



RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Martin Down Walk

Date: 3rd April 2034
 Weather: Overcast and windy with light showers
 Walk Leaders: Lyn and Gerry Traves
 Attendees: 13

This weeks walk was rescheduled due to the recent heavy rain from Holt Heath to Martin Down where the ground was not so water-logged. Martin Down is situated on the Hampshire/Dorset border close to the little village of Martin. The National Nature Reserve which covers approximately 350 hectares is jointly owned and managed by Natural England and Hampshire County Council. Although one of the largest areas of undulating chalk grassland in the country, Martin Down represents a small remnant of downland which once covered the chalk. The site includes flower rich grassland, scrub and woodland, supporting a wide range of wild flowers, insects and birds. The down is rich in archaeology, dating from Neolithic Bokerley Ditch to the Rifle Range used during the Second World War. The village of Martin is within Cranborne Chase and is the most westerly parish in Hampshire.

Our walk started from the main car park situated off the A354 near Bokerley Junction and followed the path beside Bokerley Ditch. It runs across the downland to the southern tip of the reserve, where we saw the rare wild Pasque Flower (pasque comes from 'paschal', meaning Easter) growing on tumuli. Unfortunately the flowers were closed up due to the bad weather. We returned back circling round to the disused rifle range where we had our lunch, taking shelter from the windy, damp weather conditions. We cut the walk shorter than planned and returned back to the car park.

Birds	Flowering Plants	Fungi	Mammals
Skylark	Common Gorse	Yellow Fieldcap	Brown Hare
Rook	Blackthorn	Thimble Morel	Roe Deer
Carrion Crow	Dandelion		
Corn Bunting	Daisy	Molluscs	
Goldfinch	Common Dog Violet	Garden Snail	
Wood Pigeon	Pasque Flower	Brown-lipped Snail	
Grey Partridge	Cowslip	Various Slugs	
Stonechat	White Beak-sedge		
Pheasant	Catsear		
Yellowhammer			
Blackbird			
Chiffchaff			
Song Thrush			
Mallard			
Red Kite			
Buzzard			
Magpie			
Whitethroat			



*Thimble Morel-Verpa conica at Martin Down
by Martin King*



*Pasque Flower at Martin Down
by Lyn Traves*