



## Ringwood Natural History Society Ashley Walk Ramble

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017  
 Weather: Overcast, 15 degrees  
 Walk Leader: Martin King  
 Attendees: 6

Ashley Walk is a popular walk starting and ending near the rural village of Godshill, in the north of the New Forest. The walk takes in a good mixture of open heathland, forested inclosure and ancient and ornamental woodland. The walk took us through Black Gutter Bottom crossing Ditchend Brook to Pitt's Wood Inclosure. A cast iron inclosure plaque states it was originally enclosed in 1775, thrown out in 1816 and re-enclosed in 1903, although it is no longer enclosed today. The area was taken over by the Government during the Second World War and known as Ashley Walk Bombing Range. It was used by aircraft flying from the Aeroplane & Armament Experimental Establishment at RAF Boscombe Down, near Salisbury. The range was used for training and testing, all types of munitions fired and or dropped from British aircraft were tested here first, except live incendiaries due to the fire risk. The range consisted of several different target types including air to ground attack, mock ship targets, aircraft pens, gun emplacement, bomb fragmentation areas and the Ministry of Home Security target (known locally as the Sub Pens). Lunch was at Ashley Hole, to the right we could see a large mound, this mound covers a Sub Pen. Hampton Ridge runs through this area. Now given back to nature still clearly visible are chalk target markings, numerous bomb and mortar craters and an observation shelter. Many thanks to Martin for standing in on this rescheduled walk.

Birds (seen or heard)	Birds cont.	Flowering Plants	Fungi
Robin	Goldcrest	Bluebell	Sulphur Tuft
Chiffchaff	Buzzard	Wavy Bittercress	Hairy Curtain Crust
Chaffinch	Song Thrush	Gorse	Chicken of the Woods
Herring Gull	Coal Tit	Daisy	Birch Polypore
Dunnock	Nuthatch	Dandelion	
Blackbird		Common Dog Violet	
Sky Lark		Blackthorn	<b>Others</b>
Collard Dove		White Beak-sedge	Tadpoles
Carrion Crow		Willow Catkins	Grey Squirrel
Meadow Pipit		Common Milkwort	Fallow Deer
Snipe		Wood Anemone	Brimstone Butterfly
Pheasant		Wood-sorrel	
Stonechat		Round-leaved Crowfoot	
Linnet		Lesser Celandine	
Magpie		Hairy Bittercress	
Wren		Wood Spurge	
Green Woodpecker		Silver Birch Catkin (m&f)	
Siskin		Greater Stitchwort	
Great Spotted Woodpecker		Butcher's Broom	
Mistle Thrush		(flowers and berries)	
Wood Pigeon		Primrose	
Stock Dove		Bilberry aka Whortleberry	
Blue Tit		Holly (m)	
Jay		Ash	



*Gorse in flower Ashley Walk by Martin King*



*Silver Birch, Pitts Wood Inclosure on Ashley Walk by Martin King*