

4. Coed y Bwl

Castle upon Alun, Vale of Glamorgan

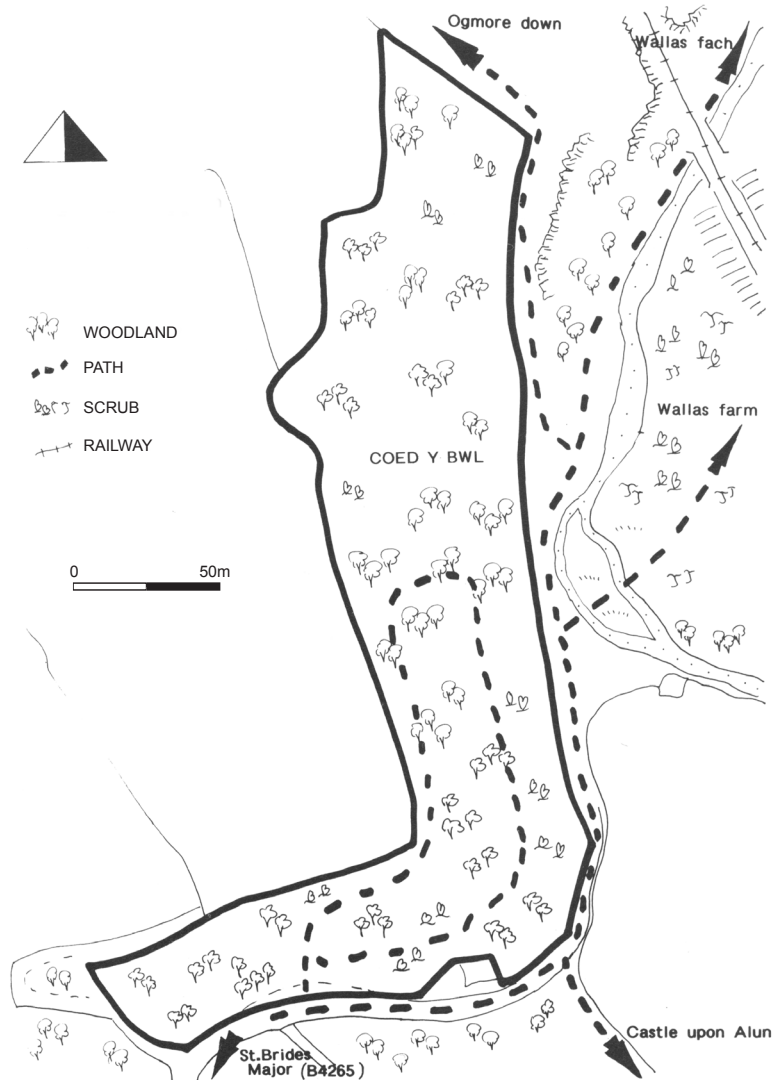
Grid References	O.S. Explorer map 151 Cardiff and Bridgend. Main entrance: SS909749, Site centre: SS909751
Status	The site is a notified SSSI.
Tenure	The reserve was acquired by the Trust in December 1970 by leasehold for 21 years, and the lease was renewed in 1991, for a further 21 years.
Size	2.4 ha (5.9 acres).
Location and Access Notes	1 km east of St. Bride's Major, 3 km south of Bridgend. Minor roads leading north into the Alun Valley from the B426 between St. Bride's Major and Wick, allow access to the reserve. Inaccessible to wheelchairs, but the spring ground flora can easily be seen from the road, and parking is afforded in the lay-by opposite the bridge.
Public transport	Bus numbers 146 and 145 from Bridgend to St. Bride's Major, from where it is a 1 km walk.

Description: Coed y Bwl is an ancient Ash woodland situated on the northwest side of the Alun Valley and overlies the Carboniferous limestone. The wood was dominated by Elm at the southern end, grading into Ash and Sycamore towards the north, with an understorey of Field Maple. Since the decline of the Elm due to Dutch Elm disease the southern end of the reserve has been clear felled, and replanted with Ash, Common Lime and Wild Cherry.

The reserve is best known as a Wild Daffodil (2-3) wood, with these flowers dominating the field layer on the southern part of the wood in early spring together with Wood Anemone (3-5), whilst on the northern slopes Bluebell (4-6) predominate.

The wood supports a range of woodland birds including Great Spotted Woodpecker, Nuthatch, Treecreeper, Blue Tit, Coal Tit, Marsh Tit and Great Tit, augmented in the summer months by Willow Warbler, Blackcap and Chiffchaff. Birds of prey include Buzzard, Sparrowhawk and Kestrel. Tawny Owls are also resident.

Mammals include Badger, Fox, Stoat, Hedgehog, Long-tailed Field Mouse, Bank Vole, Grey Squirrel and Mole.



Management Objectives: To maintain the reserve as mixed Ash woodland, by allowing natural regeneration of native trees, and avoiding grazing by maintenance of the boundary wall, whilst conserving the Wild Daffodil population.

Good times to visit

Feb - Jul	Wild Daffodils
Apr - Jul	Woodland flowers, birds and insects
Sept - Nov	Fungi