

Hopland's Wood



Location & Access

OS: 122 • **GR:** TF 459 718 • 14.2ha (35.00 acres) • Freehold 1964

Habitat type: Woodland

Hoplands Wood lies on the south side of the Willoughby-Claxby road, about 4km (2.5 miles) south of Alford and 1km (0.6 miles) west of the B1196 road. The entrance gate is beside the road, where there is a space for cars on the verge. Visitors are requested to keep to the rides. A public footpath crosses the reserve on the main east-west ride.

Description & Management

An example of the once extensive oak/ash woods of the calcareous Boulder Clay soils of the Middle Marsh of east Lincolnshire, it lies just below the eastern edge of the Wolds and partly in the valley of a little chalk stream, Burlands Beck, which forms the southern boundary of the reserve and rises in the Claxby Spring reserve.

Oak and ash are the dominant trees, and there are fine standards of both species. Downy birch and alder occur throughout. Wych elm and English elm are also present but both have suffered from Dutch elm disease. The shrub layer includes hazel, field maple, willow, field rose, dogwood, guelder-rose, hawthorn, blackthorn, honeysuckle and occasional spindle. High forest conditions pre-dominate in the eastern half of the wood, while elsewhere there are extensive areas of hazel coppice.

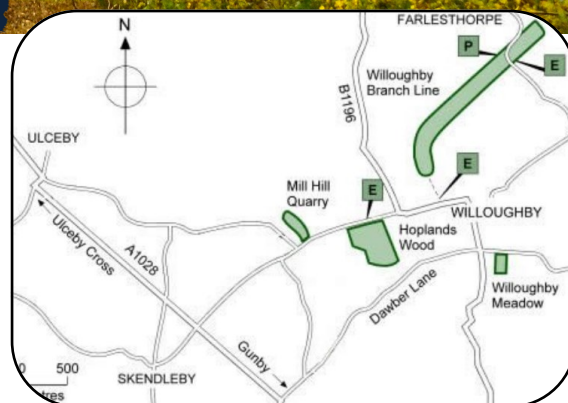
The moisture retentive clays and the closeness of the canopy make Hoplands a damp wood in which ferns and mosses abound. Primrose, sweet woodruff, moschatel and early-purple orchid are common, with bluebells in drier areas, and there are patches of herb-Paris. The rides have bugle,

creeping-Jenny, wood and water avens, marsh thistle, lady's mantle, meadowsweet, spotted-orchid and twayblade.

There is a varied bird population at all seasons. Breeding species include woodcock, tawny owl, treecreeper, great and, occasionally, lesser spotted woodpecker and nuthatch, five species of tit and six species of summer warbler. Barn owls occasionally hunt in the rides, and redpolls and siskins visit birches and alders for seed in winter. Badgers frequent the wood from a nearby sett. A pond in the glade attracts spawning frogs, which abound in the wood.

In order to encourage a variety of flora and fauna, the main aims of

management are: to perpetuate the high forest areas by thinning; to restore the traditional coppice-with-standards system in appropriate areas; and to manage existing rides and glades, open up old ones and maintain the stream as an attractive feature. Considerable progress has been made in the achievement of these aims.



Hoplands Wood

GR at E TF 459718

