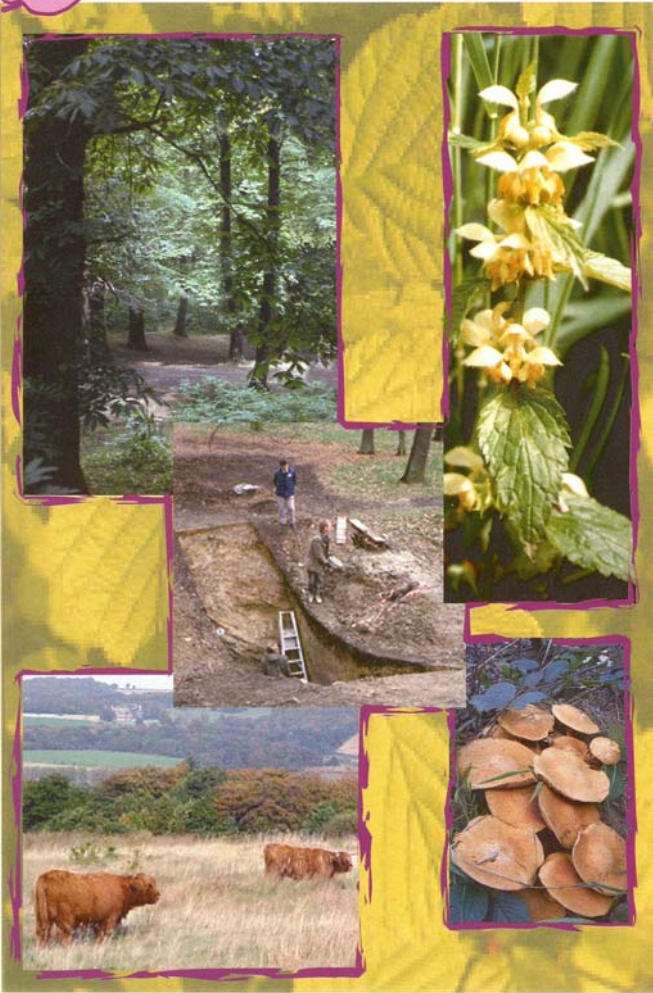


Scholes Coppice & Bray Plantation

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FUELLING A REVOLUTION

the woods that founded the steel country

Plants and Animals in the Woods

Scholes Coppice is ancient in origin but it has many characteristics of a plantation. Around a century ago sweet chestnut and beech were planted here. Plants have struggled to grow in the shade beneath the dense canopy of the beech trees. Patches of birch and oak growing amongst them help to improve the naturalness of the site.

Mainly oak, sweet chestnut and sycamore grow in Bray Plantation. You can also find wych-elm.

Ancient woodland indicator species grow within the Coppice. Plants found here include bluebell, broadleaved helleborine, dog's mercury and hairy woodrush. Many grasses grow here too like wood melick and wood millet.



Bird life in the woods is varied. In the 1990s over 40 species were recorded. Winter visitors include flocks

of redwing, fieldfare and brambling. Breeding birds include blackcap, chiffchaff, sparrowhawk and tawny owl.



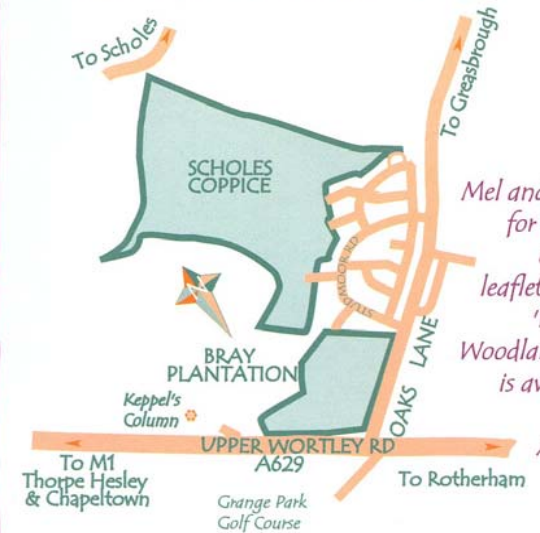
The woodland edges and the broad ride attract a number of uncommon butterflies including holly blue, speckled wood and purple hairstreak.

Management in the Woods

Rotherham Council has carried out woodland management initiatives in both woods, including thinning and access improvements. In Scholes Coppice a series of glades (open areas) were created in 1993 to improve the structure of the wood. Today, the benefits can clearly be seen with young trees filling the glades – the next generation of trees in Scholes Coppice. A management plan was approved in 1993 that is reviewed every 5 years. This helps to ensure that the woodland is here long into the future and remains beneficial to wildlife.

General Information

To find out more about the woodland's management and maintenance contact: The Woodlands Officer on 01709 822177; or look on www.rotherham.gov.uk or www.heritagewoodsonline.co.uk.



Thanks to Mel and Joan Jones for their help in creating this leaflet. Mel's book 'Rotherham's Woodland Heritage' is available from Rotherham Arts Centre.

What's in a Name?

The name of each wood betrays its origin. Scholes Coppice is an ancient wood. It was managed for centuries as a coppice where most of the trees were periodically cut at ground level and then allowed to grow back. It was probably managed as a coppice-with-standards where a number of large single stemmed trees (standards) would have been allowed to regrow.

As Bray Plantation's name suggests it is not an ancient wood but a plantation and was planted by and named after Jonathan Bray in the 1820s. He planted the trees to hide the unsightly mounds left by mining ironstone.

Past Management of the Coppice

In the thirteenth century Scholes Coppice was part of Kimberworth deer park, where deer were farmed for the next four hundred years. By the 1650s the deer were gone and the area was leased to Lionel Copley, the most powerful ironmaster in South Yorkshire, who mined the ironstone and used the coppice to make charcoal. Then in 1714 Scholes Coppice was bought by the Watson-Wentworths of Wentworth Woodhouse and was coppiced for the last time in 1726. It was then 'cut into walks for beauty' and made a part of Wentworth Park.

In the 1940s almost half of the wood (the present Keppel's Field) was lost through open-cast mining. Following the death of the last Earl Fitzwilliam in 1979 it was gifted to South Yorkshire County Council and then became the property of Rotherham MBC.

Archaeological Features in Scholes Coppice

Keppel's Column was erected in Scholes Coppice between 1773 and 1782. Later, open-cast mining left the obelisk outside the wood. The Marquis of Rockingham used the Column to honour his close friend, Admiral Augustus Keppel, who was acquitted in a court martial in 1778 for failing to engage the French fleet in the English Channel.



Keppel's Column



Caesar's Camp



Caesar's Camp is an ancient earthwork which is hidden within the wood. It was formerly known as Castle Holmes. The feature consists of a single rampart and ditch enclosing a large flat area. It is believed that it dates back to the Iron Age. Archaeologists suggest that there was a timber palisade fence on top of the bank defending the enclosure.