



A sound like two pebbles banged together is the territorial call of the male Stonechat. This small, brightly coloured bird, an inhabitant of Old Lodge Reserve, perches on gorse or heather and darts out to catch passing insects.

Old Lodge Local Nature Reserve, on the High Weald, is leased from the Stuart family. There are breathtaking views of the North and South Downs and the "hill country" of the Ashdown Forest. The reserve contains lowland heathland which is the result of thousands of years of animal grazing in light, sandy soils. Heathland is now nationally threatened. Without grazing the open landscape would be covered with trees like Birch, and the specialist heathland wildlife lost.

To preserve this unique habitat the Trust is removing scrub, a mix of trees and bushes, and grazing with cattle and Exmoor ponies. Grazing checks the spread of Bracken, which creates layers of leaf litter, and stifles heathland plants. Bracken is also mown or removed by volunteers.

Walking on the reserve

Please keep to the trail marked on the leaflet (on the reserve this is marked by posts with green arrows). The trail is about two miles, starting at the car park, and takes one to two hours. The slopes are mostly gentle, but steep in places, with wide unsurfaced paths and some stiles, gates and steps at the entrance.

Dogs must be kept on a short, fixed lead.



How to find us

The reserve is on the west side of the B2026 between Maresfield and Hartfield, about a third of a mile north of the junction with the B2188 at Kings Standing. Parking is in the nature reserve car park.



Sussex Wildlife Trust is the county's leading wildlife charity. Our aim is to help people enjoy, understand and take action to conserve the wildlife and landscapes of Sussex.

Volunteers needed! Much of the work at Old Lodge Nature Reserve is done by volunteers. Please contact the Trust if you are interested in becoming a volunteer, or for membership details:-

Sussex Wildlife Trust
 Woods Mill, Henfield
 West Sussex BN5 9SD
 Tel: 01273 492630
 Web: www.sussexwt.org.uk
 Email: enquiries@sussexwt.org.uk
 WildCall, the wildlife information service: 01272 494777

Registered Charity No: 207005

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Old Lodge

Nature Reserve



Jean-Louis Le Moigne / NHPA

Taking Care of Sussex



Old Lodge Nature Reserve

The Black Darter and Golden-ringed Dragonflies lay their eggs in the acidic, boggy streams and pools of Old Lodge Reserve.



Golden-ringed Dragonfly

On warm summer evenings at twilight, you can hear the haunting sound of Nightjars "churring". Nightjars live on heathland and several pairs breed on the reserve.



Nightjar

Old Lodge Estate Private

Pippingford Park Private

Keeches Bridge

Scots Pine



Fallow Deer

Scots Pine trees thrive on the sandy soils of heathlands. They provide nesting sites for birds like Redstarts, and shelter for deer and the Trust's grazing animals.

— Reserve boundary

⋯ Nature Trail

★ Entrance to reserve

Car Park

← Maresfield

B2026

→ Hartfield & Ashdown Forest Centre

The deep purple Bell Heather flowers in July, and the mauve Calluna, or Ling, in August. The flowers supply nectar for many insects including the Silver-studded Blue butterfly. In the past heather was used for domestic tasks like roof thatching.



Bell Heather and Silver-studded Blue