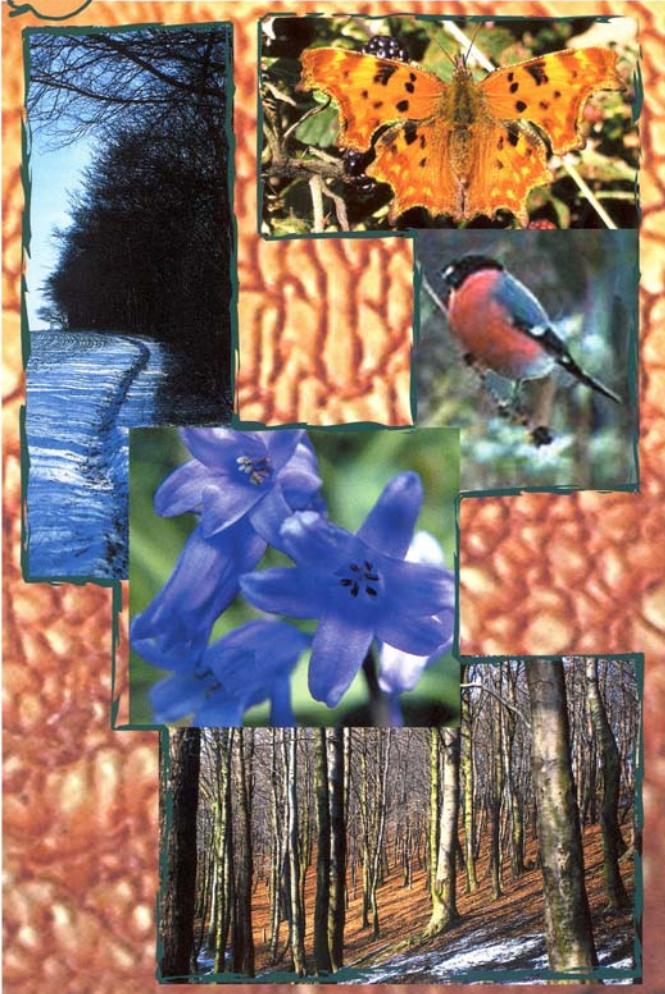


# Herringthorpe Wood & Gibbing Greave

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## What to look for in the woods

Herringthorpe Wood occupies the steep valley of the Dalton-Whiston boundary stream. Much of it was replanted about 100 years ago with beech and sweet chestnut. Some sessile oak and wet alder carr (rare in Rotherham) remains. You can also find one of the oldest trees in the Borough Council's woods.

The ground vegetation is sparse but you may see ancient woodland indicators like wood anemone, greater woodrush, wood millet and bluebell.

Gibbing Greave is also in a steep valley occupied by a stream. Its irregular shape is typical of ancient woodland. Southern Gibbing Greave, also contains mature beech and no shrub layer. The northern side and parts of the narrow valley floor are dominated by sessile oak and its shrub layer contains holly, hazel and guelder rose. There is a carpet of bluebells, and patches of wood anemone, dog's mercury, yellow archangel and other ancient woodland indicator species in spring. Alder grows by the stream.

Both woods are home to many typical woodland birds including tree creeper, willow warbler and lesser-spotted woodpecker. A number of rare insects inhabit these woods too, including two nationally notable crane-flies and an even rarer solitary wasp. The once rare speckled wood butterfly, which loves dappled sunlight, can also be spotted in both woods.

## Management in the woods

The lack of management and the planting of beech over long periods has resulted in a 'closed canopy wood' where very little light reaches the woodland floor. This has resulted in a poor understory and ground flora.

Between 1996 and 2005 some thinning and glade creation was carried out. This will continue in order to increase the amount of light that reaches the woodland floor. In one of the glades three indicator species have appeared - bluebell, greater woodrush and wood millet. Butterflies have also colonised as a result of this work.

## General Information

To find out more about the woodlands' management and maintenance contact: the Woodlands Officer on 01709 822177; or look on [www.rotherham.gov.uk](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk) or [www.heritagewoodsonline.co.uk](http://www.heritagewoodsonline.co.uk)

Thanks to Mel and Joan Jones for their help in creating this leaflet. Mel's book 'Rotherham's Woodland Heritage' is available from Rotherham Arts Centre.



## What's in a name?

Herringthorpe Wood takes its name from the hamlet of Herringthorpe, first mentioned in a document written between 1194 and 1199.

The origins of Gibbing Greave are more complex. We are not sure what Gibbing means. It may be named after a land owner like Falconer Wood, which got its name from Robert Faulkener, a fourteenth century lord. Greave is the modern version of the Old English (Anglo-Saxon) word 'graefe' meaning a small wood or grove. In the late Middle Ages, it was known as Gibbon Grove and over time its name has changed.



Red campion

## History

In the late Middle Ages Gibbon Grove belonged to Rotherham College, a religious institution founded in 1482. Shortly before Henry VIII dissolved the College in the late 1540s, the wood became the property of the wealthy Swift family. Ownership had passed to the Duke of Norfolk by the seventeenth century and it was recorded among his spring (coppice) woods in 1676. We believe the wood along with Herringthorpe Wood was bought by the Borough Council from the Foljambe family in 1940.



The oldest surviving map of Herringthorpe Wood is from 1798 when all the open land in Dalton township was being enclosed.

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## Charcoal makers

It would have been a common sight to see charcoal makers and their families living in the woods throughout the 'coaling' season, which was between April and November.

