

Sussex Hedgerow

Survey

We need your help to find as many important hedgerows as possible.

Sussex Hedgerow

Survey

Hedgerows are man-made features of the countryside, but they may be full of wildlife. They often contain a wide range of native trees and shrubs and consequently, most kinds of woodland birds, insects and mammals, even dormice, use them. Sometimes, part of the hedgerow is a grassy bank which can host both woodland and grassland flowers such as primroses and orchids. A ditch may also be part of the hedgerow structure, with associated aquatic plants and animals such as newts. Better still, when intact they act as highways which stretch between areas of wild habitat, like woodlands or marshlands, helping animals move from one place to another safely under cover.

Britain's tremendous network of hedgerows developed over the whole of the last millennium. Farmers needed quick-growing stock-proof barriers, and hawthorn (sometime called 'quickthorn' because it is fast growing) and blackthorn, supplied this need. Other shrubs were used locally or colonised so that many hedgerows have a wide range of shrubs within them. Many of the shrubs produce edible fruit and these were once a valuable food source for local people; blackberries, elderberries and sloes are familiar to us today but in the past, raspberries, crab-apples, damsons, pears and many more would have been familiar sights, and can still often be found today. An astonishing variety can still be found in hedgerows, all of which will be snapped up by wildlife of some kind. As a rule the older the hedgerow is the more shrubs you find; the more shrubs and trees the greater the variety of wildlife that live there.



Photo by Jim Asher

Some of the species which rely on hedgerows are rare, like this Brown hair-streak butterfly.



Hawthorn

some of the most valuable wildlife-rich or heritage hedgerows in the countryside. This legislation does not apply to garden hedges, or most hedges in urban situations and even in the countryside we need to find out where the most valuable hedgerows are.

Shrinking hedgerows

Post-and-wire fences are often erected alongside, and eventually replace, hedgerows which are becoming gappy because they have not been managed. They have not been managed because although management is only needed infrequently it is labour-intensive, so fences are sometimes chosen in preference. Some hedgerows have been ripped out to make fields larger, or to make way for development.

Hedgerows have been disappearing at an alarming rate. Legislation was put into place to help protect

We need your help to find as many important hedgerows as possible.



Sussex Hedgerow

To help us, please **PRINT** and use black ink

Your details

First name _____ Last name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Tel no. _____

Hedgerow details

OS map grid ref:

Parish/town _____ Site/Road name _____

Please attach a sketch map, or multimap showing the location of the hedgerow and send it to us with the form.

What kind of shrubs are in your hedgerow?

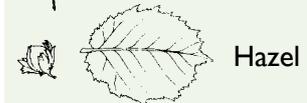
Look at leaf shapes shown. Please circle any you find. If unsure, please enclose leaf/twig. Please list other species here.

Does the hedgerow join with other hedgerows?

Yes/No

Please tick here if you do not want us to store your contact details on our database

Please tick here if you would be interested in taking part in a more detailed survey of this or other hedges.



What is the land used for on either side of the hedgerow?

eg garden/road, field/farmyard

How long is it? _____ How tall is it? _____ How wide is it? _____

One adult stride is roughly a yard/metre.

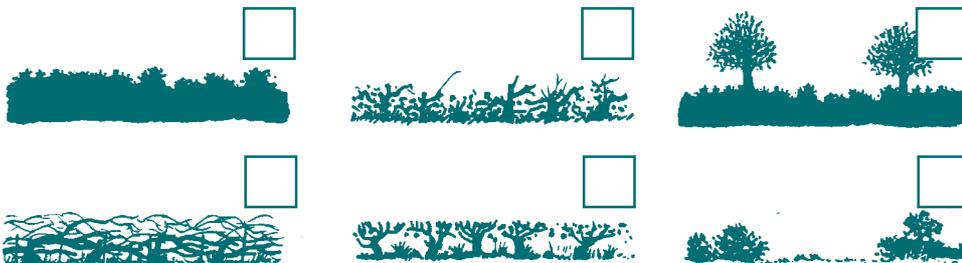
At ground level

Is the hedgerow dominated by any particular species?

If so, which one(s)?

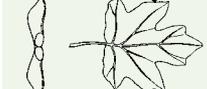
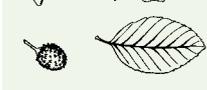
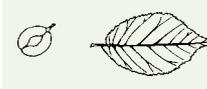
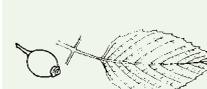
Any other comments on the character of the hedgerow?

Which of these drawings does your hedgerow best resemble? Please tick box



Drawings courtesy of RSPB

Please return this form before September 2003 to
Hedgerows, Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre, FREEPOST, Woods Mill,
Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9SD.

