

Troopers Hill wildlife

Troopers Hill is home to mosses, fungi, grasses, shrubs and plants that provide a habitat for over 280 species of invertebrates including 80 different moths and 20 types of butterflies among them the common blue (1) and the marbled white (2).

The hillside is the home for a number of species of mining bees. The early mining bee (3) is one. Look out for the tiny holes in the ground that are the entrances to their homes.

In summer, walking across the hill you will drive clouds of crickets and grasshoppers before you, including the long winged conehead (4). Two reptile species live here. See if you can find common lizards (5) or the shyer slow worm (a legless lizard) sunbathing.

Many birds are fed and sheltered by the Hill, from the long-tailed tit (6) to the buzzard (7). Tawny owls can be heard hooting in the very early hours.

Look at the miniature moss forests and see if you can identify the Haircap mosses. A very magnified Bristly Haircap moss is shown in the centre photo above. Different fungi appear



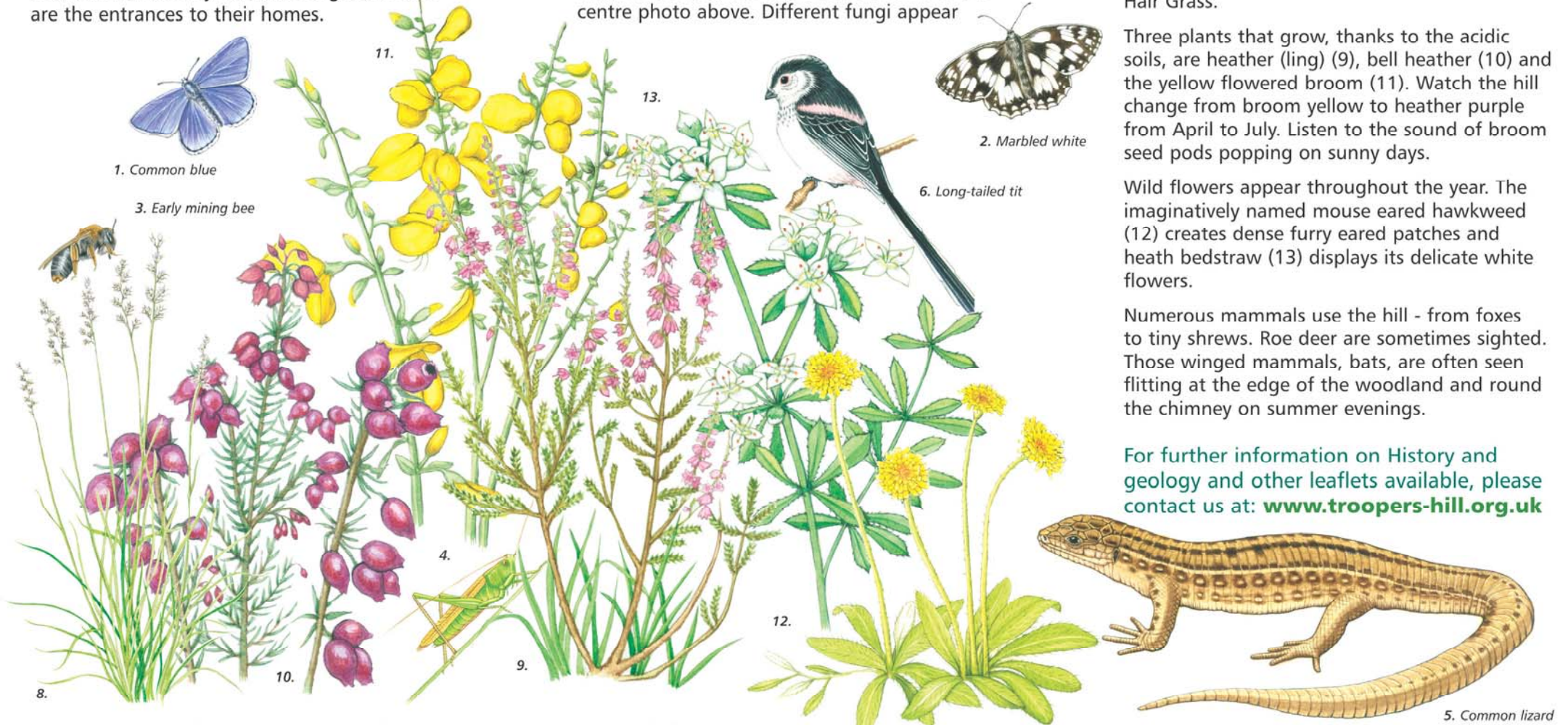
throughout the year from the red and white fly agaric to the black centred earthball. Some of the grasses forming lawn-like areas are fine leaved fescue grasses, including Sheep's Fescue (8). Other more tussocky grasses include Wavy Hair Grass.

Three plants that grow, thanks to the acidic soils, are heather (ling) (9), bell heather (10) and the yellow flowered broom (11). Watch the hill change from broom yellow to heather purple from April to July. Listen to the sound of broom seed pods popping on sunny days.

Wild flowers appear throughout the year. The imaginatively named mouse eared hawkweed (12) creates dense furry eared patches and heath bedstraw (13) displays its delicate white flowers.

Numerous mammals use the hill - from foxes to tiny shrews. Roe deer are sometimes sighted. Those winged mammals, bats, are often seen flitting at the edge of the woodland and round the chimney on summer evenings.

For further information on History and geology and other leaflets available, please contact us at: www.troopers-hill.org.uk



8. Sheep's fescue, 10. bell heather, 11. yellow broom, 4. long winged conehead cricket, 9. heather (ling), 12. mouse eared hawkweed, 13. heath bedstraw

5. Common lizard