

# Reserve News

July 2017



**Sussex**  
Wildlife Trust

## Staff changes

We said a fond farewell to James Power, Head of Land Management, at the end of April as he moved onto new pastures as a Conservation Advisor for the National Trust. James has led work on the nature reserves for the past eleven years overseeing the growth in the amount of land we manage and also the team to its current size. He was also instrumental in the acquisition of Graffham Common, a pine plantation that has since been restored to heathland. Recruitment for his replacement is taking place in July so we hope to have someone in post very soon.

## Wildlife Highlights

In June we discovered a very rare beetle at Flatropers Wood. *Cryptocephalus sexpunctatus* or Six-spotted Pot-beetle has not been seen in Sussex since the 1920's (and never before recorded on site) and is currently known from just one or two sites in Britain. Flatropers Wood continues to produce these exciting rarities despite the site having no wildlife designations.

At the other end of Sussex, Graffham Common continues to produce exciting finds. Graeme Lyons, SWT's senior ecologist is carrying out an invertebrate survey on site this year and is delighted how this former pine plantation is developing. Discoveries this year have included the spider *Uloborus walckenaerius* which was found in the young stages of heather growth. This spider was previously only known in Sussex from Ambersham Common (close to Graffham and linked by some good habitat) and one other site, so it's encouraging to see species moving through the landscape and really does show the importance of linking sites up and working on the landscape scale.

Finally, well done to Graeme Lyons and Dave Green who completed their 1000 species challenge on June 10<sup>th</sup>. They managed to see an amazing 1035 species in 24 hours concentrating on some of our West Sussex nature reserves. For a full round up of what they saw, and what they missed do look on our website but four species new to the nature reserve network were recorded including the Welsh Oak Longhorn Beetle at Ebernoe. The reserve network species list now stands at 9874 – when will we reach 10,000 and what species will it be?

The **Land Management Volunteer BBQ** will be held on **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September from 4pm**. Invites to follow!

**Looking to volunteer with us? Please check the web site to find out where we are currently look for volunteers to get involved and then register your interest by completing our registration form, specifying which reserve or project you are interested in <https://sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/volunteer-registration-form>**

**If you would like an informal chat about what is happening locally and how you could get involved at your local reserve please contact the reserve or project lead listed below.**



## WEST SUSSEX RESERVES WITH PRACTICAL DAYS

**Ebernoe Common**      **GU28 9LD or SU 975 278**      near Petworth and Wisborough Green

Almost 200 acres of ancient woodland with glades and ponds plus 200 acres of farmland, much of which is now being grazed as part of the conversion from arable to wood pasture. This reserve seems enchanted with its many diverse species of woodland plants and animals. Delightful in spring with its violets and daffodils and in autumn with fungi. Although grazing has been re-introduced to this ancient wood pasture it is still necessary to control the invasive bracken and holly and keep the glades and rides open for butterflies etc. (Monthly task day usually a Saturday and/or Tuesday)

Contact: **Colin Booty** on: **01403 732175**

Meet: 10.00 at Ebernoe church (down track signposted church, 1 mile east of A283).

**Graffham Common**      **GU28 0PT or SU932196**      near Midhurst.

We are starting a new volunteer group at our newest nature reserve. This group will run at weekends and will be co-ordinated by the Volunteer Reserve Manager. Graffham Common is a heathland reserve, recently restored from pine plantations. Rare heathland birds have already returned to the site. Work groups will focus on scrub removal to protect the re-emerging heathland habitat.

Contact: **Graham Ault** on: [grahamault@btinternet.com](mailto:grahamault@btinternet.com)

**Levin Down**      **PO18 0HU or SU 887 131**      near Chichester and Midhurst

A lovely hill of south and east facing downland and mixed scrub including juniper and the very rare chalk heath habitat. Parts of the reserve are carpeted with chalk loving flowers in summer, and the reserve is also good for butterflies such as Brown Argus, Grizzled Skipper and Brown Hairstreak. The management includes clearing scrub - to open up the grassland and provide glades for the butterflies and to keep pathways open. (Twice monthly task day usually a Sunday, Oct – Mar, volunteers 18yrs+ only please).

Contact: **Ann Griffiths** on: [agriff9180@aol.com](mailto:agriff9180@aol.com)

Meet: 10.00am at Charlton Cross Roads.

**West Dean Woods**      **PO18 0RU or SU 845 153**      near Chichester and Midhurst

This is a superb example of an ancient hazel coppice, which is worked in a traditional way by the volunteers, producing hedgelaying rods and stakes, beanpoles etc. The woodland floor is covered in flowers in the spring, and there is a huge colony of daffodils in the north of the reserve. New volunteer input is required here to continue the excellent work started some 30 years ago. (Task days every Monday (except in Summer) and Thursdays most of the year).

