

Sydenham Hill Wood

Local Nature Reserve



Summer Activity Trail

June, July and August

There are three entrances to the wood. Use the map and numbered posts to find where you are and follow the nature trail. The full trail circuit will take about one hour and is not suitable for wheelchairs or push chairs.

Please leave the woodland as you found it; take any rubbish you have home with you and do not pick any flowers. If you are walking a dog please clean up after it and keep it on a lead at all times. Bins are located near the entrances to the wood.

As you walk around the wood tick off each box you find, see or hear:

- 3 different coloured butterflies
- A feather
- A seven spot ladybird
- A beetle
- A grasshopper
- 5 different plants in flower
- A heart shaped leaf
- A dragonfly

1. Near the **Crescent Wood Road Entrance** there are elm trees growing, which have rough, oval leaves that feel like sandpaper. Elm trees suffer from a fungal disease spread by a bark-eating beetle. This means that they die off before they reach maturity, so they don't grow very tall. Take the right hand path from the notice board.
2. **The Old Tennis Court**
There were once six big Victorian houses built along the top of the hill in Sydenham Hill Wood. One of the houses had a tennis court, which is where you are now standing. This area doesn't much look like a tennis court today and it is managed as a glade. Glades are open areas in woodland. They are important habitats for many animals that require sunlight, warmth and nectar-rich plants to feed on.
3. **The Cedar Of Lebanon** is the biggest tree in the wood. Next to the cedar is a deep hollow in the ground. It is thought that the hollow might be a World War II bomb crater. The hollow stays damp in spring and summer so plants that need moist soil, like ferns and horsetails grow here. Horsetails have long, jointed stems and bristly, needle-like leaves. They come from an ancient family that has been around for nearly 400 million years.
- 4 & 5. As you walk from **The Folly** to **The Pond** look up in the branches of a tall oak tree on your left. Can you see a big bundle of twigs? This is the nest of sparrowhawk. Sparrowhawks are birds of prey that eat small songbirds. In the summer sparrowhawk chicks begin to practice flying and leave the nest for short periods of time. You might hear them screeching loudly.
6. The **Old Railway Track** now forms the main path. Flowers grow along the path edge. Creeping cinqfoil grows very close to the ground. In summer it has yellow flowers with five heart-shaped petals.
7. **Cox's Walk Footbridge** is a good place to stop to catch your breath and enjoy the view.
8. Rosebay willowherb grows along the slopes near **The Fallen Beech Tree**. Rosebay willowherb is very tall and has pink flowers that provide nectar for lots of insects. The leaves are eaten by the caterpillar of the elephant hawkmoth; a large pink, fast-flying moth. The caterpillar is fat and grey, like an elephant's trunk, with two big eye spots on the front end of its body to scare off predators.
9. Walk along the path through **Oak and Hornbeam** trees and keep your eyes open for bat boxes on the tree trunks. Bats are nocturnal and the large boxes that look like small dustbins are colony roost boxes. These are places where lots of female bats gather together to sleep during the day. In June and July they give birth to their babies which are called pups. The pups are fully grown when they are about three weeks old and by the time they are five weeks old they begin to catch insect prey on their own.
10. There is Ivy growing on the trees near **The Tunnel Mouth**. Ivy is a food plant for the holly blue; a small blue butterfly with tiny black spots on its wings. The holly blue lays its eggs on ivy flower buds in the summertime and holly flower buds in the spring. Holly blue caterpillars are green and very well camouflaged. They make holes in the side of the flower bud and eat out the insides leaving empty buds behind.

From The Tunnel Mouth, take the steps back up to the Crescent Wood Road Entrance. You have reached the end of the Summer Trail.

Why not visit us again?

Download our Autumn, Winter and Spring activity trails from: www.wildlondon.org.uk

Follow us on 
[SydenhamWoodLWT](https://twitter.com/SydenhamWoodLWT)




Sydenham Hill Wood

Local Nature Reserve

Nature Trail Map 

How to find us by Rail and Bus:

 Sydenham Hill & Forest Hill

 Bus: 363 & 356

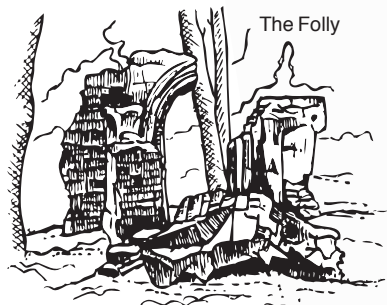
Additional Information:

Open all the time

No wheelchair or pushchair access except by appointment

No cycling

- 1. Crescent Wood Road Entrance**
- 2. The Old Tennis Court** is now managed as an open glade.
- 3. The Cedar Of Lebanon** is around 150 years old.
- 4. The Folly** is a ruin remaining from a Victorian garden.



The Folly

E Entrance

South London is an important stronghold for the rare stag beetle. You can help them by leaving dead wood in your garden.



