

TROOPERS HILL

Local Nature Reserve

Troopers Hill Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is a picturesque, wild and romantic space overlooking the River Avon. The reserve offers fantastic views of the dynamic city of Bristol, whilst creating a dramatic vista of its own. The tall chimneys and deep gullies reveal a tantalising glimpse of Bristol's industrial history, surpassed only by the importance of this unique site to UK nature conservation.

Troopers Hill has been an LNR since 1995 and supports the only significant area of lowland acidic grassland and heathland in the Bristol area. The rare plants and wildlife provide a great opportunity for nature-watching while the expansive of grassland offers a welcome breath of fresh air.

The rocky crags and gullies are a natural children's playground while the stunning views can be enjoyed by everyone. Walk through the adjacent woodland or sit and enjoy a picnic. Fly a kite or just enjoy the wind in your hair. The stimulating mix of terrain and blend of vegetation allows everybody, of any age or ability, to enjoy what the hill has to offer. Discover something new in this peaceful community wilderness.



TROOPERS HILL

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A fascinating mix of history and wildlife on your doorstep

History and the landscape

The pennant sandstone of Troopers Hill makes this a very different landscape to parts of the west of Bristol which have underlying limestone rock. The wonderful red colours of the sandstone can be seen exposed on various parts of the hill, sometimes fading to grey. The sandstone has allowed acid soil to develop which supports the locally rare grassland and heathland.

In the 1600s the hill was part of a huge Royal hunting forest. Some of the plants on the hill may well be remnant populations of plants that were once more locally widespread.

The tall chimney on top of the hill is thought to have been used for copper smelting in the late 1700s. Later, in the 1800s, coal and fireclay were mined from the hill. The lower chimney is the remains of an engine-house for the coal mine. The Gully is one of the sites on the hill where pennant sandstone was quarried.

Butlers Tar Distillation Works dominated the scenery at the foot of the hill from 1843 to 1981. The nearby industry may have contributed to the acid conditions.

As Bristol's urban sprawl spread, the steep slopes and tipped quarry waste deterred builders from developing Troopers Hill and the site was purchased by Bristol City Council for everyone to enjoy in 1956.



Friends of Troopers Hill

Friends of Troopers Hill are a group of local residents sharing an interest in Troopers Hill Local Nature Reserve.

We work closely with Bristol Parks to:

- Maintain and improve the natural environment of Troopers Hill
- Provide a friendly community focus for people who care about Troopers Hill
- Carry out practical conservation work to look after Troopers Hill
- Organise public events throughout the year

New volunteers are always welcome at our regular work parties and meetings.

Visit our website www.troopers-hill.org.uk for a list of events, our latest newsletter, photos, videos and discussions.

Please help us to care for Troopers Hill.

For further information on history, geology and other leaflets, visit:

www.troopers-hill.org.uk

How to get to Troopers Hill

Pedestrian entrances to Troopers Hill are from **Troopers Hill Road** and from **Malvern Road** or **Summerhill Terrace** by crossing Troopers Hill Field.

Car parking is available on adjacent roads. Please park with consideration for local residents.

By bus use any route between Bristol City Centre and Hanham via St George; contact Friends of Troopers Hill for more details.

Visitors with wheelchairs or pushchairs should use the **Malvern Road** entrance. From here there is a surfaced path leading right on to the top of the hill.



For further information, please contact:

Friends of Troopers Hill www.troopers-hill.org.uk

Bristol Parks www.bristol.gov.uk/parks

T: 0117 922 3719.

Resources for school and family visits on www.troopers-hill.org.uk/funlearning



The co-operative membership community fund



Caring for Troopers Hill

Troopers Hill is maintained by Bristol Parks working in partnership with the Friends of Troopers Hill who are a group of local residents who take an interest in all aspects of the site. The partners agree the work to be done each year. One of their major tasks is to control bramble, hawthorn, oak and other trees and scrub that would destroy this special area of grassland and heathland.

