

Post 20

DORMOUSE WOODLAND

You are now standing in another area of hazel coppice. Dormice are living in this and other parts of Devilsden Wood.

They are a nationally rare and protected species.

We are

particularly fortunate to find them in Happy Valley, as they have become extinct in many counties over the last 100 years or so.



Dormice are rarely seen, as they are nocturnal, hibernate during the winter months and, when they are awake, spend most of their lives in the tree tops. They need a wide variety of foods, including flowers, pollen, fruits, insects and ripe nuts to see them through the year. Coppicing provides enough diversity within a wood to provide all these different foods, and ongoing coppice management of these woods will be beneficial for their survival.



A hazel nut opened by a dormouse

Although you would be very lucky to see a dormouse, you might come across their feeding signs. If you look under hazel trees during the autumn, you may find hazelnuts which have been eaten by dormice. They have a neat round hole on one side with toothmarks radiating away from it on the nut surface. The inside surface of the hole is smooth.

Continue straight ahead and turn right up the steps, leave the wood and follow the edge of the field keeping the hedge on your right (see map below).

NATURE TRAIL MAP

