

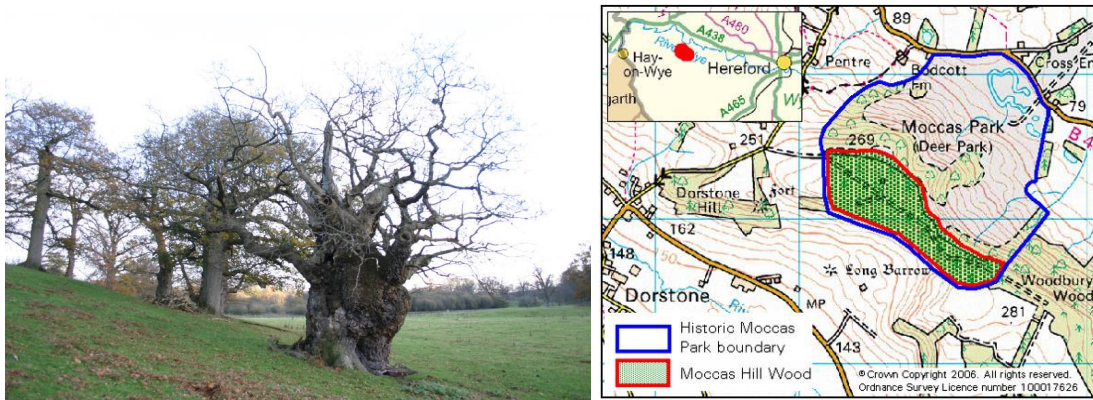
Thursday 10 March 2011

Buffering and restoring mediaeval deer park next to Moccas Park

Moccas Park, National Nature Reserve, near Hereford

Moccas Park is one of the largest and most diverse examples of wood pasture remaining in Britain, ranking in national importance alongside the New Forest, Windsor Great Park and Sherwood Forest.

Reference is made to it in Reverend Francis Kilvert's famous diaries of the 1870s. He was in awe of 'those grey old men of Moccas, those grey, gnarled, low-browed, knock-kneed, bowed, bent, huge, strange, long-armed, deformed, hunchbacked misshapen oak men...'



Moccas Park once stretched to 184 hectares but in the 1950s, 45 hectares of land was sold and, in effect, split the ancient Park in two. The majority of the trees were felled in this area and, with them, the history of the trees that had stood for generations was lost forever. The area was replanted with quick-growing conifers which block out the light from the woodland floor and drastically reduce its biodiversity value.

A few years ago, The Woodland Trust, in partnership with English Nature, seized the chance to acquire this adjacent land, Moccas Hill Wood, and restore the original Park within its historic boundaries.

Come and discover with us how the restoration is coming along. In the morning we will look at the ancient park to see what the restoration is trying to achieve. In the afternoon we will visit the conifer plantation on the hill to see how much of a challenge the two organisations have taken on.

We will meet at SO 3471 4289. There are no facilities. There is a pub nearby that we may go to for lunch if the weather is grim or bring a picnic.