



RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Sweatfords Meadow Walk in Fordingbridge

Date: 8th July 2026
 Weather: Hot and sunny
 Walk Leader: Bill Syrratt
 Attendees: 15

This weeks walk started from the Forde Inn on Whitsbury Road Fordingbridge. We are currently experiencing our third heatwave of the year so it was very welcome to have a 7.30pm start. Sweatfords Water rises near Rockbourne and flows through Fordingbridge, its a pristine spring fed chalk stream and a tributary of the Hampshire River Avon, it flows into it near Bicton. Sweatfords Meadow is local to where Bill and his family live and they have experienced a huge amount of housing development in the area. This little nature reserve only has a one mile long walk but there was an awful lot to see along the way. The water meadow has been enhanced as part of the New Forest District Council's Greenway project which aims to improve walking routes and help protect sensitive areas of the Forest. Improvements have included resurfacing 500m of footpath with hoggins, a compacted mix of gravel, sand and clay that allows water to drain through, along with boardwalks which will enable the path to be used throughout the year. The water meadow had previously become waterlogged and very muddy during the winter. After our short walk which took longer than expected as there was an awful lot to see, we had refreshments at the Forde Inn. Many thanks to the pub as they stayed open allowing us to do so.

Flowering Plants	Flowering Plants	Birds	Others
Common Comfrey	Birdsfoot Trefoil	Great Tit	Red Soldier Beetle
Great Mullein	Greater Birdsfoot Trefoil	Mallard Ducks	Cinnabar Moth Larva
Wild Carrot	Water Forgetmenot	Wood Pigeon	Comma Butterfly
Hogweed	Marsh Woundwort	Long-tailed Tit	Banded Demoiselle
Angelica	Purple Loosestrife	Greenfinch	
Hedge Bindweed	Water Mint		
Large Bindweed	Hemp Agrimony		
Meadowsweet	Marsh Thistle		
Stinging Nettle	Enchanter's Nightshade		
Red Campion	Yellow Loosestrife		
Bittersweet	Fool's Watercress		
Great Willowherb	Ragged Robin		
Creeping Thistle	Common Fleabane		
Creeping Buttercup	Nipplewort		
White Clover	Cornflower		
Common Ragwort	Spear Thistle		
Musk Mallow	Pineappleweed		
Ox-eye Daisy	Mignonette		
Water Dock	Greater Plantain		
Scentless Mayweed	Red Clover		

Common Knapweed	Prickly Lettuce		
Hemlock	Bristly Oxtongue		
Ribwort Plantain	Reedmace		
	Hedge Parsley		



Comma Butterfly by Andy Enefer