

The Moons Moat

Nature Trail

Work Book



Moons Moat Conservation Group

www.moons-moat.online

Created and published by
The Moons Moat Conservation Group

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responsibility for any errors or consequences arising from this book.

We would like to thank the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust for information
used in compiling this book.

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Parent and Teacher Notes

The district of Moons Moat is an industrial and business estate in the north-east of Redditch between the districts of Church Hill and Winyates which takes its name from an ancient moated homestead located in Church Hill South. During the development of Redditch New Town the site was sympathetically incorporated into the town expansion and now sits as a green oasis in this popular residential district.

Moons Moat is now a scheduled Ancient Monument and its future has been championed by the Moons Moat Conservation Group, supported by Heritage Lottery funding. This book complements other documents produced by the Moons Moat Conservation Group to focus on some ecological aspects that this unique site provides.

Although known for its historic significance, Moons Moat provides a habitat for many varieties of fauna and flora. In this booklet we try to highlight some of the wildlife found here. This booklet can be used with the Nature Trail to help all explore and learn.

Derek Coombes

Chairman

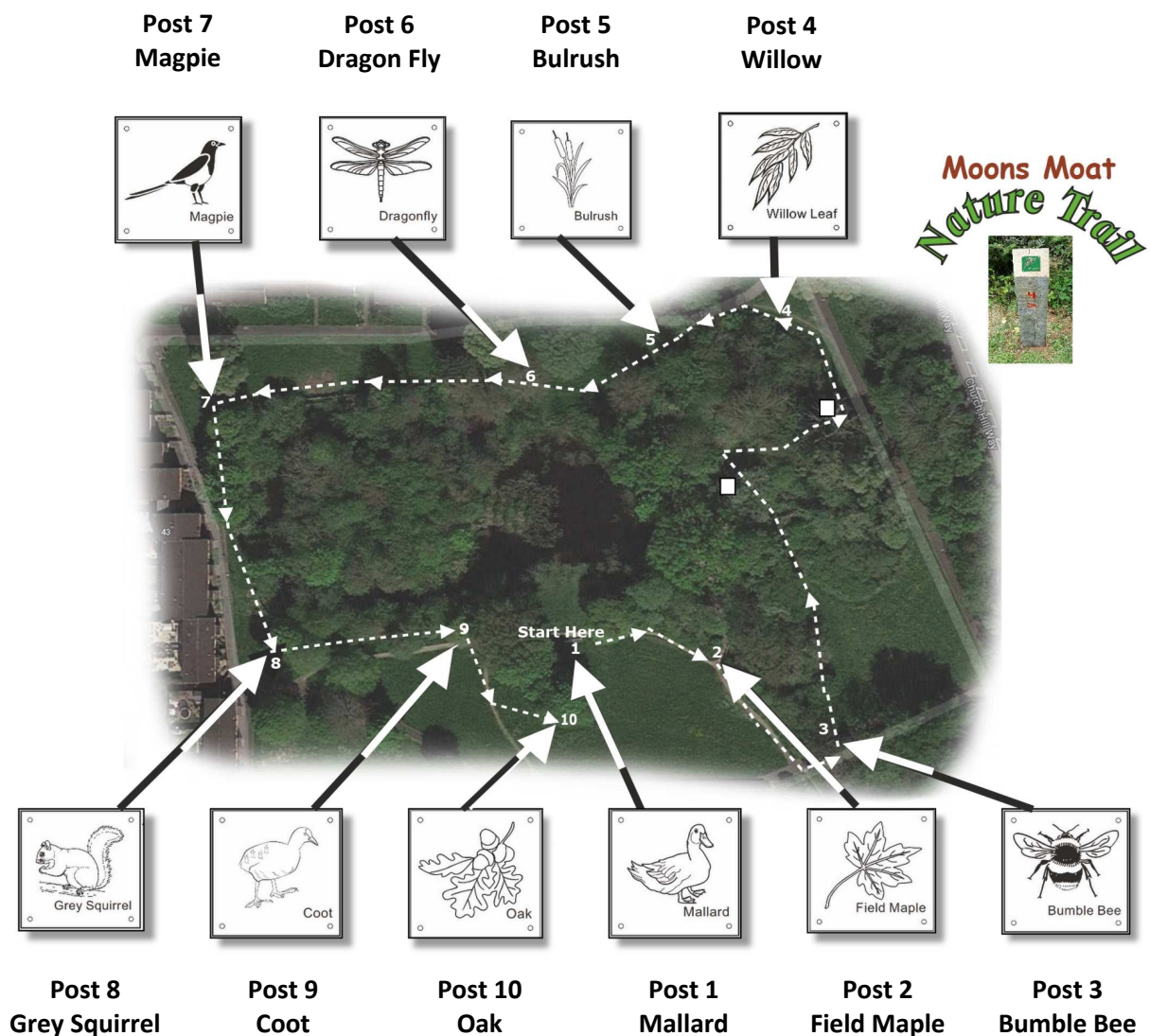
Moons Moat Conservation Group

Welcome to the Nature Trail

The Nature Trail will take you around the moat and the common land to the east of the brook.

Start the Nature Trail at the seat on the south side of the moat and follow the ten numbered posts in an anti-clockwise direction around the site.

This book and the Nature Trail will introduce you to the site and its eco-system. Try to find-out even more from other sources.



What to See

The following list is of the plants, trees and animals which may be seen at Moons Moat. As you walk around the moat there are 10 “rubbing posts” where, with a pencil or crayon, you can copy(rub) the outline of some of these wildlife species. Copy them into the square on the appropriate page.

Can you spot all ten? For those you cannot see, perhaps you can find a drawing in a book or on your computer which you could copy.



- Post 1 – Mallard
- Post 2 – Field Maple
- Post 3 – Bumble Bee
- Post 4 – Willow
- Post 5 – Bulrush
- Post 6 – Dragonfly
- Post 7 – Magpie
- Post 8 – Grey Squirrel
- Post 9 – Coot
- Post 10 – Oak



“Brass Rubbing?”

Our Nature Trail offers you the opportunity to “rub” the metal plaque on each marker post with a pencil or wax crayon to copy images which can be found here.

How to “Brass Rub” the Nature Trail Plaques

