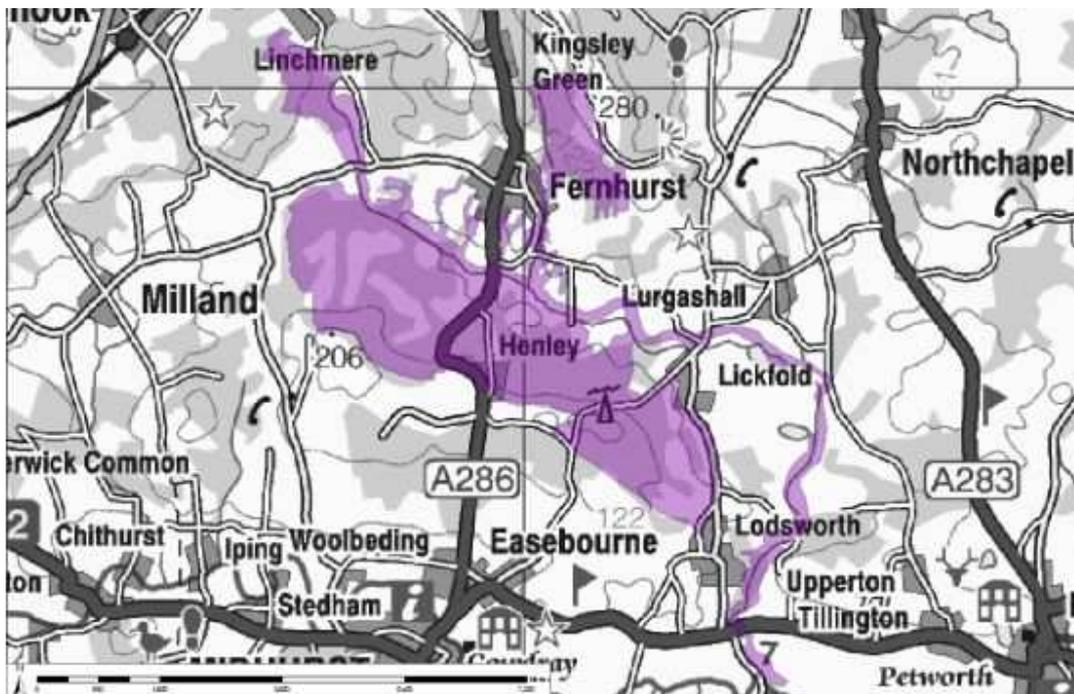


## Snapes Copse and Verdley Wood Biodiversity Opportunity Area

**Joint Character Area** Wealden Greensand and Low Weald

**Geology** Snapes Wood and Verdley Copse Biodiversity Opportunity Area lies on a mixture of Weald clay mudstone and Hythe sandstone, with clay, silt, sand and gravel deposits throughout



The Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) are the regional priority areas of opportunity for restoration and creation of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats. They are a spatial representation of BAP targets and are areas of opportunity, not constraint. The BOAs are the property of the South East England Biodiversity Forum [www.sebiodiversity.org.uk](http://www.sebiodiversity.org.uk). Contains Ordnance Survey data Crown copyright and database right 2010

Snapes Copse and Verdley Wood has been recognised as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) as it represents a priority area for the delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets. This is one of 75 such areas across Sussex. The BOA covers approximately 1678 hectares.

This area is dominated by ancient woodland and modern wood-pasture, there is a small patch of existing heathland yet a large part of the area was historically of a heathy nature. The area is extended north-east by a Barbastelle flightline which travels along streams towards Ebernoe. Verdley Wood is an important area for butterflies. This area represents one of the four core forest areas of the West Weald Landscape Project.

