



# The Yellow Land Community Nature Reserve...

[www.bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk](http://www.bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk)

The **Yellow Land** is a one-acre site on the northern edge of Bishop's Itchington. It is part of a much larger area (Bishop's Hill-Bishop's Bowl) that was once a limestone quarry and associated cement works. Lime waste from the nearby old cement factory has created a **limestone grassland-scrub** habitat which has an insect fauna of regional importance; in particular, it is one of only a handful of sites in Warwickshire where you can still find the **Small Blue** butterfly.

Because of the site's importance in terms of its history and wildlife, the Yellow Land Natural Heritage Project was set up in 2008. The project transformed the site into a village nature reserve, where people can connect with the rare wildlife on their doorstep. The Heritage Lottery Fund provided funding for the project which was organised by Bishop's Itchington Parish Council in partnership with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and Butterfly Conservation.

## The Small Blue



- Adults fly in May and June
- Wing span can be as little as 15mm
- Adults feed on flowers of kidney vetch, bird's-foot trefoil and other vetch species.
- New caterpillars are 1mm long and feed exclusively on kidney vetch



Ox-eye daisy



Quaking grass



Song thrush



Common spotted orchid



The yellow and orange flowers of kidney vetch



Mason wasps

## Through the year

### Spring

**Butterflies:** *grizzled skipper, dingy skipper, small blue, brimstone*

**Plants:** *hairy violet, kidney vetch, cowslip, blackthorn blossom*

**Birds:** *chiff-chaff, willow warbler, song thrush*

### Summer

**Butterflies:** *marbled white, small heath, common blue, small skipper, large skipper, ringlet, gatekeeper, meadow brown*

**Plants:** *common spotted orchid, twayblade, tufted vetch, carline thistle, wild marjoram, restharrow, melliot, wild carrot, wild parsnip, quaking grass.*

### Autumn/winter

**Plants:** *blackthorn sloes, crab apples*

**Birds:** *fieldfare, redwing, long-tailed tit*



## History

Quarrying began in Bishop's Itchington after the Birmingham to Oxford railway line was built in 1852, with a siding near the works. As the quarry expanded, so too did the population of the village and the works became the main employer in the area. The owner, Greaves, Kirshaw & Bull's Cement Works, built the Greaves Club in 1887 in the village.

Stone was quarried by hand and by steam machinery before being processed in the cement works. Waste material was then carried in large buckets on an aerial ropeway. The dumped waste formed a large slag heap, known as Bishop's Hill or 'the Heaps', which can still be seen from the Yellow Land. The cement works closed in the 1970s.



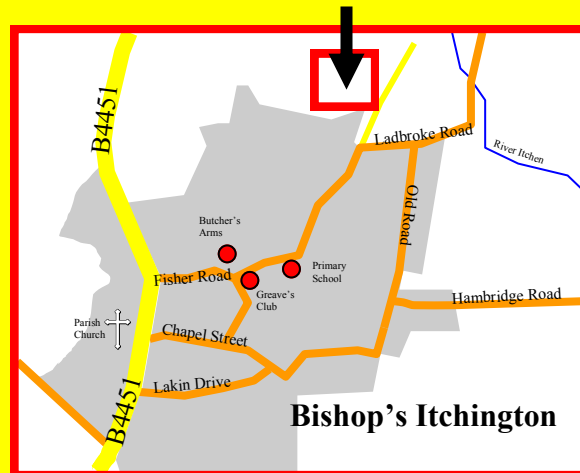
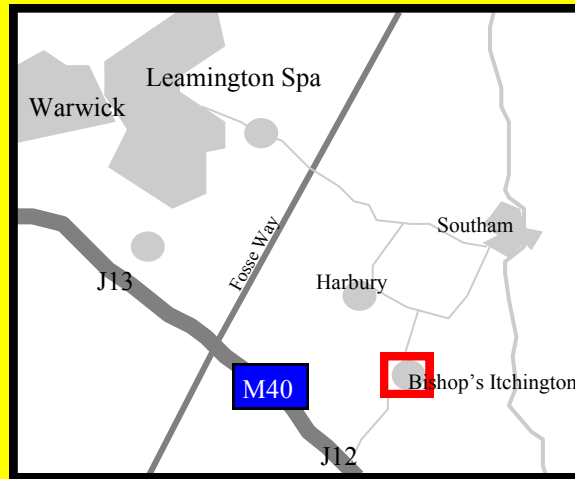
Men at work in the quarry, early 1900s.



A fossil Ichthyosaur, found in the quarry in the 1920s (left). Devil's toenail fossils can still be found today (below)



## Location



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 **BISHOPS ITCHINGTON**  
PARISH COUNCIL

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