



## **RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

### **Stanpit Marsh to Christchurch Harbour Walk**

Date: 23rd November 2023  
 Weather: Morning overcast, afternoon becoming sunny  
 Walk Leaders: Sonia Wilkinson and Judy Thomas  
 Attendees: 20

Stanpit is a neighbourhood within the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Dorset Council. It's within Mudeford parish, and is situated on the shore of Christchurch Harbour, 1 mile east of Christchurch town centre. Our walk started from Stanpit Marsh car park where we took the westerly footpath bordering Stanpit Recreation Ground. The path leads to Riversmeet Meadow, formerly a golf course, this Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) serves as a buffer to Stanpit Local Nature Reserve. The rewilding programme and new management regime are attracting pipits and finches, and the path around the edge offers views across Central Marsh and Priory Marsh. We walked through a car park and the disused Christchurch Borough Council Offices to reach Bridge Street. Turning left walking along Bridge Street we crossed two river bridges both over branches of the River Avon. We reached the Mill Stream, walking beside it with the Avon on our left, we had a magnificent view of Christchurch Priory. Reputedly the longest parish church in England, the current building dates back to 1094 when it originally was going to be built at St Catherine's Hill. It was a Catholic Augustinian Institution until the Dissolution when it became the Parish Church of Christchurch. Mike spotted a Peregrine Falcon sitting on one of the buttresses of the church tower. We arrived at the Quay on the River Stour where a large group of Swans hang out and where we had lunch. We returned along the Convent Walk, passing the ruined Norman Keep to the main road, then retracing our steps back to the gate leading onto Stanpit Marsh. We walked the circuit around the marsh passing the Rusty Boat to Grimmerly Bank, then over the Bailey Bridge Prototype to the Visitor Centre and the car park.

<b>Flowering Plants</b>	<b>Flowering Plants cont</b>	<b>Birds</b>	<b>Birds cont.</b>
Tansy	Ribwort Plantain	Mute Swan	Starling
White Dead-nettle	Primrose	Mallard	Goldfinch
Bladder Campion	Catsear	Jay	Shoveller
Yarrow	Ribwort Plantain	Herring Gull	Teal
Bramble	Prickly Sow-thistle	Black-headed Gull	Great Egret
Teasel	Bristly Oxtongue	Oystercatcher	Little Egret
Dandelion		Chetti Warbler	Grey Heron
Daisy	<b>Fruits</b>	Cormorant	Curlew
Spear Thistle	Rose Hip	Brent Goose	Marsh Harrier
Smooth Sow-thistle	Stinking Iris	Wood Pigeon	
Hedge Bindweed		Peregrine Falcon	<b>Others</b>
Storksbill		Magpie	Brown Trout
Canadian Fleabane		Jackdaw	Grey Squirrel
Winter Heliotrope		Carrion Crow	Red Admiral Butterfly
Dogwood		Feral Pigeon	
Groundsel		Meadow Pipit	
Mexican Fleabane		Long-tailed Tit	
Primrose		Redshank	
Catsear		Kingfisher	



*Winter Heliotrope at Stanpit by Lyn Traves*