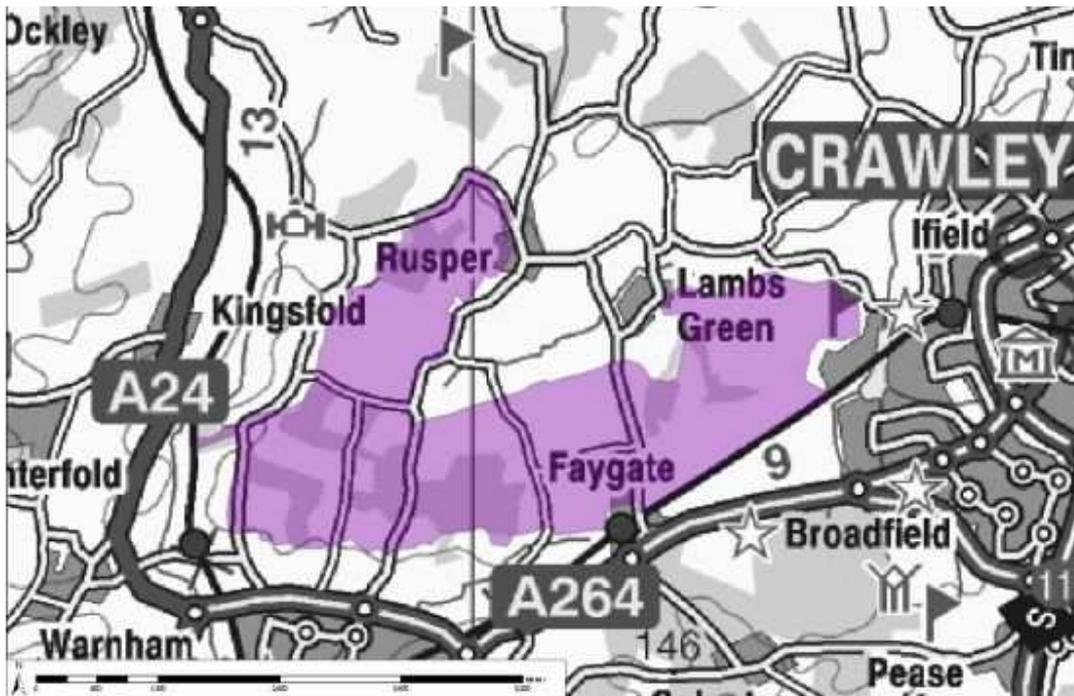


Rusper Ridge Biodiversity Opportunity Area

Joint Character Area Low Weald

Geology Rusper Ridge Biodiversity Opportunity Area lies on Weald Clay with veins of limestone and sandstone.



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. Contains Ordnance Survey data Crown copyright and database right 2010

Rusper Ridge has been recognised as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) as it represents a priority area for the delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets. It is one of 75 such areas across Sussex. The BOA covers approximately 1250 hectares.

This area west of Crawley, is a landscape dominated by small ancient woodlands. The area is bounded to the south by the Horsham to Crawley railway line and to the north by tributaries of the River Mole.

BAP Habitat

Wood-pasture and parkland
Woodland

BAP Species 15 species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

Species	Habitat Requirements
Common Toad <i>Bufo bufo</i>	Scrub, rough grassland, fens, reedbed and wet woodland, dense ground vegetation or litter, ponds, large water bodies
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Woodland, scrub, marshes, heathland, reedbed
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Open countryside, scrubby areas, woodland edges, hedgerows, insect-rich grassland, seed-rich areas
Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Wetlands including reedbeds, tall rushes and wet grassland with good vegetation cover, gardens, farmland, hedgerows, ditches
White Admiral <i>Limenitis camilla</i>	Woodlands, sunny glades, Bramble, Honeysuckle, partially-shaded locations
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Farmland, grazing marsh, wet meadows, seeds and insects

Invasive Non-native Species

Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*

Hybrid Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta x hispanica = H. x massartiana*

Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*

Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*

Designated Sites

House Copse SSSI a small isolated semi-natural woodland of Small-leaved Lime and Hornbeam, previously managed as coppice under Oak standards, and is almost unknown elsewhere in southern England.

Warnham SSSI a brick pit which exposes the lower Weald Clay Group above the Horsham Stone.

Brookhurst Wood and Gill, and Morris's Wood SNCI is Hornbeam dominated woodland situated predominantly on or adjacent to stream valley sites. There is a rich ground flora in places, with a good variety of mosses and liverworts, and number of butterflies using the woodland rides.

Hyde Hill SNCI has a diversity of habitats including semi-natural woodland, hedgerows, streams and grassland. There are a number of uncommon species including Wild Service Tree, Midland Hawthorn and Violet Helleborine. The site is also important for butterflies with 26 species recorded including White Admiral.

Kilnwood Copse SNCI is an Oak and Hornbeam woodland of variable structure, with Small-leaved Lime distributed throughout. There is a variety of mosses and liverworts, and two small ponds although there are a number of non-native species surrounding these.

Opportunities Identified

- Woodland management and restoration
- Control of non-native invasive species
- Education and community engagement, including links to health

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