

ABOUT THE RESERVE

This Local Nature Reserve beside the River Avon is mainly made up of three maturing broadleaved woodlands – Conham River Park, Hencliff Wood and Bickley Wood.

Once part of the old Kingswood Forest, most of the site is oak woodland. Some semi-improved grassland can be found at the top of the slope and there are small areas of floodplain meadow, hedgerows and scrub along the riverbank. Some small areas of ash, wild cherry and sycamore have developed in the old quarries and on some of the grassland and scrub areas.



△ This map is dated 1610. It shows few signs of the intense industrial activity that was to take place here in the following centuries.



Bristol Record Office

WOODLAND WILDLIFE

Local Nature Reserves are natural sites that have a legal status. Reserves help to protect wildlife habitats near towns, making an important contribution to the UK's biodiversity. Bickley Wood is an SSSI (Site of Specific Scientific Interest) because of its important geology. Look out for these common plants at Avon Valley Woodlands:



Paul Hulbert

△ The Blackthorn's common name comes from its dark bark. The bitter sloe fruits are an important food plant for birds.



Paul Hulbert

△ The familiar sight of the abundant Herb Robert – a member of the geranium family and one of many common wild flower species.



Paul Hulbert

△ Wildflowers such as bluebells, celandines and wood anemones. These are flourishing as dense woodland is opened up to let more light reach the ground.



Paul Hulbert

△ Bramble can be found throughout the woodland. If managed, it forms part of a scrub layer that protects wildlife and birds.

ALL NEW AND BEAUTIFUL

This is the diary extract of a holiday-maker, 23 June, 1836. His delight in reaching the natural environment of the Hanham Gorge after industrial Bristol is striking:

“The first two miles as far as Crew's Hole was flat, stale and unprofitable but from the turn of the river beyond this place all was new and beautiful, the banks of the stream assuming a bolder and loftier aspect, and being clothed with a richness of verdure contrasting strikingly with the tameness and sterility which so generally prevailed between Crew's Hole and Bath Bridge. The scenery of this charming route was agreeably diversified in many places by the works now in progress for the formation of a railway, intended to connect the cities of Bristol and Bath.”



Barton Hill History Group

THINGS TO LOOK FOR



John Morris

△ The red Pennant sandstone on the quarried slopes of Bickley Wood SSSI.



Sally Pattison

△ The berries of the 'wild service' trees in Hencliff Wood, commonly known as 'chequers'.



Ruth Cleeman

△ This Monkey Puzzle Tree is one of two that marked the entrance to Conham Hall, nr. Conham River Park.



Ruth Cleeman

△ These and other ruins near the 100 steps housed a copper smelter that was advanced for its time.

▷ The black triangular-shaped coping stones on the walls on Ferry Lane. These were cast from copper slag – a byproduct of brass and an example of waste material cleverly re-used.



Peter Miller

For information on the Reserve use the search at: [www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk)  
Two health walks and an audio guide relating to Conham River Park, its history and the bats you are likely find there is available from local libraries.

GETTING THERE

Many new facilities, especially at Conham River Park make parts of the Reserve fully accessible to wheelchair users and buggies.

**On foot:** Several public rights of way link up

**By bicycle:** From Bristol along the River Avon Trail

**Bus:** Services are available along Memorial Road. Then follow the footpaths.

**Car:** Parking is available at Castle Farm Road for walks around Bickley Wood and Hencliff Wood. For walks around Conham and the Panorama Walk please use the car park at Conham River Park. Both sites are signposted along Memorial Road.

**Conham car park:**  
Grid reference ST 629 721. Post code BS15 3AW

**Castle Farm Road car park:**  
Grid reference ST 641 707. Post code BS15 3NN

BECOME A FRIEND

Much of the Avon Valley is owned by South Gloucestershire Council and is managed in partnership with the Friends of Hanham Nature Reserve. For information on events and workdays ☎ **01454 863592**  
✉ [naturalenvironment@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:naturalenvironment@southglos.gov.uk).  
Join in the fun!



This information is also available in other languages, in large print, Braille or audio tape. Please phone ☎ **01454 868004** if you need any of these or any other help to access Council services.

Avon Valley Woodlands

Local Nature Reserve



Rosie Corner • Bat Conservation Trust





## A black and white photograph of two men standing in a quarry or construction site. The man on the left is wearing a dark jacket and trousers, and the man on the right is wearing a light-colored shirt, dark trousers, and a cap. They are standing in front of a large pile of rubble or stone.



## A small boat with three people on the water near a shoreline with buildings.

Barton Hill History Group

## Memories



Foxes' food



**Danger**  
Please keep to paths.  
Keep away from dangerous structures,  
quarry faces and cliff edges.  
Steep paths in places.