

**Literature consulted but not cited**

Fuller and Warren., (1993). Coppiced woodlands: their management for wildlife. JNCC, Monkstone House, Peterborough.

Kirby, K.J.,(1984). Forestry operations and broadleaved woodland conservation. JNCC, Monkstone House, Peterborough.

NCC., (1988). Site management plans for conservation. JNCC, Monkstone House, Peterborough.

**PART TWO - EVALUATION AND OBJECTIVES****2.1 Conservation status of the site**

The site is subject to the following designations:

**Wildlife Site (Cornwall Nature Conservation Site):**

Wildlife Sites have been identified by the Cornwall Wildlife Trust as 'prime sites' for nature conservation in Cornwall. All Wildlife Sites are of at least county importance for nature conservation and some are of national or international importance.

**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** are defined as the most scenically valued areas, recognised as being of national importance. Where the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty is the prime objective of landscapes within these areas.

**2.2 Evaluation of features**

The evaluation is based upon Ratcliffe's (1977) criteria for the assessment of the nature conservation interest of a site.

**Size**

The area of the site is 8.09ha, of which 7.64 hectares is woodland and 0.45ha scrubby grassland.

**Diversity**

There is a diversity of habitat types at the 'Alpine Nature Trail', within the habitats species diversity varies. The beech plantation (compartments 2 a-g, 1b) has low vegetation species diversity. The larch plantation (compartment 1a-c), grassland (compartment 4a), ride (compartment 6a) and wet flush (compartment 5a) have a higher level of species diversity.

**Naturalness**

Naturalness has been reduced due to coniferous planting across much of the site. Dominant species include beech, existing outside of their natural range, sycamore and rhododendron which are non-native species.

Naturalness is also affected by management activities, such as coppicing, pollarding and ride creation.

## Rarity

### Birds

The birds listed below have been recorded at the Alpine Nature Trail, they are also listed within Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man. This supersedes Red Data Birds in Britain. The list is divided into three sections: red, amber and green. The red list species are of greatest concern requiring urgent, effective conservation action. The amber list species are of medium concern whilst the green list species require ongoing monitoring.

Species: English name:	Scientific name:	Red List	Amber List	Green List
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	√		
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>		√	
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>		√	
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>		√	
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		√	
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>		√	
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	√		
Kestrel	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		√	
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>		√	
Green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		√	
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>		√	
Marsh tit	<i>Parus palustris</i>		√	
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		√	

In addition the Lesser spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor* is a rare sighting within Cornwall.

### Mosses

The moss *Plagiothecium curvifolium* is the first record of this species within Cornwall.

### **Fragility**

The woodland is vulnerable to the spread of invasive species, such as sycamore and rhododendron. An increase in rhododendron numbers will result in successional change from a native ground flora to non-native shrubs.

Non-native beech and sweet chestnut should be monitored. Succession to a beech dominated woodland will reduce the nature conservation interest of the woodland due to the effects of over shading and the suppression of the ground flora. Beech should be managed within mixed deciduous stands of trees.

Wet woodland and associated bryophytes and pteridophytes are vulnerable to changes in water availability and relative humidity, created by the proximity of trees and understorey shrubs within the wetter areas.

### **Typicalness**

Both the larch and beech plantation are typical of this plantation habitat type. Species diversity within compartment 4a is typical of a scrub dominated grassland habitat.

### **Recorded history**

Woodland record available from 1983. (Kennedy, 1983).

Floral record from 1985 (Cashman and Jones, 1985).

No records of other groups are available until 1996.

### **Position in ecological unit/geographical unit**

Surrounding land use is agricultural predominately improved pasture. The woodland continues to the east. To the south of the site is the main road to Cremyll. On the opposite side of the road a woodland fringe leads onto further areas of agricultural land.

The woodland forms an important continuum of habitat, linked to the Mount Edgecumbe estate woodland (recorded within the 'Ancient Woodland Inventory', Cornwall Wildlife Trust, 1986). The combination of the two areas forms a significant block of woodland within the context of Cornwall.

The conservation interest of the larch and beech plantation is improved by its proximity to Clarrick Wood. A continuum of woodland habitat allows those species associated with the neighbouring ancient woodland site to extend their range into Clarrick Woods.

### **Potential value**

As the site is mostly conifers, it has great potential value for enhancing the nature conservation interest.

The site has the potential to be managed to enhance the existing diversity of woodland and create variations in species composition and age and height structure.