

Learn more about the Lost Words of Thorncombe

BRAMBLE: Grows wild in most places in the UK. In Thorncombe it provides food and shelter for many woodland creatures. This plant needs to be managed in certain areas, such as our planting coups, where the young trees get swamped by this quick growing plant if we do not cut it back each year.

CHESTNUT: A lot of the trees around you are Sweet Chestnut trees. Many have multiple stems which tells us that in the past these trees were coppiced (cut down at their base). This does not kill a tree as it will grow new shoots and stems and was traditionally used as a way of sustainably harvesting wood for building, fences and furniture. Thought to be introduced to Britain by the Romans, they are not that common in Dorset. Did you see our Roman Road running through the reserve?

RAVEN: Ravens breed mainly in the west and north of the UK. Thorncombe boasts some huge trees which benefit the ravens for nesting sites and the woodland provides them with plenty of food such as other birds' eggs, small mammals, insects and picnic leftovers!

BEECH: These trees often hold on to their leaves throughout winter, a trait known as marcescence. That's why people like it for hedging. Here at Thorncombe, we have a very linear collection of beeches which we believe are an old hedge boundary line. Beech trees live for so long that they provide gnarled and knotted habitats for many deadwood specialists, such as hole-nesting birds and wood-boring insects. The bark is often home to a variety of fungi, mosses and lichens.

NEWT: Newts are nocturnal and spend the day hiding under large stones or compost heaps. From mid-October they hibernate, emerging again in February or March. Rushy Pond isn't the only place we have newts. They also live by a small pond near the Visitor Centre and have been found hibernating under the decking of the café area.

DOE: In Thorncombe we have visits from Roe deer and Sika deer. Roe deer are native to the UK and are small and reddish in colour, while Sika deer were introduced to the British Isles in the 19th century. In some areas of Dorset their numbers are so great that they threaten the habitats of other wildlife.

Lost Words and Thorncombe Wood Local Nature Reserve

This leaflet and trail has been inspired by 'The Lost Words', a book that takes twenty of the words that are falling out of use amongst children - such as Adder, Kingfisher and Bramble - and brings them back to life, through the magical paintings of Jackie Morris and the 'spell poems' of Robert Macfarlane. Jackie and Robert have given full consent for this trail here at Thorncombe Wood and we thank them for their support.

Thorncombe Wood is a mixed woodland and heath owned and managed by Dorset Council. The woodland, made up of Sweet Chestnut, Beech, Oak and Ash, gives way to Black Heath, an area of heathland in restoration with its own herd of Dartmoor ponies. Rushy Pond can be found here, famous from Thomas Hardy's works. It is home to amphibians and dragonflies and is the hunting ground for resident grass snakes.

Thorncombe Wood is adjacent to Hardy's Cottage (owned by the National Trust), birthplace of novelist and poet Thomas Hardy. This area was probably the source for many of the characters, stories and scenes that inspired Hardy's writing and so is an ideal location to encourage families to explore nature and to share the wonder of words and language.

This new Lost Words Trail helps bring words to life that have been lost from the Oxford Junior Dictionary and hopes to encourage people to say the words aloud and use them for generations to come.



the lost words trail

Thorncombe Wood



Fly with me around Thorncombe Wood
and look for Lost Words, say them aloud,
make them louder for all to hear