You will need this workbook or blank sheets of paper, wax crayons or soft pencils (several in case they break), a soft brush or cloth and, if possible, masking tape.

Gently brush or wipe the plaque to remove any small pieces of gravel, grit and dust.

- Hold the page of the booklet or spread a sheet of paper so that it completely covers the plaque and keep it in place with masking tape when you start rubbing.
- Rub the paper gently with the wax crayon of your colour choice. Using the side of the crayon makes a wider rubbing on the plaque. Enjoy seeing the image being re-created.
- When your rubbings are completed, remove the tape and close the book or roll the paper carefully so that it is not crumpled.
- Make sure you clean up and take all your rubbish with you – so that all who follow you will also feel welcome to visit.



Post 1 – Mallard

The much-loved mallard is our most familiar duck, found across town and country. There is at least one breeding pair here. If you feed the ducks, please don't feed them bread - it's not good for them! Instead, they love eating sweetcorn, lettuce, oats and seeds.

***Your Mallard*****Question:**

What is the male mallard called?

Post 2 – Field Maple

The field maple is a sturdy broadleaf tree most often found in hedgerows and on the edge of woods. Like the Sycamore, Field Maple produce winged seed pods which spin-off in Autumn. The tree supports caterpillars, aphids, and all their predators. The tree has been prized for carved work such as bowls.



Your Field Maple

Question:

What country has a maple leaf on its national flag?

Post 3 - Bumble Bee

These large, hairy bees are generally black with yellow banding. Look closely at flowering plants in Summer and you'll probably spot several species. They are social insects, living in colonies of up to 200 workers. They are important pollinators of many plants and fruiting trees.



Your Bumble Bee

Question:

What sweet, sugary substance do Bumble Bees make?.

Post 4 – Willow

Willows are found mainly on moist soils. Well known for their 'weeping' shapes and furry catkins, they have a watery bark, which is soft and tough. Their flexible twigs and slender young branches have often been used for hedging and for sculptures. Their large roots are remarkable for their toughness, size, and ability to survive, even when exposed.

***Your Willow*****Question:**

What other items are made from Willow?

Post 5 – Bulrush

Great reedmace is familiar to many of us as the 'bulrush'. Look for its tall stems, sausage-like, brown flower heads and green, flat leaves at the water's edge. Historically the plant has been used as a medicine – as a poultice for sores and its dried pollen is said to be an anti-coagulant.



Your Bulrush

Question:

What are Bulrushes also called?

