



RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Stanpit Marsh to Christchurch Harbour Walk

Date: 4th December 2024
 Weather: Hazy Sun
 Walk Leaders: Sonia Wilkinson and Judy Thomas
 Attendees: 10

Stanpit is a neighbourhood within the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. It's also within Mudeford parish, and is situated on the shore of Christchurch Harbour, 1 mile east of Christchurch town centre. Our walk started from Stanpit 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 past the disused Christchurch Borough Council Offices to reach Bridge Street. Turning left, walking along Bridge Street we crossed over two river bridges both over branches of the River Avon. We reached the Mill Stream, walking beside it with the Avon on our left to the Old Mill, we had a magnificent view of Christchurch Priory, reputedly the longest parish church in England, dating back to 1094. It was a Catholic Augustinian Institution until the Dissolution when it became the Parish Church of Christchurch. We arrived at the Quay on the River Stour, with views towards Hengistbury Head and the Isle of Wight and where a large group of Swans hang out along with some non-native wildlife!. We then walked around the grassy area known as The Quomp and where we had lunch. Afterwards we returned along the Convent Walk, passing the ruined Norman Keep back to Bridge Street, then retracing our steps back to the car park.

Birds	Flowering Plants
Blackbird	Yarrow
Black-headed Gull	Dandelion
Robin	Daisy
House Sparrow	Teasel (seed heads)
Wood Pigeon	Smooth Sow-thistle
Feral Pigeon	Annual Meadow-grass
Mute Swan	Primrose
Mallard	Greater Periwinkle
Herring Gull	Common Whitlowgrass
Blue Tit	Groundsel
Great Tit	
Cormorant	Mammals
Hippo in River Stour	Grey Squirrel
Carrion Crow	
Magpie	



Teasel Heads at Riversmeet Meadow by Lyn Traves