

The site was historically used as sheep pasture and, after decades of limited management, had developed dense, uniform stands of Hawthorn scrub and Bramble. While these species have their place in the landscape, the lack of structural variety was limiting opportunities for a wider range of flora and fauna.

The landowner wanted to increase biodiversity and increase the variety of species present, with the long-term goal of creating a mosaic of habitats that would support everything from invertebrates and amphibians to birds and small mammals.

Our Approach

To deliver these outcomes, SPconservations developed a management plan that focused on creating diversity in both structure and habitat. Key techniques included:

Scrub Management: Selective clearance of Hawthorn and bramble to break up uniform blocks, creating open glades and varied age structures. This approach opens space for natural succession and allows a wider range of wildflowers and grasses to establish.

Pond Creation: Carefully sited ponds were dug to provide wetland habitat, supporting aquatic invertebrates, amphibians, and offering feeding areas for bats and birds. Shallow edges were designed to encourage colonisation by native plants.

Bare Ground Creation: Small patches of bare soil were introduced to encourage pioneer species and provide vital habitat for invertebrates. These areas also act as germination sites for less competitive plants, increasing plant diversity across the site.

Results

The management work has already started to transform the site. Increased structural diversity has created new niches for wildlife, and we expect to see:

- Wildflower colonisation in cleared areas.
- Amphibians and aquatic invertebrates establishing in new ponds.
- Boosts in invertebrate numbers on bare ground patches, supporting higher trophic levels for birds and bats.

