

welcome to

# Macclesfield forest

Macclesfield Forest and the surrounding land is a workplace. The forest produces timber and farmers use the open fields and moorland to graze livestock and produce crops. The area is the source of drinking water for

Macclesfield from Ridgegate and Trentabank reservoirs.

Please respect the area and its wildlife. Keep your dog under control or on a lead. Wildlife in the forest requires quiet areas without disturbance.

For this and safety reasons, access in the forest is by public footpath or concessionary footpaths and bridlepaths. You are welcome to follow on foot any of the waymarked paths. If you are horse-riding or cycling, please remain on the paths designated as concession bridlepaths and ride with consideration for walkers. From time to time forestry operations will mean that some paths have to be closed temporarily. On such occasions, alternative routes will be waymarked. Rangers operate in this area and will be happy to assist you.

For your safety, please keep clear of timber stacks and forest machinery.



Siskin

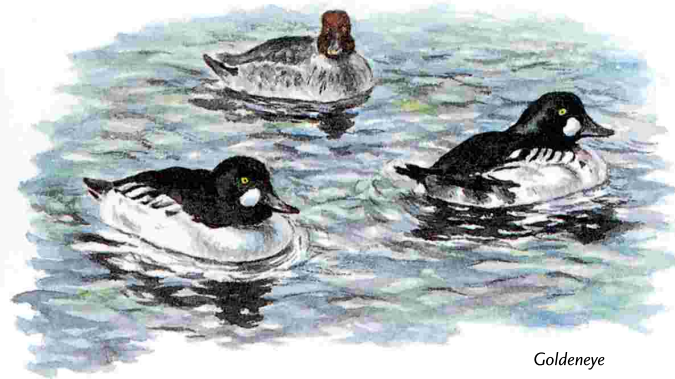


Red campion

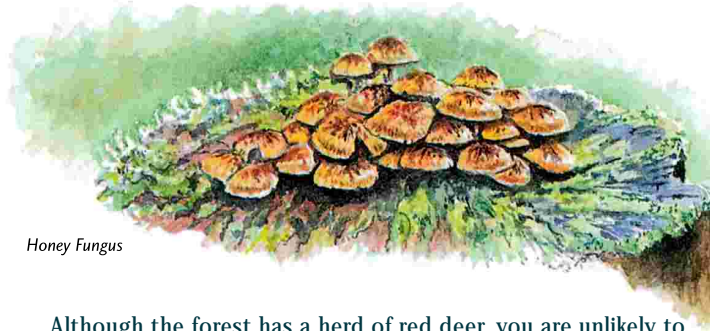
## Wildlife of the forest

The observant eye will find a great variety of plants and animals in the forest. You may see the animals themselves or come across tell tale signs that the animals have left behind such as droppings, chewed pine cones, or tracks in snow or soft mud.

The roadside verges contain many plants such as bilberry, tormentil, bedstraw, sorrel, red campion and foxglove. There are at least thirty different types of fungi found in the forest including fly agaric, stinkhorns, honey fungus and the sickener. Some of the wet areas are covered in moss. Look closely whilst out walking to see how many different mosses you can find.



Goldeneye



Honey Fungus

Although the forest has a herd of red deer, you are unlikely to see these shy animals. You may see deer hoof prints in the mud or spot trees where deer have rubbed the bark away. The small mammals of the forest are very elusive but you may see a weasel as it dashes across your path or find a pine cone gnawed at by a mouse. Snuffle holes where badgers have foraged for insects can sometimes be seen in grassy banks under the trees. Conifer seeds provide a good food supply for a number of birds such as tits, crossbills and finches.

The reservoirs are a useful home to many wildfowl. At different seasons you may see Tufted Duck, Goldeneye, Pochard, Teal, little grebe, Great Crested Grebe and coot. The Larch trees at the eastern end of the shore of Trentabank are the nesting sites for the largest heronry in the Peak District. The competition for the best nests begins in March each year.



## forest walks

Three circular forest walks are briefly described below. Each walk starts from Trentabank car park and is numbered and waymarked. Visitors are recommended to wear stout shoes and carry waterproofs.

### Walk 1 ½ hour (1km)

To follow this walk look for waymarks showing a number 1. This is a short walk from Trentabank car park through the forest to the layby overlooking the heronry. Return alongside Trentabank Reservoir.

### Walk 2 1½ hours (5 km)

If following this walk look for waymarks showing a number 2. This walk takes you from the mild low area of forest, uphill to the edge of High Moor. Here young pine on the forest edge are slow growing in this windswept environment. You can see evidence of old farmsteads in the forest where the local farms were pulled down when Trentabank Reservoir was built. When you reach the road at Standing Stone enjoy the fine views westward onto the Cheshire Plain where Jodrell Bank is prominent. The return to Trentabank is downhill through conifers of mixed ages including second generation forest, replanted in 1990.

### Walk 3 4 hours (9km)

The waymarks with number 3 will guide you along a walk taking you from Trentabank, uphill to the eastern forest edge overlooking Wildboardclough and the Cat and Fiddle moors. From this high point you climb further still to pass the hamlet of Macclesfield Forest, with the Forest Chapel famous for the Rush Bearing service (in August each year). After re-entering the forest from Charity Lane, views out across the forest and reservoirs accompany the descent through varied forestscapes to the Leather Smithy Inn at Ridgegate reservoir. Crossing the road carefully, return through lower lying areas of the forest. The ridgegate Embankment, completed in 1840, allows chance to watch some of the waterfowl common to the area.



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## Key

-  Parking
-  Information
- WC Public Toilets
- RS Ranger Service
-  Wheelchair Path
-  Public or Concession Path
-  Concession Bridleway
-  Forest Walk
-  Road
-  Forest
-  Viewpoint

