

Iping Common

Heathland Trail

Welcome to the Heathland Trail

Sussex Downs Conservation Board

How to Find Us

Iping Common

Heathland Trail

In the past humans have used heathland to graze their livestock and collect materials such as firewood and Bracken. These activities have helped the heathland to survive.

Today, management plays a vital role in conserving the heathland. Iping and Stedham Commons are jointly managed as a Local Nature Reserve by the Sussex Downs Conservation Board and the Sussex Wildlife Trust.

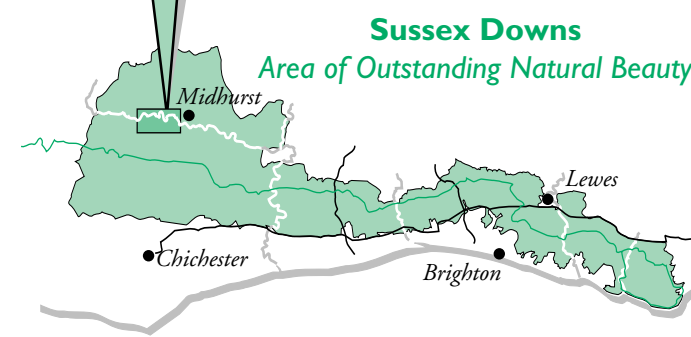
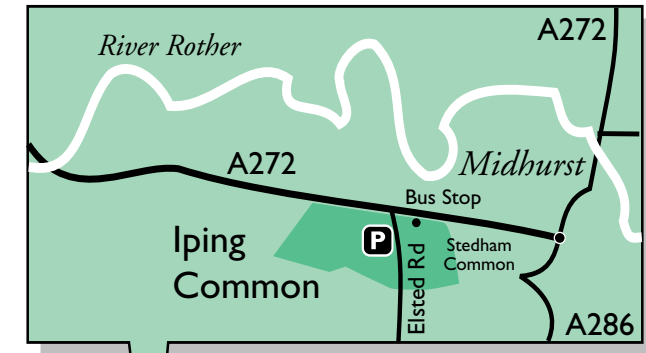
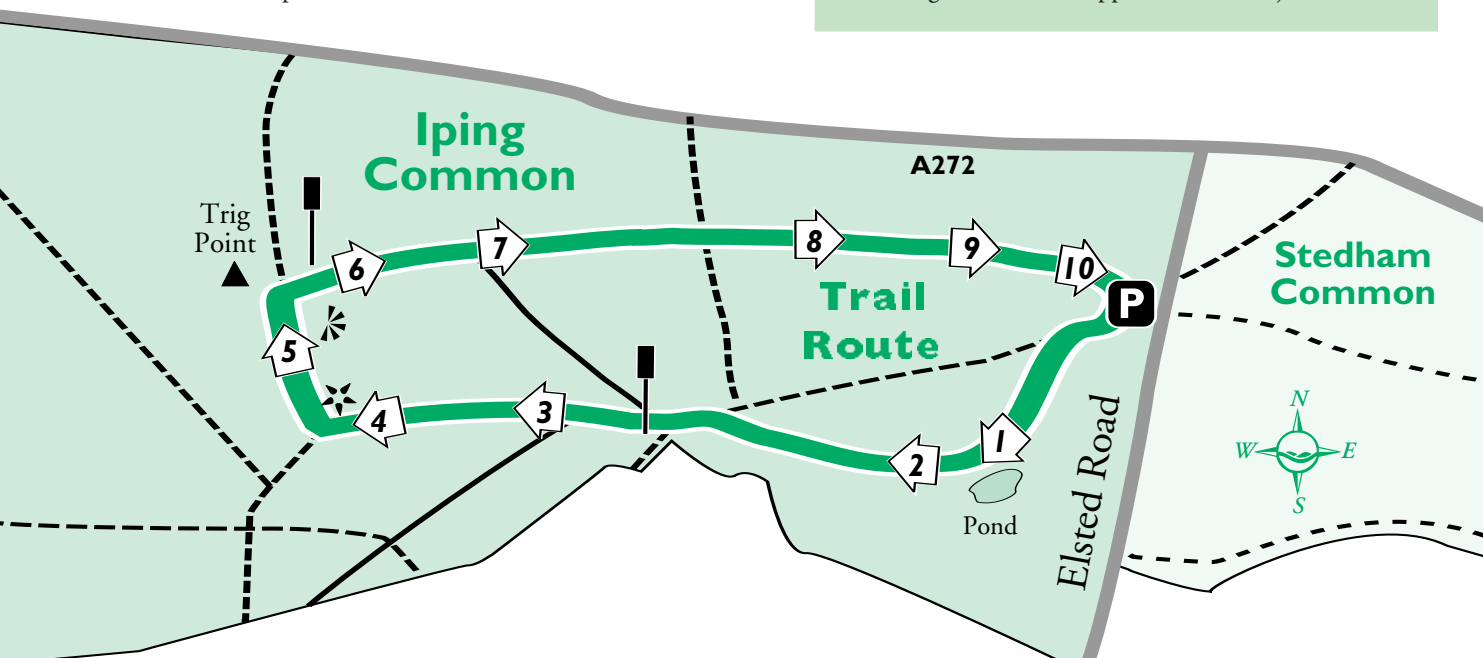
Follow the Heathland Trail and find out why the heathlands are important.