Contact: **Phil King** on: [pdck@btinternet.com](mailto:pdck@btinternet.com) **07701 371198**

Meet: A286 Chichester-Midhurst, at West Dean take minor road opposite The Dean Public House for 2 miles, at reserve sign take track through woodland on right.

**Woods Mill**      **BN5 9SD or TQ 218 138**      near Henfield

The headquarters of the Sussex Wildlife Trust and the best educational reserve in the land! Its different habitat types, which include meadow, wetlands, scrub and ancient woodland makes the work varied and interesting. This weekly Friday group is often at full capacity.

Contact: **Volunteer Development Team** on: [swtvolunteering@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:swtvolunteering@sussexwt.org.uk) **01273 497 562**

## EAST SUSSEX RESERVES WITH PRACTICAL DAYS

**Rye Harbour**      **TN31 7TX or TQ 941 189**      near Rye

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve is fabulous for its wetland and coastal wildlife. Bare shingle, saltmarsh, pasture, open water, reedbeds and willow scrub make for varied habitats and varied tasks to manage them! There is a wide variety of volunteering opportunities.

Contact: **Linda Wren** or **Andy Dinsdale** on **01797 227 784** or [rhnroffice@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:rhnroffice@sussexwt.org.uk)

**Filsham Reedbed**      **TN38 8DY or TQ 780088**      near Bexhill and Hastings

One of the largest surviving reedbeds in Sussex is home to many breeding warblers during the summer. The ponds attract many birds in the autumn and winter including Harriers, Bitterns and Kingfishers. Tasks include scrub and reed cutting, maintaining paths for visitor access, and keeping the open water areas free from encroaching vegetation. (Monthly task day usually a Saturday)

Contact: **Anthony Brown** on **07933 607926**

**Flatropers Wood**      **TN31 6TH or TQ 863 234**      near Rye and Northiam

This lovely Wealden wood consists mostly of oak and birch, which used to be managed for timber production. There is a stream and a pond that supports palmate newts. Bracken and trees need to be managed in places to encourage the spread of heather, and the ride edges need to be coppiced, to promote increased diversity of flora and butterflies. (task days usually on Sundays)

Contact: **Derek Bates** on **01424 425538**

Meet: 10.00am by the middle entrance on Bixley Lane, Beckley.

**Gillham Wood**      **TN39 3BA or TQ 716 069**      near Cooden nr. Bexhill

This 7.9 acre reserve is an oasis within Cooden village. The wood is mainly oak with holly, hazel and the delightful guelder rose. Indicators of the woods age include the prickly butcher's broom. Keen residents manage the wood as members of the Friends of Gillham Wood. (task day usually the first Saturday of each quarter)

Contact: **Alice Parfitt** on [AliceParfitt@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:AliceParfitt@sussexwt.org.uk)

**Malling Down**      **BN7 2RU or TQ 423 107**      near Lewes

This chalk downland area is rich in flowers such as the Common Spotted Orchid and Round Headed Rampion and is a stronghold for the rare Adonis Blue butterfly and Silver Spotted Skipper. It is essential to keep scrub from taking over the shorter and warmer turf that the butterflies and Downland flowers like. (Monthly task day usually a Sunday, October - February)

Contact: **Peter Hodge** on **01273 812047**

Meet: Usually the top of Mill Road, Lewes at 10:00 am.

### **Marline Valley**

**TN38 9NY or TQ 783 122**

near Hastings and Battle

A beautiful mixture of woodlands, streams and meadows. The hornbeam woods produce a riot of colourful flowers in spring, the stream supports many rare mosses and the meadows are excellent for flowers and butterflies. Scrub around the meadow needs to be coppiced, bramble and bracken controlled, and the footpath network needs maintaining. (Monthly task day usually a Sunday)

Contact: **Owen Johnson 01424 426986**

Meet: 9.45 am. As this is a large reserve with difficult parking, please contact the leader to find each working group. Lifts are available from Hastings Station at 9.30am on each task day.

### **Old Lodge**

**TN22 3JD or TQ 470 30**

near Crowborough and Forest Row

Part of the Ashdown Forest, work is still needed here to maintain a mixture of pine woodland and heathland. A good site for heathland birds and a wide range of dragonflies. Pine, birch, bracken and gorse need to be controlled on this large area to complement the work done by grazing animals, and some work needs to be done on the many small ponds.

Contact: **Martin Wilkinson on 01892 542929**

Meet: Tuesdays:9:00am opposite the Top Lodge cottages along the Old Lodge private road.

