

Dunwich Forest is changing! Over the next 35 years, a partnership involving Suffolk Wildlife Trust, the Forestry Commission and RSPB will transform the pine plantation into a mosaic of grazed woodland and heathland. This will link the adjoining reedbeds, marshes and heaths of the Suffolk Coast and Westleton Heath National Nature Reserves which make this part of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty so special.

This is the first step in a wider vision to create a wildlife-rich landscape extending from the Blyth Estuary southwards towards the Alde. People will benefit too, with the changing landscape bringing new wildlife interest and improved access.

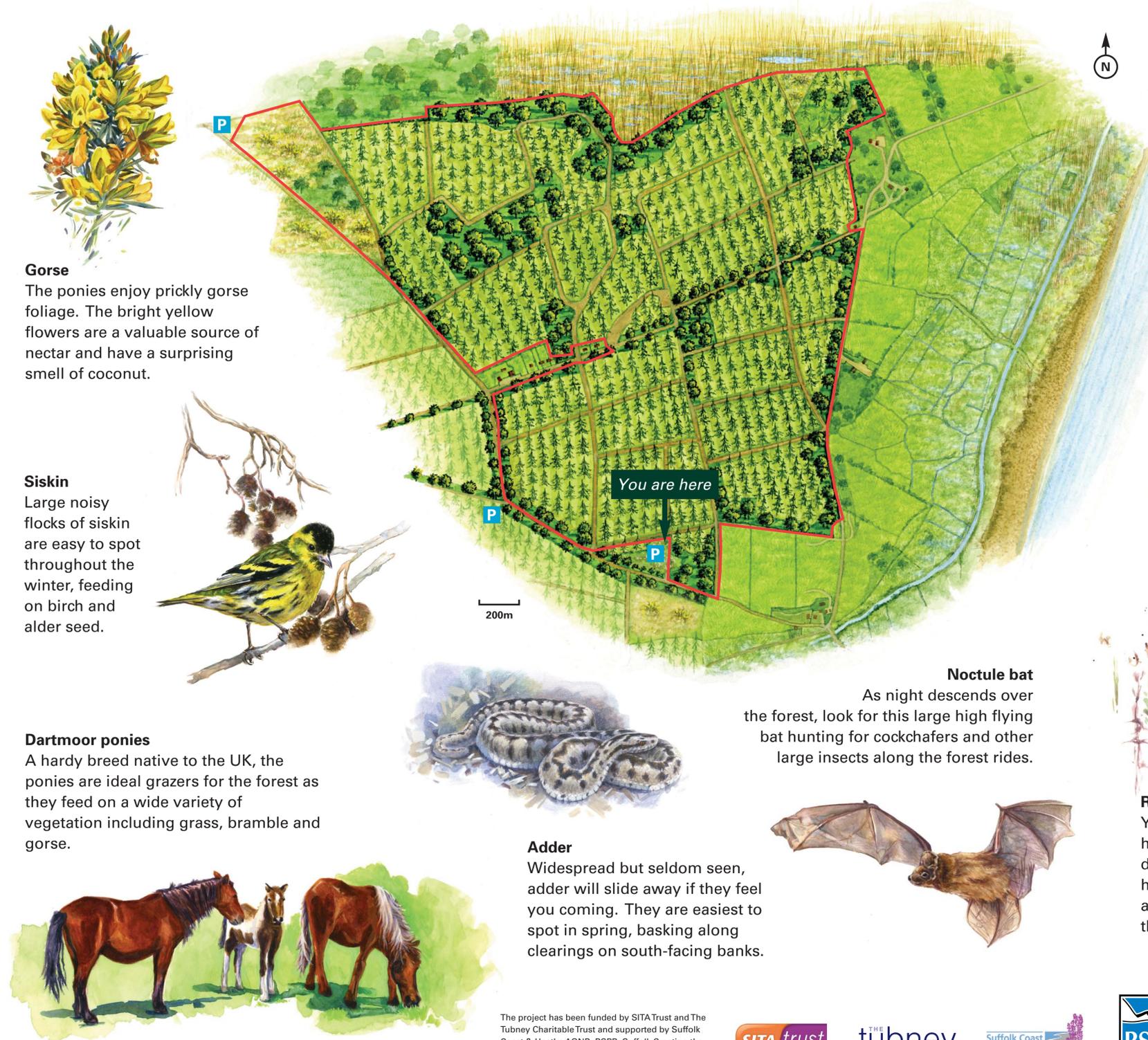
The transformation will be gentle. The conifer crop will be gradually harvested, creating space for natural vegetation to develop in its place. The lighter soils to the south will revert back to open heathland under the care of the RSPB. In this northern part of the forest (shown on the map), the conifers will be replaced by broadleaved woodland through natural regeneration creating wood pasture.

Wood pasture is traditionally maintained by grazing. Suffolk Wildlife Trust has pioneered the use of ponies for conservation grazing in Suffolk and hardy Dartmoor ponies, which will thrive on the scrubby woodland grazing, are ideal in Dunwich Forest. The herd of 30 ponies roam freely through the forest, grazing alongside the rabbits and deer.

Managed for nature and free for everyone to enjoy, our goal is for Dunwich Forest to be a vibrant Living Landscape where local people, visitors and wildlife thrive together. You can help us by joining Suffolk Wildlife Trust – www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org



Dogs are welcome but should be kept on a lead when near livestock.



— Grazing enclosure
Explore the forest using the network of tracks and trails.
Size: 270 hectares / 668 acres



Gorse
The ponies enjoy prickly gorse foliage. The bright yellow flowers are a valuable source of nectar and have a surprising smell of coconut.



Siskin
Large noisy flocks of siskin are easy to spot throughout the winter, feeding on birch and alder seed.



Dartmoor ponies
A hardy breed native to the UK, the ponies are ideal grazers for the forest as they feed on a wide variety of vegetation including grass, bramble and gorse.



Adder
Widespread but seldom seen, adder will slide away if they feel you coming. They are easiest to spot in spring, basking along clearings on south-facing banks.



Noctule bat
As night descends over the forest, look for this large high flying bat hunting for cockchafer and other large insects along the forest rides.



White admiral
Adults are on the wing in July, feeding on honeysuckle and bramble flowers along the rides. Honeysuckle is also the food plant for the caterpillars.



Red deer
You are most likely to see or hear Britain's largest deer during the October rut, but hoofprints, fraying on trees and clumps of hair are evident throughout the year.

The project has been funded by SITA Trust and The Tubney Charitable Trust and supported by Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB, RSPB, Suffolk Creating the Greenest County and Natural England.

