

Explore Wareham Forest

Discover the famous heaths and woods of the Dorset countryside...

Explore miles of tracks which take you through beautiful and ancient landscapes, where if you are lucky you'll see some of its special wildlife. You may spot a Sand lizard or Smooth snake, and the Hobby, a scarce falcon that visits in summer.

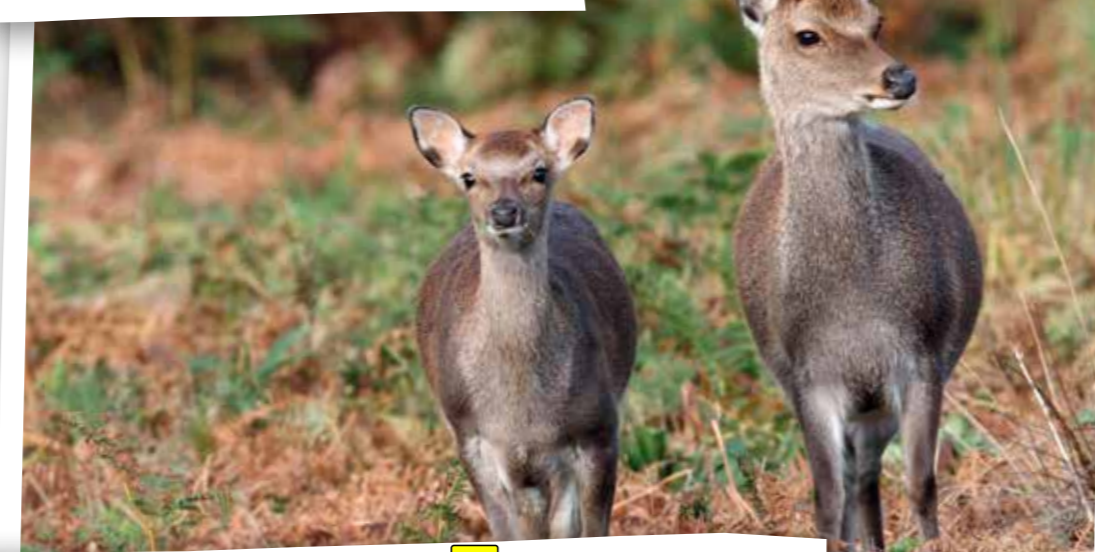
Look out for...

Sika deer

Sika deer were introduced to parks and estates in Britain from Asia in the 1850s. Many escaped to form the wild herd that you will see here. Sika are sensitive to human disturbance and often hide in woodland by day, venturing out onto open heath at night. They tend to be in small family groups for most of the year, but form larger herds in winter.

The best time to look for them is between **October - November**, when you are likely to hear the strange call of the stags.

A Sika calf and hind



A stag calling



Woodlark

Woodlark are a special bird species which nest on the ground. They lay eggs and raise their chicks on the open heathlands and young forest plantations which makes them vulnerable to disturbance from people and animals.

Woodlarks are small, brown and speckled, similar to a thrush. You can identify them by their very short tails when flying. They also have white stripes over each eye which form a V shape on the back of the neck.

Be aware

Please keep dogs under control in the forest, especially during bird nesting season. Always keep to the tracks to reduce disturbance.

Explore our trails

The Sika Trail ●●●

11 km (7 miles)
Allow 1 hour
Grade: Moderate
Follow blue waymarked posts on the ground. This trail has good surfaces and is suitable for most cycling abilities.

