

STAGE
3

From Shufflesheeps to Combe Hill via Chapel Common


Joining the Serpent Trail from Midhurst Road, this section begins by passing through two Forestry England sites – Shufflesheeps and Hatch Fir.

Although these woodlands are predominantly managed for timber (much like Iron Hill in Stage 2) the wide, sunny rides throughout allow heather and other dwarf shrubs to establish on the edges. These small refuges act as ‘stepping stones’ of heathland habitat in between the larger sites which are home to the main populations of rare and endemic plants and animals. **Liphook Golf Club** comes next along the track, acting as another important stepping stone by having heather in their roughs and patches of bare, sandy ground which are great for insects, reptiles and birds – **watch out for golf balls when crossing the fairway here!**

At **Chapel Common**, keep an eye out for the **silver-studded blue butterfly** and the dazzling **poplar beetle** 1 – both of these species have strongholds here as well as a myriad of orchids, acid grassland flowers and heathland bird life.

i Alternative Route

For those who would rather bypass the downhill bike course at Combe Hill, take the alternative path through Hambledon Piece and re-join the Serpent Trail at Tullecombe in Stage 4.

 Ground-nesting birds: March to mid Sept.



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2 Chapel Common is home to three sections of an ancient Roman road built in 43 AD by the Roman army; it was mainly used by the Imperial mail service or *Cursus Publicus* who could travel up to 150 miles a day on horseback! It survives today as sections of ‘agger’ (remnants of a raised embankment upon which the road would have been built) between parallel ditches.



© Sam Moore



As you exit Chapel Common, carefully cross the B2070 and follow the left hand footpath into the woodland adjacent to **Coldharbour Woods**. Look out for glimpses of the South Downs, before descending from the Greensand Ridge onto Canhouse Lane and into the Weald through **Rake Hanger SSSI** to Combe Hill.

i PUBLIC TRANSPORT

 **Start:** From Liphook Railway Station head south along Midhurst Road to join the Serpent Trail at a restricted by-way on your right.

 Leave the Trail at the road after Rake Hanger and head to Hill Brow, B2070. Cross at the Jolly Drover for Stagecoach Bus 38 for Petersfield. Bus stops are on Hill Brow Road. Continue along this road to Liss Railway Station (approx. 20mins).