### **Seaford Head**

**BN25 4JQ or TV 5043 9807**

near Seaford and Eastbourne

The Trust currently manages part of Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve and holds a regular task group on the first Thursday of each month to carry out practical conservation in this iconic landscape.

Contact: **Sarah Quantrill on [sarahquantrill@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:sarahquantrill@sussexwt.org.uk)**

### **Selwyns Wood**

**TN21 0QN or TQ 552 205**

near Heathfield and Uckfield

Much of this mixed woodland used to be chestnut coppice. There is an expanding area of heathland, and a mixture of oak and other trees has been planted to replace dense birch stands. Regular maintenance tasks consist of path clearance, coppicing, bracken and scrub control to maintain the heather area and removing invasive rhododendron. Weekly Thursday task day.

Contact: **Trevor Hince on 01435 863364**

Meet: Thursdays 9.30-12.30. From Cross-in-Hand, turn off B2192 by Methodist church into Fir Grove Road. Reserve ½m on left.

## **OTHER PRACTICAL VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES**

We have a number of practical conservation Hit Squads which provides an opportunity for volunteers who would like to get involved with regular volunteering on our reserves. Each group meets weekly at Woods Mill or at one of the specified locations.

Tasks include scrub clearance, removal of non-native species, grassland management, reed cutting, woodland management, fence repair etc.

Hit Squad volunteers should be 16 or over and have a degree of physical fitness alongside some interest in wildlife & conservation. The Hit Squads are popular, run every week and often have a full complement of volunteers. Please contact the **Volunteer Development Team** to check availability contact on **01273 497 562** or **[swtvolunteering@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:swtvolunteering@sussexwt.org.uk)**

### **Weekly Conservation Hit Squads**

We have 3 weekday practical conservation hit squads. Each group meets weekly at Woods Mill and travels as a team in the Trust's Land Rover to spend the day (9am to 5pm approx.) at various nature reserves in Sussex.

The 3 groups are as follows:

- Tuesday hit squad - East Sussex Reserves
- Wednesday hit squad - West Sussex Reserves
- Thursday hit squad - Central Sussex Reserves

### **Saturday Conservation Hit Squad**

The Trust also runs a Saturday Conservation Hit Squad (approx 9.00am to 4pm). The group is based at Woods Mill, Henfield, and from there the team travels in the Land Rover to various reserves across both East and West Sussex to carry out vital conservation tasks. There is also the option of meeting on site, if you prefer. This is a weekly group; however you don't need to commit to volunteering every week.

Contact: **Sarah Quantrill on [sarahquantrill@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:sarahquantrill@sussexwt.org.uk)**

### **Wednesday Midhurst Conservation Hit Squad (West Sussex Heathland Sites)**

The Trust runs a weekly conservation hit squad based in the Midhurst area and would love to hear from volunteers in the local area who would like to get involved. The group, which works in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority, carries out practical conservation tasks on Wednesdays at various heathland sites such as Stedham and Iping Commons, Graffham Common, Ambersham & Heyshot Commons and Weavers Down. You don't have to commit to coming every week, just let the leader know when you'd like to attend. No experience is necessary, but volunteers should be enthusiastic and have a reasonable level of fitness.

Contact **Jane Willmott on 07557 162406 [janewillmott@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:janewillmott@sussexwt.org.uk)** to find out more.

Meet: Midhurst Depot or on site.

### **Gatwick Greenspace Partnership**

Gatwick Greenspace Partnership is a Living Landscape project that works to benefit people, wildlife and the countryside between Horsham, Crawley, Horley, Reigate and Dorking. If you live in or around the Gatwick Greenspace area you may be interested in volunteering with this project, where there are regular volunteer tasks to carry out rhododendron removal, heathland management, pond work, tree planting, installation of boardwalks and stiles etc.

Contact **Kevin Lerwill on 01293 550730 or [kevinlerwill@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:kevinlerwill@sussexwt.org.uk)** or look at the website:

<https://sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/get-involved/community-projects/gatwick> and download their volunteer task programme.

**Brighton Hit Squad** This newly formed group meet s once a month on a Saturday morning for practical conservation work on Sussex Wildlife Trust's reserves within the city but will working on other greenspace across Brighton and Hove.

Contact: **Huw Morgan on [huwmorgan@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:huwmorgan@sussexwt.org.uk)** for dates and to find out more.

### **Youth Rangers (16-25 year olds)**

The Trust runs youth ranger groups for 16-25 year olds on Wednesdays at Tilgate Park in Crawley and Thursdays at Stanmer Park in Brighton. Tasks includes habitat management and maintenance in local greenspaces and nature reserves, planting hedgerows, wildlife gardening, tool use and maintenance, woodworking and wildlife identification. This is an ideal opportunity for young people seeking a career in the countryside. No formal qualifications required but enthusiastic individuals with a keen interest in wildlife and the environment, and a willingness to work outdoors in all weather conditions, are welcomed. Please contact the leader beforehand to check the day is going ahead as planned.

