

Autumn Trail

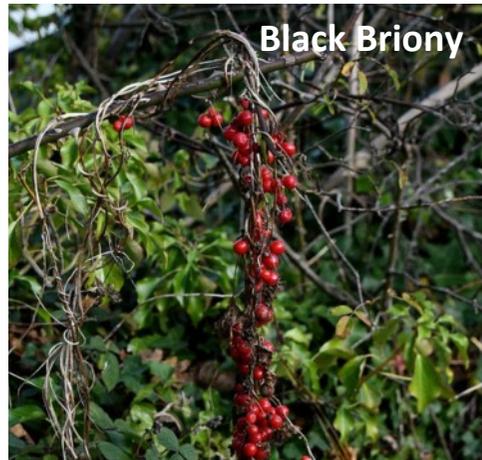
- 5 At the top of the track turn left onto a small public road that climbs uphill briefly with Dorset Wildlife Trust's Hendover Coppice on the right. This damp and shady **Ancient Woodland** is home to the endangered hazel dormouse that lives mainly in the trees here.

The profusion of early spring plants have vanished leaving only a few bright colours. Leave the juicy red fruits of the poisonous Black Bryony plant. You will see bright green Hart's-tongue Fern.

- 6 Turn left at the road junction and walk down the steep hill. On the right is **Friary Land** that Hilfield acquired in 2016 where we will be working to create a 'wildlife corridor'.

- 7 The road becomes a sunken lane or '**Holloway**' and is possibly 1,500 years old. See the underlying geology; touch the greensand formed in prehistoric seas. Notice the badger workings.

When you arrive back at the Friary do spend some time in the **Kitchen Garden**. It's bursting with vegetables and fruit now, and providing a contribution to food for the Friary and its many guests.



Black Bryony



Hart's-tongue Fern



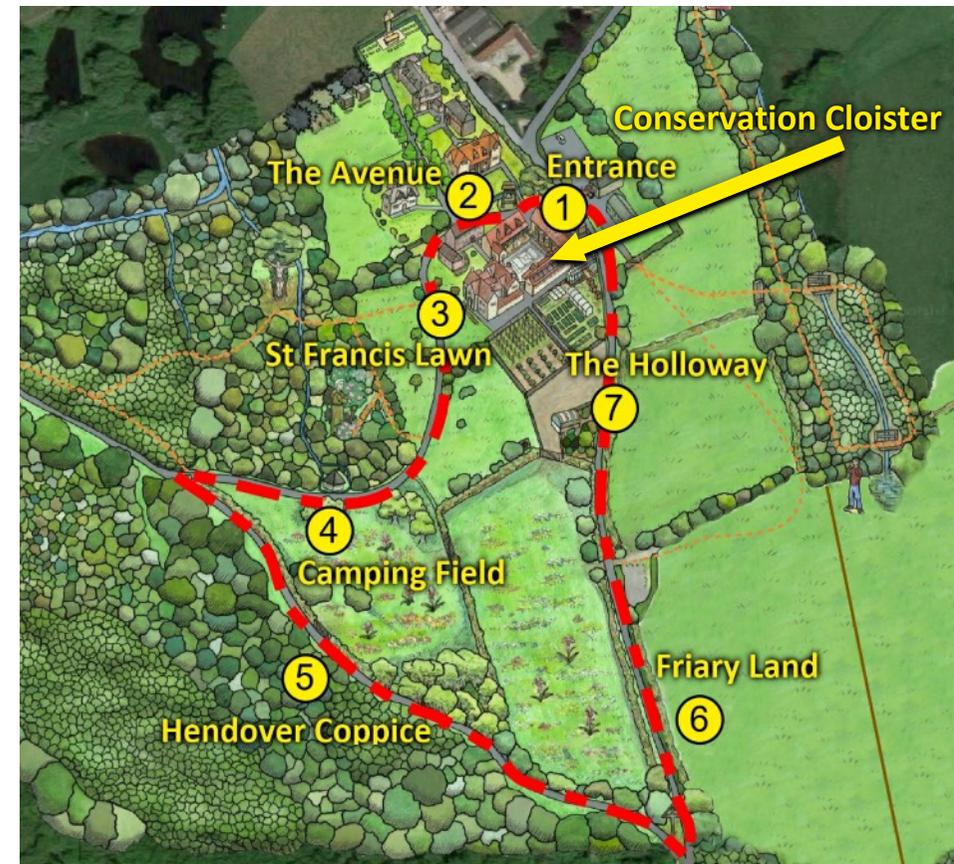
Pumpkin

Please return this trail to the Conservation Cloister when you've finished. Map your sightings and keep in touch with Hilfield's Facebook Conservation Group page, and website: www.hilfieldfriary.org.uk



Autumn Trail

Hilfield Friary Trails



This trail follows our 'Triangle Route'. It's paved and the length is 2/3 of a mile. Autumn is the amazing transition to winter.

Follow the numbers in yellow circles on the map that match the numbers in the text.

You might like to borrow a wildflower guide from the Conservation Cloister by the Chapel in the Courtyard.

Enjoy!



1 At the top of the Avenue

Begin at the 'German Oak'. The acorns are a rich food source for animals and birds. Humans used to eat acorns. In Neolithic times they were ground into flour for bread making. They must be cooked to remove toxic tannin.

Across the drive from the 'German Oak' is a horse chestnut tree that produces the conkers children love to play with.

The tree does have problems with the larvae of the leaf miner moths that eat the leaves from the inside out. This makes the leaves go brown too early. There is also evidence of bleeding canker on the trunk but some trees, particularly in woodland, may be resistant.

Tiny pink cyclamen flowers grow under this tree every autumn.

2 Walk to the Canticle Garden on the left and follow its path. There are many early autumn flowers to see. Taste the herbs ready for harvesting.

You can see the dark pink sedum flowers that provide lots of late season nectar for butterflies.

Continue up the lane. The leaves fall from the trees in the **The Avenue** to the right and are swept up to make into leaf mould; one of the best and free potting composts there is.



3 Walk to 'St Francis' Lawn' and see the large number of different trees with their colourful autumn foliage.

You won't see many hazel nuts on the ground because of the grey squirrels. Many of the oak saplings will never reach maturity due to these nibbling squirrels.

Visit the Woodland Trust website to find out lots of information about trees: www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

The Dorset Wildlife Trust website also has lots of information about trees and wildlife: www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk

4 Continue up the lane to the **Camping Field**. Explore the large shrubby boundary between the Camping Field and our woodlands.

You will see the blackberries. Did you know there are over 400 micro species that all vary a little in fruiting time, size, texture and taste!

You might see our cattle on the field. For most of the year this highly prized wild flower meadow is closely protected from animals but the hay has been cut, the seeds spread and now the cows can eat the grass.