Post 6 – Dragonfly

Dragonflies are insects which are “unequal-winged” because the back wings are broader than the front wings. In Great Britain and Ireland there are about 30 species. The adult fly has multi-lensed eyes, two pairs of transparent wings and a long slender body.



Your Dragonfly

Question:

How many wings does a Dragonfly have? How do you know you have not seen their close relatives, ‘damselflies’; what differentiates them?

Post 7 – Magpie

With its noisy chattering, black-and-white plumage and long tail, there is nothing else quite like the magpie in the UK. When seen close-up its black plumage has a purplish-blue colour.

Widely considered as one of the most intelligent animals in the world, magpies seem to be jacks of all trades – scavengers, predators and pest-destroyers. They are omnivores eating mainly grains, berries and caterpillars.



Your Magpie

Question: What sort of objects do Magpies get accused of stealing?

Post 8 – Grey Squirrel

Tree-climbing nut-buriers, scampering grey squirrels are a familiar sight, but sadly these American imports have had a disastrous impact on our native red squirrels. With mainly grey fur and reddish-brown patches around the face and legs, its long bushy tail helps it to balance when tree-climbing.

***Your Grey Squirrel*****Question:**

Grey Squirrels are not the original squirrels in this country; what colour is our native squirrel? Which of the adults do you think are the bigger?

Post 9 – Coot

Coots are medium-sized water birds, relatives of the moorhen. Coots have mainly black plumage, with white bills and foreheads (which has led to the phrase ‘bald as a coot’). They are usually easy to see, often swimming in open water where their large, untidy nests can often be spotted in Spring.

***Your Coot*****Question:**

Why are we wrong when we call someone “Bald as a Coot”?

Post 10 – Oak

The English oak is, perhaps, our most recognised tree, often considered a national emblem: the one for which almost every child and adult can draw the lobed leaf, or describe its acorn fruits. Oaks do not produce acorns until they are about 40 years old and can continue to great ages. A widespread tree, it is prized for its wood and was for centuries associated with ship-building.

***Your Oak*****Question:**

Complete the well-known saying: 'Great oaks from little grow'.

You May Also See At Moons Moat

We have only room for ten posts at Moons Moat but as you walk around you may see other wildlife. Perhaps one of these:-

Greater Spotted Woodpecker

The 'drumming' of a greater spotted woodpecker is a familiar sound in our woodlands, parks and gardens. It is a form of communication, mostly used to mark territories and as a form of display in the Spring.



Hedgehog



Considered a gardener's best friend, the hedgehog will happily Hoover-up slugs when roaming here by the moat. Covered in spines, hedgehogs like to eat all sorts of bugs, but especially slugs and crunchy beetles. They are most active at night and hibernate through the Winter.

Rabbit

Who doesn't love spotting rabbits hopping through long grass during a walk in the countryside? It is always a treat to see their curious faces popping up, ears standing tall when on the look-out for predators.



Bat



Pipistrelles are the commonest British bats, weighing around 5 grams (same as a 20p piece). A single pipistrelle can eat 3,000 tiny insects in just one night!

Robin

The Robin is the UK's favourite bird – with its bright red breast it is familiar throughout the year and especially at Christmas! Males and females look identical, and young birds have no red breast but are spotted with golden brown. Robins, despite their cute appearance, they are very territorial and are quick to drive intruders away.



Woodlouse

The woodlouse is not an insect but a crustacean, that has 14 parts to its body, which gives it flexibility to be able to curl into a ball to protect itself from danger. The woodlouse is found in dark, damp places usually in woodland. The woodlouse feeds on decaying leaf and plant matter on the woodland floor.

