

# Robin's Den Wood

## What is special?

Robin's Den Wood is a broadleaved woodland planted in 2012 that covers almost 4.5 hectares of land reclaimed from Thornley Colliery. The colliery was one of the oldest in the area and opened in 1835, operating until 1968. The Gore Burn flows through the woodland. The name dates back to the 13th Century and comes from 'Goreburne', the name given to a large area of wet, marshy moorland to the west of Shotton. The wood sits within Gore Burn Local Nature Reserve.

Local school children helped plant the trees and name the wood. The trees here are all native species such as oak, birch, willow and alder. These are most suitable for this area and an excellent way to help local wildlife, providing sources of food, places of shelter and safety from predators.

Native woodland is one of our richest habitats for wildlife, supporting everything from plants, lichens and fungi to insects, butterflies, small mammals and birds. Although the trees are just small saplings and it may not feel and look like woodland yet, it is still an important haven for wildlife. Wildlife most likely to be found here includes reed bunting, yellowhammer, short eared owl and water vole.

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Drawing by  
Callan Simkins,  
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Hare



Short eared owl



Burnet moth



Bank vole



Yellowhammer



Meadow brown  
butterfly

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[woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk)

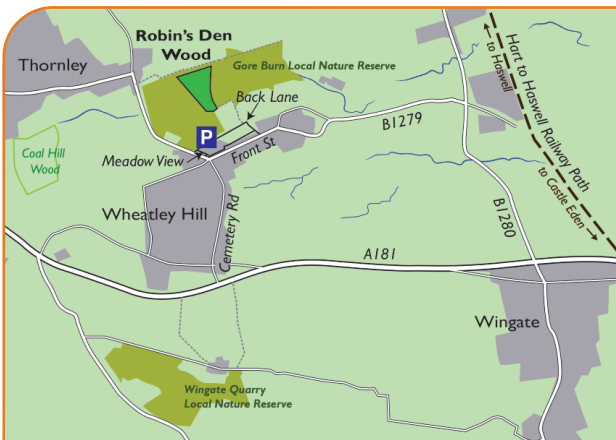
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## Enjoying this wood

Robin's Den Wood can easily be enjoyed as part of a longer route using the extensive network of paths and old railway lines. Heading south through the village of Wheatley Hill is the Heritage Centre, a small building of architectural beauty which houses a permanent exhibition of an East Durham colliery home. South of the A181 there are a couple of paths leading to Wingate Quarry Local Nature Reserve. The grassland here is known as Magnesian Limestone grassland and is unique and internationally important. Wingate Quarry contains over 34 species of wildflowers including common spotted orchid, birdsfoot trefoil, quaking grass and butterwort. Butterwort is a carnivorous plant which feeds on flies.

To the east of the site you can get on to the Haswell to Hart railway path. This runs through peaceful countryside for walkers and cyclists, linking up to Monk Hesleden, Castle Eden, south to Wynyard Woodland Park, and north as far as Sunderland.

This new wood is part of a unique group created in honour of Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee. Long after the celebrations, the trees will continue to grow and the wood will become richer and more diverse with each passing season. Sixty years from now children involved in planting the wood could be showing their children and grandchildren the trees they planted.



**Area:** 4.5 hectares (11 acres)

**Grid Reference:** NZ 375 396

**Map:** Ordnance Survey Explorer 305

**Directions:** The site is about three miles west of Peterlee. Leave the A19 near Wingate and head west for a couple of miles to Wheatley Hill. Turn right onto Cemetery Road which takes you through the centre of the village. This turns in to Woodlands Avenue – at the end cross over Front Street and head down First Street. Take the first right along Meadow View which runs into Black Lane near the greyhound track. Access to the site is along a path near the bend in the road.

**Parking:** Along Meadow View or Black Lane. **Dogs:** Do not allow your dog to foul the paths and please pick up after your dog.



If you enjoyed your trip to this wood and would like to discover more woodland nearby, go to [VisitWoods.org.uk](http://VisitWoods.org.uk)