



RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Verditch Chase and Martin Down Walk

Date: 20th April 2022
 Weather: Hazy sunshine, 15 degrees
 Walk Leaders: Lyn and Gerry Traves morning, Martin King afternoon
 Attendees: 13

Vernditch Chase is situated within Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, on the county boundaries of Wiltshire, Hampshire and Dorset and is maintained by Forestry England. This mixed woodland mainly consisting of Beech is on the edge of (but not part of) Martin Down NNR and shares an entrance and car park with the extensive downs off the A354. There is also a neolithic long barrow on the main path into the wood on the left and Grim's Ditch an ancient boundary network running through the site, only a low mound remains, overgrown with trees in open beech woodland. A Roman Road also runs along the eastern boundary of Vernditch. Having walked around the woodland we returned back to our cars and had our lunch overlooking Bokerley Ditch. The rolling downland landscape of the National Nature Reserve covers approximately 336 hectares, jointly owned and managed by Natural England and the 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, we found the Pasque flowers, a total of ten were seen. The down is rich in archaeology, dating from Neolithic Bokerley Ditch to the Rifle Range used during the Second World War.

Flowering Plants	Flowering Plants cont	Birds	Butterflies
Gorse	Garlic Mustard	Sky Lark	Speckled Wood
Dandelion	Wild Cherry	Buzzard	Peacock
Daisy	Barren Strawberry	Carrion Crow	Orange Tip
Wayfaring Tree	Thyme-leaved Speedwell	Linnet	Brimstone
Blackthorn	Primrose	Common Whitethroat	
Germander Speedwell	Herb Robert	Blackcap	Insects
Ground Ivy	Greater Stitchwort	Great Tit	Dark-edge Bee Fly
Hairy Violet	Cow Parsley	Mistle Thrush	Oil Beetle
Cowslip	Common Polypody	Great Tit	Buff-tailed Bumblebee
Dog's Mercury	Male Fern	Coal Tit	Red-tailed Bumblebee
Common Dog Violet	Bracken	Robin	
Bluebells		Wren	Fungi
Ransoms		Blackbird	Birch Woodwort
Lesser Celandine	Also seen on Martin Down	Goldfinch	Turkeytail
Wood Spurge	Chalk Milkwort	Rook	Peeling Oysterling
Woodruff	Common Milkwort	Song Thrush	Bitter Bracket
Wood Anemone	Pasque Flower	Lesser Whitethroat	
Early Dog Violet	Salad Burnet	Kestrel	Mammals
		Wood Pigeon	Roe Deer
		Magpie	
		Stonechat	



Bluebells and Wood Anemones at Vernditch Chase by Lyn Traves