

A three-mile circular walk through the forest to stimulate your imagination...

- ▶ Walk the trail
- ▶ Read the story
- ▶ Consider the reports
- ▶ Imagine the experience
- ▶ Decide for yourself - could it be true?

In December 1980 several sightings of a UFO were reported in Rendlesham forest. Many think these mysterious events are the most significant UFO incident to have occurred in the UK.

During the evening of 26th December, a Sudbourne resident reported a mysterious shape (like an upturned mushroom) in the sky above his garden. Later that night two United States Air Force patrolmen at the RAF Woodbridge East Gate spotted unusual lights in the forest, and were given permission to go in and investigate. What they reported was very strange.

This was the time of the 'Cold War' and because of the sensitive military situation at the time, the incident was officially reported to the Military Authorities by the Deputy Base Commander Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt, USAF.

The forest is now very different. Much of the area was replanted following the great storm of 1987. There is, of course, no tangible evidence of a UFO on the ground - no debris was found apart from some broken tree top branches. We can, however, piece together, from transcripts and recordings that were taken at the time, an intriguing picture. Follow the trail, read the story and work out what you think happened...



#### Location

Follow the B1084 Woodbridge to Orford road. Find Rendlesham Forest Centre after 4 miles.

#### Public transport

Train: Nearest station is Melton near Woodbridge.

#### National Cycle Routes

Route 1 and Suffolk Coastal Regional Route 41.

#### Forest Camping

t: 01394 450707  
forestcamping.co.uk

[forestryengland.uk/rendlesham-forest](http://forestryengland.uk/rendlesham-forest)

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## The Rendlesham Forest UFO Trail



[forestryengland.uk](http://forestryengland.uk)

## Follow the trail...

#### ▶ Trail information

The trail is 3 miles.  
Allow 1.5 hours

#### ▶ Key to symbols

- Toilets
- Picnic area
- Car Park
- Campsite
- View point

#### ▶ Trail route marker



Woodbridge Airfield

The East Gate

Unusual lights were seen by USAF patrolmen from this direction

Forest road from main entrance



North

Caution Forest road crossing

The Orford Ness Lighthouse, approx. 5 miles

Open field

Rendlesham Forest Centre



UFO Trail start point

Caution Forest road crossing

## Forest code

- Protect and respect wildlife, plants and trees.
- Guard against all risks of fire.
- Keep dogs under control.
- Take your litter home.
- Make no unnecessary noise.
- Take only memories away.
- The forest is for everyone. Please be aware of other visitors.



# UFO Trail read the story...

The East Gate



## 1 The East Gate

Just after 2am on the morning of 27th December 1980, two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights through the trees outside the East Gate to RAF Woodbridge Airfield. Could they have belonged to an aircraft from an unfriendly power? The patrolmen obtained permission from their on-duty flight chief to leave the airfield and investigate. They were joined by two further USAF personnel, but one was ordered to remain on patrol at the East Gate, and so three went into the forest on foot.

## 2 As you cross the forest road, imagine the search

The first sightings from the air base had been of lights in the sky – a strange glow. As the men entered the forest, radio contact with the air base began to break down and so one of the search party remained on the edge of the forest to keep contact. Two men therefore continued deep into the forest until they approached the eastern edge. It was here they reported seeing a shape in a clearing! Walk on to Point 3 on the map.

## 3 Imagine the sighting

At the clearing towards the edge of the forest the patrol were to report that they had spotted a conical object about the size of a car, floating on beams of light just 12 inches above the ground. There was a mist surrounding it and the craft appeared to be metallic with black markings on one side. They tried to approach the object – it was like walking in slow motion. Suddenly the craft rose rapidly in a flash of light and disappeared. Had the patrolmen been spotted?

The search party returned to base to report their observations. They wondered if the craft would return. The next day air force personnel searched the area. Some of the trees surrounding the clearing had

The landing site?



broken tops, and they found three small triangular depressions on the ground, 1.5 inches deep and 7 inches wide. Radiation levels were taken – they were 10 times the normal background level. What did all this mean?

In 1980 the trees around the clearing were tall and mature rather like the areas you have just walked through, since first crossing the forest

road. The sector immediately in front of you has been replanted since the reported incidents. However, there are clearings within the recent planting where trees did not re-grow. Had the strange lights somehow contaminated the area?

To the east, across the farmland, is the North Sea coast. In the distance, behind the trees, the Orford lighthouse would have been visible. Was it the beam of light from here that the patrolmen saw, or could it have been something else?

## 4 The forest edge

### Imagine the second sighting

The next night the USAF personnel were better prepared in case the craft returned. They were ready to deploy with Geiger counters, arc lighting and recording equipment.

The first reported sighting that night, over the open field to the east of the forest near Point 4, was a pillar of yellowish mist, which then seemed to transform itself to a huge eye with a dark centre! Then a craft was spotted and reported to have manoeuvred through the forest towards Point 5 – it had pulsating lights, red on the top with blue lights underneath. The patrolmen pursued it, and reported that it transformed into a pyramid shape, approximately 30 feet across and 20 feet high.

After a chase of about an hour the craft shot skywards. Elliptical pieces detached themselves from it, which lingered in the sky for approximately an hour – the craft then disappeared.

"I could not move – it was dreamlike. I felt slower on that night. Everything was on half speed and something was wrong".



## 5 As you approach Point 5 – imagine the observers' experiences

The initial search party reported hearing women screaming. Who were these women, and where were they? They also reported that animals in a nearby paddock became frenzied. Something had disturbed them.

One of the patrolmen involved in the search on the second night was to report that he was unable to move when he first came upon the craft: "I could not move – it was dreamlike. I felt slower on that night. Everything was on half speed and something was wrong".

You have now walked the trail, you have read the story and considered the events of those dark winter nights of 1980. Did you see anything mysterious? What do you believe?

## Suggested further reading

If your appetite for the Rendlesham UFO sightings has been whetted, you may want to find out more. Books on this subject are:

**Out of the Shadows: UFOs, the Establishment and Official Cover Up** by David Clarke, Andy Roberts, Plankus Books (2002), ISBN 0749922907

**Sky Crash: A Cosmic Conspiracy** by Street, Randle and Butler, HarperCollins (1986), ISBN 0586066780

**You Can't Tell the People: The Definitive Account of the Rendlesham Forest UFO Mystery** by Georgina Bruni, Pan (2001), ISBN 033039021X

Or you can always type 'Rendlesham Forest' into an internet search engine and see what you can find...

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All illustrations are hypothetical and are in no way representative of actual events.

