

2. Coed Llwyn Rhyddid

Hensol, Vale of Glamorgan

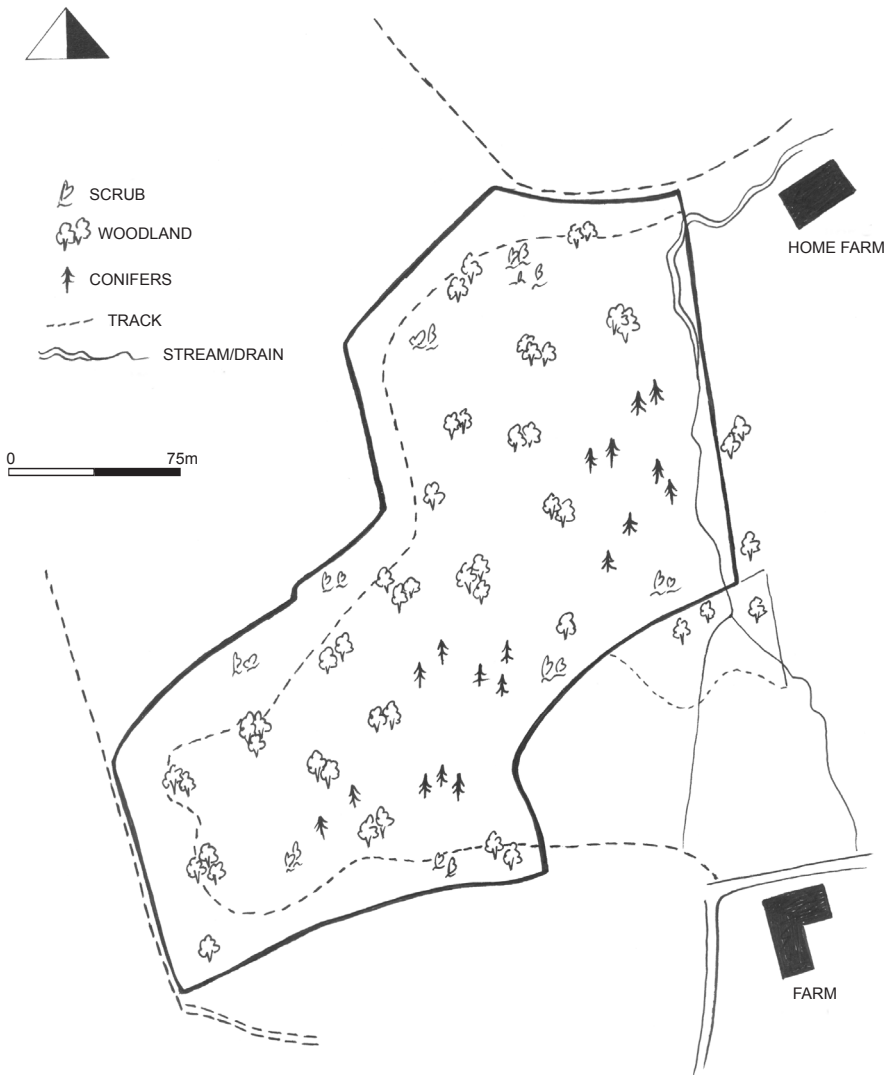
Grid References	Main entrance: ST041778, Car parking: ST043778
Status	
Tenure	Freehold purchased February 1990.
Size	4.9 ha (12.1 acres).
Location and Access Notes	One mile north of Hensol forest, to the west of the road to the Vale of Glamorgan Hotel & Golf Club. As Herons are easily disturbed, access into the wood is only available through organised group viewing days during the breeding season (mid January to August). A stile in the south east corner of the wood is accessed through the gate on the right at the end of the farm track and nearest the farmhouse. Alternatively, a public footpath through Home Farm leads to a gate in the northern corner. Access is by permissive paths and includes small bridges and occasional stiles.
Public transport	The nearest bus stops are 1 mile away on routes to Peterston-super-Ely: in Hensol forest from Cowbridge and in Hensol from Pontyclun.

Description: A mixed secondary woodland supporting a large heronry.

Coed Llwyn Rhyddid is a mixed woodland partly planted some time in the last hundred and fifty years. The canopy is made up of Oak, Ash, Beech, and a mixture of conifers, principally Scots Pine, with an understorey of Holly, Hazel and Rhododendron. The woodland herb layer includes Wood Anemone (3-5) and Bluebell (4-6). The drainage ditches support Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage (4-7). Other plants include Crab Apple (5), Yellow Pimpernel (5-9), Wood Sedge (5-6) and Wood Sorrel (4-5).

The conservation interest of the wood is that in the 1990s it was the third largest heronry in Wales with around 35 pairs. In 2005, 28 pairs were recorded. Nesting Herons have been recorded in the Hensol area since at least 1872. The Herons nesting at the top of Scots Pine trees can be viewed from the roadside parking near the farm entrance track.

The Herons generally return to the wood towards the end of January. The breeding cycle takes until July for the chicks to fledge, and late August for the Herons to leave the wood.



Conservation Objectives: To maintain the heronry by limiting disturbance and ensuring a succession of mature Scots Pine tree nesting sites. To improve the woodland herb layer by eradication of invasive Rhododendron.

Good times to visit

- Feb - Jul Nesting Grey Herons, visible from outside reserve
- Oct - Nov Autumn colour