Contact:

Crawley Group at Tilgate Park (Wednesdays – term time): **Tamara Jewell**, on **07771 375254** or [tamarajewell@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:tamarajewell@sussexwt.org.uk)  
Brighton Group (Thursdays): **Huw Morgan**, on **07771 375273** or [huwmorgan@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:huwmorgan@sussexwt.org.uk)

### **Further Information:**

**Please see the following page for the Quarterly Conservation Task Calendar**

Please wear old clothes and suitable footwear, bring food and drink and plenty of enthusiasm. Tools, gloves and training are provided, though you may wish to invest in your own gardening gloves. You are advised to be up to date with your tetanus immunisation.

**If you no longer wish to receive this mail-out or are unable to volunteer for the SWT, please could you contact Volunteer Development Team on 01273 497562 E-mail: [swtvolunteering@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:swtvolunteering@sussexwt.org.uk)**

Above all, have a good time, and thank you for helping us to conserve the wild places of Sussex.

# CONSERVATION TASK CALENDAR

## JULY 2017

<b>Mon</b>	31	3	10	17	24
<b>Tues</b>		4 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	11 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	18 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	25 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad
<b>Wed</b>		5 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Crawley Youth Rangers Gatwick Greenspace	12 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Crawley Youth Rangers Gatwick Greenspace	19 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Gatwick Greenspace Crawley Youth Rangers	26 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Gatwick Greenspace
<b>Thurs</b>		6 Selwyns Wood West Dean Woods Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers Seaford Head	13 Selwyns Wood West Dean Woods Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers	20 Selwyns Wood West Dean Woods Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers	27 Selwyns Wood West Dean Woods Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers
<b>Fri</b>		7 Woods Mill	14 Woods Mill	21 Woods Mill	28 Woods Mill
<b>Sat</b>	1 Saturday Hit Squad Ebernoe Common Filsham Reedbed Gillham Wood	8 Saturday Hit Squad	15 Saturday Hit Squad	22 Saturday Hit Squad	29 Saturday Hit Squad
<b>Sun</b>	2	9 Marline Valley	16 Flatropers Gatwick Greenspace	23 Gatwick Greenspace	30

## AUGUST 2017

<b>Mon</b>		7	14	21	28 <b>BANK HOLIDAY</b>
<b>Tues</b>	1 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	8 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	15 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	22 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	29 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad
<b>Wed</b>	2 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Gatwick Greenspace	9 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Gatwick Greenspace	16 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Gatwick Greenspace	23 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Gatwick Greenspace	30 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Gatwick Greenspace
<b>Thurs</b>	3 Selwyns Wood Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers Seaford Head	10 Selwyns Wood Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers	17 Selwyns Wood Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers	24 Selwyns Wood Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers	31 Selwyns Wood Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers
<b>Fri</b>	4 Woods Mill	11 Woods Mill	18 Woods Mill	25 Woods Mill	
<b>Sat</b>	5 Saturday Hit Squad Ebernoe Common Filsham Reedbed	12 Saturday Hit Squad Gatwick Greenspace	19 Saturday Hit Squad	26 Saturday Hit Squad	
<b>Sun</b>	6 Flatropers	13 Marline Valley	20 Marline Valley	27 Gatwick Greenspace	

## SEPTEMBER 2017

<b>Mon</b>		4	11	18	25
<b>Tues</b>		5 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	12 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	19 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad	26 Old Lodge Tues Hit Squad
<b>Wed</b>		6 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Crawley Youth Rangers Gatwick Greenspace	13 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Crawley Youth Rangers Gatwick Greenspace	20 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Crawley Youth Rangers Gatwick Greenspace	27 Midhurst Hit Squad Weds Hit Squad Crawley Youth Rangers Gatwick Greenspace
<b>Thurs</b>		7 Selwyns Wood West Dean Woods Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers Seaford Head	14 Selwyns Wood West Dean Woods Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers	21 Selwyns Wood West Dean Woods Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers	28 Selwyns Wood West Dean Woods Thurs Hit Squad Brighton Youth Rangers
<b>Fri</b>	1 Woods Mill	8 Woods Mill RESERVES VOL BBQ!	15 Woods Mill	22 Woods Mill	29 Woods Mill
<b>Sat</b>	2 Saturday Hit Squad Ebernoe Common Filsham Reedbed	9 Saturday Hit Squad	16 Saturday Hit Squad	23 Saturday Hit Squad	30
<b>Sun</b>	3	10	17 Gatwick Greenspace	24 Gatwick Greenspace	