



**GNS site guide to
the Painswick
area**

Greenhouse Lane is a sunken road climbing steeply south east out of Painswick in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds. The vertical sides of the lane are clothed in woodland and shady hedgebank plants. Flowering now are lesser periwinkle, celandines and early dog violets, with the first greater stitchwort and bluebells. Blackcap and chiffchaff are singing alongside the resident birds - robin, blackbird, mistle thrush.



Greenhouse Lane

Turn right onto Yokehouse Lane which follows the contour about 60 m below the top of ridge and gives fine views across the Painswick Valley. White violet, the white form of the sweet violet, is equally as common as the early dog violet. Frith Wood looms above,

standing back one field above the road, and you are almost sure to see a buzzard soaring out across the valley.



Yokehouse Lane

Turn left onto the track up Juniper Hill, an unkempt patch of calcareous grassland where the eponymous plant still hangs on by the skin of its teeth.



Juniper Hill

With a cold breeze nipping the sere grasses and the thin bare trees, it is a bit like stepping back into winter. However, the first cowslips are showing

yellow, there is abundant hairy violet, and the blooming pussy willows are drawing many insects including fat bumble bees, and plenty of chiffchaffs.

The scrubby edge to High Wood closes in briefly, with blackthorn now in full flower, then out onto the airy top of the hill where there are several fields in long-term set-aside.



Long term set-aside

These used to grow cereals but tumbled down to grassland, cut just once a year, about a decade ago. The flora here is developing spectacularly and is thick with orchids and broomrape at the right time of year, but now the flowers are limited to dandelion, daisy and cowslip. The wide space attracts birds of the open field - with skylark and meadow pipit.

Turn left along the footpath beside a drystone wall splashed white with the lichen *Aspicilia calcarea*, and on into Frith Wood, a Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust Reserve of ash and beech. The walker is greeted by the demented call of the nuthatch - doowit, doowit, doowit - joined by other woodland birds such as goldcrest. The spurge-laurel is now all but over, but the wood spurge is fully out, and the first bluebell flowers are showing. Ramsons is still in tight bud.



Frith Wood

Finally cut left at the Bulls Cross end of the wood, back down Greenhouse Lane towards Painswick. The whole walk takes an hour or two, and is all moderately easy.

Juliet Bailey, April 2005

Please use the space below to record what you saw on the walk.

Don't forget to include a 6 figure grid reference for each record.

Date:

Species:.....

Your name and contact details:

Location:.....

Species:.....

Location:.....

Species:.....

Location:.....

Species:.....

Species:.....

Location:.....

Location:.....

Species:.....

Please send your completed record sheet to GNS Painswick Records, The Apiary, Swindon Lane, Cheltenham, Glos., GL50 4PD

Location:.....