

Wogden Foot

Welcome to Wogden Foot, a place which used to be noisy railway sidings on the Woodhead route connecting Manchester, Sheffield and Penistone. Since the railway closed in 1981 the site has developed into an important habitat for wildlife supporting some uncommon and unusual species.

Wogden Foot lies on Millstone Grit and is sandwiched between the moors of the Peak District National Park to the south and the Upper Don River and agricultural fields to the north. The soils overlying the Millstone Grit are naturally acidic and nutrient poor suiting species such as heather and wavy-hair grass.

However, there are some less acidic areas, a legacy of the limestone railway ballast that was dumped on the site after the line closure. This has led to some plants being found on site that are normally found on alkaline limestone to the east of Barnsley. Some unexpected species you may find on the limestone mounds include

tansy, mouse-ear hawkweed and wild strawberry.

In the summer there are spectacular displays of colour from a wide range of wildflowers.



Cowslips

Keep your eyes open for wild mignonette, cowslips and bird's-foot trefoil, which is also known as 'eggs and bacon' for its yellow and red flowers.

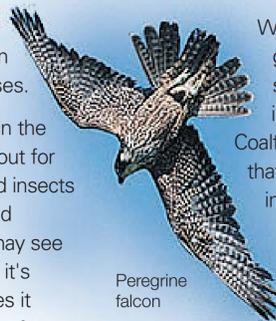
The wildflowers attract butterflies such as common blue and meadow brown, which can be seen flitting through the flowers and grasses.

Birds and other animals find food and shelter in the developing scrub, woodland and heath. Look out for bullfinch and tree pipit searching for seeds and insects and ground-nesting birds such as pheasant and skylark. If you keep your eyes skyward you may see a curlew with its long, curved beak. However, it's haunting call vividly evocative of the wild places it inhabits, is likely to indicate its presence long before

the bird is visible. And if you're really lucky, you'll spot a peregrine falcon – the fastest creature in the world, reaching over 200mph in the 'stoop', its hunting dive.



Meadow brown butterfly on knapweed



Peregrine falcon

Without management, the species-rich grasslands will eventually disappear, slowly turning into scrub then woodland in a process called 'succession'. The Coalfield Heathland Project aims to control that process by cutting down scrub and introducing grazing.

Traditional breeds of cattle and sheep will graze on Wogden Foot during the spring and summer months. Grazing will help to keep the soils low in

nutrients and create a more varied structure in the grassland, heath and scrub. This will encourage the wildflowers to spread and improve conditions for other wildlife.

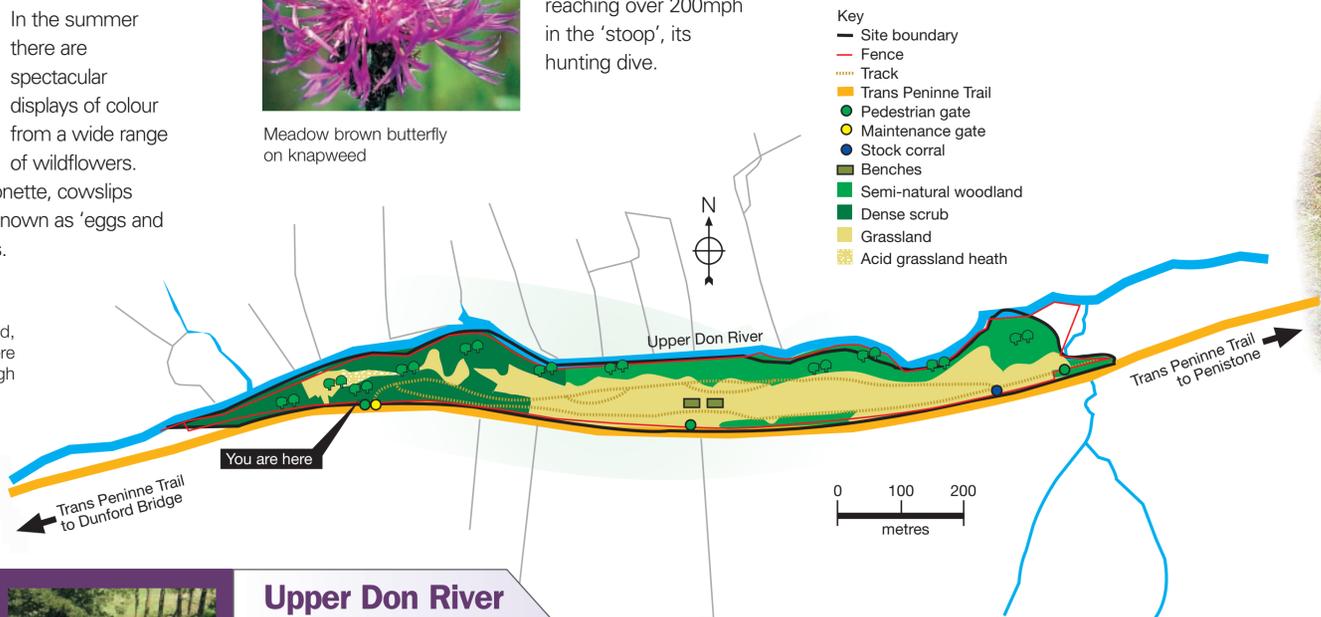


Common blue butterfly on bird's-foot trefoil, it's favourite food

Wogden Foot is owned by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and managed in partnership with the Coalfield Heathland Project.



Dexter cow, one of the traditional breeds that will graze Wogden Foot



Upper Don River

The Upper Don River flows through the Penistone District from its source just beyond Winscar Reservoir at Dunford Bridge to its confluence with the Little Don, or Porter, at Deepcar, a distance of 15 miles. All too often rivers remain invisible to travellers who only encounter them at bridges. The Upper Don runs parallel with Wogden Foot and the Trans Pennine Trail until it reaches Oxspring where the trail splits and the river starts to meander.

The waters of the Don have been used to power many mills along its length. Bullhouse Corn Mill is the one nearest the source and which still survives today as workshops. The Upper Don has an industrial history and because of this it was polluted to such an extent that many parts were deserted by the fish and wildlife. Now however the river is much cleaner and fish and wildlife are in abundance along its length.



Common spotted orchid, some of which grow here to over 50cm high

The Coalfield Heathland Project

Reconnecting people with their natural heritage

Lowland heathland is an internationally rare habitat in need of protection. In the Yorkshire coalfield region it is found in small pockets, interspersed with woodlands, wetlands and commons to make a unique mosaic of habitats for wildlife.

The Coalfield Heathland Project is working to improve the condition of heathlands and maintain them in the long term to ensure they are a valuable resource both for wildlife and for the communities in the towns and cities surrounding them.

The project aims to restore and recreate over 300 hectares of heathland over six years. If you would like to get involved or give us your views please contact:

The Coalfield Heathland Community Wildlife Ranger, Tel: 0114 263 4335

Email: j.ward@wildsheffield.com



Taking Care

- No motor vehicles
- Guard against fire
- Dogs to be kept on a short lead
- If cattle become agitated by dogs and crowd around you- let go of the dog
- Take litter home



Supported through Defra's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund Grant Scheme



Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund



Produced by Adrian Bury Associates 01937 590541 May 2007