Friends of Portsdown Hill Newsletter

OCTOBER 2023



Welcome back to Portsdown Hill — the summer that began and ended with unusually warm weather has given way to autumn. Unlike last year there wasn't a summer heatwave and drought and so plant growth wasn't constrained. So hopefully insect populations were able to maintain themselves.



The short version of the year's biodiversity news is — a notable lack of insect abundance and an increase in new species benefiting from our warmer climate. The trend continues. Several new species turned up, recent colonists continue to thrive and (some good news) a characteristic downland species has made a return.

Southern green Shieldbug, an African species now found here



Adonis blue butterfly, a native species that has returned to hill

This August saw the very sad passing of Bob Bennett. A long standing Treasurer to the FoPH, conservation volunteer and butterfly transect recorder. Bob made an invaluable contribution to the full range our activities and is sorely missed. Ever thoughtful and supportive and adept at encouraging others to be thoughtful and supportive. We were fortunate to have his help, as were many other community groups.

Richard Jones

Countryside Officer



Adult summer beetles, like this thick-thighed beetle need flowers—like this orchid. They also need somewhere to over-winter at immature stages of their life cycle, which is where tall grassland with a variety of hollow, dead wildflower stems, e.g. hogweed, comes in handy. But diverse grassland requires the removal dead vegetation so the trick of habitat management is to keep a bit of everything.

On the Web

www.portsdown.org.uk/ The FoPH website

www. havantnature.net/Wildlife information on Portsdown and further afield.

www. portsdown-tunnels.org.uk Portsdown's underground history

Contact Details

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Events

Talks — Between October and April we meet on the second **Tuesday** of the Month at the Church of the Resurrection Hall, Brecon Avenue, Drayton, PO6 2AW. Starting at **7.30pm**.

£3.00 on the door - includes refreshments



Tues 10th Oct BIRD AWARE SOLENT

Alice Ashcroft-Dalley will talk on the work of **Bird Aware Solent** that aims to reduce the recreational impact on our coastal birds



Tues 14th Nov BETTER WILDLIFE PHOTOS

Dianne Watkins will share ways to fool your

camera into to taking better wildlife shots



Tues 12th Dec URBAN REWILDING

Harry Munt will be talking about making a difference to our own patch

Guided Walks Meet at the East Gate of Fort Widley 10.00 am — 1.00(ish) pm

Thursday, 26th October **Fungi foray**

We shall head off into the woods and fields and see what mushrooms we can find





Thursday, 14th December **Berry Christmas**

A warming winter walk taking note of the season wildlife, including the remaining berries in the hedges