

## **Webb's Wood**

Webb's Wood is the oldest wood on the reserve; it appears on a Berkeley Estate map dated 1725, and the diversity of species within it indicates that it may be ancient. It was probably used during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as a source of oak bark for tanning and for hazel coppice. It once stood on farmland owned by the Webb family, hence the name.

The woodland canopy - of oak and ash - is relatively sparse whereas its "understorey" of hazel, hawthorn and field maple is well developed and provides valuable habitat for small songbirds. There are however some fine mature tree specimens, including a massive ash tree in the middle of the wood.

Most of our oak trees are "pedunculate" oaks, so called because the acorns are borne on stalks or peduncles.

## **Savage's Wood**

Savage's Wood is our largest patch of woodland and dates from around 1880 in its current form. However, parts of the wood are probably much older than that. Look out for a big mature oak with spreading branches. It is unusual for an oak in a wood to spread out like this so it is possible that it once stood on its own in a field or common and that the wood grew up around it.

In contrast to Webb's Wood, Savage's Wood has an impressive tree canopy but few low growing shrubs, so it has a spacious feel to it. The wood is dominated by oak and ash, but also features a number of plantations of particular species. Near the southern entrance of the wood, opposite the school fence, is a stand of hornbeam that was probably planted for timber; you can also find beech. There is a substantial amount of hazel, which the conservation group is coppicing (cutting back to ground level so that the plants regenerate with lots of new growth). Look for a group of wild cherries planted in the 1950s. Wych elm and alder can also be found.

When Bradley Stoke Way was built it went through one end of the wood - you can see a remnant in the corner of Tesco's car park next to the road. The younger trees to the north of the wood were planted in compensation. They are mainly ash but there is also oak and hazel.

## **New Plantations**

Between Savage's Wood and Webb's Wood are several young plantations consisting of mainly ash with a few other species. The conservation group is carrying out a programme of selective felling to open up the canopy and let light in to the floor. This will encourage more ground cover and wild flowers.

## **Sherbourne's Brake**








Sherbourne's Brake is about 200 years old and was probably originally planted as game cover. However, its ground flora indicates that parts of the wood may be older than this - it may have grown up from a copse visible on old maps.








This wood is also dominated by oak and ash, with the addition of crack willows close to the brook. More unusual are the non-native turkey oaks at the wood's summit - in autumn these are easily distinguishable from pedunculate oak by the bristly acorn cups - and a number of black poplars. The original poplar which seeded these was felled long ago and its slowly decaying trunk still lies next to the path.

## **Hedgerows**

The hedges that run through the reserve and through the rest of Bradley Stoke are valuable "wildlife corridors", helping small birds and mammals move between wooded areas. Many of these are the remnants of old field boundary hedges and some are ancient, most notably the "Saxon hedge." This runs on a line between Stoke Gifford and Patchway Common and is thought to be 900 years old. Our hedges mostly contain hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn, and include some of our oldest trees.

**How many tree species can you find?**

	Alder <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Ash	
	Beech <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Black Poplar	
	Blackthorn <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Cherry	
	Crack Willow <input type="checkbox"/>

	Field Maple <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hawthorn	
	Hazel <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hornbeam	
	Oak <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Oak	
	Wych Elm <input type="checkbox"/>



THREE BROOKS LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

## TREES



*The reserve contains three wooded areas - Webb's Wood, Savage's Wood and Sherbourne's Brake - each with its own distinct character. These are linked by the hedgerows that provide valuable "corridors" for wildlife.*



Group website: [www.three-brooks.info](http://www.three-brooks.info)



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

