



# SUNNINGDALE PARK'S NATURAL WORLD

Sunningdale Park has been a rare and captivating haven for nature for many centuries. It is now open for you to enjoy where you can discover the parkland's rich biodiversity as the sights and sounds of nature are here in abundance.

Sunningdale Park has rich biodiversity, supporting many species of plants and animals. The wide range of habitats, flora and fauna makes Sunningdale Park a unique and special place to live and enjoy.

Each of these species of biodiversity work together in ecosystems, to maintain a balance within the park. We hope you can go out into the parkland and enjoy the natural world here and observe many species, some of which you may spot have been captured in the following pages.

**If you do venture off the paths, please watch out for rabbit & badger holes and low branches.**





# The Parkland

The parkland contains a combination of grassland, woodland, native shrub and wetland habitats that have undergone ecological enhancement to maximise the opportunity for wildlife to thrive. You will see that ongoing management works will continue to occur to maintain such benefits in the long-term.

The enhancement and management works have also provided new opportunities for sensitive enjoyment of the parkland for informal recreation such as dog walking, jogging and picnicking.



The parkland is largely enclosed by a fence designed specifically to contain dogs as a proportion of the space is designated as “suitable alternative natural greenspace” (SANG). This ensures the parkland can be fully used for recreation such as dog walking and as such protect natural habitats of ground nesting birds elsewhere.



Plan of the SANG and natural wildlife



# Wildlife found at Sunningdale Park

## Badgers

Several Badger setts are present across Sunningdale Park, and this nocturnal species uses the open grassland and woodland habitats for night-time foraging. Look out for signs of badger holes.



## Bats

Bats are known to roost in the trees and buildings around Sunningdale Park, and can be seen foraging at dusk, especially along woodland edges. Species present include Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Noctule and Brown Long-eared bats.



## Birds

Sunningdale Park supports an assemblage of breeding and wintering birds typical of parkland and woodland habitats. Birds recorded include several species of nature conservation interest such as Barn Owl, Red Kite, Buzzard, Song Thrush, Bullfinch, Green Woodpecker and Kestrel. Please be careful not to disturb any ground nesting birds if you happen to come across one.



## Rabbits

Rabbits use regular trails between their burrows and feeding areas across Sunningdale Park, they can be seen all year & more often at night. Watch your step as there are lots of rabbit burrows around!



## Deer

Both Roe Deer and Muntjac Deer are present and can frequently be seen across the parkland habitats. During June/July Please try not to disturb the stags and bucks can demonstrate aggressive behaviour.



## Reptiles

Grass Snake and Slow-worm have been recorded within the parkland from areas of woodland edge and rough grassland habitat. Both species are harmless and you will be very lucky to see them!





# Home to veteran trees

The main body of the parkland comprises open areas of grassland with individual parkland trees. These include a small number of veteran and ancient specimens.

One of the most notable veteran trees is a very large, mature Sweet Chestnut tree (*Castanea sativa*) on the edge of the ornamental gardens that form part of Northcote Gardens. This tree is about 500 years old, dating back to c.1520 (Henry VIII era).

This tree is just one of almost 10,000 trees that populate the estate, which include several Sequoia trees (Giant Redwoods), brought to UK from America by William Lobb in 1853, and planted between 1860-90.

## Woodlands

Several areas of woodland are located around the parkland with the largest being an area of mature mixed woodland in the south. Native tree species present in this area include Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) and Yew (*Taxus baccata*).

This woodland also supports a wide variety of plants and wildflowers including Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) and Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*).

## Habitat management

The habitats present within the park are subject of a management plan to maintain and enhance their value for a variety of wildlife. Ongoing management measures include:

- Removal of invasive non-native species such as Rhododendron
- Low intensity management of the grassland, to reduce nutrient levels and encourage a higher diversity of plant species.
- New tree planting and management of existing trees to ensure future generations of parkland trees
- Creation of new opportunities for wildlife, including bat and bird boxes on buildings and trees, and log piles to provide homes for invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles.



Woodland images of Sunningdale Park