

## The Restoration of Blackhouse Wood

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In the Domesday Book it says that about 40% of Worcestershire was then covered in woodland; now it is only 7.4% and 500 hectares of this is owned by the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. Blackhouse Wood is part of the Suckley Hills range, adjoining Crews Hill, and it was purchased by the Trust in 2015. In the 1960s it was almost clear-felled and replanted with non-native species, especially conifers. The Trust has spent the last two years securing features of the former ancient woodland, removing introduced species, and encouraging the re-establishment of native species like oak and hornbeam.

Volunteer work parties work hard each month on tasks such as cutting coppice and maintaining glades. They have also helped with the installation and monitoring of camera traps to see what wildlife inhabits the wood. We were treated to a selection of images taken by these cameras – badgers, foxes, deer, birds, bats and mice. A successful dormouse survey has revealed the presence of several dozen dormice. The long-term aim is to improve linkages and wildlife corridors to other nearby woodlands.



Common spotted orchids in Blackhouse Wood