



## Newsletter No.50 November 2014



Welcome to the South Down Group's 50th Newsletter which gives details of meetings from now until March 2015, plus a few nature notes and local activities with some news from the Horndean Biodiversity Group. As Hampshire Wildlife Trust are not producing their Wildlife Diary any more we will continue with our branch newsletter and will share the newsletter with the local Horndean Biodiversity Group members as many local members have said they would like to have a paper version. There are still many people who do not do everything on the computer or i-pad !

Our next newsletter will be produced in March 2015. The editor (JV) welcomes feedback. Your comments and pictures for inclusion etc by 1st March 2015. Copies of the newsletter and diary of events will be available at all our meetings. More information can be found on the HWT website --- [www.hiwwt.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.hiwwt.org.uk/whats-on) for events across the county.

### Meetings and Events in the South Down Group area from November 2014 to March 2015

#### **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 Church Hall, Padnell Rd., Cowplain, PO8 8DZ (Map Ref SU694 112) Parking at the back of the Hall via the road to the left of the church. Contact Peter on 023 92592711 or John on 023 92592647.



#### **Tuesday 21st October "Presenting the Horndean Biodiversity Action Plan" 7.30 to 9.00pm**

YOU are all invited to this important meeting, not just to "launch" the Horndean BAP but to look at ways to protect our local environment and wildlife now and in the future against the many increasing threats. There will be illustrated contributions from those involved with producing the BAP. and a chance to meet local HPC countryside team.

Venue: Napier Hall, Horndean. On the A3 Portsmouth Rd between Merchistoun Hall and the pub 'The Colonial Bar'. Car parking in front of hall or in Napier Road.

Free admission, contribution towards refreshments welcome.

#### **Tuesday 2nd December "Planning the Way Ahead for the Horndean Biodiversity Group"**

2.00 to 4.30pm. A special meeting following on from the meeting on the 21st Oct. at the same venue (see above), to review the projects and the practical details of continuing the present and future plans for tree, hedgerow and wild flower planting and to review surveys and the monitoring of local wildlife. ALL are very welcome to attend.

## 2015

#### **Wednesday 21st January "The Wildlife of Madagascar (Part 2)" 7.30 to 9.30pm**

Deryn and Alan Key will continue to describe the fascinating variety of wildlife that they encountered in Madagascar, illustrated with their superb photographs. Held at our usual venue at St Wilfrid's Church Hall (details above).

#### **Wednesday 18th February "The Colourful World of Hoverflies" 7.30 to 9.30pm**

Phil Budd from Southampton NH Society will introduce us to this fascinating group of insects and show how they mimic other insects, with suggestions for carrying out a local survey in our own gardens and countryside, well illustrated and a display of members photos. Venue: St Wilfrid's Hall, Cowplain (See details under 19th November meeting above.)

#### **Wednesday 18th March "Wild Flowers in History and Folklore" 7.30 to 9.30pm**

An illustrated talk by Gerald Ponting on the stories of some of our wild flowers.  
Venue: St Wilfrid's Hall (See details under 19th November meeting above.)

For all the above meetings at St Wilfrid's there is an admission fee of £2.50 which helps to pay for the hall etc. and at all meetings there is a half time break for refreshments, chat and to see displays.



## News from the Horndean Biodiversity Group

The Horndean Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was finally "launched" on 21st October.

The BAP devotes a lot of space to animal and plant species that have been recorded in Horndean. Attention is given to locally common species such as bluebells and wasps as well as the rarer 'BAP species' - the only hope for their survival is to retain, conserve and where possible improve their natural habitats against the many threats to our natural environment. The actions described are all going to benefit us as well. The success of this BAP will be judged by the number of people it inspires to join in this challenge.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 2 December at Napier Hall 2.0pm. Subjects to be discussed include tree

planting, hedgerow and verges planting, studying and recording butterflies, moths, dragonflies, hoverflies, bees, wildflowers and other groups depending on local support available. All projects will work closely with the Parish Countryside team. Contact JV on 92592647



### Nature Notes and Local Surveys

With Autumn temperatures above average and a mix of rain and sunshine the countryside is looking very green and a number of wildflowers are having a second flowering. The most prominent flower at the end of October is Ivy which is being visited by Red Admiral and Brimstone butterflies (on 26 Oct.) and many bees, wasps and hoverflies

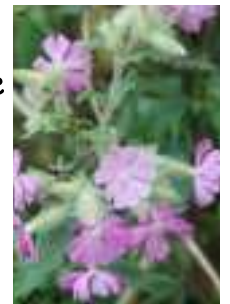
One flower that seems to flower all year round is Red Campion, this clump was seen on 25th Oct in a local garden.

