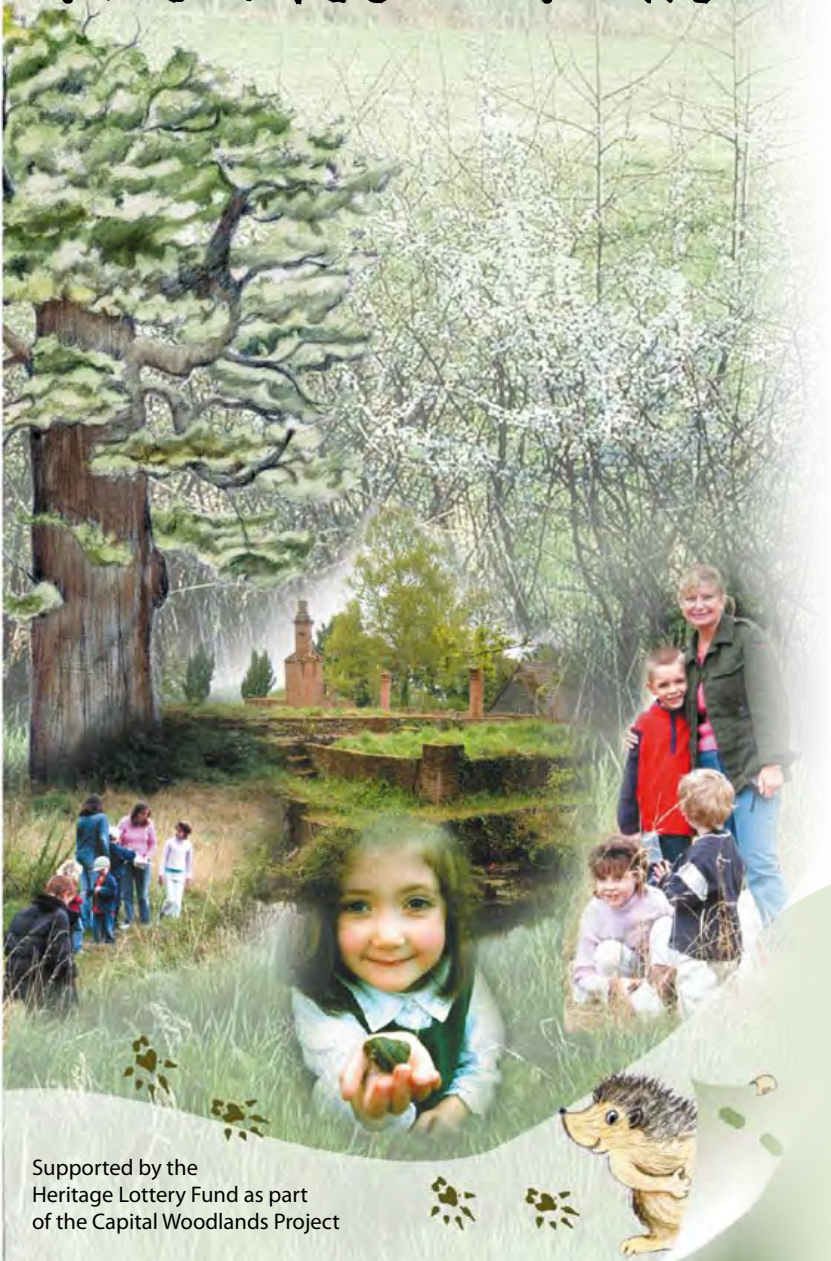
Scadbury Park Local Nature Reserve

The Acorn Trail



Supported by the
Heritage Lottery Fund as part
of the Capital Woodlands Project

How to Get There..

