



Newsletter No.49B
June 2014
(Update of April NL49a)



Welcome to the South Down Group newsletter which gives details of meetings from now until December 2014, plus a few nature notes and local activities with some brief news from the Horndean Bio Group. Our next newsletter will be produced in October 2014. The editor (JV) welcomes your comments and pictures etc by 31st September. 2014.



Since April the weather has improved considerably. May has lived up to its name and it has been a good year for may blossom, enjoyed by the bees. This picture was taken at Dell Piece on the 4th May and shows a Grey-haired Mining Bee, which took me some time to identify as *Andrena cineraria*.

Meetings and Events in the South Down Group area from
June to November 2014

Wednesday 11th June "Oxenbourne Down" Evening Walk 7.00pm

Search for woodland and downland plants and insects in this 2 mile walk. There is one steep ascent. Meet in the Queen Elizabeth Country Park visitor centre car park (Map Ref. SU 718 186). Contact: Andrew Powling on 023 9225 8457

Thurs. to Sat. 3 to 5 July "National Moth Night" For those interested in moth trapping events contact JV on 023 92592647 or J.Nundy on 9235 0922

Wednesday 9th July "Old Winchester Hill" Evening Walk 7.00pm

Enjoy a walk on this hilly site to look for flowers and birds. Meet and park in the NNR car park off Old Winchester Hill Lane (Map Ref: SU 646 213). Contact: John Goodspeed on 07811 435252.

Wednesday 30th July "Hazleton Common" Evening walk 7.00pm

Explore Hazleton Common and Dell Piece West for summer flowers and birds. Meet and park at the end of Padnell Rd., Cowplain (Map Ref: SU 700 113) Contact John Goodspeed on 078 1143 5252. Dogs on leads welcome.

Saturday 2nd August "The Catherington Nature Trail" Follow a circular route around Catherington Down and Catherington Lith to see the summer flowers and butterflies. Meet Catherington car park opp school at 9.30am (M Ref: SU 695 144) Finish by lunchtime with pub lunch or picnic on the Down. Contact John on: 92592647

Wednesday 15th October "The Natural Science Collections" 7.30 to 9.30pm

An introduction by Christine Taylor, Keeper of Natural Sciences at Hampshire County Council, who will bring along examples of their very interesting Biology and Geology collections and talk about the services provided at Chilcombe. Venue: St Wilfrid's Church Hall, Padnell Rd., Cowplain, PO8 8DZ (M.Ref: SU 694 112). Contact Peter on 92592711

Wednesday 19th November "Our Wonderful Heritage of Hedgerows" 7.30 to 9.30pm

Jon Stokes of the Tree Council will talk about our heritage of hedgerows and what they contribute to our enjoyment of the countryside and how they create shelter, food and natural corridors for so many wildlife species. Held at St Wilfrid's Hall (details above). Parking at the back of the Hall via the road to the left of the hall.

Suggestions for talks and events next year welcomed, please contact a group member listed below or tell us at one of the meetings.

Group contacts

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John Vigay	<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	023 92592647	wildlife@vigay.com
John Telford	<i>Snr. Countryside Ranger HPC</i>	02392597766	john.telford@horndeanpc-hants.gov.uk
(Late News: John Telford will be leaving the area for new pastures in July 2014)			
Deryn Hawkins	<i>HBG Secretary</i>	02392598000	deryn.hawkins1@gmail.com

See over page for NATURE NOTES and news from Horndean Biodiversity Group.

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 Bird's-foot 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!



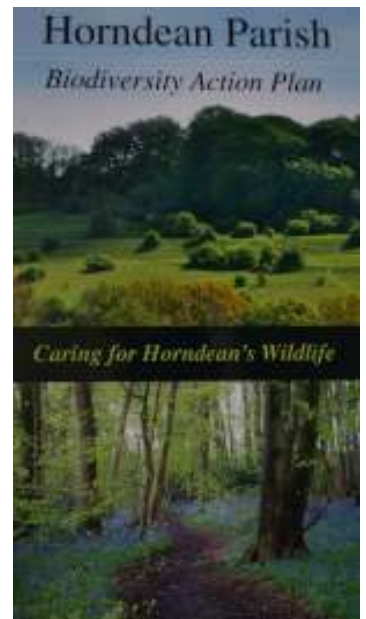
Moth recording has been carried out at two garden sites and this magnificent Lime Hawkmoth came to the light trap on 19 May '14. The National MOTH NIGHT will be on 3-5 of July this year with the emphasis on woodland moths. Anyone wishing

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