



This summer extra edition is to keep us all in touch and remind everyone of events ahead, with Nature Notes and notes on progress with the Horndean Biodiversity Action Plan.

## Meetings and Events in the South Down Grp. area from July to November 2013

### Wednesday 10th July 7pm *Blendworth and Chalton Windmill*

An evening walk from Blendworth to Chalton Windmill looking mainly for wild flowers and enjoying the views across the Solent. Meet and park by Blendworth Church (MRef. SU710 134). Plenty of time allowed for photography.

For more Info. ring John Goodspeed on 023 9222 1361. There are some stiles to climb. Dogs on leads welcome.

### Saturday 13th July 9.30am - 1pm *Wildlife at Pagham Harbour Nature Reserve*

A walk by the 'pools' and ditches to St Wilfrid's Chapel and the harbour entrance. See birds, wild flowers and hopefully dragonflies, led by Lawrence Holloway. If the weather is fine an after lunch visit to the new Medmerry reserve is possible meet at the Visitor Centre car park 1 mile south of Sidlesham on the B2145 (PO20 7NF Map Ref: SU 856 965. Please bring a pack lunch. For more information ring John Vigay on 023 9259 2647. Suggest bring cameras and binoculars.

### Saturday 3rd August 1.45 - 6.30pm *HWT Annual Volunteers Event at Mottisfont Village Hall*

Booking Essential For more information contact Peter on 023 92592711 (For HWT volunteers)

**Autumn Talks** at St Wilfrid's Church Hall start again on :-

### Wednesday 16th October 7.30pm *Bringing Butterflies Back from the Brink*

An illustrated talk by Dr Dan Hoare of Butterfly Conservation, ongoing action and local projects to save the vulnerable species at risk in south-east Hampshire at our usual venue - St Wilfrid's Hall, Padnell Rd., Cowplain, PO8 8DZ

### Wednesday 20th November 7.30 *Ponds for Wildlife*

An illustrated talk by Dr Naomi Ewald on the surveying and conservation of aquatic life at St. Wilfrid's Church Hall

More details for these two events will be found in the HWT Wildlife Diary - Events programme or on their website.

## Our Wildlife Needs You !

The recent State of Nature Report has been compiled by 25 leading wildlife organisations producing a stocktake of our native species - 60% of the species studied are in decline and the report reveals that 2 out of 3 insect species are declining. The full 92 page report can be downloaded from [www.rspb.org.uk/stateofnature](http://www.rspb.org.uk/stateofnature).

Local naturalists and wildlife enthusiasts are urgently needed to survey and monitor the state of our local native species and the local Biodiversity Group is asking locally for people to come and help us . If you would be able to help with our surveys, please contact Peter Leversha by phone or E-mail. You do not have to be an expert on identification or photography.

### Nature Notes

Owing to the bleak winter many plants and animals are appearing up to a month late this year but the recent weather has brought everything forward very rapidly with a prolific growth of vegetation.

**Wildflowers at Catherington Down** -- The one and only place to see Dropwort (*Filipendula vulgaris*) is on the lower slopes a few paces in from the the Lovedean Lane entrance. This is closely related to Meadowsweet (*F. ulmaria*) - of which there is one specimen on a higher terraceto the north with much larger leaves Dropwort has bright pink flower buds. The only orchid noticeable on CD is the Common Spotted Orchid, over 100 blooms can be seen across the Down, mostly small but the one on the left was larger and had fine markings.

The wild roses are now giving a good display here and in Parsonage Field and this one has what looks like a musk beetle in the centre. All of these pictures were taken on 1st July 2013 at CD. We are keeping a keen lookout for Frog Orchids not seen here for some years, maybe because they are small, green and hard to spot.

They should be in flower in July. Our surveys this summer will concentrate on CD.



**Orchids at Noar Hill** -- Those who went on the guided walks at Noar Hill just south of Selbourne, led by Nigel Johnson were treated to the amazing sight of thousands of orchids, mainly common spotted, twayblade, musk and fragrant with some pure white blooms. Amongst the rarer orchids were Fly Orchid and the White Helleborine, on the right, snapped on the perfect evening walk on 26th June. On this trip we did not see any Frog or Bee Orchids but another 'first' for many of us was the Dragon's Teeth (*Tetragonolobus maritimas*) >> which is a member of the pea family with solitary primrose coloured flowers. Many thanks to Nigel and Rosemary for a delightful evening.



**Orchids at Dell Piece West** -- A few blooms of Southern Marsh Orchid were seen from the western board walk and under the trees on the south side near the slip road were 9 specimens of Broad-leaved Helleborine which should be in flower by the end of July. More of the same species can be seen on the Sheepwash track running down to Padnell Road - these may be a different variety

**Invertebrates** --Most groups of insects do seem to be down on numbers this year especially hoverflies, moths, beetles and honey bees although there have been plenty of the commoner species of bumble bees. The commonest hoverfly seen is the attractive *Helophilus pendulus*, seen here on bramble flowers (1.7.13).



The dragonfly is an orange female Broad-bodied Chaser seen in this picture at Hazleton Common (5.6.13) whilst doing a butterfly transect - only one butterfly was seen! One group that is thriving is the slugs and snails in countryside and gardens. The 'handsome' Large Black Slug was crossing the path at The Holt (16.6.13).

**Birds** --Numbers of birds, especially migrants, seem to be down this year, with very low numbers of swifts and swallows. Skylarks and Yellow Hammers have been seen in Blendworth fields and hedgerows. Nightjars have been seen in Havant Thicket. In urban areas there are large numbers of Magpies this year and this may help to control the increasing number of Wood Pigeons! Many people in this area now send in records to the Garden Bird Watch survey organised by BTO. If you have a garden and can recognise birds, BTO welcome more people to join in this valuable survey. See [www.bto.org/gbw](http://www.bto.org/gbw)



**TREE NEWS - - Advance Notice** - In November 2013 Phase 3 of the Tree Planting in Jubilee Field is to be completed - a call for volunteers will again be made, details will be given in the next newsletter. Work will include planting up to 20 standard trees and replacing any losses from last year.

Now that the new summer growth can be seen in all our woods and gardens we reawaken to the threat of **Ash Dieback**. It has not been spotted in our part of Hampshire yet but we ALL need to keep a sharp lookout. If you think you see it phone or E-mail the local tree wardens (JV or Julian Tipper) and we will come and check and if suspected we will inform the Forestry Commission. 'Tree Alert' and 'Ashtag' are 2 phone apps. set up for sending suspected ash records to the F.C. - we need to give location (Map Ref or post code) and a picture of affected tree. Defra has said that our best hope of securing the future of British ash trees lies in identifying resistance to the disease.

**What to look for on Ash trees.** Symptoms can be visible on leaves, shoots and branches. Leaves may wilt in early summer, browning of the leaf tips is a sign of infection. Stems may become discoloured as the fungus spreads, there may be a change from olive-green to purple and then brown. Diamond shaped lesions on the bark of branches appear and this in turn starves the ash of water. If everyone reports suspected trees it will help track the disease, improving an understanding of ash dieback and maybe help to identify resistant strains.

Those who want to read more on Ash there are 3 excellent articles in British Wildlife Vol.24 No.4 (April 2013) by P. Marren, G. Peterken and B. Edwards (Copies from JV if requested). The latest on [www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara).

**The Horndean Biodiversity Action Plan** proof is nearing completion. The final proof will be available as a PDF file and a small number of paper copies will be available, hopefully by the end of November 2013.

#### CONTACTS

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The next 'regular' newsletter will be produced early in October. Please send contributions to JV by 30th Sept.