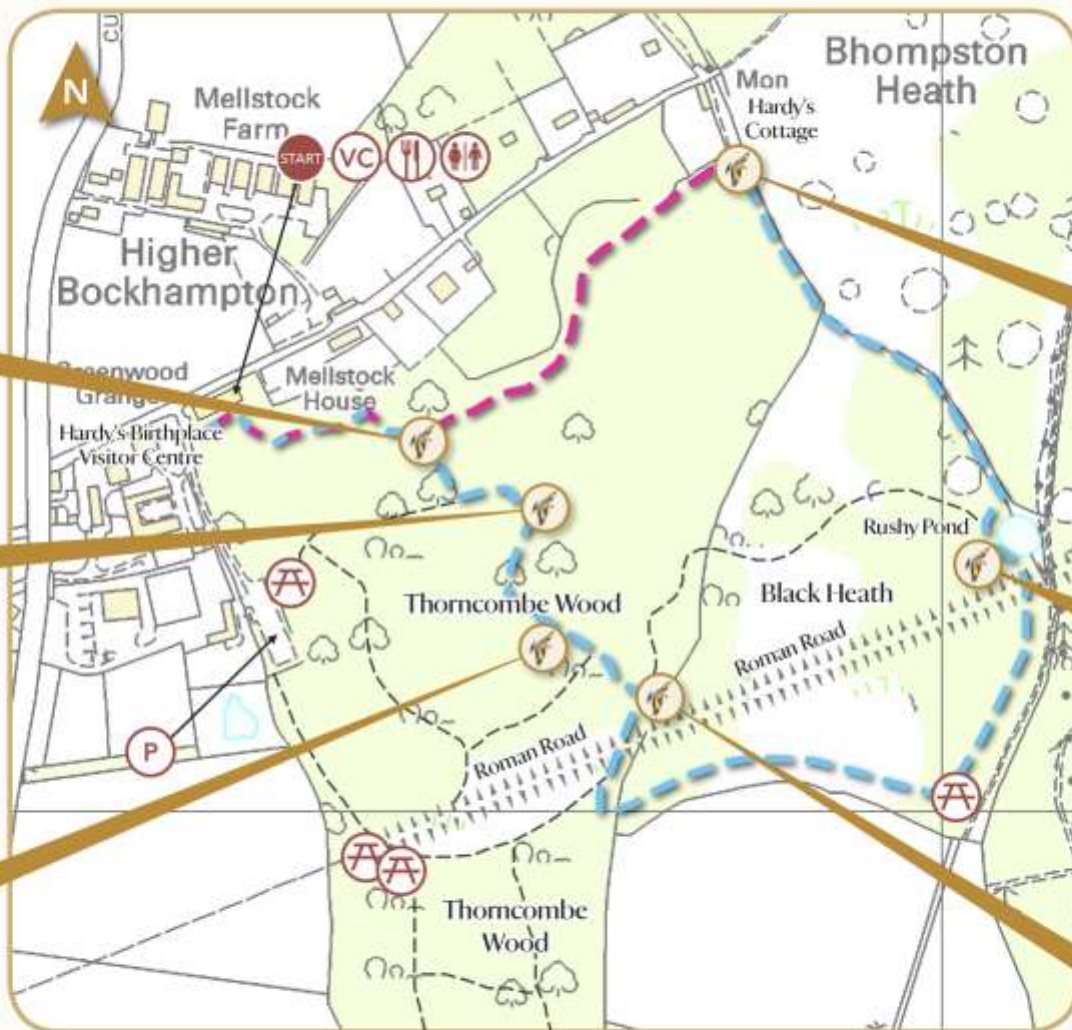
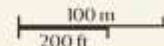
The Lost Words Trail



Follow the pink and blue waymarkers in the reserve using this map and look out for the Lost Words symbol

KEY

- Pink route (~0.3 miles)
- Blue route (0.9 miles)
- Other paths
- Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre
- Cafe
- Parking
- Toilets
- Picnic benches



BRAMBLE

Bramble is a food source for honey bees and bumblebees and other wild animals. Its leaves are eaten by certain caterpillars and some grazing mammals, especially deer.

What do you like most about bramble?

CHESTNUT

Tall, multi-stemmed trees can be found in this area. Find the tree with the most stems. Use your hands to explore the bark and think of words to describe the tree or your feelings about the tree.

RAVEN

Ravens are massive with a wingspan of up to 150cm. Even the fledglings are enormous, and the nest can be 2m wide! Ravens have nested here at Thorncombe; fingers crossed they nest again next spring.

What sound do ravens make?

DOE

This is the word for a female Roe deer. Both Roe and Sika deer visit our woodland through the year. They are timid and secretive. Let us know if you see one while out today.

NEWT

Newts spend spring time swimming around in Rushy Pond looking for mates. By autumn, they are out of the water feeding upon insects, slugs and spiders ready to overwinter under nearby logs. Find the sign to discover what a baby newt is called.

BEECH

These sky-reaching, grey barked trees around you are both male and female at the same time; they are monoecious - that's a long word! The wind blows pollen from the male to the female flowers to make the beech nuts. These nuts in turn feed the woodland animals and enrich the soil beneath your feet.

DORSET DIALECT

Can you join the old Dorset dialect words to the modern words we use today?

Tinklebobs
Airmouse
Dumbledore
Holm

Holly
Ladybird
Walk
Robin

God Almighty's Cow
Reddick
Slinger
Ralc

Fircone
Bumblebee
Bat
Icicles