



2006 EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Hawkshill Spring Watch

Saturday 22 April - 7.30am

Take an early morning walk around Hawkshill Common to spot the birds that frequent our area and learn about them.

Leader: Phil Oliver

Contact: Walmer Parish Council 01304 381506

Meet: Hawkshill Common

Castle end of grass plateau adjacent to the interpretation board. Parking available on Liverpool Road, Walmer (opposite Grams Road)

Charge: Free.

Bird charts may be available for purchase on the morning.

Booking: Not necessary

Distance: Approx. 1½ miles

Duration: 1 hour

Green Gang Activities

BIRD NESTERS AND FEEDERS

Sunday 21 May 2006 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Come along to Hawkshill Common and make your own nest box or bird feeder out of recycled material.

A BATTY AFTERNOON

Wednesday 9 August 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Join us on Hawkshill Common and make kites or models in the shape of bats out of recycled material.

For Further information contact: The Whole Hog Arts Company 01303 862236 or Walmer Parish Council 01304 381506

CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED AT ALL TIMES BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ADULT TO ENSURE THAT THEIR CHILDREN ARE SAFE AND WELL BEHAVED, NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LEADER OF THE EVENT.



JOIN THE MONTHLY SCRUB CLEARING WORKING PARTY



Members of the group working on the chalk bank. Photograph provided courtesy of the East Kent Mercury Newspaper

More volunteers are needed to help conserve Hawkshill Common and clear the scrub which is invading this important piece of chalk grassland.

The group meet on the **first Sunday of each month** throughout the year.

Meet at 10.30am in the car parking area on Liverpool Road (opposite Grams Road). Tools will be provided but you should bring your own refreshments and come suitably dressed for physical work.

Don't forget you can use the monthly session to get fit as well as help the environment.

For further information or details contact Stan Stockley on 01304 373304

STOP PRESS

Work has just been completed on the main footpath from Liverpool Road up to the Common (ED46). With the help of a grant from the Community Paths Project organised by Kent County Council the path has been widened and resurfaced to make it less hazardous to use during wet weather

Green Gang is a special programme of activities organised for children and their families during the school holidays. These activities have been funded by Pfizer in conjunction with Walmer Parish Council

Monitoring the Flora and Fauna of the Freedown

2005 was the 5th year of wildflower monitoring since the Management Plan was introduced.

Main findings

21 different species were found in the 30 x 10 metre area surveyed on the plateau an increase of 2 on last year, and 6 more than in 2001. 37 different species were found on the west-facing bank adjacent to the electrical sub-station, the same as last year, but 4 more than in 2001.

✦ On the newly cleared slope 24 different species were identified. This is clearly an area in transition with patches of bare ground still visible, and higher numbers of species not associated with chalk grassland such as Prickly Hawkbeard, Cleavers and Ivy. However, the most commonly occurring plant was our native herb **Marjoram**.



Wild Carrot plant

Keep It Clean

There is a growing problem with litter and dog fouling on and around Hawkshill Common. Please help us protect this Special Landscape Area and keep it pleasant for everyone.

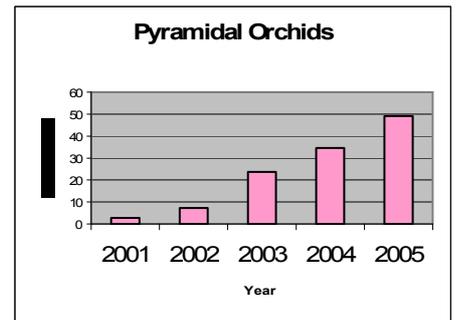
Dog bins and litter bins are provided at strategic points – please use them or the Parish Council may have to consider introducing byelaws in the area to enable fines to be imposed on offenders.

Grass is also clearly starting to spread in this area which will help control the less welcome plants.

✦ In other cleared areas **Common Milkwort** is also present, which is a typical chalk grassland plant. How these newly cleared areas develop over time will be of great interest.

The most commonly occurring plant overall was the slightly uninspiring **Ribwort Plantain**, a plant often found in disturbed grassland, this was found in 71% of the 100 quadrats sampled. Next came **Wild Carrot** which was in 67% of the quadrats. Wild Carrot is commonly found in rough grassland, especially near the coast.

Once again, the number of **pyramidal orchids** showed an increase, with 49 flower heads being counted this year compared to 35 in 2004.



✦ Another plant also on the increase is **Scabious**. This plant is a favourite of butterflies. Good numbers of this plant exist on the western slope near the sub-station, and the few plants that have spread to the plateau area were present again this year.

Horseshoe Vetch was also recorded on the western bank this year. This plant is essential for the rare Adonis Blue butterfly, so we should be optimistic for potential further sightings next summer.

Butterflies

Grass-loving species, **Marbled White** and **Meadow Brown** did well as did **Ringlet** and there was a small increase in numbers of **Small Heath**. A **Swallowtail** was seen in early July, the 2nd for Kent this year, to be followed by several others in the coastal areas of East Kent.

Brimstone butterflies were absent this year, which was unusual, as numbers in Kent were generally above average. **Clouded Yellows** were

also absent and **Painted Ladies**, **Small Tortoiseshell** and **Peacocks** were scarce, which related to counts in the rest of the county. Numbers of **Small Copper** and 1st brood **Speckled Wood** were down but the latter showed an increased 2nd brood later in the year. Both **Chalkhill** and **Adonis Blue** failed to put in an appearance this year though they were fairly numerous in the downland near Dover

The work of the Hawkshill Working Group is funded by Walmer Parish Council.

If you would like to be put on the mailing list to receive future newsletters or require further information contact: -

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