Scadbury Park is on the following bus routes:

R1 From Green Street Green via Orpington and St Mary Cray Station

R 11 Green Street Green to Sidcup via Orpington and Footscray

B 14 (Mon.-Sat) Orpington to Bexleyheath via Sidcup

61 Bromley North to Chislehurst via Orpington

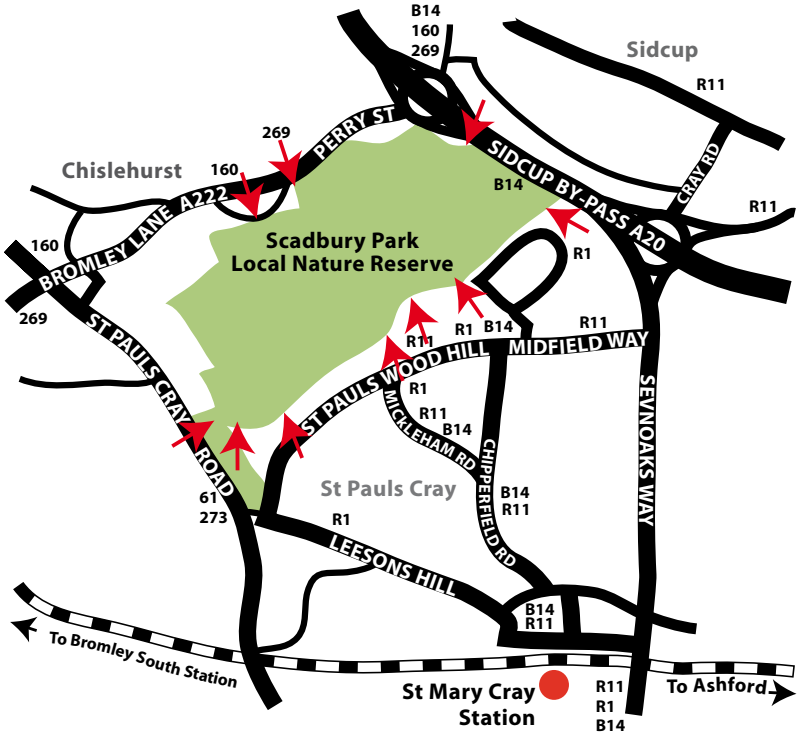
273 Petts Wood to Lewisham via Chislehurst, Grove Park, Lee and Hither Green

160 Sidcup to Catford via Chislehurst, New Eltham and Eltham

269 Bromley North to Bexleyheath via Chislehurst, Sidcup and Bexley

Trains:
Nearest stations: St. Mary Cray, Chislehurst, Orpington, Sidcup and Petts Wood.

Correct at time of going to press.
Latest information from Traveline: 020 7222 1234.



Trains to Bromley South & Victoria
or
London Bridge via Lewisham

If you are interested in Scadbury Park and would like to become more involved, please contact the Friends of Scadbury Park at www.scadbury.net For further details about Bromley's countryside including accessibility and nature trails contact Bromley Countryside Service on 01689 862 815, e-mail countrysideandparks@bromley.gov.uk or see www.bromleybiodiversity.co.uk

Emergency Phone No Evenings and Weekends 020 8464 4848
Emergency Phone No During Office Hours 020 8313 4471

Bromley
THE LONDON BOROUGH

heritage lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

What to see in Scadbury

Scadbury Park has been managed as a country estate for many centuries and although there is no longer a grand house here, it remains home to many plants and animals whose ancestors lived here, and ancient trees which have been growing at Scadbury for hundreds of years. Some of these you will be able to see on the way around the nature trail, indicated by posts, (tick the circles) others may be anywhere in the park and are shown in some of the pictures. How many can you spot?

Score: 10-20 Ace, 20-30 Really Wild, over 30 Absolutely Fabulous!

Looking back to the past

The name Scadbury may be derived from the old English "sceatha burh" meaning robber stronghold or shady hill. The moat surrounding the manor house dates from about 1250 but the house whose ruins you can see was built in the 15th century for the rich and powerful Walsingham family. The estate later belonged to the Townshends, a great Whig family who lived at Frognal, though still managing Scadbury as a country estate. The most famous of the Townshends defended the peace settlement with the American colonies in Parliament, became Baron Sydney in 1783, and later Viscount Sydney. Sydney in Australia was named after him. Queen Victoria visited Scadbury in 1872 and her son, later Edward VII, shot pheasants here.

