

# 7 EDMONDSLEY WOOD

Edmondsley Wood is a mixed deciduous woodland situated on an ancient woodland site. This woodland is part of the mosaic habitat that links the Wear Valley to the mid altitude areas of Stanley and Consett.



*The Cong Burn*



*Wren*

*Honeysuckle*



The quiet and rather secluded Edmondsley Wood consists of 12.5 hectares of mature deciduous woodland. It is designated as a County Wildlife Site and has a good woodland structure. The woodland lies on the south bank of the steep sided Cong Burn Valley, much of its substrate being that of carboniferous coal measure shale. The site supports a range of different habitats which, in turn, results in a large diversity of flora and fauna.

The woodland consists predominately of Oak and Ash with an under storey of Silver Birch, Hawthorn, Holly, Rowan and abundance of old Hazel coppice stools. The ground flora is typical of an ancient woodland site including plants such as Moschatel, Broad-leaved Helleborine and the parasitic Cow Wheat. In the centre of the site is a flat marshy area, which is dominated by meadowsweet and some encroaching Willow Carr. Forming the Northern boundary is the shallow Cong Burn, along which Alder is found in abundance. Many interesting mosses and ferns have been recorded in wet gullies around the burn.

Untreated minewater once discharged straight into the Cong Burn from old mine workings associated with the old Edmondsley Coal Mine. In 1999 the Coal Authority and Durham Wildlife Trust installed a large artificial reedbed adjacent to the woodland into which the minewater now flows before returning back to the Cong Burn minus its pollutants. This also provides an important wildlife habitat for birds, dragonflies and other invertebrates.



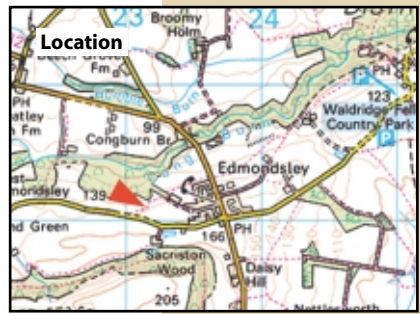
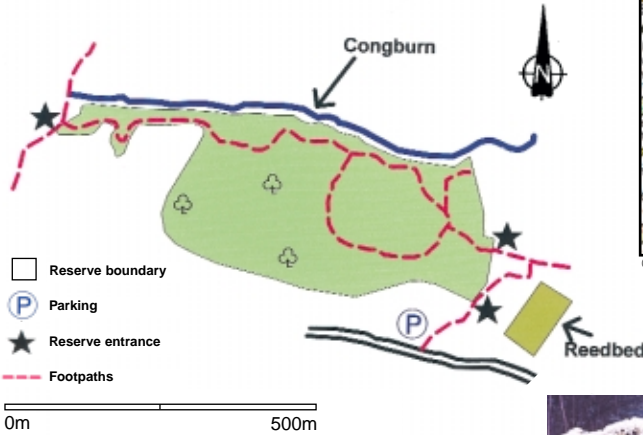
*Moschatel*

*Reed bed*



**Best seen – Spring for woodland flora**

# EDMONDSLEY WOOD



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## General Information

**Ownership:** Durham Wildlife Trust

**Size:** 12.5 hectares

**Grid Reference:** NZ231492

**O.S. Explorer Map No:** 308

**Parking and access to site:**

Parking available on old BMX track. Follow the fence line through the gate to the style and then down into the wood.

**Public transport:** Regular bus services from Durham to Edmondsley.

**Dogs:** Dogs to be kept on their leads during spring

**Accessibility:** ▲▲▲▲

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## Management

Management of the woodland aims to reinststate rotational hazel coppicing. This prolongs the life of the hazel stools, opens up the canopy allowing light to the woodland floor and provides conditions suitable for a wide range of birds, bats and invertebrates. Invasive sycamore will be selectively felled to encourage natural regeneration of native species. The marsh and willow carr areas will be kept open with an annual late summer cut. Access improvements will comprise installation and maintenance of boardwalks, steps and stiles and provision of on site information panels.

Robin



**Sweet Cicely** the Liquorice plant tastes and smells of aniseed. The oily seed cases are sometimes used by woodturners to polish finished carved pieces, similar to the Westmoreland practice of using leaves to polish oak panels.

Coppiced hazel with deer guards



## Location

The reserve is 3 miles south west of Chester-le-Street near the village of Edmondsley. Access is from the Edmondsley to Burnhope Road approx. ¼ mile west of the Edmondsley crossroads. Parking is available at the site of the old BMX track on the northern side of the road. Walk through the gate along the fence line until you reach a style. Follow the path to the bottom of hill where you meet the circular footpath through the wood adjacent to the boardwalk. Sturdy boots required, as it can be muddy.

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