-  **Rowan**
-  **Field Maple**
-  **Beech**
-  **Elm**
-  **Hawthorn**
-  **Blackthorn**
-  **Wild Rose**
-  **Bramble**
-  **Elder**
- Climbers**
- Others**

Drawings by Pete Edwards

Moisten edge to stick

Moisten edge to stick

Moisten edge to stick

No need to
use a stamp
but it will
save us
money if
you do

Hedgerows
Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
FREEPOST
Woods Mill
HENFIELD
West Sussex
BN5 9SD

Doing the Survey

Do not put yourself in danger at any time, do not survey hedgerows on highways without a footway and always seek the farmer's/owner's permission before entering private land.

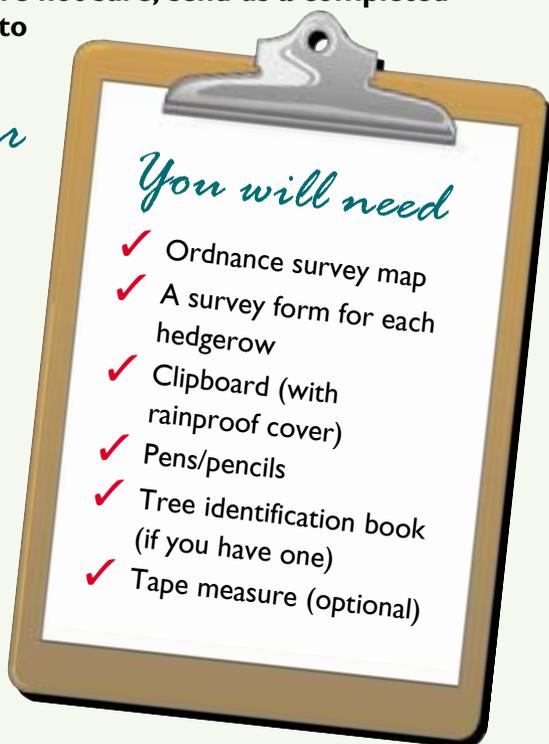
An accurate Ordnance Survey grid reference will enable us to find your hedgerow easily. If you have access to the internet, you can find a map of your area on **Multimap.com** print it out, mark your hedgerow on the map and enclose it with your form. Alternatively please enclose a sketch map with your form, clearly showing identifiable landmarks.

A long pace is roughly a metre/yard. You can measure the length of the hedgerow by pacing it out or by using a tape measure. The height of any hedgerows over head height will need to be estimated (compare it with the height of a companion if available.)

If you are unsure about the kinds of shrub in your hedgerow have a look at the leaf shapes on the survey form. Compare them to the most common leaves in the hedgerow. If they're shown we want to know about your hedge. We would like to hear about holly or yew hedgerows but please don't send records of other evergreen hedges (conifers, rhododendron, laurel.) They are pretty poor in wildlife terms. **If you are not sure, send us a completed form with a twig or leaves for us to identify**

You can help further

We need more information about the hedgerows that are recorded during this survey. If you would like to help gather this information for your hedgerow, or other hedgerows in your area, we would very much appreciate your help and we'll show you how. Hedgerow surveys are not difficult, but you will need a little guidance in how to go about it and what equipment you will need. If you would like to find out more about this, please tick the box on the survey form and we'll send you information.



What can we do?

New hedgerows are great in the right place; but it takes hundreds of years for a hedgerow to become rich in wildlife. The best thing we can do is ensure that our ancient hedgerows remain in the best possible condition by managing them well. First we need to find out where they are. **See the back of the survey form to find out how to take part,** complete the survey form and send it back to us.



Blackthorn

In the countryside

Let us know about any hedgerows you see while you are out and about, especially if there appear to be lots of different kinds of shrubs within them. Or if you have a favourite local hedgerow, or your own garden hedgerow, let us know about it unless it only contains garden species like most conifers or garden privet.

Towns and Cities

Just because your hedge is in a built up area doesn't mean it isn't wildlife habitat. Greenfinches are most often seen near houses but only if there is suitable shrubby habitat nearby. Butterflies like the holly blue and brimstone rely on shrubs and many wildflowers will find refuge in their shelter, too. Some ancient hedgerows can be seen in urban areas and need care just as much as rural ones.

What will happen to the records?

We will assess the information you send us and as many hedgerows as possible will be visited by surveyors who will record detailed information. This information will be compiled on a database and will be available to all those who are interested and will find the information useful. This may be biological information regarding rare species, or it may help protect the hedgerow directly.

What if I need more survey forms?

Brambles



Contact us at the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre, Woods Mill, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9SD
Tel: 01273 497553, email: hedgerows@sussexwt.org.uk
or go to www.sxbrc.org.uk



from **Rio** to **Sussex**
— action for biodiversity

Sussex Biodiversity Partnership