



Marbled white

Collyweston Quarries Nature Reserve locally known as 'The Deeps' is the largest (8 hectares – 19.5 acres) remaining fragment of semi-natural limestone grassland in the county. Collyweston Quarries is leased to the Wildlife Trust by Burghley Estates and Easton-on-the-Hill Parish Council. It has been a Wildlife Trust nature reserve since 1983.

Nationally these wildflower rich grasslands have become scarce mainly due to building development and changes in farming practices, with an estimated 80% loss nationally since the late 1940s. For this reason most of Collyweston Quarries has been given legal protection under its designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Access

The main access points are via; the public footpath leading from Ketton through the nature reserve to the A43 – Stamford Road and an informal path from Easton-on-the-Hill Parish Council Recreation Ground

Bring stout footwear as the ground across the reserve is uneven and can be wet and slippery. Keep away from the steep drops and disused mine shafts which surround the reserve. Please follow the country code at all times, keep to the paths where possible and keep dogs on leads. Thank You.



Dyers greenweed

We hope you enjoy your visit

How to find the reserve

OS Grid Reference TF 004 038. The main entrance to the nature reserve is located opposite a large lay-by on the A43 – Stamford Road between the villages of Collyweston and Easton-on-the-Hill. Parking is available in the two large lay-bys on either side of the A43 – Stamford Road near the main entrance to the reserve. From here access can be gained up the track/ public footpath adjacent to the houses along Deepside.

More Information

Your local Wildlife Trust protects wildlife and countryside for people to enjoy in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough. We are a charity dependent on voluntary contributions.

If you would like more information about this reserve or about how you can support us please contact The Reserves Manager, The Wildlife Trust, Lings House, Billing Lings, Northampton NN3 8BE or telephone (01604) 405285. E-mail: northamptonshire@wildlifebcnp.org

To join the Wildlife Trust please contact the Membership Manager, The Wildlife Trust, The Manor House, Broad Street, Great Cambourne, Cambridge CB3 6DH or telephone (01954) 713500. E-mail: cambridgeshire@wildlifebcnp.org

This reserve is supported by:

Sir Francis Pemberton



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Welcome to
Collyweston Quarries



Photograph by The Wildlife Trust; illustrations by Mike Langman



Protecting wildlife
close to home

History

Historically the site was quarried for limestone building stone and Collyweston Slate, which is used locally as a roofing material. The quarrying ceased in the early part of the 20th Century, leaving pits and spoil heaps which now form the current grassy humps and hollows terrain.

What to look for

The shallow, well-drained, nutrient poor, lime rich soils that have developed on the old quarry workings provide ideal conditions for over 100 different types of wildflower.

The most colourful time of year is early July when much of the grassland is aglow with the golden-yellow flowers of common rockrose, common bird's-foot-trefoil and the local rarity dyer's greenweed whose flowers were once gathered to produce a yellow dye.



Pyramid orchid

This colourful display continues later in the summer with a flush of pinks and purples through the grassland when the pyramidal orchid, greater knapweed, wild thyme and clustered bellflower come into flower.

Also look out for the brownish coloured knapweed broomrape and common dodder with its long red tendrils. These parasitic plants depend on other plants like greater knapweed to survive.

The wildflowers, short turf and hills and hollows terrain of the grassland provides food plants and open, warm,



Knapweed broomrape



Common lizard

sheltered conditions with bare ground that are ideal for a number of different insects and reptiles. Glow worms which are actually beetles can be seen in the longer grass at dusk or during the night in June, when the females glow green to attract the adult males. Between June and August the reserve is awash with an abundance of different butterflies and day flying moths including marbled white, and two kinds of burnet moth the six-spot and narrow-bordered five-spot.

Look out for reptiles like the common lizard that may be seen on the bare ground basking in the sun.

The areas of hawthorn and blackthorn scrub in and around the grassland support several bird species, such as yellow-hammer and whitethroat. Listen out for the maniacal ringing laugh of the green woodpecker in the summer months.



Common rockrose

How the Trust cares for this reserve

We use sheep to graze the grassland during the autumn & winter months and we cut back encroaching scrub from the grassland. Without this vital management the nature reserve would quickly lose most of its special wildflowers and insects. We also maintain open access to the nature reserve throughout the year and with the help of volunteers we monitor the wildlife on the nature reserve to ensure the important species are conserved.



Wild Thyme

