



RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Hengistbury Head Walk

Date: 5th February 2025
Weather: Sunny
Walk Leaders: Pat Holder and Jean Crawford
Attendees: 11

Hengistbury Head is a historical sandstone headland forming part of Southbourne, which is a suburb of Bournemouth to the west and Christchurch to the north, providing wonderful walks with views of the surrounding areas of Christchurch Harbour, Bournemouth Bay and beyond, owned and managed by BCP Council. It's a nature reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a site of international importance in terms of its archaeology and is an ancient monument and ranks as one of the most important such sites in England. The northern slope of the head tails off towards the sea and forms Mudeford Spit and the sand bar closing Christchurch Harbour from the south. The reserve has a number of different habitats for wildlife including woodland, heathland and saltmarsh. It is home to over 500 plant species, 300 types of birds, a superb variety of insects, reptiles including Natterjack Toads and small mammals. It is good site to watch bird migration in spring and autumn and to see wildfowl and waders in winter.

Our walk took us from the car park along the main tarmac path until we reached the path leading up to the Ironstone Quarry, now a lilly pond, then walking over Warren Hill (the head) and returning back downhill to the Hiker cafe where we had lunch. Afterwards some of us visited The Visitor Centre, after viewing a very interesting art exhibition inspired by local archaeology, we went into the garden area where we were shown to the Iron Age Roundhouse very recently built. We were invited inside by some people working there for a very interesting chat about their work and how they helped to built the structure, along with some of the history of people living in the area over 2,000 years ago.

Birds	Flowering Plants
Redshank	Gorse
Mallard	Daisy
Greenfinch	
Widgeon	Insects
Robin	Buff-tailed Bumblebee
Wren	
Blue Tit	
Chaffinch	
Coal Tit	
Great Tit	
Wood Pigeon	
Starling	
Herring Gull	
Black-headed Gull	
Magpie	
Carrion Crow	



Hengistbury Head Iron Age Roundhouse at the Visitor Centre by Lyn Traves