**Butterfly**

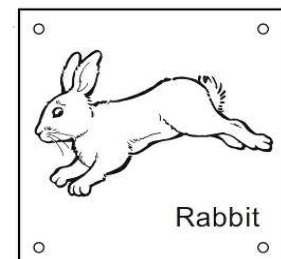
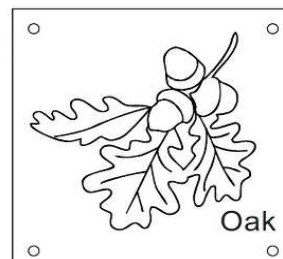
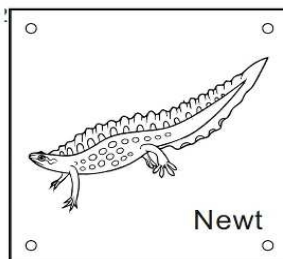
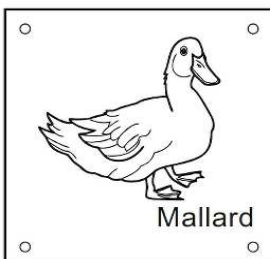
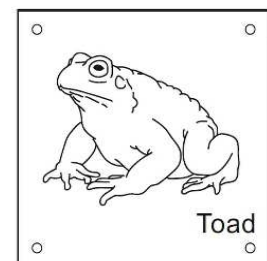
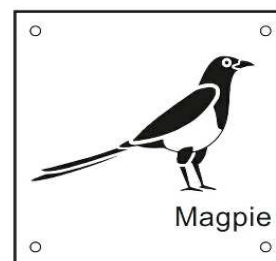
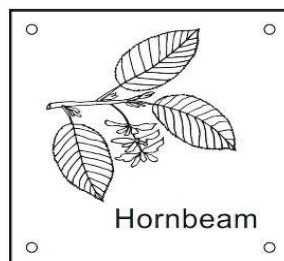
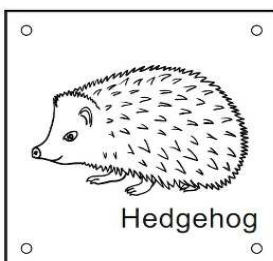
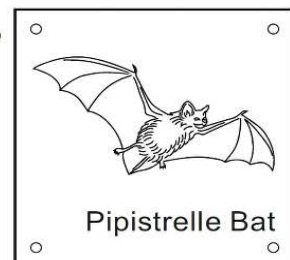
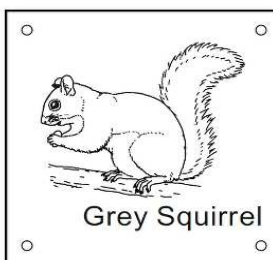
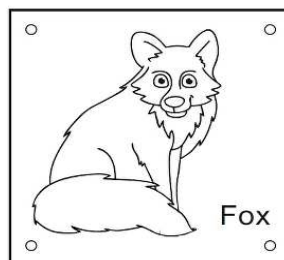
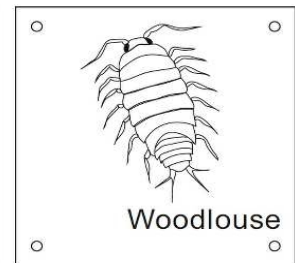
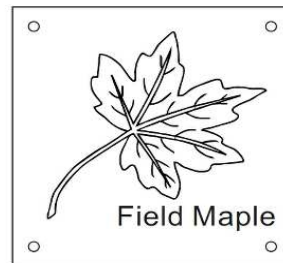
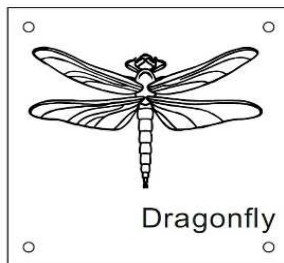
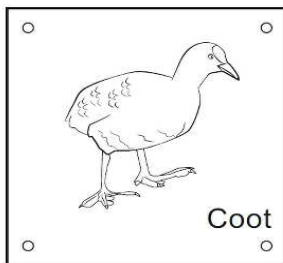
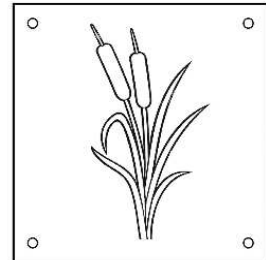
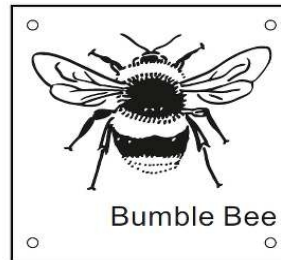
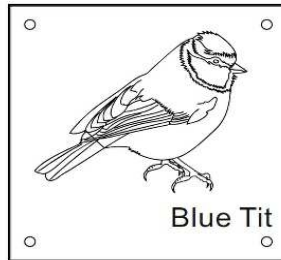
A variety of different butterflies visit us looking for food, places to breed, or spots to overwinter as adults, larvae or pupae. Each habitat will attract a different set of butterflies depending on the plants, trees and shrubs there. The Large White is a common visitor – look out for its brilliant white wings, tipped with black.



The Ducks are a common site at the moat

How Well Did You Do?

