



## **RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

### Avon Country Park Walk

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023  
 Weather: Sunny and warm  
 Walk Leader: Theresa Holden  
 Attendees: 12

Avon Country Park is situated in St Leonards just into the Dorset border on the A31 and two miles south of Ringwood, and is managed by Dorset County Council. It is divided into North Park, South Park and Matchams View, we visited North Park. The miles of tracks offer an opportunity to explore some of Dorset's internationally important heathland and its rare wildlife. The park is dominated by lowland and wet heath, acid grassland and heather, which is broken only by clumps of birch and pine. There is a Heathland Discovery Centre and Visitor Centre which is surrounded by established woodland and is home to a large pond, bee hives, wood piles, bird feeders, bird and bat boxes. Next to the wildlife area is the vivarium, which houses sand lizards and is part of an important breeding programme. Any eggs that are laid are carefully removed and given to Amphibian and Reptile Conservation who will incubate them, giving the youngsters that hatch a better chance of surviving their first winter. The young are released on sites where populations have been struggling, which has included Hengistbury Head and sites in Hampshire. We were lucky to see both a female and male sporting his green breeding colour. Sightings of note were a Western Honey Bee colony living in an old woodpecker hole, our first Silver Studded Blue butterfly and a Sparrowhawk hunting around pine trees, we did not see it catch anything.

<b>Flowering Plants</b>	<b>Flowering Plants cont.</b>	<b>Birds</b>	<b>Insects</b>
Ox-eye Daisy	Lesser Stitchwort	Herring Gull	Silver-studded Blue Butterfly
Creeping Buttercup	Herb Bennet	Buzzard	Western Honey Bee
Hawthorn	Common Cow-wheat	Black-headed Gull	Beautiful Demoiselle Damselfly
Ribwort Plantain	Wood Speedwell	Chiffchaff	Black-tailed Skimmer Dragonfly
Dog Rose	Herb Robert	Robin	
Rough Hawksbeard	Barren Strawberry	Wren	<b>Mammals</b>
Cut-leaved Cranesbill	Common Dog Violet	Stock Dove	Grey Squirrel
Common Storksbill	Honeysuckle	Carrion Crow	
Broad-leaved Dock	Hoary Plantain	Goldcrest	<b>Fungi</b>
Ragged Robin	Rhododendron	Blue Tit	Chicken of the Woods
Pendulous Sedge	Cross-leaved Heath	Jay	Birch Polypore
Birdsfoot Trefoil	Heather Aka Ling	Chaffinch	Turkeytail
Yellow Iris	Holly	Wood Pigeon	
Salad Burnet	Tormentil	Sparrowhawk	<b>Reptiles</b>
Daisy	Lesser Trefoil	Starling	Sand Lizard (m&f)
Dandelion	Sheep's Sorrel	Sand Martin	
Bell Heather	Catsear	Tree Pipit	
Common Vetch	Haresfoot Clover	Stonechat	
		Linnet	
		Goldfinch	
		Coal Tit	
		Wood Lark	

		Swift	
		Blackbird	
		Green Woodpecker	
		Dunnock	
		Mistle Thrush	
		Magpie	
		Song Thrush	



*Immature Black-tailed Skimmer by Martin King*



*Cow Wheat by Lyn Traves*