

NATURE NOTES

Heavy rainfall and now hot sunny weather has led to a luxuriant growth in vegetation especially trees and shrubs as seen in this picture taken on 8th June at Parsonage Field, Catherington with a dense patch of Ragged-Robin and many areas of Birdsfoot Trefoil in flower. Many Common Blue butterflies are now visiting the field. The well laid hedges on the left are now flourishing. Unfortunately the weather has led to a large increase in the slug and snail population in most of our gardens (those that have resisted the use of slug pellets). Let's hope that hedgehogs, frogs and birds will benefit.



Butterflies and Moths Butterfly transects are carried out weekly at our six main sites by the volunteer team. A good number of Brimstones have been seen and a few sightings of Dingy Skippers, the two pictures showing specimens caught up with at Catherington Down on 15th May 2014 but I do not believe there have been any Grizzled Skippers this year. Both species are very elusive !



Moth recording has been carried out at two garden sites and this magnificent Lime Hawkmoth came to the light trap on 19 May '14. The National MOTH NIGHT will be on 3-5 of July this year with the emphasis on woodland moths. Anyone wishing

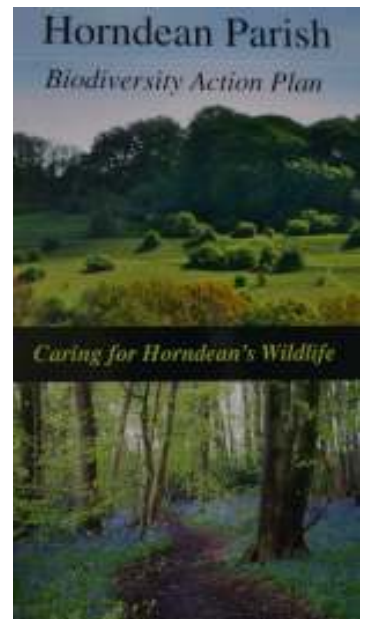


to know more and join in, perhaps even set up a moth trap in their own garden contact John Vigay. Our moth traps have very bright lights, it is important not to upset the neighbours !

Birds A good number of local people now join in BTO's Garden Bird Watch recording weekly the birds that come to your garden. There is now a very large population of Wood Pigeons visiting gardens, nesting and competing with grey squirrels to eat most of the bird seed put out but a big increase has been seen in magpies, a big part of their diet being wood pigeons eggs ! JV had four magpies on his lawn lining up to have a splash in a small bird bath. Phil Lavender has been setting up Kestrel and Owl nesting boxes across our area and up to ten of the Kestrel boxes have been home to a family of Kestrels this year. One box in a pine on the access road to B & Q in Havant had four healthy chicks in. Further afield it is good to see a good population of skylarks at Horndean Down and at Blendworth. Yellow hammers are now back at Blendworth (Woodhouse Lane) and have also been heard at Hazleton Common.

HORNDEAN BIODIVERSITY GROUP are now pleased to announce that the Horndean Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) has at last been printed and will soon be put on the websites as a Pdf file. All those involved in the production will be given a copy but the high cost of production means that we have to charge £5 (half printing cost) for a copy available from any member of the Group committee or the Horndean Parish Office.

Now that this is off our minds we can devote more time to the conservation projects and surveys that we were doing locally. This includes more tree and hedgerow planting and wildflower and insect surveys which helps to monitor the health of our local habitats and nature reserves. We need more volunteers, more news on projects will appear in the next newsletter in early October. Many ideas for future projects are contained in the BAP but the real success of the BAP will be in recruiting volunteers to help in the important tasks to look after our local habitats in very difficult times with so many threats.



The newsletter and past editions can be seen on www.wildlife.vigay.com