

Croft Ambrey is an Iron Age hill fort covering 32 Ha owned by the NT. The site is registered as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and sits prominently in the landscape on top of the ridge overlooking Croft Wood with extensive 360 degree views of the wider Herefordshire Shropshire and Worcestershire landscape.

In the 1800s to early 1900s the central part of Croft Wood contained Wood Pasture and Croft Castle would have enjoyed striking views up to Croft Ambrey hill fort.

Due to topography views over Croft Wood are less extensive as seen from the north side of the wood. However the steep slopes and intimate hilly nature of the ground create a striking landscape.


A Bat survey found some Oak pollards to have favourable Bat habitat. Species recorded were: Common and Soprano Pipistrelle, Barbastelle, Long-eared and *Myotis* bats


This valley contains an interesting mix of native species including some fine examples of mature Wych Elm, Hawthorns and Rowan as well as other species including Elder, Ash, Willow, Hazel, Hornbeam and Cherry.

Large DF and GF with prolific natural regeneration of GF.


Most Oak remnants through this sub-cpt are derived from stored coppice. Crowns on these trees tend to be under developed and other naturally set broadleaves are drawn up also with poor crowns.


Groups of mature Scots Pine planted in 1928 add character to the landscape and structure to the wood. The younger under storey of Scots Pine planted in 1989 have potential to complement the older pine in the same way in future years.

 A large collection of veteran Oaks and pollards still remain, although only occurring within a small area and are mainly confined to the southern end of Croft. The wood also contains a scattering of notable groups throughout the plan area.

 Mature Western Hemlock and Douglas Fir covers much of the centre of Croft with a freely regenerating under storey of Hemlock in many places.


Even aged Douglas Fir and Larch plantations on an Ancient Woodland site. There are currently no signs of *Phytophthora* either here or throughout the rest of Croft.


 Some of the PAWS have areas of mature Sycamore adjacent to them. Although Sycamore can be considered a naturalised native, Sycamore regeneration will need monitoring to ensure already threatened ASNW remnants do not become critical.


 Croft Castle and the area extending to Croft Ambrey hill fort to the north are listed on the register for Historic Parks and Gardens. The landscape north of the Castle would have been less wooded in the past, as indicated on early OS maps from 1830 showing the area as Wood Pasture. (*Cassini historical map - Old series 148*) The FC took over the management of Croft Wood in 1925 and by mid 1950 had planted the wood with conifer, so that by the late 70s views towards Croft Ambrey had been lost along with the more open Wood Pasture landscape.

Croft contains only small areas of remnant broadleaf woodland with scattered isolated mature trees and small quantities of natural regeneration in places.

An area of good quality Ash also containing fine examples of mature Wych Elm and Hawthorn. Since Ash dieback has not been found within Croft Wood or the surrounding area, regeneration of Ash could be accepted and recruited as a component of the future woodland in the short term.

 An area of ASNW under NT management containing a SSSI.

 SSSI in favourable condition and notified for the woodland type, variety of habitat types and the ornithological importance for woodland species.

 Public Footpaths, way-marked trails, and forest roads allow easy access for the public to the forest and Croft Ambrey hill fort from Croft Castle.

The woodland edge along the southern boundary of contains valuable mature hawthorn hedge habitat.

Due to the elevated position within the landscape, there are widespread views of Croft Wood as seen looking from the south.