

REPRINT

# NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK

Clive Chatters & Mike Read

The New Forest is England's newest National Park. In this beautiful book, the first comprehensive guide to be published since the setting up of the National Park, the author and photographer explore the Forest's landscapes and introduce the people who live and work there.

The National Park is special for its landscapes, its wildlife and its cultural heritage. It is a remarkable place, where ancient traditions of land management are practised everyday to support an intriguing landscape and way of life.

The Open Forest, with its ponies and open spaces, may look wild but it is cared for as much as any other landscape. How this lovely area is managed is explained so that everyone can understand and enjoy what makes it special. The New Forest has a living language unique to its landscapes and rural economy, and this book tells the reader what these words mean and how they are used.

The Open Forest is only part of the New Forest. There is also the coast, the Avon Valley, and an ancient countryside of woods and fields. The authors' hope is that their book will inspire you to go out and discover the whole of the New Forest National Park for yourself.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Clive Chatters was born in Essex in 1961, raised in Suffolk and educated at Wye College (University of London). He has lived in the New Forest since 1985, working for the Nature Conservancy Council and then for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Naturalists' Trust, now the Wildlife Trust. He is a Secretary of State appointee on the National Park Authority and in September 2006 was elected as Chairman of the Authority.

### The photographer

Mike Read is an established professional wildlife and landscape photographer, writer, lecturer and tour guide. He is the author of the critically-acclaimed *New Forest Moods*, *Perfect New Forest* and *The Spirit of New Forest Ponies*, all for Halsgrove.

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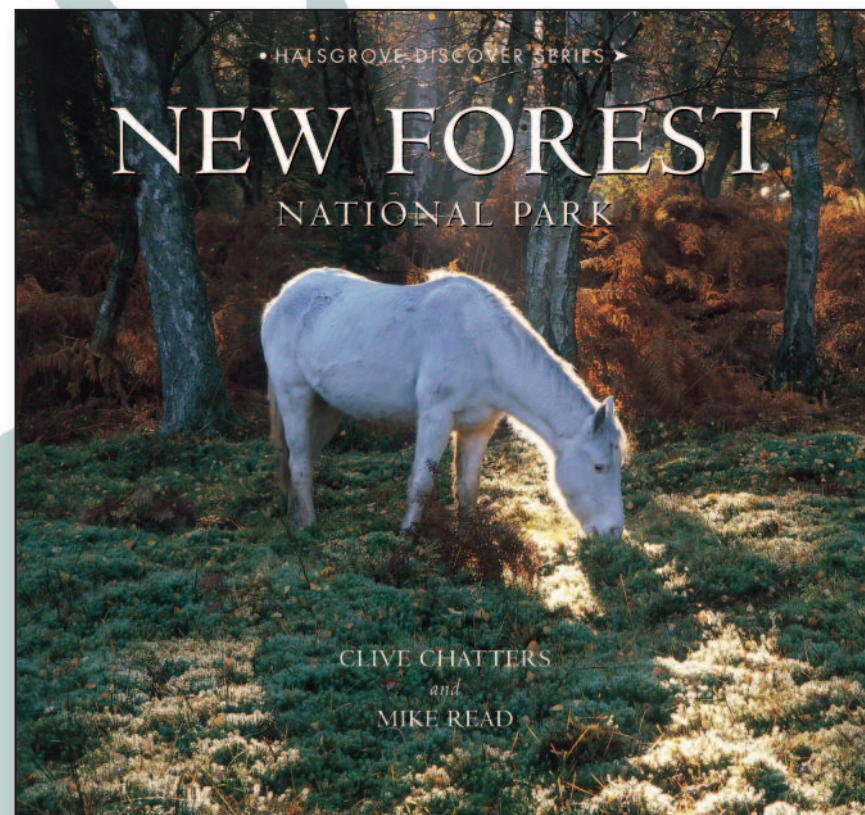
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## MANAGING THE OPEN FOREST

The landowners of the Open Forest have the responsibility of managing the landscape. The responsibilities of the Forestry Commission as the manager of the state-owned land are set out under the various New Forest Acts of Parliament. The private landowners have different responsibilities mostly arising from other Acts of Parliament. As the Open Forest is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), landowners are now obliged to maintain the Open Forest in a "favourable condition". To practice the majority of Open Forest management is undertaken by the Forestry Commission.

### Deer

For much of the history of the Forest deer have been the most prestigious of animals. The right to hunt deer was a closely guarded privilege, only to be enjoyed by royalty and those they favoured. The deer lands were an important living resource. It was only about 150 years ago, with the controversial Deer Removal Act, that the carefully managed herds of deer became relegated to their current role.

There are five species of deer on the Open Forest. Roe deer are a native wild animal and have been a part of the forest landscape since the last Ice Age. Red deer are also native but the current herds in the Forest were introduced after the native herds became extinct. Fallow deer are not native but have a long pedigree as an animal strong wild in the Forest. The exact date of their introduction to the Forest is unknown, but it is thought to be in the Norman-medieval period, some 900 years ago. Sika deer and muntjac are relative newcomers having been introduced by shooting estates and as curiosities over the last hundred years.

Deer have no natural predators in the Open Forest. Traffic accidents kill some deer every year, but without management their populations would be controlled by the natural processes of disease and starvation.

Opposite: A red deer stag following during the rut.

Below: A roe buck.



*Example of a double-page spread.*