



RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Holt Heath Walk

Date: 24th April 2018
 Weather: Overcast, light rain pm. 12 degrees C
 Walk Leaders: Lyn & Gerry Traves
 Attendees: 10

This walk was rescheduled to Holt Heath NNR and SSSI, situated between the villages of Holt and Three Legged Cross in East Dorset. It is one of Dorset's largest remaining areas of lowland heathland, part of the Kingston Lacy Estate, owned and managed by the National Trust. In the 1630s the Lord Chief Justice of the day, Sir John Bankes, acquired the forest, wood and heath with additional holdings to the south. Today the area of the heath, from the north to the south of the Holt-Mannington road is approximately 1,048 acres (424 Hectares).

Dry heath, wet heath and mire communities are all represented at the site. Local plants include common heather, bell heather, cross-leaved heath, bog asphodel, sundews and marsh gentian. Birds include Dartford warbler, stonechat and nightjar. The heath is Dorset's only site for breeding curlew and all six of Britain's reptile species are found here.

Our walk started from White Sheet Plantation car park of Upper Row Road, walking across the heath to Holt Road, where we turned right to circle around the heath southwards, crossing a stream and passing through a gate into White Sheet Plantation which is managed by the Forestry Commission and where we had a picnic lunch. Afterwards we continued by walking a loop around the plantation to a pond on the eastern boundary then returning to the car park via the main path.

Flowering Plants	Birds	Fungi
Dandelion	Stonechat	Birch Polypore
Cow Parsley	Chiffchaff	Turkeytail
Daisy	Wood Pigeon	
Gorse	Carrion Crow	Insects
Lesser Celandine	Cuckoo (heard)	7 Spot Ladybird
Early Dog Violet	Curlew (heard)	
Common Milkwort		
White Beaked Sedge	Mammals	Butterflies seen on recce 22/4
Common Mouse-ear	Roe Deer	Brimstone
Tormentil		Peacock
Sheep's Sorrel		Speckled Wood
Lousewort		
Thyme-leaved Speedwell		
Broome		



Common Mouse-ear and Common Milkwort on Holt Heath by Lyn Traves