

This reserve is on the south facing hillside at the end of the Holtspur Valley opposite the Holtspur Bank Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

The two meadows are managed by cutting and grazing to encourage the growth of wild flowers, and prevent coarser grasses taking over.

This sometimes involves cutting them in late summer and removing the hay to prevent the soil becoming enriched. Grazing is vital for maintaining the best grassland habitat conditions for plants and insects. Most of the grazing here takes place with sheep over the winter but at times other stock including horses, might be used and even light grazing during summer months. Temporary fencing is sometimes used for controlling the patterns of grazing – a necessity on small sites. This will usually be seen in winter surrounding the main scrape. Here, we have exposed the underlying chalk to create an ideal habitat for Horseshoe Vetch and Kidney Vetch to grow, the foodplants for caterpillars of the Chalkhill Blue and Small Blue butterflies.

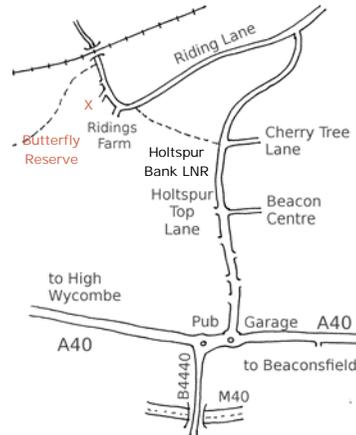


Photo © Jim Asher

Pictured above, a male Chalkhill Blue butterfly. After being absent from Holtspur Valley for many years, this species has been seen on the reserve every year since 2011. Flying from late June onwards, the females have been seen laying eggs on the plants established in the scrapes for them, and we hope that a colony will become established here.

Holtspur Bottom and the nearby Holtspur Bank Local Nature Reserve (LNR) are supported by a Higher Level Stewardship Agreement with Natural England. The LNR is also owned by Beaconsfield Town Council and managed by their volunteers.

Land owned by  
Beaconsfield Town Council,  
managed by  
Butterfly Conservation  
Upper Thames Branch



### How to get to Holtspur Bottom

Turn into Holtspur Top Lane from the roundabout on the A40 between Beaconsfield and High Wycombe. Continue for about a mile and, at the bottom of the hill, turn sharp left into Riding Lane. The reserve is half a mile along the lane, on the left shortly after Ridings Farm.

The vehicle gate is locked, except for events.

Park under the railway bridge.

Access reserve through the pedestrian gate.

Grid Ref. SU918906



[www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk)

[www.holtspurbottom.info](http://www.holtspurbottom.info)

Butterfly Conservation is a charity registered in England & Wales (254937) and in Scotland (SC039268)

# Holtspur Bottom Butterfly Reserve

*A haven for butterflies and moths –  
re-created from an arable desert*



Riding Lane, Holtspur,  
Near Beaconsfield  
HP9 1BT

# Holtspur Bottom Butterfly Reserve

Six-spot Burnet moth. Can be seen flying by day from June to August.



Photo © Wendy Wilson

This chalk grassland at the end of the valley was almost entirely lost to arable cultivation, with part of the site once used as a rubbish tip. On the initiative of Frank Banyard, Butterfly Conservation took over management of this 4.5 hectare site in 1998. We re-sowed the lower field with a mixture of traditional flowers and plants to benefit our butterflies and other wildlife.

Twenty-seven species of butterfly are regularly seen on the reserve, and over 220 species of moths have been recorded.

The Chalkhill Blue and Small Blue butterflies are now breeding again as a result of habitat improvement by Butterfly Conservation volunteers.

There are three notice boards on-site to help identify the species you see.

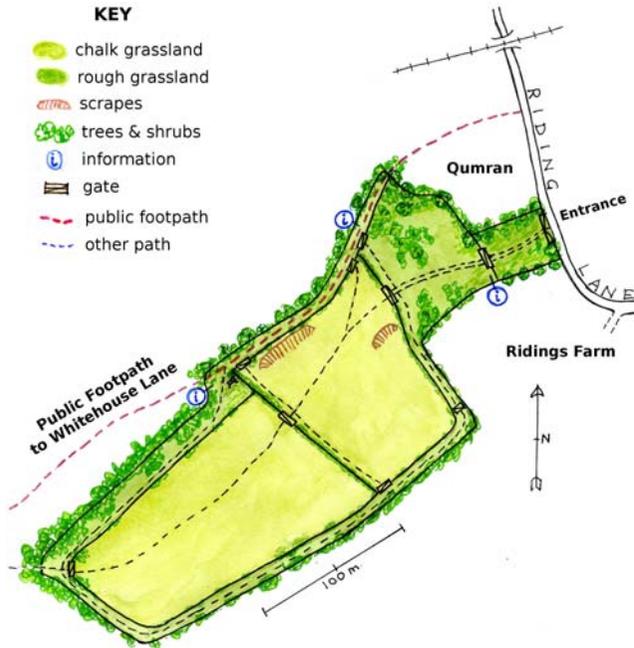
The whole reserve can be visited on foot.

## Events

There are guided walks and moth trapping evenings in the spring and summer. Work parties, to improve the habitats, are held in the winter. Why not join us in caring for this reserve? For more details, look on the Information Boards or [www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/events.html](http://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/events.html)



Maps © Wendy Wilson  
Cover photo of Holtspur Bottom © Tony Gillie



A "scrape", with vetches in flower.

Photo © Nick Bowles



Horseshoe Vetch: the larval foodplant of the Chalkhill Blue butterfly.

Photo © Wendy Wilson

Marbled White butterfly. Can usually be seen in June and July.



Photo © Wendy Wilson

Caterpillar of the nationally scarce Striped Lychnis moth can be found on the Reserve from July to mid-September.



Photo © Tony Gillie