

BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST

**The Extent and Distribution
of
Woodlands in Birse Parish**

**Neil A. MacKenzie
December 2014**

Introduction

The aim of this report for Birse Community Trust (BCT) on the woodlands in Birse parish, is to update and refine the woodland map and associated area data contained within the previous BCT report *Native Woodland Survey of Scotland: Data for Birse Parish* (MacKenzie, 2014).

Methods

The refinement process started with the same mapped polygons taken from the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) and the National Forest Inventory (NFI) datasets, that were used to compile the “Native and other woodlands” map in the earlier BCT report. The various types of native broadleaved woodland recorded in the NWSS were amalgamated under the category of ‘native broadleaved woodland’. Mapped areas that were previously described as unknown woodlands or unidentified native woodlands were re-classified. This was undertaken using a combination of techniques, including detailed scrutiny of colour aerial photography, checking the tree species composition listed in the online dataset of the NWSS and a one day vantage point survey using the local road and forest track network. In addition, some new areas of woodland were added to the map. These were mainly low density native pinewoods, recently planted woods and some riparian woods that were visible on the air photos and have been previously surveyed (MacKenzie, 2002a & b). As the survey reference date was based on the most recent aerial photography (circa 2009), recently felled sites were not altered on the amended map in this report.

Results

The total woodland area of the Parish is over 4000 ha. This total excludes woods under 0.5 ha, as well as most of the many narrow strips of trees and woodland along river and burn sides, roadsides and field boundaries.

Almost 76% of the total area of woodland in Birse parish is native woodland and of this about half is self-sown natural origin woodland (Table 1 and Figure 1). The mixed broadleaved category contains some native species but is made up largely of non-native broadleaves and some conifers and generally form part of the estate policy woods.

The 4,058 ha of woodlands over 0.5 ha in Birse parish, represent 31% of the parish’s total land area of approximately 12,915 ha.

As the map shows, there is a large part of the parish with virtually no woodlands. These open hill areas in the south and west of the parish cover around 5,664 ha or 44% of the parish’s land area. The 4,000 ha of woodlands in the parish occur in the remaining 7,251 ha or 56% of the parish and represent 56% of the land area in that part of the parish.

Table 1 Woodlands in Birse parish (excluding woods less than 0.5ha)

Woodland type	Area (ha)
Native pinewood – self sown	745
Native pinewood – self sown (low density)	485
Scots pine woodland - planted	1357
Non-native conifer woodland	963
Native broadleaved woodland	491
Mixed broadleaved woodland	17
TOTAL WOODLAND	4,058

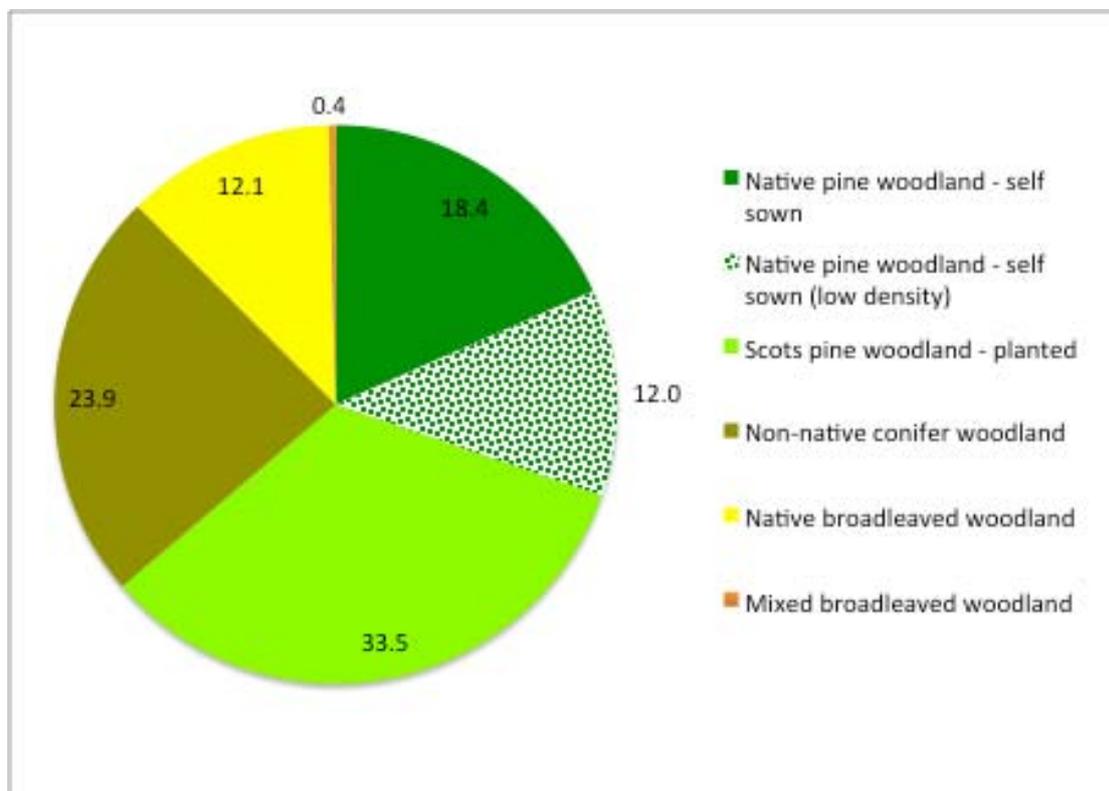


Figure 1 Percentage woodland types in Birse Parish

References

MacKenzie, N. (2002a) *Survey of relict burnside trees and woodlands in the Forest of Birse Community*. A report to Birse Community Trust.

MacKenzie, N. (2002b) *Survey of burnside trees and woodlands along the Water of Aven, Finzean*. A report to Birse Community Trust.

MacKenzie, N. (2014) *Native Woodland Survey of Scotland: Data for Birse Parish*. A report to Birse Community Trust.

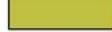


Birse Community Trust

Woodlands in Birse Parish and Land Above 450m

Scale 1 : 55,000 28/12/2014

Woodland types (woodland > 0.5ha)

-  Native pinewood - self-sown
-  Native pinewood - self sown (low density)
-  Scots pine woodland - planted
-  Non-native conifer woodland
-  Native broadleaved woodland
-  Mixed broadleaved woodland
-  Land above 450m
-  Public road
-  Parish boundary

Sources: National Forest Inventory (2013); Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (2014)

