



This season we have already had a Bug Hunt and a Nature Photography afternoon – a huge thank you to everyone involved. We still have the Bat Walk to look forward to with Alex Hatton 17th August 19.30pm. Everyone is welcome, members and non-members, and we continue to look for more Committee members. If you are interested, please let us know (07802 162275 or email lorraineamaynard04@gmail.com).

Conservation Update



Our conservation volunteers spent many hours during the autumn and winter cutting back the brambles and scrub in Pond Meadow by hand. This was followed up with a first cut in May using our new mower.

The aim is to restore this habitat to its original wild flower meadow and increase its biodiversity. We plan to mow the meadow a bit more frequently at least initially to deter the more dominant plants such as brambles. Wild flowers do best on poorer soils, so we remove the arisings from mowing to reduce the nutrients which would otherwise return as the debris breaks down.



Our hard work is starting to pay off with the return of *meadow* flowers such as Agrimony, Bugle, Oxeye Daisy, Ragged Robin, Bird's-Foot-Trefoil, Speedwell, Red Campion and Yellow Archangel this year. We were particularly delighted by the sightings of a Common Spotted Orchid and a Southern Marsh Orchid and we hope to see more of them next year. We've also cut back the buffer zones beside the bridleway and we'll be looking to mow these areas in the autumn.

Please let us know if you would like to help with the conservation work.

Patrick Burke

DRAINAGE UPDATE: BAM Nuttall have completed drainage works on the south side of the railway bridge. Repairs are being carried out on a sewer pipe near the end of Railway Path, which will take a further two weeks. Relaying the Railway Path will then be underway, and it is hoped that the path will be reopened by end of August. Work to the section of drainage on the north side of the bridge is near completion.

We have a new mower!

We took possession of a brand-new reciprocating mower in late April. The machine has already been put to good use, mowing Pond Meadow as part of a regular programme that seeks to restore the meadow and prevent its gradual degradation to poor quality scrubland. The mower managed to achieve in a morning what had previously taken our volunteers much of the winter. We should now be able to maintain the buffer zones far more efficiently too. The purchase was made possible through John Gamble's extremely generous bequest and with the help of MSDC for which we are most grateful.

Peter McKerchar



Friends of Ashenground and Bolnore Woods

Summer 2019

Conservation

-

Protection

-

Enhancement

-

Enjoyment

Bugs, bugs and more bugs!

Summer is here at last! The trees have put on their emerald green suits for the occasion and flowers are everywhere.



This of course means BUGS! Love them or hate them, they are important pests for many critters and vital pollinators. Nearly all animals, including us, depend on them.

They are also beautiful, from butterflies to the humble fly, they all have an attraction. As a child bluebottles fascinated me with their incredible metallic beauty, their emerald and sapphire colouring rivalled any jewel.

Those lucky enough to have a butterfly bush in the garden, will hopefully have witnessed lots of multicoloured butterflies on it. Butterflies are in decline, but we can do our bit to try and help.

- Don't spray insecticide! If you have green or black fly, look around your garden for some ladybirds and set them to work - they are the ladybird's main diet.
- Plant shrubs and flowers that they like to feed on or host their caterpillars on - a good book / the internet will guide you.



So how do we find bugs? Well look out for the tell-tale signs.

Curled leaves, sometimes webs (not only spiders have them), nibbled leaves are a dead giveaway to a resident caterpillar. Watch for bird activity as they feed on bugs. The woodpecker and tree creepers are experts at hunting for bug in crevices in bark.

You also find bugs in water - boatmen, diving beetles, water fleas, the list goes on. If you look in any standing water in your garden its guaranteed you will find midge larvae.

Another way to find bugs is to take a white hand towel, put it under a bush or tree branch and shake the branches (gently as not to cause damage). Then study what falls off, a magnifying glass can help see detail and colours.

Helpful bug hints:

- If a mosquito does get you, cover the bite with clear nail varnish, this prevents oxygen getting to the bite which causes the itch.
- To stop wasps pestering you, place a jam smeared jam jar as far away as possible. They'd rather eat the jam than waste their stings on you.

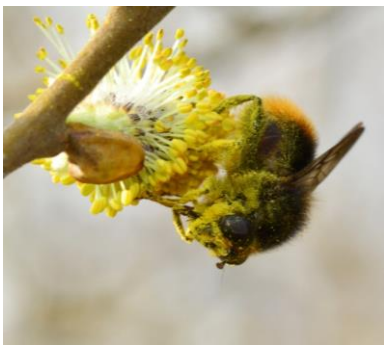
Debby Martell



A snippet from an excellent article on bees by Krisztina Fekete

SNAPSHOT OF INVERTEBRATE LIFE IN ASHENGROUND AND BOLNORE WOODS

This early spring species is an excellent bumblebee-mimic (see images below), which frequently visits willow, blackthorn and wild cherry. *Criorhina ranunculi* is mainly a southern species where they breed in rotting (mainly oak or birch) tree trunks. This insect tends to stay up high in a canopy, therefore not often can be seen. As it is evident from the photos, hoverflies also excellent and very important pollinator species alongside bees.....



Pic.1. *Criorhina ranunculi* hoverfly covered in pollen (Fekete, 2019)



Pic.2. *Criorhina ranunculi* on Sallow (Fekete, 2019)

...to read the rest of this paper and see the beautiful photos please visit www.foabw.uk (under Surveys)

Bug Hunt



Thank you to both Jo Wilson, MSDC Ranger and Debby Martell for leading the Bug Hunt this year. Both children and adults enjoyed the hunt. Jo and Debby did an excellent job identifying lots of beetles, butterflies, grasshoppers, crickets,

spiders and many more. In total 37 species were identified.

Thank you to Linda Howard for taking the photos on the day.



Nature Photography Afternoon

Linda Howard led the Photo Afternoon once again this year. Some wonderful photos were taken and all



who attended enjoyed the afternoon. Thank



you Linda for giving up your free time to share your expertise and knowledge with us.

**Photo credits:
Louise Taylor & Linda
Howard**

Lorraine Maynard



Friends of Ashenground and Bolnore Woods

Summer 2019

Conservation

-

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Enhancement

-

Enjoyment

Can you name some of the lovely bugs people have spotted in Ashenground and Bolnore Woods?



1. _____



2. _____



3. _____



4. _____



5. _____

Forthcoming Events

- Bat Walk – 17th August
19.30pm: Meeting at the Bridge – please bring a torch

All children are welcome at all FoABW events and all events are free. Any under 16s must be accompanied by an adult.

(Answers below if you get a bit stuck)

Annual Subscriptions: To join or renew your subscription you can do one of the following:

- Set up a standing order by requesting the appropriate form from Peter McKerchar.
- Send a cheque to 25 Wealden Way, Haywards Heath, RH16 4AF, payable to FoABW.
- Bank transfer to account no. 10021310, sort code 60-10-26, giving your surname as reference.

The Committee is very grateful to those who pay more than the minimum of £5 and paying by standing order reduces our administration costs.

Answers: 1. Ladybird, 2. Brimstone, 3. Buff Tailed Bumblebee, 4. Flower Beetle, 5. Peacock Butterfly