



RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

An afternoon with Martin Green at Down Farm

Date: 12th June 2023
 Weather: Sunny and warm
 Walk Leader: Jean Crawford
 Attendees: 18

We met Martin Green at his farm consisting of 260 acres of organic land on Cranborne Chase, situated between Wimborne St. Giles and Sixpenny Handley. He is also known for his archaeological work there and for his impressive Down Farm Museum, which is full of his finds and those from the surrounding area ranging from the Paleolithic to the Romano-British period. Covering the period from hunter gathering to farming and including bones of deer and auroch skulls (ancestors of modern day cattle), along with flint tools, pottery and the remains of humans found on the property, together with fossils found on the Jurassic Coast. His family has been farming here since the 1930s and he started picking up flints as a child, their profusion unearthed his curiosity and he started digging in 1976. After our visit to the museum he took us on a tour of some of the sites found on the farm. We reached a recently excavated section of the Neolithic Dorset Cursus which crosses the farm, it runs for 10 km/6¼ miles and dates from roughly 4,000 years ago. A cross-section has been excavated which shows what it used to look like. There is also a long barrow and several round barrows visible on the slopes, along with a pond barrow. While the Roman road known as the Ackling Dyke also passes through on its way from Badbury Rings to Old Sarum. The farmland is cultivated to encourage wildlife, cattle are used during the winter instead of sheep in the summer to graze the land giving Martin good results. A good many wild flowers and insects in low numbers were seen but unfortunately the birds were not recorded. Afterwards we were invited back for tea and cake at the farm. Many thanks to Martin and to the two ladies who served us tea and made the delicious cakes for their hospitality.

Flowering Plants	Flowering Plants cont.	Grasses	Insects
Pyramidal Orchid	Long-stalked Cranesbill	Meadow Fescue	Butterflies
Elder	Field Poppy	Red Fescue	Peacock
Ox-eye Daisy	Mignonette	Perennial Ryegrass	Meadow Brown
White Dead-nettle	White Champion	Annual Meadow-grass	Brimstone
Field Forget-me-not	Curled Dock	Rough Meadow-grass	Common Blue
Caper Spurge	Bristly Oxtongue	Cocksfoot	Small Blue
Dovesfoot Cranesbill	Musk Thistle	Created Dogstail	Others
Nipplewort	Greater Birdsfoot Trefoil	Barren Brome	Five-spot Burnet Moth
Stinging Nettle	Black Knapweed	Upright Brome	Red-tailed Bumblebee
Foxglove	Salad Burnett	Soft Brome	
Red Champion	Kidney Vetch	Meadow Brome	
Bladder Champion	Beaked Hawksbeard	Bread Wheat	
Daisy	Prickly Sow-thistle	Meadow Oat-grass	
Lesser Stitchwort	Wild Teasel	False Oat-grass	
Dog Rose	Charlock	Sweet Vernal Grass	
French Cranesbill	Hop Trefoil	Yorkshire Fog	
Green Alkanet	Common Mouse-ear	Creeping Bent	
Common Spotted Orchid	Common Sorrel	Meadow Foxtail	
Cleavers	Rough Hawkbit		

Birdsfoot Trefoil	White Clover		
Yellow Rattle	Field Bindweed		
Bulbous Buttercup	Fairy Flax		
Hogweed	Common Broomrape		
Bramble	Woad		
Red Clover	Alsike Clover		
Catsear	Germander Speedwell		
Field Pansy	Common Vetch		



Musk Thistle by Lyn Traves