

STAGE

4

Combe Hill, Tullecombe, through Rondle Wood to Borden Lane

This section begins with a walk along a woodland track through Combe Hill – or through Hambleton Piece for those taking the alternative route – arriving at Tullecombe.

If walking through Combe Hill please be vigilant as several steep mountain bike trails cross the footpath here.

The small clearing before the car park at Tullecombe acts as a wildlife refuge and if you approach quietly, is a good place to spot birds, butterflies and deer **1**. The following stretch of the Serpent Trail does not contain any heathland, however it is a fantastic place to appreciate the surrounding woodland and the different types of land management.

Through **Rondle Wood** **2** you will pass varying ages of chestnut coppice. This technique of cutting a tree down to its base, allowing it to re-sprout and grow, then repeating the process, means wood can be harvested from the same tree for many years; the coppice 'stools' are cut on rotation so there's a supply of appropriately-aged wood to harvest every winter.

Once past Borden the woodland changes character and pine plantation becomes the dominant canopy cover.

Alternative Route

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

These trees provide fantastic nesting habitat for **birds of prey** such as sparrowhawks **3**, and the flaky bark hosts an array of invertebrates which are a great food source for reptiles and small birds such as goldcrests, long-tailed tits and treecreepers.



Public Transport

Start: Walk from Liss Railway Station (approx. 20 mins) or take Stagecoach 38 to the Jolly Drover and walk to Coombe Hill.

Borden Lane, for Stagecoach bus 93 (Wednesdays and Saturdays only).



1

© Elliott Neep/neepimages.com/Sussex Wildlife Trust



2

© SDNPA / Abbi Gray



3

© byjohn

STAGE

4

