

# Ruislip Woods Walks

## White route 0.9km

The White Route is one of several easy access guided walks that pass through Ruislip Woods.

The path starts from Wiltshire Lane and ends at Bury Street, and is mostly downhill. It can, however, be walked either way round.

Accessible by bus H13 alighting at the top of Wiltshire Lane, Northwood. The H13 runs from St. Vincents in Wiltshire Lane, Northwood to Ruislip Lido in Reservoir Road, Ruislip. The H13 can be boarded from Ruislip, Ruislip Manor, Pinner, and Northwood.



# Ruislip Woods Walks **White route**

**Follow the posts marked with a white disc and arrow**



① The first post is situated at the highest point in Ruislip Woods. This is the best place to look for the purple emperor butterfly, which can be seen soaring above the oak canopy from late June to the end of August.

② Cross the bridle path through oak and hornbeam woodland. These are the two most common trees in Ruislip Woods.

But which is which?

Hornbeam: smooth bark with veins twisting vertically up the tree. Leaves are oval with serrated edges.

Oak: rough bark, leaves have five to eight pairs of rounded lobes. Try rubbing your hands on the bark to feel the different textures.

③ You will soon pass through a section of hornbeam coppice. Coppicing is a form of woodland management that involves cutting the trees on a 20-year cycle. In the past the new shoots were used for a variety of things such as pea sticks and charcoal.

Today, coppicing is still carried out but mainly for its benefit for wildlife, which thrives on the newly-created open areas.

④ Shortly you will come to a bench on the route. Sit here for a while and close your eyes. How many different bird sounds can you hear?

⑤ Further along the path you will pass a row of silver birch trees. This is probably the third most common tree in the woods. Unlike the oak, which can live for centuries, the average life span of a birch tree is 90 years.

⑥ After crossing another footpath you will arrive at a huge beech tree on the right. This is the largest tree in Ruislip Woods. In autumn you may also see the largest fungi, giant polypore, growing around its base.

⑦ On your left is the bridle path. A yellow plant called common cow-wheat grows along its edges and is the main food plant of the rare heath fritillary butterfly, which was first introduced here in 2004. If you are extremely fortunate, you may catch sight of one from mid June to August.

⑧ Carry on along the path until you reach another bench. If you rest here a while you may see or hear a greater spotted woodpecker. The call is a single 'tchick', but you may hear the more familiar 'drumming' sound, especially in spring. In summer, enjoy the delightful scent of honeysuckle which is common in this area.

⑨ As you walk along the path, keep an eye out for the bright red cardinal beetle which can be found on bramble leaves.

⑩ Continue along the path until you reach a section laid with gravel. On your left, look for the coppiced wild service tree. This is the least common tree in these woods and is only found in ancient woodland. It can be identified mainly by its leaves, which are unlike any other in these woods. The leaves have toothed lobes and turn a variety of yellows, red and purples in autumn.

**Follow the path down until you reach Bury Street. The bus stop for the H13 is on the right.**

**The H13 runs from St. Vincents in Wiltshire Lane, Northwood, to Ruislip Lido in Reservoir Road, Ruislip. The H13 can be accessed from Ruislip, Ruislip Manor, Pinner and Northwood.**

Further copies of this leaflet can be obtained from the Woodland Centre, next to the Lido beach, as well as public libraries and the Civic Centre in Uxbridge or downloaded from the council's website at [www.hillingdon.gov.uk/greenspaces](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/greenspaces)