walk should take an adult approximately 1 hour to complete and involves a relatively steep (1:5) climb.

