

**D** An earth bank separates the secondary Hawthorn woodland from the ancient Jervis Wood West. Although less than an acre in size this wood, dominated by Hornbeam coppice, is rich in plants associated with ancient woodland. Look out for Anemones, the Wild Service tree and the distinctive Wood Melick grass.



Wood Melick

**E** At the edge of the woodland turn across the open glade.

Note how the trees which are growing here differ in shape from those in the woodland.

**F** Turn left at the large pollarded Oak. This tree once marked a field boundary. Bryony and Honeysuckle clamber over many of the hedgerow trees along the path.



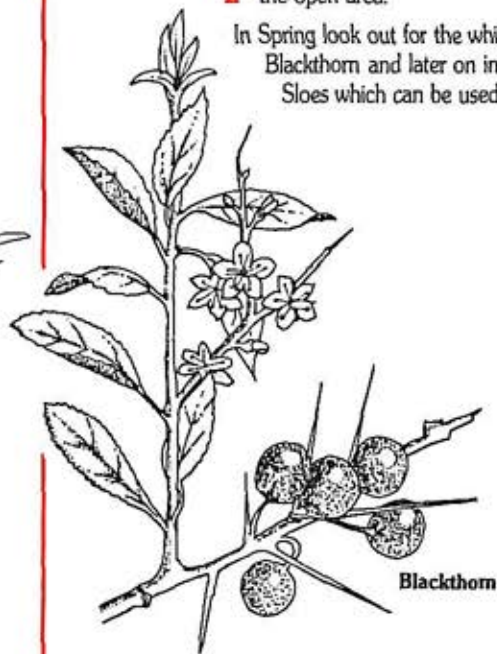
Bryony

**G** The dense Hawthorn woodland on the right has also grown up on abandoned farmland but is more varied than that on the other side of the Glen. Oak, Ash and Birch can be found amongst the Hawthorn. Follow the path until it reaches a marshy area dominated by Pendulous sedge.

**H** Cross back to the open area. As the path climbs the grassy slope Birch and Bracken are seen. These species prefer the lighter, more well drained soils.

**I** Blackthorn and wild roses grow at the top of the open area.

In Spring look out for the white blossom of the Blackthorn and later on in the year the black Sloes which can be used to flavour gin.



Blackthorn

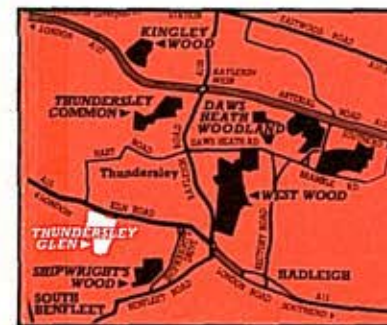
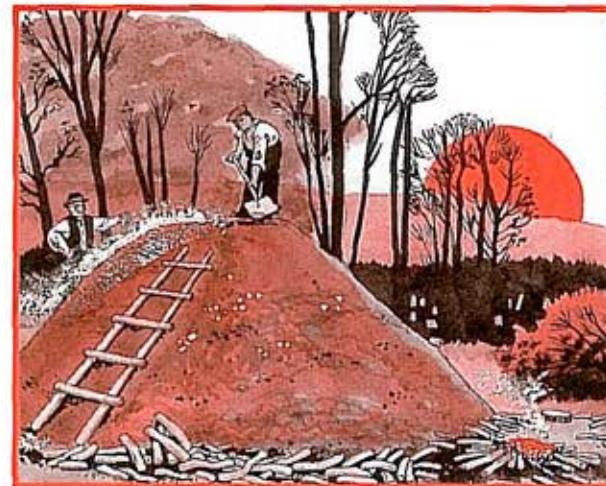
  
 benfleet | canvey | hadleigh | thundersley

# WOODLAND WALKS

IN SOUTH-EAST ESSEX

## THUNDERSLEY GLEN

■ AN OPEN WOODLAND ONCE USED FOR CHARCOAL BURNING



ACCESS  
 FROM KILN ROAD,  
 UNDERHILL ROAD  
 OR  
 SHIPWRIGHT'S  
 WOOD

AREA  
 11  
 HECTARES

8

# THUNDERSLEY GLEN

## WALK EIGHT



Long-tailed Tits

**T**HUNDERSLEY GLEN is in South Benfleet, alongside the A13, just before the road drops steeply down Bread and Cheese Hill. Today the Glen is a delightful mixture of sunny clearings, dense scrub, mature oaks, coppiced woodland and marshy hollows. However it has not always been thus and the trees and clearings tell a tale of woodland clearance, farming and coppicing.

The Glen was once part of a much larger wood belonging to the Manor of Jervis Hall. By the nineteenth century much of this woodland had been destroyed and the Tithe Maps of 1843 show the Glen was arable farmland except for a small patch of woodland in the south west. An orchard was established and the land was farmed for a short time before being subdivided into plot land. When these plots were abandoned they were invaded by thorn, birch and oak and rapidly became woodland.

Thundersley Glen is now managed by Castle Point District Council as a public open space. A walk has been waymarked through the Glen and an equestrian ride and footpath link Thundersley Glen with Shipwright's Wood.

### WOODLAND TRAIL

**A** Start at the entrance off Kiln Road and follow the path down the hill to the pond. Kiln Road is named after a brick kiln, which was probably fired by locally grown wood or charcoal. Hornbeam, Cherry, Field Maple, Oak, Elder and Hawthorn border the path.

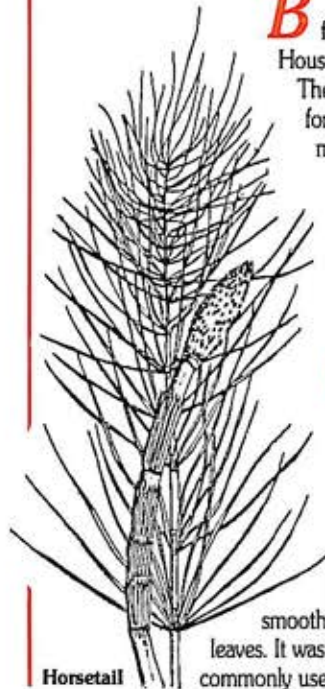
**B** A hydraulic ram once pumped water from the pond up to Thundersley House on Kiln Road.

The island in the pond is a good spot for bird watching. Long-tailed Tits may be seen flitting through the Willow trees searching for insects.

The open clearing behind the pond is dominated by one of our most primitive plants, the Horsetail.

**C** Follow the path down into the woodland. This was farmland until 1925 but has now been overgrown by Hawthorn. The large trees alongside the public footpath are Oak and Hornbeam.

The Hornbeam is immediately recognisable by its smooth fluted trunk and oval toothed leaves. It was this tree which was most commonly used for the manufacture of charcoal.



Horsetail