Which animals or plants pictured on the posts (or on the plaques below) did you find? Tick those you have seen. Maybe when you come back next time you will see some different ones.



Answers

And did you get these answers to the questions?

1. A male mallard duck is called a **drake**.
2. **Canada** has a maple leaf on its national flag.
3. Bumble bees collect nectar to make **Honey**.
4. **Woven Baskets and Cricket Bats** are traditionally made from Willow.
5. Bulrush is also known as **Reed Mace**.
6. A dragonfly has **four** wings. Dragonflies have **larger bodies and much larger eyes**. The wings of the **Damselfly** are **more slender and fold-back against the body** when the fly is at rest. Those of the Dragonfly remain outstretched.
7. Magpies were traditionally accused of stealing **bright, sparkly objects**.
8. The squirrels native to this country are **Red** squirrels. Adult grey squirrels are larger than our native red squirrels.
9. "Bald as a Coot" - the word actually comes from an ancient English word, "balled," which **means white rather than featherless or even hairless**.
10. 'Great Oaks from little **acorns** grow'.

Well done if you got the answers to these questions.

For More Information.

Why not go on-line and find out more about the wildlife at Moons Moat

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife>

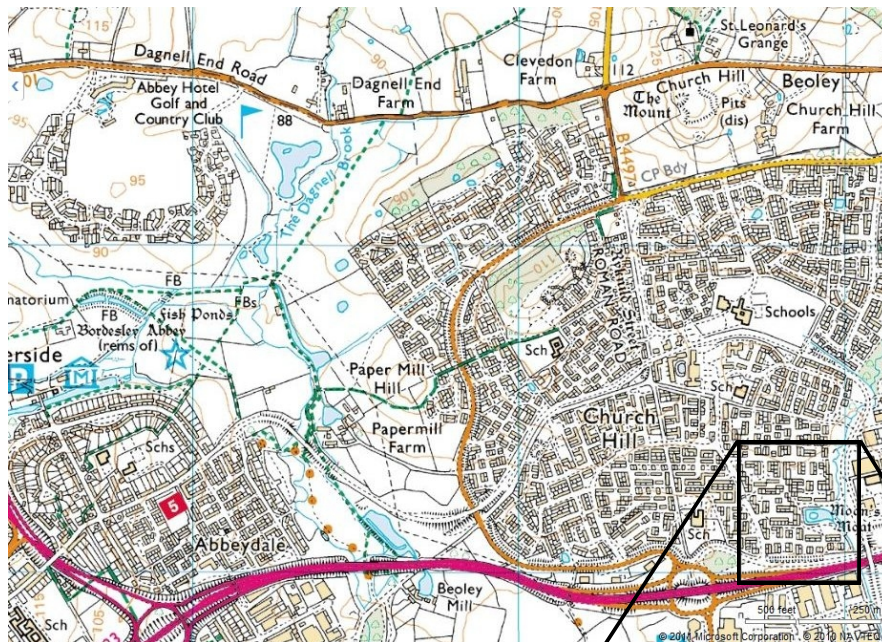
<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife>

<https://www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/>

<https://britishwildlifecentre.co.uk>

The Location of Moons Moat

Moons Moat is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and the site of a former medieval moated house in the middle of a residential area between Arley Close, Barnwood Close and Exhall Close in Church Hill South, Redditch.

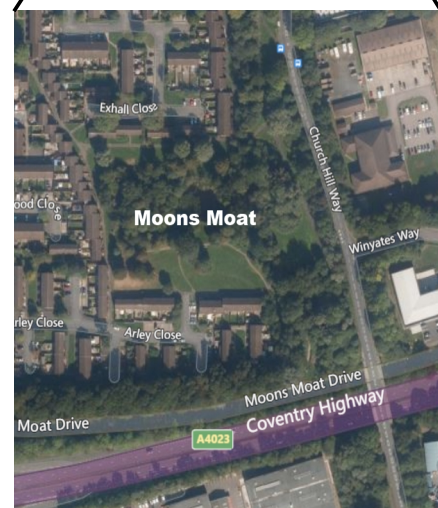


Moons Moat is located at:

SP 06910 68191

Post Code: B98 9JB

Lat. 52.311791 Lon. -1.9000608



Please remember the Moons Moat is a scheduled ancient monument so please respect the area and do not leave litter there. It is also surrounded by peoples houses so please respect their privacy.

