

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AROUND WHEATLEY HILL

WINGATE QUARRY LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

Wingate Quarry is a Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). It was County Durham's first LNR in 1980 and was classified as SSSI in 1984 as a result of its magnesian limestone grassland



The quarry was worked for magnesian limestone until the 1930s when it closed. Since then a large and varied grassland has developed on the site. magnesian limestone grassland is nationally scarce, with this site accounting for close to 8% of the national total. The quarry is a refuge for many rare plants and wildlife. There are 34 species of wildflowers in the quarry

Great Crested Newts - a protected species are to be found in the Quarry. They are protected by law and even taking a photograph or picking one up is only allowed under licence



Two orchids which are uncommon in County Durham can be found in the Wingate Quarry - the fragrant orchid, and frog orchid



The yellowhammer species is in decline



The free-flying white marbled butterfly was translocated from North Yorkshire during the late 1990s as the quarry was considered a suitable habitat and breeding ground for them. The butterflies have managed to build a sustainable population in the quarry



One of the most interesting plants in the Quarry, is butterwort which traps and digests insects



coal under the limestone