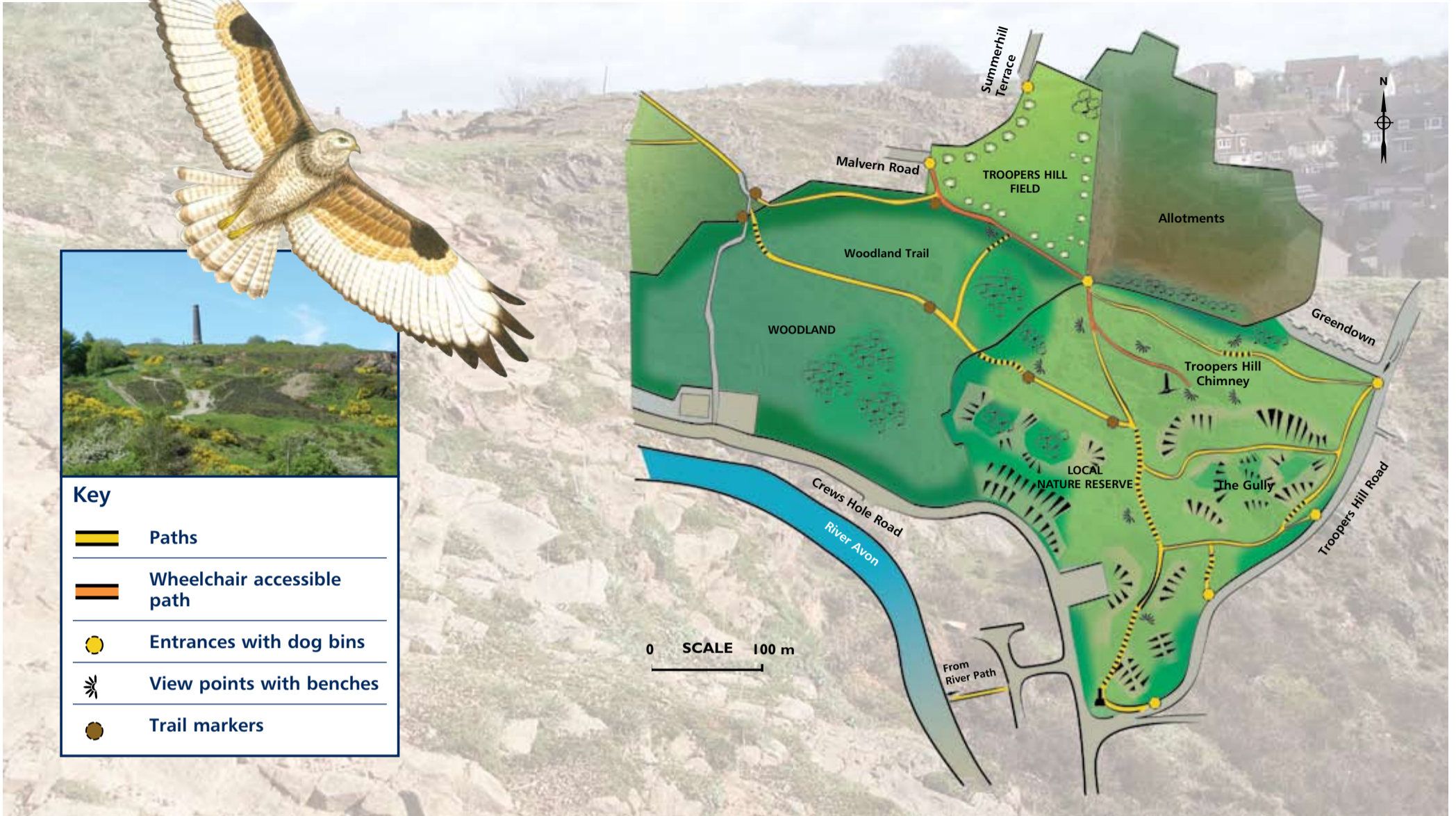
While you are here, please do your part to maintain this reserve for the benefit of both wildlife and people.

- Children enjoy playing on the reserve: please consider their safety by taking your litter home and cleaning up after your dog.
- To protect the many unusual plants and insects that live here, motorcycles and horses are not allowed on the reserve.
- There are some steep slopes and cliff edges on the reserve; please take care.
- Please protect the Hill's delicate grassland by not using barbecues.



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7. Buzzard



Key

-  Paths
-  Wheelchair accessible path
-  Entrances with dog bins
-  View points with benches
-  Trail markers



Troopers Hill wildlife

Troopers Hill is home to mosses, lichens, fungi, grasses, shrubs and plants that provide a habitat for over 280 species of invertebrates including 80 different moths and 20 types of butterflies among them the common blue (1) and the marbled white (2).

The hillside is the home for a number of species of mining bees. The early mining bee (3) is one. Look out for the tiny holes in the ground that are the entrances to their homes.

In summer, walking across the hill you will drive clouds of crickets and grasshoppers before you, including the long winged conehead (4). Two reptile species live here. See if you can find common lizards (5) or the shy slow worm (a legless lizard) sunbathing.

Many birds are fed and sheltered by the Hill, from the long-tailed tit (6) to the buzzard (7). Tawny owls can be heard hooting in the very early hours.