## BAP Habitat

Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh

Lowland dry acid grassland

Lowland heathland

Lowland meadows

Wood-pasture and parkland

Woodland

BAP Species 28 species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

<b>Species</b>	<b>Habitat Requirements</b>
Grey Dagger <i>Acronicta psi</i>	Hedgerows, parks, woods and gardens, Hawthorn and Blackthorn
Tree Pipit <i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Newly planted conifers or open heath, mixed deciduous woodland
Pearl-bordered Fritillary <i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>	Woodland, violets in sheltered locations, woodland clearings with some scrub or Bracken
Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	Heathland, moorland, open woodland, recently felled conifer plantations, mosaic of bare ground, low vegetation, scrub and trees
Cornflower <i>Centaurea cyanus</i>	Arable and disturbed land on sandy, loamy soils.
Small Heath <i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	Dry grassland, heathlands, short turf, parks and gardens
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Woodland, scrub, marshes, heathland, reedbed
Small Phoenix <i>Ecliptopera silaceata</i>	Woodland, hedgerows, open habitats including commons and gardens, willowherbs
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Open countryside, scrubby areas, woodland edges, hedgerows, insect-rich grassland, seed-rich areas
Dingy Skipper <i>Erynnis tages</i>	Chalk grassland, woodland rides, cliffs and embankments, mosaic of bare ground, shorter sward and sheltered areas, Bird's-foot Trefoil
Grasshopper Warbler <i>Locustella naevia</i>	Scrub, thick grassland, reedbeds, forestry and gravel pits
Wood Lark <i>Lullula arborea</i>	Heathland, woodland, mosaic of scattered trees, bare ground, short vegetation and taller vegetation, open seed-rich areas
Dot Moth <i>Melanchra persicariae</i>	Gardens, verges, waste ground, hedgerows
Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Open woodland and woodland edges, parks and gardens
Wood Warbler <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	Mixed deciduous woodland, even age-canopy, little understorey, patchy ground cover
Buff Ermine <i>Spilosoma luteum</i>	Woodland, parks and gardens
Turtle Dove <i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	Woodland edges, hedgerows and open land with scattered bushes
Cinnabar <i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	Meadows, wasteland, road verges and downland
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Farmland, grazing marsh, wet meadows, seeds and insects
Adder <i>Vipera berus</i>	Open heathland, woodland and moors, fens, cliff
Oak Hook-tip <i>Watsonalla binaria</i>	Oak woodland and parkland, larvae feed on oak
Sallow <i>Xanthia ictertia</i>	A common species in most of Britain, occupying damp woodland, hedgerows, heathland and marshy places, larvae feed on sallow
Common Lizard <i>Zootoca</i>	Open woodland, moorland, heathland, fens, sand dunes, rocks,

**Invasive Non-native Species** ten species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

Red Valerian *Centranthus ruber*  
 Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*  
 American Mink *Mustela vison*  
 Signal Crayfish *Pacifastacus leniusculus*  
 Winter Heliotrope *Petasites fragrans*  
 Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*

## Designated Sites

Northpark Copse to Snapelands Copse SSSI contains an outstanding bryophyte and fern community surviving as relicts of mild, wet Atlantic conditions.

Henley Common SNCI two contiguous registered commons containing a good example of ancient Beech woodland, a small stream and some herb-rich marshy grassland.

Lurgashall Mill Pond and Old Mill Farm meadows SNCI one of the best sites in the County for breeding and wintering waterfowl. There are populations of a scarce snail (*Zenobiella subrufescens*) and herb-rich meadows, one of which contains ant hills.

Pasture near Salmonbridge Farm SNCI a small field supporting unimproved, species-rich grassland with an interesting marshy area and areas of mixed scrub.

River Wood SNCI ancient woodland in the small valley of the River Lod, a tributary of the River Rother. There is a diversity of woodland types ranging from Alder carr to Beech and Holly woodland on the steep, sandy slopes, and a rich ground flora.

Swards Meadow SNCI streamside, unimproved neutral to acidic grassland with damp areas and a drier southwest facing bank. The meadow is surrounded by bands of woodland and supports a rich grassland flora with some woodland species present.

The River Rother SNCI encompasses the river, several tributaries and adjoining habitat (woodland, carr and marshy grassland). The wet woodlands are of particular botanical interest with species such as Alternate-leaved Golden-saxifrage and Large Bitter-cress, and there is a large population of the nationally rare Desmoulin's Whorl Snail at Selham Fen.

## Opportunities Identified

- Policy integration
- Ecological networks
- Woodland management and restoration
- Woodland butterfly interest
- Woodland bat interest
- Landowner advisory and agri-environment schemes

### Sussex Biodiversity Partnership

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