How to get around

The Acorn Nature Trail is marked by 20 numbered posts (see inside leaflet). It is about 2 ½ miles long and may be muddy at times, with steps and kissing gates as shown overleaf. There are some gradients of more than 1:5 (20 %). Much of Scadbury is a working farm. Please follow the Country Code, keep to the footpaths and remove your dog waste. Cycling, horse riding and fishing are not allowed. Scadbury Park Nature Reserve By-Laws apply.

female male

ON YOUR WAY AROUND THE PARK LOOK FOR MINIBEASTS LIVING ON MANY OF THE PLANTS

A Squash Bug Nymph on yew, camouflaged to hide from predators

B Wasp Spider. This is a female, males are brown and 1/4 the size.

C Stag Beetles- an endangered species throughout Europe, the larvae live for 5-7 years usually in dead oak or fruitwood before emerging as adults

D Wasp Beetle- frightens predators away by its wasp-like markings

E 5 Spot Burnet Moth on Black Knapweed

LOOK FOR SOME OF THE HUNDREDS OF SPECIES THAT ONLY LIVE WITH OAK

E Knopper galls

F Marble galls

G Artichoke galls. All of these galls are the home to the larvae of different species of tiny wasps.

H Caterpillar of Dark Crimson Underwing Moth

I Scarce Silver Lines Moth

J In spring look out for native Bluebells, easy to recognise from Spanish and hybrid Bluebells because of the deep, violet blue colour of their nodding bell flowers which arise from 1 side of the stem, their turned back petals, yellow stamens and narrower leaves.

HEDGES PROVIDE FOOD, SHELTER AND A SAFE CORRIDOR FOR BIRDS AND SMALL MAMMALS AS WELL AS SOME DIFFERENT SPECIES OF MINIBEAST FROM THOSE IN THE MEADOWS.

K Bank Vole

L Dark-Lipped Banded Snail

The Acorn Trail

Chiff-chaff

Trentepohlia

Post 1

In front of you is a very old oak tree, probably alive when Queen Elizabeth I visited here in 1597. In spring and summer you can hear birds called chiff-chaffs which visit to breed at this time of year and can easily be recognised by their call, "chiff-chaff".

As you pass the pond look for red staining on the trunk of the ash tree, caused by the alga *Trentepohlia*.

Alder

Post 2

At the start of the walkway the sands and pebbles of the well-drained Blackheath Beds give way to silty valley soils, very wet in winter. Many of the plants growing here can tolerate waterlogged conditions, e.g. alder trees, which get some of their food from nitrogen-fixing bacteria living in nodules in their roots.

Post 3

Leaving the damp soils of the valley you start the climb back onto the drier soils derived from the Blackheath Beds. In front of you is coppiced sycamore; cut to ground level every 10-15 years, it allows enough light in spring for a carpet of bluebells.

Sycamore

Post 4

There are many yew trees here. These poisonous conifer trees may be male or female. In spring both have small flowers, but only the female trees have red fruits in autumn. Beside the path are mosses- at their best in spring when there is enough water to allow them to reproduce and form spores in capsules, usually at the tips of slender fruiting bodies.

Yew

Post 5

Near this post are many young birch trees. These are short-lived, early colonizers which die as slower growing trees become established. They are often killed by a bracket fungus called birch polypore.

Birch Polypore

Post 6

The oak trees on either side of the path are more than 400years old. In the past when some of the estate was managed as parkland many of the oaks grew straight and tall in open pasture land and their valuable timber was harvested for shipbuilding. Hundreds of species of plants, animals and some fungi depend on oak trees for their survival.

Oak Milk cap

Post 7

Near this post, dead wood is home to invertebrates, microscopic animals and fungi many of which breakdown wood, returning plant food to the soil.

