

Quarry Moor cliff face

Common spotted orchid

Quarry Moor is a special place. Donated by Alderman Thomas F Spence in 1945, and held in trust for the benefit of the people of Ripon, Quarry Moor has since become one of the city's most valued attractions.

In recognition of its unique geology and rare species-rich magnesian limestone grassland, Quarry Moor was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1986 and is now managed for both nature conservation and recreation. Although bordering the outskirts of the city, Quarry Moor provides a surprisingly tranquil habitat for a variety of wildlife, and in 2001 it became one of a nationwide network of Local Nature Reserves.

Careful conservation management will ensure that the plants, insects and birds continue to thrive, providing enjoyment for present and future generations of local residents and visitors.

### 255 million years in the making

At the far side of the reserve an exposed quarry face provides a unique glimpse of a Permian landscape. 255 million years ago this site was once part of the shoreline of a warm and shallow tropical sea. Sediments deposited at the water's edge built up gradually over time, eventually forming magnesian limestone. Prized as a building material, the limestone, 30 metres deep in places, has been quarried from this site since the 15th century, firstly for local buildings and boundary walls and later in the 20th century for lime burning to meet the demand for mortar. Work ceased in the 1950s, and 20 years later the quarry was infilled. Today, few signs remain of the frenetic activity that once took place on this site.

### A year on the grassland

The first sightings of Brimstone butterflies as they emerge from hibernation herald the arrival of spring. The meadows come alive with a breathtaking display of wildflowers of every colour. The early show of cowslips and primroses gives way in the summer months to displays of oxeye daisies, knapweed and common spotted orchids. A multitude of butterflies flutter from flower to flower in search of nectar, whilst swallows swoop in low, taking insects on the wing. As autumn approaches, wind blown seeds disperse to germinate in spring, bringing the meadow once more to life after the long hard winter.



# welcome to Quarry Moor

### A haven for birds

Quarry Moor's grassland and woodland habitats offer ideal nesting and feeding grounds for many species of bird. In spring, migrating whitethroats and willow warblers arrive from Africa to breed, nesting in the scrub to raise their young. If you're quiet and patient, you may catch sight of a tree creeper, scurrying up a tree trunk probing for insects, or the diminutive wren, darting through the undergrowth. Listen out for the songs of warblers and the 'clack, clack' of blackcaps as they raise the alarm - it really does sound like two stones knocked together.



Male (left) and female (above) blackcaps are frequent visitors in the spring to the reserve.

With patience you may be lucky and spot a tree creeper (far left) probing for insects on a tree trunk in the wooded areas.

### The secretive lives of mammals

Most British mammals are shy and are usually only seen in the early morning or at dusk. Foxes, weasels, voles and even deer have been sighted at Quarry Moor. Keep a look out for their tell tale tracks in the soft earth, and for the distinctive burrows of mice and voles in the long grass.



The flowers of knapweed and oxeye daisies rise above the tall grasses.

### Conservation

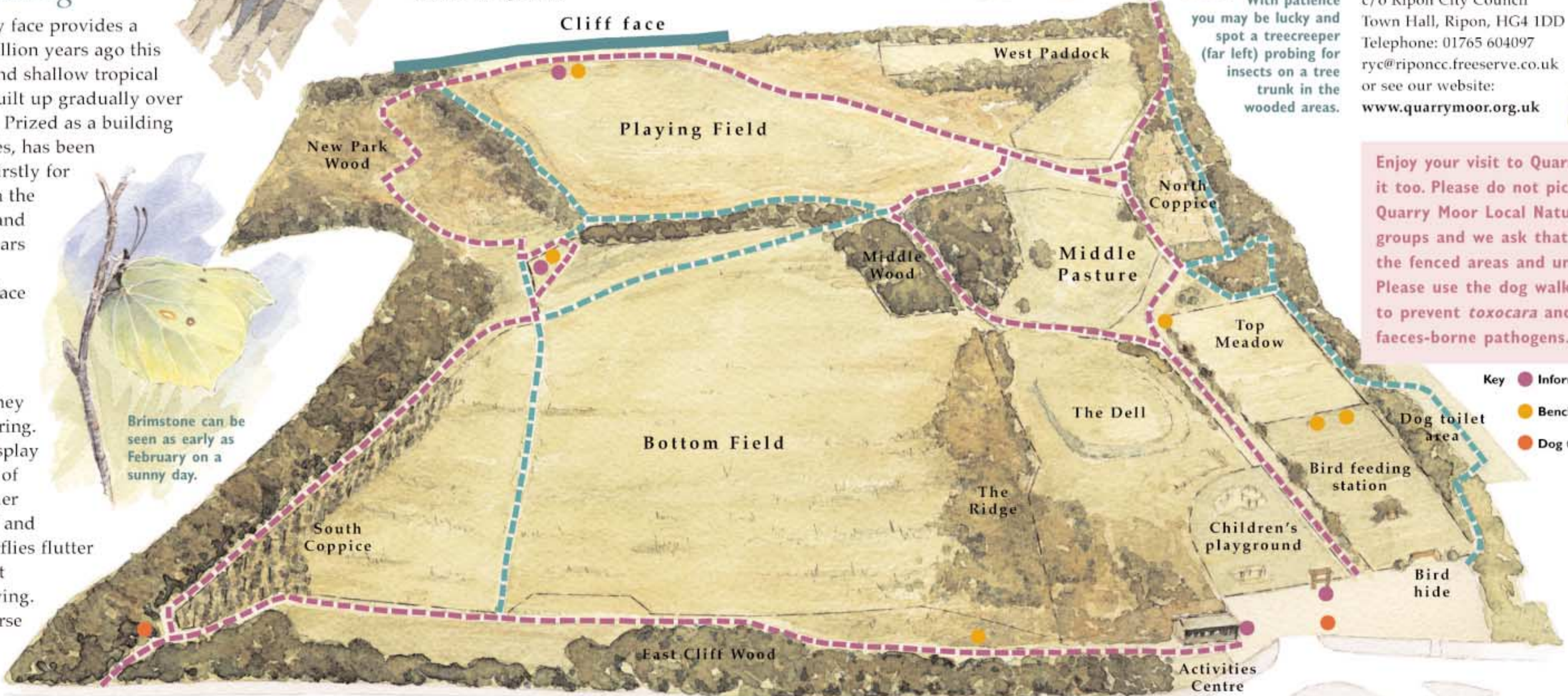
The grasslands are maintained by an annual work programme of traditional hay cutting and grazing. At times throughout the year different areas will be fenced off for grazing. Notices will be posted to tell you when and where this is happening.

For more information see the duty warden, or contact: The Alderman T F Spence Charity c/o Ripon City Council Town Hall, Ripon, HG4 1DD Telephone: 01765 604097 ryc@riponcc.freereserve.co.uk or see our website: [www.quarrymoor.org.uk](http://www.quarrymoor.org.uk)

Enjoy your visit to Quarry Moor, but allow others to enjoy it too. Please do not pick the wild flowers or leave litter. Quarry Moor Local Nature Reserve is used by school groups and we ask that you keep dogs on a lead in the fenced areas and under control in other areas. Please use the dog walking area and bins provided to prevent toxocara and infection from other faeces-borne pathogens. Thank you.



Brimstone can be seen as early as February on a sunny day.



- Information boards
- Benches
- Dog toilet bins
- Paths suitable for wheelchairs
- Informal footpaths

## Quarry Moor local nature reserve

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