Red Campion is easy to grow from seed, if anyone would like to have a go then phone John V. on 92592647 for a free packet of seed, also roots of Marsh Woundwort are available free, are easy to grow and much loved by bees.



**Ragwort** has done very well this year but a little bit too well on Catherington Down as a considerable amount of seed has blown across the Down. Young plants are coming up everywhere amongst the chalk downland flowers and will mature next year. A team of

volunteers is needed to do some ragwort removal - any offers. In the Holt a number of Cinnabar moth caterpillars were photographed in mid August and on the nettles were a number of Small Tortoiseshell caterpillars.



**Hedgehogs** are now seriously declining but JV is glad to report that this one appeared on a sunny day in the back garden in late July. They are now preparing to hibernate. We can all help in easy ways by not burning all the fallen leaves but put leaves and debris on the compost heap

instead of having a bonfire -they make the best compost for insects to breed in and thus provide an excellent source of food for hedgehogs and birds. Phil Lavender has provided some excellent rustic homes for hedgehogs and also many nestboxes for owls and kestrels which have proved very successful this year. **Most important is keeping and creating more hedgerows and wildlife corridors in the more urban parts of the parish** (more in the Horndean BAP) to be discussed at the next HBG meeting on 2 Dec.



**Butterfly recording.** A team of volunteers have carried out weekly walks (transects) to record butterflies on 6 sites in Horndean and Rowlands Castle and this has been co-ordinated on behalf of Butterfly Conservation by John Nundy for over 10 years and now wishes to retire from this. We thank him for carrying out this task so well and now urgently need to find another person to continue the work. We do not want to stop the recording after all these years. Volunteers find the weekly walks a most enjoyable task. We now need to consider the options. If anyone would like to take on this task, then John N will be happy to go over the details of what's involved.

**Moth recording.** Now becoming more popular but much harder to organise, especially within the public areas as many moths are nocturnal. On the butterfly walks many day-flying moths have been recorded. More details are in the Horndean BAP and future moth trapping nights will be listed in the newsletter and on the websites. JN and JV and others have kept regular records using moth traps at night in their gardens. An annual report is produced.

**Dragonfly recording** JN is extending his interests to recording the dragonflies and damsel flies at 2 or 3 of our best areas - Hazleton Common, Dell Piece West and maybe Catherington Pond.

**Hoverfly recording** in local gardens is a project we hope to start next spring. Full details will be given at our Cowplain meeting on 18th February 2015, introduced by Phil Budd who recently organised a similar project in the Southampton area. This is a very interesting group of insects and if you join in you dont have to go further than your own garden, more on [www.wildlife.vigay.com](http://www.wildlife.vigay.com) - go to Horndean Biodiversity and click on 'Flies'

**Tree Planting** will be done locally in the 1st week in December, those who would like to join in with the volunteers should contact Jordan (HPC) on 92597766

**Volunteers in Action** A workday was organised at **Catherington Lith** on Saturday 18th Oct. by Carole Burnett and James Tickell to carry out scrub clearance mainly on the lower slopes of Stubbins Down seen here in action and having a well earned break with refreshments being supplied by Elaine Tickell. If you would like to join the volunteers on future workdays, contact Carole or Jordan for details. Tools and plenty of fresh air are provided and extra hands would be welcomed. Thanks to Elaine for the refreshments and to Carole for the photos.

## C O N T A C T S

Peter Leversha	<i>South Down Grp Chairman</i>	023 92592711
Deryn Hawkins	<i>Horndean Bio Group Secretary</i>	023 92598000
John Vigay	<i>Newsletter Editor and website</i>	023 92592647
Carole Burnett	<i>Horndean PC Countryside Team</i>	023 92597766
Committee members : Mike Ashton (HBG/SDGrp) Ann Dale (SDGrp)		



*Our meetings are open to ALL who are interested in wildlife incl. non-members.*