

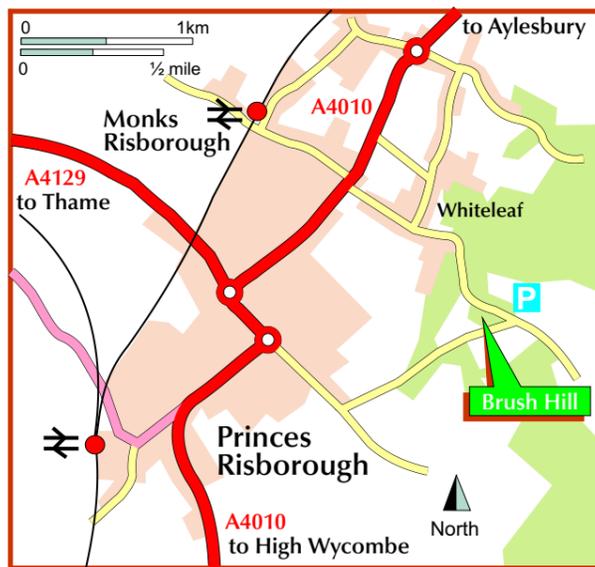
# BRUSH HILL

## LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

### WILDLIFE WALKS FOR EVERYONE



Princes Risborough  
*fit for a prince*



### How to get there

#### By Car

From Princes Risborough, take the A4010 to Aylesbury. After ½ mile, take the road on the right, Peters Lane, signposted to Whiteleaf Hill. Follow the lane up the hill for ½ mile to the car park at the top on the left.

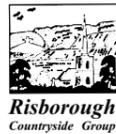
#### By Bus or Train

Princes Risborough is served by buses and trains from Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Thame.

#### On Foot

The Ridgeway National Trail crosses the reserve.  
OS sheet: Explorer 181 SP822035

Photos by Risborough Countryside Group, U3A Photographic Group, Nick Bowles, Gerry Whitlow and Blueskybirds.com



### About the walks...

#### Terrain

**Short walk** (0.5miles/0.8km) around level woodland path with access to view point.

**Long walk** (0.9miles/1.5km) follows route of short walk with additional walk around grassland on hillside, uneven in places.

#### Access

There are no stiles. Access to the woods is through "kissing" gates, suitable for manual wheelchairs and pushchairs.

#### Refreshments

Pubs and cafés Princes Risborough.

#### Toilets

Nearest in Horns Lane car park in Princes Risborough.

#### Parking

Parking for the walks is in the Whiteleaf Hill car park and picnic site in Peters Lane.

#### Dogs

Sheep graze the grassland over winter. Dog walkers are requested to keep dogs on a lead when the flock is present.



### Brush Hill Local Nature Reserve

lies on the Chiltern escarpment next to the historically important site of Whiteleaf Hill, with its chalk cross and neolithic barrow. A number of important nature reserves are situated close by, reflecting the rich and varied habitats that can be found in the woodlands and chalk grassland in the area.

#### Woodland

This ancient woodland at the top of the reserve contains oak, Scots pine, larch, horse chestnut, cherry, ash, hornbeam and beech, which provide a dense, spreading canopy through the summer and beautiful golden colour in autumn.

Under the canopy of these bigger trees, there are holly, hawthorn, hazel, wych elm, elder, field maple, wayfaring tree and guelder rose. In spring, the ground is carpeted with bluebells, sweet woodruff, wood anemones, yellow archangel and dog's mercury.

Tawny owls can be heard calling in the evening and you might see a treecreeper, nuthatch or woodpecker in the trees, along with speckled wood butterflies.



#### Hedgerows

The mature hedgerows of hawthorn and blackthorn provide a bounty of winter fruit for winter visitors such as redwing and fieldfare.



#### Grassland

The downland is grazed by sheep between October and March to prevent scrub invasion and sustain a green sward where plants such as wild thyme, cowslip, toadflax, lady's bedstraw and pyramidal orchid can flourish.

This area has been home to many species under threat across the county, including the yellow meadow ant, the glow-worm and chalkhill blue and small copper butterflies. The hillside offers good aerial displays of swifts and swallows as well as resident red kites and buzzards.



### What to look out for...

#### In spring:

- Bluebell, wood anemone, cowslip
- Warblers, nuthatch, treecreeper, woodpeckers, tawny owl
- Brimstone and orange tip butterflies

#### In summer:

- Pyramidal orchid, toadflax, sanicle
- Swallow, swift, woodpeckers
- Marbled white, common blue and meadow brown butterflies, scarlet tiger moth and glow-worm

#### In autumn:

- Wayfaring tree berries, traveller's joy, woodland fungi
- Red kite

#### In winter:

- Tits, redwing, fieldfare, siskin, redpoll
- Muntjac



Brush Hill Local Nature Reserve was opened in 1997 with funding from LEO Pharmaceuticals and Orange Communications with the support of English Nature and Butterfly Conservation. It is managed for the local community by:

The Ranger Service  
Wycombe District Council  
Queen Victoria Road  
High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 1BB  
Tel: 01494 421825

The Risborough Countryside Group works together with the Rangers on work parties and other events linked to the reserve. New members welcome.

### Further Information

The Risborough Area Information Centre in Horns Lane, Princes Risborough has full details of other local walks, places to visit and events taking place in and around the town and beautiful surrounding countryside.  
Tel: 01844 274795

# BRUSH HILL LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

## WILDLIFE WALKS FOR EVERYONE

**1** Cross the lane from the car park, enter the wood through the kissing gate and follow the path to the right alongside some ditches, possibly earlier tracks down the hill.

**2** Look for signs of previous coppicing. Trees were cut back to the ground every 7-15 years to provide wood for fuel and fencing. There is an old coppiced ash close by. Fallen trees and dead wood are left on the ground - an important wildlife habitat

**3** Leave the wood and pass through the kissing gate and a line of trees to a spectacular viewpoint which looks out to the Berkshire Downs beyond Didcot power station, the Cotswolds beyond Banbury, and closer to home, Waddesdon Manor and Bledlow. Red kites and buzzards can be seen overhead.

**4** From the viewpoint, follow the path on the left towards the hedge, then right, down the slope across an iron age ditch. The hedgerow is a mass of berries and covered with the hairy seeds of traveller's-joy (also called old-man's-beard) in autumn.

**5** Keep to the path on the left, as you walk down the hill, and look for butterflies and day-flying moths such as the scarlet tiger which are supported by the rich flora, including the beautiful pyramidal orchid, typical of chalk grassland.

**6** Follow the path along the bottom of the slope and look out for muntjac deer, badgers and rabbits in the scrub on the left. Glow-worms have been seen in the open grassland areas around the ant hills. The non-flying females puncture the darkness with pale green light after dusk from late May to July to attract mates.

**7** At the kissing gate, turn back up the hill towards the viewpoint. Pass the scrub area popular with whitethroats and other warblers in summer.

At the viewpoint, return to the wood and turn right on to the path.

**8** Along the path, look for the majestic Scots pines, oaks and beautiful sycamores, with their flaky bark.

The fallen trees are important for a wide range of insects, particularly beetles and flies. The woodland is covered in bluebells and wood anemones in spring and is full of the song of nesting birds. At the kissing gate cross the lane to return to the car park.



**Brush Hill**

### Wildlife Walks

●●● short walk

●●● long walk

--- Ridgeway National Trail

--- Other paths

Viewpoint

P Parking

A Picnic site

V Viewpoint

S Seat

G Kissing Gate

