

## Coppiced Hazel

Along some of the footpaths you will see coppiced Hazel trees (all branches coming up from a central 'stool'). The coppiced branches of Hazel are thin and easily twisted and are woven together to make hurdles, in a similar way to Willows.

## Distance and time taken

2 miles (3 km) – allow 1-2 hrs.

## Going

Good, slightly hilly. Ground may be soft after rain.

Wear strong shoes, boots or Wellington boots.

## Habitat types

Ancient woodland, unimproved flower rich meadows, hedgerows..

## Ordnance Survey Map

Explorer 195.

## Refreshments

There are seven pubs in nearby Stansted Mountfitchet and plenty of shops.

## Dogs

If you take your dog with you, please keep it under control, preferably on a lead.

## Veteran Oaks

Veteran Oaks are defined by wildlife enthusiasts as 'trees of interest biologically, aesthetically or culturally because of their age'. Ancient Oaks can be very important for fungi and dead wood invertebrates such as beetles. It is quite often tidied away when it would be more beneficial for biodiversity if it was left to rot on the ground.



## Stansted Mountfitchet

Stansted means 'stony place' in Saxon and predates the Norman invasion of England, although it wasn't until the invasion that the suffix Mountfitchet was added from the Norman baron who settled in the area. Very few remnants of the baron's castle remain but the area boasts a reconstruction of an early Norman castle.

## Lord Aubrey Buxton

Aubrey Buxton, the co-founder of Anglia Television was greatly influenced by an interest in wildlife. He established the local 'Countryman' series which went on to become the 'Survival' programme which took the viewer from the Galapagos Islands to Tibet. However, Aubrey retained an interest in local wildlife and the first programme of the Survival series was based in London. Due to his involvement with conservation organisations for 50 years and his chairmanship of ITN he became Lord Buxton. The Essex Wildlife Trust reserve has also been named after him.

**Healthy Life Essex**  
[www.HealthyLifeEssex.co.uk](http://www.HealthyLifeEssex.co.uk)

## Wild Hops

Masses of rough and shaggy Hop leaves can be seen in the hedgerows which run alongside the footpaths. Hops are a well known ingredient of beer, but the fibres are also used to make clothing and the young shoots can be cooked and eaten, a favourite dish of the Italians is 'Hops and Tagliatelli'!

Country Walking in Essex

# Aubrey Buxton