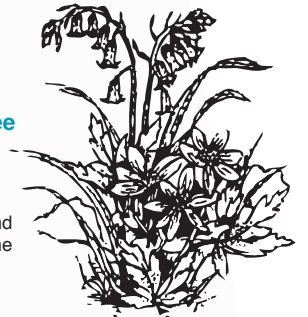
Stag beetle

- 9. Oak and Hornbeam** are dominant trees a sign of the woods ancient origin.
- 10. The Tunnel Mouth**, built in 1865 is one of two tunnels on the Crystal Palace line to the Great Exhibition.



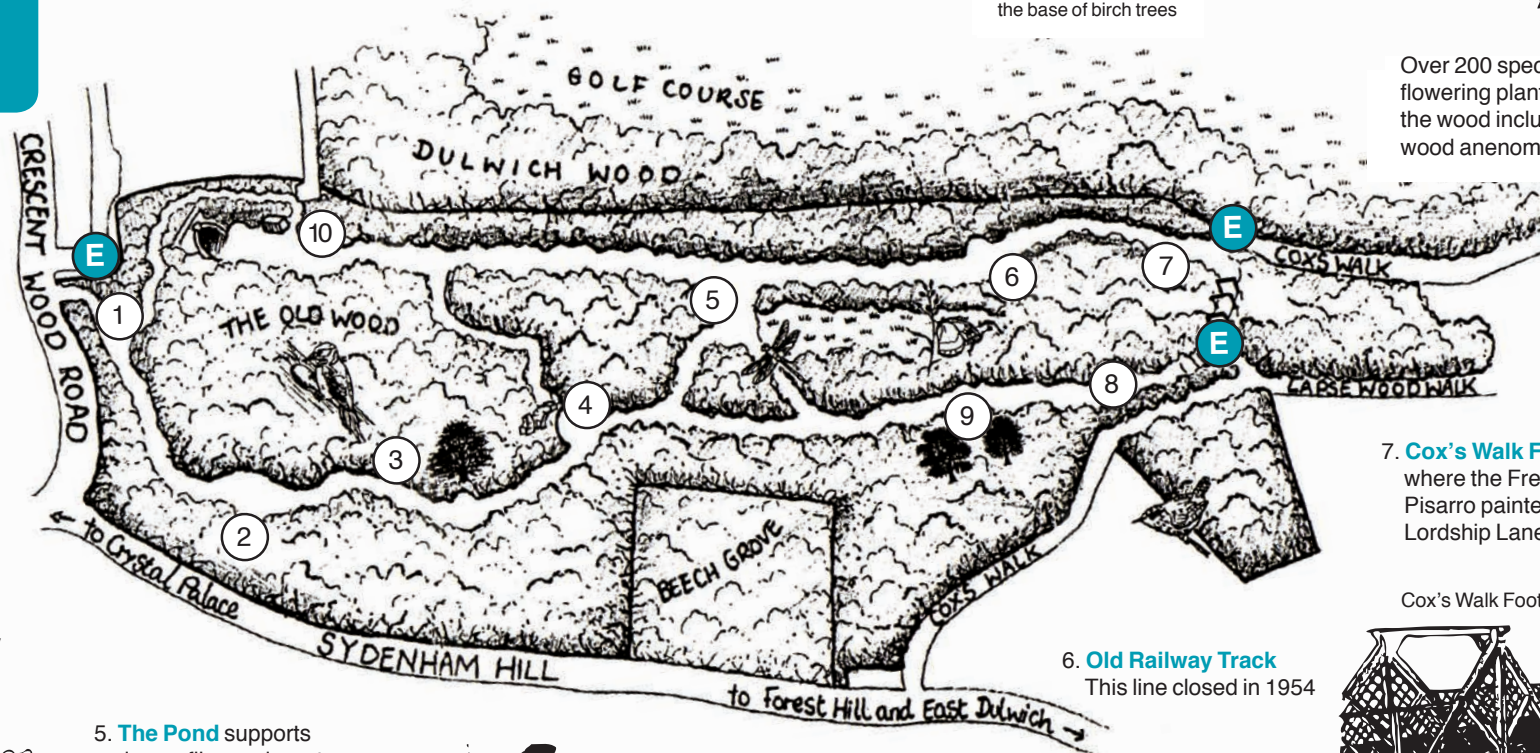
Fly agaric found at the base of birch trees

- 8. The Fallen Beech Tree** is ideal for fungi.



Bluebell and wood anemone

Over 200 species of trees and flowering plants can be found in the wood including bluebell and wood anemone.



- 5. The Pond** supports dragonflies and newts. These search for food in the surrounding lush grass.



Wood mice forage on the woodland floor.

- 6. Old Railway Track**
This line closed in 1954

- 7. Cox's Walk Footbridge** was where the French impressionist Pissarro painted a picture of Lordship Lane Station.

Cox's Walk Footbridge