Millipede

Bird's nest fungus

Post 8

To the right of the path there are ivy-covered oak and ash trees. Ivy anchors itself to trees, it is not a parasite. It provides nesting sites for birds, roosting sites for bats and a home for caterpillars of the holly blue butterfly, which eat the flower buds. Ivy flowers are a good source of nectar for insects late in the year, the berries are eaten by birds in the winter.

Ivy Berries

Ivy flowers

Ash

Post 9

To the left of the path is a lot of male fern. Ferns are thought to have evolved millions of years ago- many forms were living at the time of the dinosaurs. They spread as tiny spores released from the underside of the fronds in autumn.

Post 10

This pond is surrounded by Japanese knotweed, an invasive species which is very difficult to get rid of. Its matted roots, fast growth and the deep shade it casts stop other plants from living here.

Japanese Knotweed

Turn left to moated manor

Post 11

The ruins you can see are the remains of the manor house built by the Walsingham family in the 15th and 16th centuries. Edmund Walsingham was the Lieutenant of the Tower of London in Henry VIII's time and responsible for prisoners including Ann Boleyn, Thomas Cromwell and Thomas More. His grandson, Thomas, was a patron of the playwright Christopher Marlowe and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth I when she visited Scadbury.

Post 12

The path turns left here and goes through an avenue of English oak trees. Note the long stalked acorns and very short leaf stalks which are different from the other native oak tree, the sessile oak.

English Oak

Post 13

On either side of the path are old fruit trees, remnants of the orchards that were removed in 1971. In the summer many butterflies drink nectar from blackberry and thistle flowers growing here. Look for tunnels in the blackberry leaves made by the larvae of a leaf miner moth.

Bramble

Small Tortoiseshell

Post 14

In this part of the park you can often see and hear noisy green ring-necked parakeets. A recent introduction, they are breeding here and increasing in numbers.
This may be causing problems for less aggressive hole nesting birds like the lesser spotted woodpeckers.

Ring-necked Parakeet

Post 15

You are now in Little Wood. This is probably ancient woodland because it has some species growing in it associated with this habitat such as bluebells, yellow archangel and wood anemones.

Wood Anemone

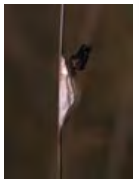
Yellow Archangel

Post 16

Many different plants and minibeasts live in the meadows providing food for birds, bats, mice and shrews. Look for cuckoo spit protecting froghopper nymphs and later in the summer, field scabious and cocoons of 5-spot burnet moths.

Meadow Brown

Froghopper Nymph



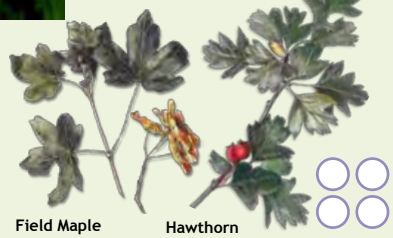
Emerging Burnet Moth

Post 17

Turn right here and as you walk up the hill you can see a new hedge of different native species planted on your right. It includes dogwood, field maple, guelder rose and hawthorn.

Guelder Rose

Dogwood



Field Maple Hawthorn

Post 18

As you look back down the hill there is a slightly older mixed hedge on your left.
Look for blackthorn, a thorny hedge plant with pretty white flowers in spring before its leaves develop. Its berries, called sloes, have traditionally been used to flavour gin.

Blackthorn

Post 19

There are many big sweet chestnut trees around the picnic area and on the far side you can see the grey/ white leaves of grey poplar. Sheep's sorrel to the right of the path indicates that you are once more on the poor acid soils of the Blackheath beds.

Sheeps Sorrel

Grey Poplar

Sweet Chestnut

Post 20

The nettles and elder growing here suggest the soil has high levels of the plant foods nitrate and phosphate. Elder bark often supports lichens, which are made up of a fungus and an alga living together. Can you find any?

Lichen: *Xanthoria parietina*

We hope you enjoyed the trail, come again soon.