

SARN BRIDGE (TALLARN GREEN) TO HIGHER WYCH – THE WYCH VALLEY

The 'Botany Walk'



The Wych Brook rises (as the "Red Brook") at Fenn's Moss on the Wrexham / Shropshire border, and flows northward and westward through a steep-sided, wooded valley to Threapwood, being joined by several smaller streams such as the Grindley Brook, which rises near the village of the same name. The English side of the valley is designated as an Area of Special County Value. Typical landscape of the Wych Brook valley: the foreground is in England and the rising ground in the distance in Wales. The Wych Brook was formerly known as the River Elfe or Elf (origin unknown), but the name "Wych" is thought to derive from saline springs in the area; note the name Brine Pits Farm at Lower Wych. Along these water courses were several small mills, many remain only in name.

The middle section of the river valley, which has eroded deeply into an underlying glacial drift of boulder clay, sands and gravels, is the narrowest and deepest, particularly between Dymock's Mill and Lower Wych. The river landscape is characterised by ancient mixed ash woodland, unintensively-farmed lowland pasture and rush pasture. Note the range of species of grasses, obvious in May are Meadow Foxtail, Sweet Vernal Grass.

The early flowering woodland plants will just about finished flowering, and the interesting pasture flowers are not yet obvious. Look for Bluebells, Ramsons, Red Campion, Wood Anemone, Yellow Archangel – all ancient woodland indicators, as are Cowslips. There have been successful reintroductions of the Dormouse in this valley.

This is a tranquil area, it is not walked a lot because it is difficult to walk in summer; please treat it with respect as areas like this are rare, and many are being spoilt by overuse, and insensitive visitors.

The Walk:

Section	Sarn Bridge to Dymocks Mill	Dymocks Mill to Oldcastle Mill	Oldcastle to Lower Wych	Lower Wych to Higher Wych
Description	First part is along a wooded river bank	Mostly on lanes, but with wide verges; good extensive views	Scrub & woodland on river bank	Old pasture with rushes near to river
Distance Km	2.93	3.24	1.7	1.7