The objectives of the Board are:

- to protect, conserve and enhance the natural beauty and amenity of the Sussex Downs AONB, including its physical, ecological and cultural landscape;
- to promote the quiet informal enjoyment of the Sussex Downs AONB by the general public but only so far as is consistent with the first objective;
- generally to promote sustainable forms of economic and social development, especially working with farmers and landowners to encourage land management which supports the two objectives above.

Situated 2.5 miles west of Midhurst, Iping Common lies just south of the A272 on Elsted Road. Bus services from Midhurst stop at Iping crossroads.

For Public Transport details telephone: (01242) 777556



Trail Route	◁	Trail	—
Tumuli	✳	Bridleway	- - -
Fire Beaters	■	Footpath	—
View Point	▲	Road	—

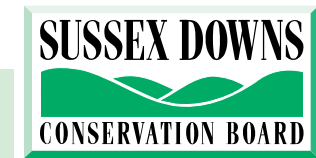
For further information contact:

Iping Common~
 Sussex Downs Conservation Board, Northern Area Office.
 Telephone: (01730) 817945
Stedham Common~ Sussex Wildlife Trust.
 Telephone: (01273) 492630.

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The information contained on this leaflet was, as far as known, correct at the date of issue. The Sussex Downs Conservation Board cannot, however, accept responsibility for any error or omission.

Sussex Downs Conservation Board
 Chanctonbury House, Church Street, Storrington,
 West Sussex RH20 4LT
 Telephone: (01903) 741234





1 The Trail is 1 mile long

45 It will take approximately 45 minutes to walk.

 Sturdy footwear is recommended.

Remember the heathland is a fragile environment.

 Please guard against all risk of re.

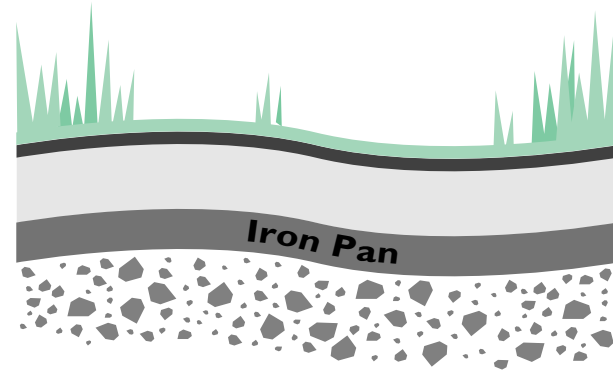
 Please keep dogs under control.

5 The Long and the Short of it!

The heather is mown at different heights to suit individual heathland species. The Silver-studded Blue Butterfly favours relatively young heather of between 1 and 7 years old. The exposed soil next to the heather provides a home for ants which 'look after' the butterfly in its caterpillar stage.

6 Down to Earth

Look at the soil profile to see how the nutrients have concentrated in an orange iron pan layer. The heathland plants are able to survive in the upper layers of poor sandy soil. *Feel the contrast between the softer, sandy layers and the hard iron pan.*



7 Fruity Flowers

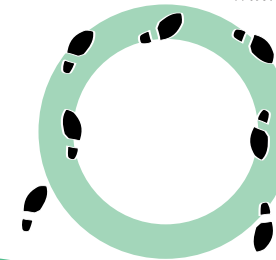
Gorse is a plant typical to heathland. In the past the young spines were cropped for animal fodder. *Without picking a flower, and minding spines, smell the Gorse flower. Some people say it smells like coconut!*

8 Tuneful Trunks

Not all the Birch trees are removed as birds like to perch in them. *Stop and listen - can you hear any of the heathland bird life?*

9 Round Erosion

The exercising of horses on this circle of heathland has caused a semi-permanent scar to develop. *Walk around the circle. Now that the heather has gone the soil is more easily eroded.*



10 Trail End

We hope that the Heathland Trail has enabled you to discover some of the interesting features that make the heathland so diverse and yet so fragile.



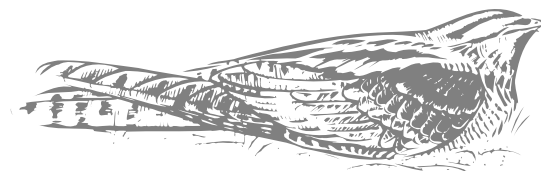
Follow the beetle arrows and use the map to guide you around the trail.

4 Burrowing Beetles

As you walk along look out for small holes in the soil. These holes are dug by the male Minotaur Beetle. The beetle uses the holes to take rabbit droppings underground. The droppings provide food and warmth for young beetle grubs.

3 Moths for Supper!

By thinning out the Birch woodland suitable nesting sites for Nightjars have been created. The removal of Bracken from nearby grassland makes it more attractive to moths - the Nightjars' main source of food.



2 Dragonfly Pond

This area of wet heath dries out in summer. Cross-leaved Heath, Sundew and Cotton Grass are all found here. The combination of wet and dry conditions throughout the year make it an ideal site for dragonflies. *- Can you spot any?*

1 Woody Invasion

Without management the heathland will gradually be invaded by Scots Pine, Silver Birch and Bracken. This will result in a loss of those species, such as the Dartford Warbler, who live only on heathlands.

