

## Press Release

15th May 2008

### Walk on the Wild Side

Join us on Sunday 25th May, 10 – 12 noon, at Earl's Hill Nature Reserve near Pontesbury, for a walk on the wild side, guided by John Hughes from the Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

John explained "Earl's Hill is an excellent mixed reserve rising from Habberley Brook, through mixed broadleaved woodland, past scree and cliff to an acid grassland summit with Iron Age hillfort. Many small mammals, birds and invertebrates have made this hill their home and some 320 species of plant have been recorded in the woodland and unimproved meadows."

This is one of a series of guided walk to find out more about the Shropshire Hills and why they were designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) 50 years ago. We will be talking about the broader picture of conserving wildlife in the Shropshire Hills, as well as exploring the delights of Earl's Hill Nature Reserve.

Stephanie Hayes, from the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership commented "There are 15 nature reserves within the AONB, including Earl's Hill, and each distinctive due to the varied geology which has created this diverse landscape. The famed volcanic exposures of the Ercall near Telford, the purple clad heathland of Nipstone, and the steep wooded valleys of Hope Valley are just a few of the Reserves to explore."

To book on this walk please contact the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership on 01588 674080. For details of other guided walks on the special qualities of the AONB and work of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust visit the Shropshire Hills portal [www.shropshirehills.info](http://www.shropshirehills.info).

**ENDS**

#### Editors Notes:

2008 marks the 50th anniversary of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of 40 AONBs in England & Wales. This designation is recognition of the national value of the area's landscape, and brings duties on local authorities to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. Covering 23% of the county, the Shropshire Hills AONB extends from the Wrekin to the Clun Forest and from the Stiperstones to the Clee Hills. It is a diverse and tranquil area, with rugged hills, rolling pastoral fields, woods and meadows, picturesque villages and historic buildings, hillforts and ancient monuments.



The management of the AONB is guided by a statutory Management Plan produced by the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership which comprises 5 local authorities, 31 other organisations and independent community members. The AONB staff team are funded by the Countryside Agency and the local authorities, and work with others to implement the AONB Management Plan. Shropshire County Council acts as host authority for the AONB Partnership. The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership plays three main roles:

- To develop policy and strategy for the area especially through the AONB Management Plan, and influence the policies and strategies of others
  - To take and co-ordinate action to conserve and enhance natural beauty, promote enjoyment and understanding, and further sustainable development
  - To support the involvement of the community in the management of the AONB.
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