

# 11. Berry Wood

Knelston, Gower, Swansea

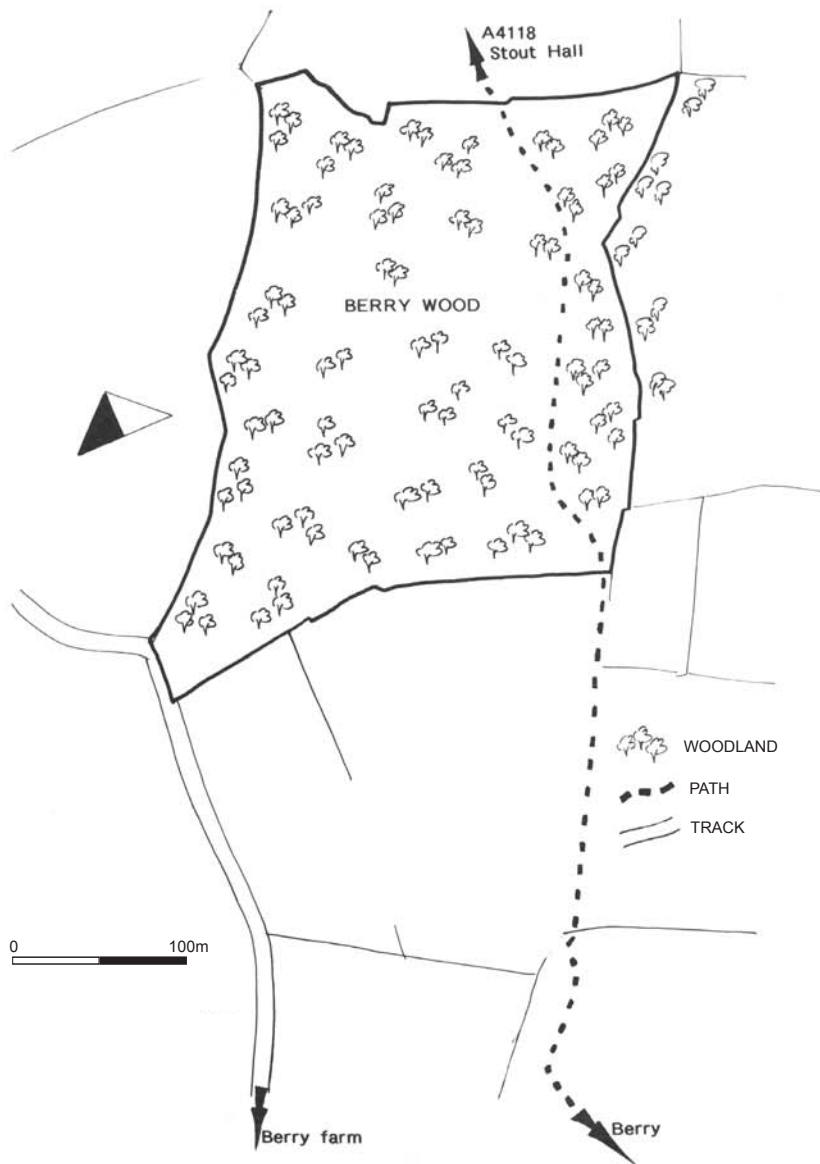
Grid References	O.S. Explorer map 164 Gower. Main entrance: SS475385, Site centre: SS474384
Status	Notified SSSI and covered by Tree Preservation Order.
Tenure	Purchased by the Trust in December 1969.
Size	6.8 ha (16.9 acres).
Location and Access Notes	500 m south east of Knelston, Gower. Access can be obtained by following the public footpath from opposite the entrance to Stouthall south for 1.7 km, or from the track which runs north from Berry Farm, keeping to the right of the farmhouse. A public footpath passes through the woodland. There is no car parking close to the reserve. Inaccessible to wheelchairs.

**Description:** Ancient mixed deciduous woodland.

Berry Wood is an example of mixed woodland, rare in this part of Gower, situated on poorly drained glacial drift over Millstone Grit. Oak is present with Birch, Ash, Hazel, Sallow, Rowan, and Aspen. The site is shown on the 1847 Llandewi Tithe map, as woodland on the western half and scrub to the east. The oldest and largest trees, principally Oak, are to be found on the western side of the reserve today, and the remainder is made up of even-aged stands of multi-stemmed Oak, Birch, and Ash. This suggests that the eastern half of the reserve may have been clear felled during the Napoleonic Wars, and allowed to regenerate naturally, whereas the western half has remained untouched. The tithe map also shows a small triangular orchard within the wood on the western boundary, where apple trees still grow.

Towards the centre of the wood and in the northwest the ground is very poorly drained. The remainder of the field layer is covered in dense Bramble, with patches of Bracken. Hazel coppice, Hawthorn, Crab Apple (5), and Holly make up the shrub layer, with Honeysuckle (6-9) and Ivy. Narrow Buckler-fern, Wood Millet (6), and where the ground is especially boggy Yellow Flag (5-7), Marsh Marigold (3-5) and Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage (4-7) may be found. There is an abundance of epiphytes on the Oak and Sallow, and bryophytes are well represented.

Wood Mouse and Pygmy Shrew also use the Blue Tit and Great Tit nest boxes, and others bird seen include Treecreeper, Nuthatch, Woodpeckers, Blackcap, Buzzard, Goldcrest, Jay, Willow Warbler, and Woodcock, with mixed finch flocks in winter including Brambling.



**Management Objectives:** To maintain the reserve as mixed deciduous woodland by allowing natural regeneration of native trees, continuing coppicing, and avoiding grazing by maintenance of boundary fencing.

**Good times to visit**

Mar - Jun	Woodland flowers
Apr - Jul	Breeding birds
Sept - Nov	Fungi