



## **RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

### Barton Common Walk

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024  
 Weather: Sunny and hot  
 Walk Leader: Theresa Holden  
 Attendees: 11

This weeks walk started from Barton Common car park just off Becton Lane, Barton on Sea, just into the Hampshire county border with Dorset. Barton Common is a very special and rare area of lowland heath-grassland, designated a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). New Milton Town Council manage the 19 hectare site under Higher Level Stewardship. New Forest ponies were re-introduced to the Common and now their grazing has helped restore the grassland while the council also manage some areas by cutting and burning of invasive gorse. Our walk took us across the common and passing by Barton Golf Course and a stream called Becton Bunny. The stream has cut its way through to the soft cliffs to create a 'bunny' or valley its also another name for chine. We reached the cliff top which is extremely unstable and subject to constant erosion, there are several groynes along the beach to try and protect the cliffs from falls. The cliffs are rich in fossils which attract fossil hunters.. We walked along the cliff path to reach a cafe at Barton on Sea where we had ice creams, the excuse was we needed to cool down in the hot weather. From there we returned back walking along the road beside the grassy promenade planted with wild flower beds, now only 20 meters wide reduced from 100 meters originally due to cliff erosion. Turning left into a road which led to Long Meadow, recently restored with the help of the Council, Friends to Ballard Water Meadow and local residents. We had our picnic there before returning along a wooded path with Becton Bunny running alongside it, back to our cars.

<b>Flowering Plants</b>	<b>Flowering Plants</b>	<b>Butterflies etc.</b>	<b>Birds</b>
Common Ragwort	Great Willowherb	Meadow Brown	Sparrowhawk
Yarrow	Wild Teasel	Gatekeeper	Robin
White Clover	Common Mallow	Speckled Wood	Blackbird
Catsear	Birdsfoot Trefoil	Small Skipper	Swallow
Enchanter's Nightshade	Red Clover	Common Blue	Wren
Tormentil	Hogweed	Cinnabar Caterpillar	Greenfinch
Honeysuckle	Bramble		Herring Gull
Rosebay Willowherb	Smooth Sow-thistle	<b>Dragonflies etc.</b>	Wood Pigeon
Foxglove	Meadowsweet	Emperor Dragonfly	Black-headed Gull
Spear Thistle	Fools Watercress	Common Darter	Goldfinch
Dandelion	Water Plantain	Beautiful Demoiselle	Sand Martin
Wood Sage	Purple Loosestrife	Common Blue Damselfly	Cormorant
Pineappleweed	Water Figwort	Blue-tailed Damselfly	Linnet
Sand Spurrey	Branched Bur-reed		Stonechat
Greater Plantain	Brooklime	<b>Others</b>	Starlings
Ribwort Plantain	Pendulous Sedge	Seven-spotted Ladybird	Moorhen
Hedge Bindweed	Stinging Nettle	Minnow	Carrion Crow
Field Bindweed	Nipplewort	Adder	Kestrel

Creeping Thistle	Garlic Mustard		Magpie
Tree Mallow	Herb Robert		
Wild Carrot	Wood Dock		
Bell Heather	Lesser Hawkbit		
Harebell	Herb Bennet		



*The fragile cliffs at Barton on Sea by Lyn Traves*