

COUNTY: SHROPSHIRE

SITE NAME: THATCHERS WOOD AND  
WESTWOOD COVERT

DISTRICT: BRIDGNORTH

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Local Planning Authority: SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, Bridgnorth District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 703904                      Area: 36 (ha.) 89 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 138                      1:10,000: SO 69 SE, SO 79 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –                      Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984                      Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:  
New site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

The Coal Measures plateau of south-east Shropshire, dissected by tributaries of the Severn, is a comparatively well wooded part of the county. Woods occur mainly in the stream valleys, and several areas retain a high degree of scientific interest. These woods occur on geological strata and soils similar to those of the Wyre Forest, a few miles to the south, and this is reflected in the flora and fauna. However, because of this geographical separation, the Wyre Forest is treated as a separate site.

Thatchers Wood is a predominantly damp wood in the valley of the Mor Brook, with areas of dry rocky woodland on steep slopes in Westwood Covert.

The flora is influenced by the damp, comparatively base-rich character of the soil. Four types of woodland occur, each dominated by different species as follows: (i) ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and wych elm *Ulmus glabra*; (ii) ash and maple *Acer campestre*; (iii) ash and hazel *Corylus avellana* and (iv) alder *Alnus glutinosa*. The main species occurring in the field layer are ramsons *Allium ursinum*, dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, woodruff *Galium odoratum*, enchanter's nightshade *Circaea lutetiana*, tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* and yellow archangel *Lamium galeobdolon*.

There are several uncommon species present in the wood, including great bellflower *Campanula latifolia*, alternate-leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium alternifolium*, herb Paris *Paris quadrifolia*, and thin-spiked wood sedge *Carex strigosa*. The scarce wild service tree *Sorbus torminalis* also occurs.

Landslips have exposed boulders, rock faces and bare clay surfaces which add to the diversity of the site.