



The woods on the slopes immediately around the Chedworth Roman Villa are ancient semi-natural woodland. They are included on the Inventory of Ancient Woodland, indicating that the site has been continuously wooded since 1600 (and probably earlier). The Chedworth Woods have a history of regular and effective management. They were managed primarily as coppice with standards until the First World War. As a consequence of their longevity, the woodlands are rich in wildlife. Owing to the variety of micro-habitats, the villa site also has a number of areas of ecological interest.

The woodland canopy mainly consists of semi-mature and mature ash, with frequent oak and beech (the latter tending to grow on the higher slopes). Several large specimens of beech have girths of up to 3.9m. There are also local stands of larch and cupressus planted within the woodlands.

The woodland understorey consists of abundant hazel with frequent ash saplings, occasional hawthorn and field maple. The ground flora comprises abundant bramble, patches of male fern, dog's mercury, enchanter's nightshade, bluebell, wild garlic, and wood false-brome. Wild gooseberry, wood avens, hairy St John's-wort and yellow archangel (a plant normally restricted to ancient woodlands) all occur occasionally.

The open slopes that lie between the villa ruins and the woodlands vary in their floral diversity. Those on the western slopes are herb-rich, containing such plants as meadowsweet, common valerian, great willowherb, meadow crane's-bill, silverweed, nettles, rosebay willowherb, hogweed, goosegrass, crosswort, cock's-foot and wood vetch. These herbs support a variety of invertebrates. The northern slope is drier and has fewer species. It is dominated by rosebay willowherb with patches of nettles, occasional ragwort and red campion.

Greater detail is available on the flora and fauna of the site in the National Trust's 2005 Nature Conservation Evaluation for Chedworth Roman Villa.

**Figure 3a.**  
**Chedworth Roman Villa local landscape:**  
**Existing vegetation context**