Look at the miniature moss forests and see if you can identify the Haircap mosses. A very magnified Bristly Haircap moss is shown in the centre photo above. Different fungi appear

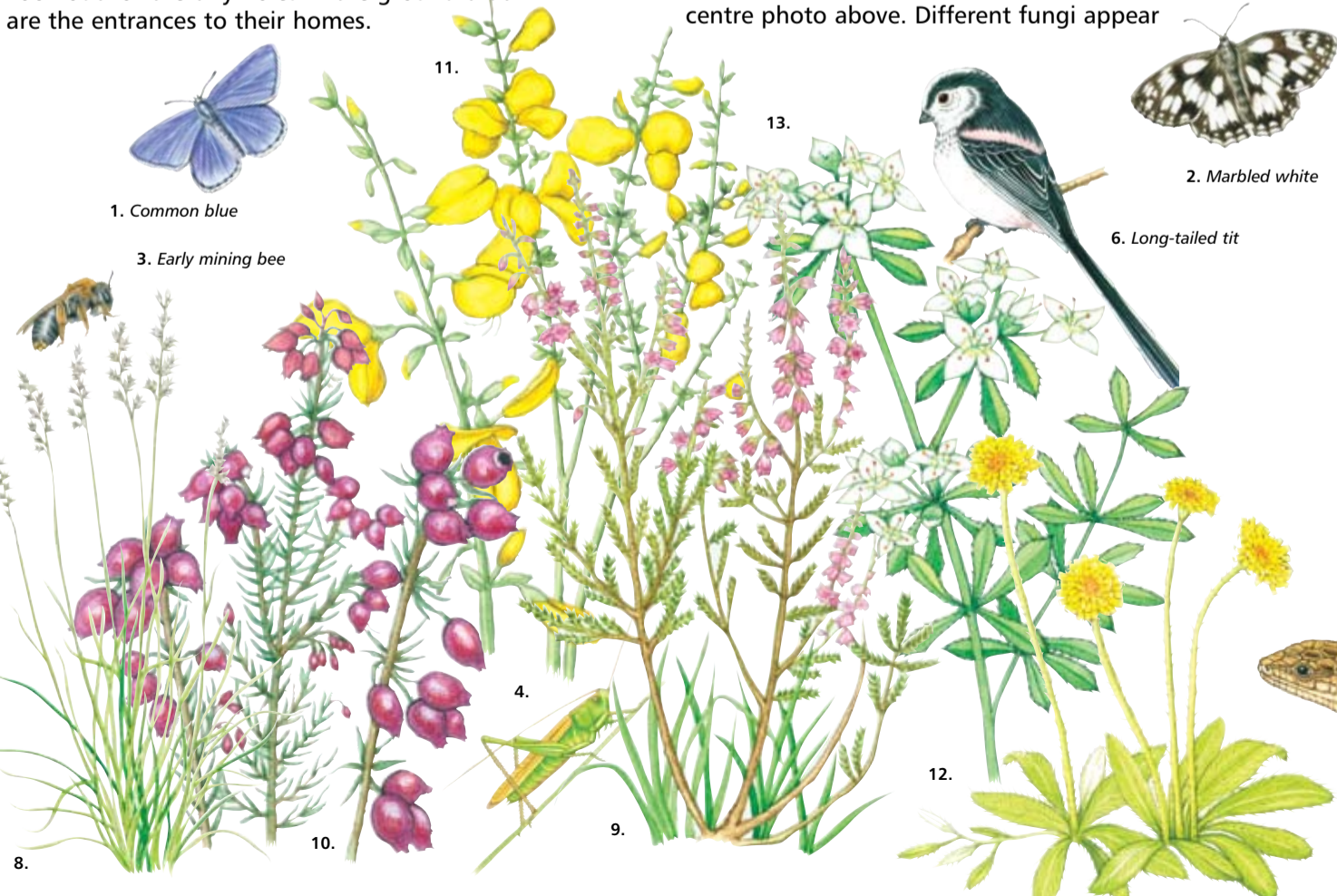
throughout the year from the red and white fly agaric to the black centred earthball. Some of the grasses forming lawn-like areas are fine leaved fescue grasses, including Sheep's Fescue (8). Other more tussocky grasses include Wavy Hair Grass.

Three plants that grow, thanks to the acidic soils, are heather (ling) (9), bell heather (10) and the yellow flowered broom (11). Watch the hill change from broom yellow to heather purple from April to July. Listen to the sound of broom seed pods popping on sunny days.

Wild flowers appear throughout the year. The imaginatively named mouse eared hawkweed (12) creates dense furry eared patches and heath bedstraw (13) displays its delicate white flowers.

Numerous mammals use the hill – from foxes to tiny shrews. Roe deer are sometimes sighted. Those winged mammals, bats, are often seen flitting at the edge of the woodland and round the chimney on summer evenings.

For further information on history, geology and other leaflets, visit: www.troopers-hill.org.uk



8. Sheep's fescue, 10. bell heather, 11. yellow broom, 4. long winged conehead cricket, 9. heather (ling), 12. mouse eared hawkweed, 13. heath bedstraw

5. Common lizard