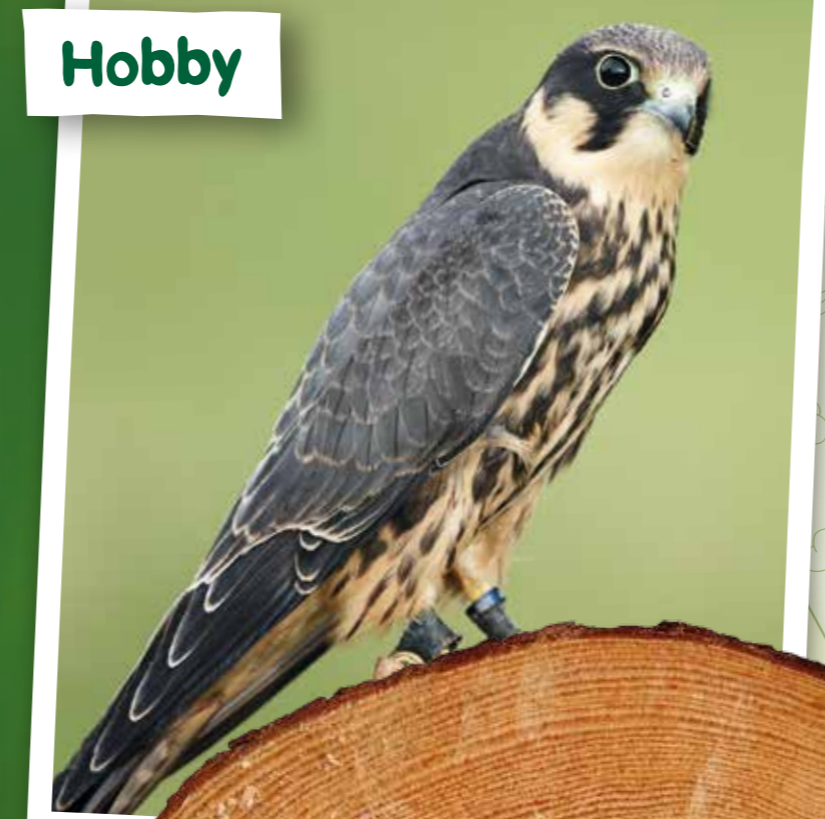
Woodlark Trail ●●●

3 km (2 miles)
Allow 45 mins - 1 hour
Grade: Easy
Follow waymarked posts around a loop which starts and finishes at the Sika Trail car park. This route has good surfaces and some gentle hills along the way.

Key to map

- Car park
- Picnic area
- Viewpoint
- Road
- Forest road
- Public rights of way

0m 200 400 600 800 1km



Hobby

Follow the Forest Code

- ⦿ Guard against all risks of fire.
- ⦿ Protect and respect wildlife, plants and trees.
- ⦿ Keep dogs under control & tidy up after them.
- ⦿ Take your litter home.
- ⦿ Make no unnecessary noise.
- ⦿ Take only memories away.

How our cycle trails are graded

- Green Easy** Sorry, not at this forest
- Blue Moderate** Suitable for: Riders in good health with basic off-road riding skills. Basic mountain bikes. Trail: Some 'single-track' sections & small obstacles of root & rock.
- Red Difficult** Sorry, not at this forest
- Black Severe** Sorry, not at this forest
- Orange Extreme** Sorry, not at this forest

Forest roads

Suitable for: Cyclists in good health. Map reading useful routes not always marked. Most bikes. Trail: Gradients can vary. Surfaces may be uneven or potholed in places. Look out for vehicles & other users.

Emergency info

Name & grid ref. for key locations:
Sika Trail car park, SY906893
Nearest access road: Bere Road
Nearest A&E hospital facilities:
Poole Hospital, Longfleet Road, Poole, Dorset, BH5 2JB.
T: 01202 665 511
In case of an emergency call 999.
Inform the Forestry Commission.
T: 0300 067 4600

A working forest...

Please remember we could be doing potentially dangerous things such as cutting down trees, moving timber or repairing tracks. For your own safety, please follow all forestry warning signs.



Don't rely on others

- Can you get home safely?
- Carry the right equipment and know how to use it.

For your safety

- Wear the right safety clothing; a cycle helmet and gloves.
- Cycle within your abilities.

On and off road

- Expect the unexpected. Watch out for other visitors.
- Stay safe: always follow warning signs and any advice you are given.
- If a vehicle is loading timber, wait for the driver to let you pass.

Cycle carefully & come back soon!

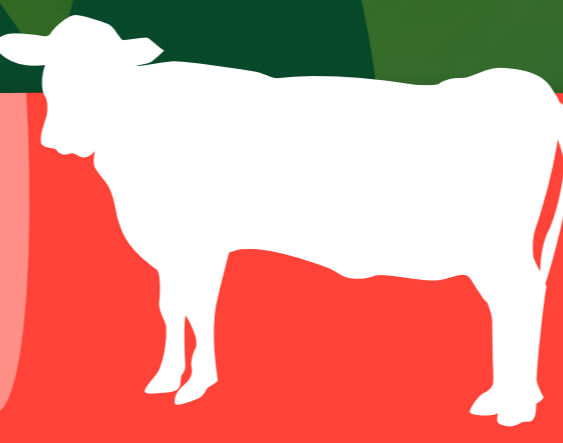
Your safety

- Off-road cycling is a potentially hazardous activity. It should only be undertaken with a full understanding of all inherent risks. The guidelines on this panel must always be used in conjunction with the exercise of your own experience, intuition and careful judgement.
- Routes may change owing to tree felling and other forest operations.

Natural lawnmowers

Cattle in the forest are doing what comes naturally, grazing in a way that is sensitive to plants and animals. This traditional practice helps create a varied habitat for wildlife. The cattle can be timid, so please do not approach them too closely.

Please keep your dogs under close control and close gates behind you.



Enjoyed your visit?

Try exploring Moors Valley Country Park and Forest near Ringwood for great days out!
For more info, visit moors-valley.co.uk



Our forests & woodlands



Wareham Forest is working in partnership with:



Get in touch

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Wareham Forest is cared for by the Forestry Commission for people, wildlife and timber.

forestry.gov.uk/visit