

Francis Gardens

District: Winchester
Grid Reference: SU 4869 3114
Surveyor: Joel Miller (HBIC Field Ecologist)
Survey Date: 28 April 2006

Brief Summary

The site is a large arable field located on the residential edge of Winchester. Along the north edge of the field and to the centre are immature broad-leaved plantations. There are also some trees and grassland along the other boundaries.

The plantations are varied in compositions. The main trees are ash, cherry, field maple and hawthorn. There is also some dogwood, holly, beech, snowberry, dog rose, elder, conifers and sycamore. The ground flora is poor and of little interest. There is much stinging-nettle, ivy, bare ground, cow parsley, hogweed, cuckoopint and grasses. A few old redwoods and oak trees are present.

The western boundary has many old trees of common lime, beech, sycamore and oak. There is some hawthorn and elder below. The field layer is very poor with dominant stinging-nettle or ivy. Along the southern boundary there is a line of mature hornbeams with holly under. Ivy is the main ground flora species. The eastern edge has some mature ash and some hawthorn shrubs. There is a strip of rough grassland here. This is fairly species-poor. The main species are false oat-grass, cock'sfoot, red fescue, bramble, hogweed and stinging-nettle.

Only the northern boundary is open to fields. There were no signs of badger activity here or elsewhere on the site. The old trees, especially along the western edge would provide good roost sites for bats, but no signs were noted.