Wildlife of the Hampshire Downs

Naturetrek Tour Report

15 - 17 June 2018



Clay Triple-lines



Dactylorhiza fuchsii var. rhodochila



Herminium monorchis



Orobanche hederae var. monochroma

Report and images by Paul Harmes



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Tour participants: Paul Harmes (leader) with six Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Friday 15th June

Froxfield - Chawton

Six group members met with our tour guide, Paul Harmes, at 6.30pm in the bar of the Trooper Inn at Froxfield, our base for the three days of the tour. Paul welcomed the group and gave a brief outline of the programme, before we sat down to dinner. During the meal, a solitary Red Kite was seen lazily circling overhead.

With the meal complete, we convened at our minibus for the 15-minute drive to Chawton, where we parked at the Naturetrek offices. We made a short walk into the adjacent woodland which was predominately *Fagus sylvatica* (Beech), with *Corylus avellana* (Hazel). As we entered, a distant Tawny Owl could be heard. Along a trackside we found a solitary *Ophrys apifera* (Bee Orchid) and numerous spikes of *Cephalanthera damasonium* (White Helleborine), sadly all well past their best. In addition, we also saw *Paris quadrifolia* (Herb-Paris), and *Polygonatum multiflorum* (Solomon's-seal).

Leaving the woods, we retraced our steps to the car park, where the Naturetrek staff had kindly set a moth trap. Although it was only relatively early, there were a few moths around. These included several specimens of Small Magpie, Straw Dot, Lace Border, Flame and Smokey Wainscot, among others.

After packing away the trap, we re-joined the minibus for the return journey to the hotel, where we retired for the night.

Day 2

Saturday 16th June

Noar Hill - Butser Hill - Portsdown Hill

Following a fine breakfast, we were on the road soon after 9am, heading for the renowned chalk grassland reserve of Noar Hill. Parking our minibus in a quiet lane, we made our way up a track and a footpath onto the scarp. As we went, we recorded Robin, Goldfinch, Wren, Chaffinch and Blackbird, as well as *Stachys sylvatica* (Hedge Woundwort), *Euonymus europaeus* (Spindle) and *Hypericum hirsutum* (Hairy St. John's-wort). Emerging onto the reserve, we were greeted by a magnificent floral display, including *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* (Common Spottedorchid), *Gymnadenia conopsea* (Fragrant Orchid), *Polygala vulgaris* (Common Milkwort), *Centaurea scabiosa* (Greater Knapweed) and its parasite, *Orobanche elatior* (Knapweed Broomrape). Overhead, Common Kestrel and Red Kite were added. As we progressed, we saw *Campanula glomerata* (Clustered Bellflower), *Herminium monorchis* (Musk Orchid), *Verbascum thapsus* (Great Mullein), *Neottia ovata* (Twayblade) and *Lathyrus pratensis* (Meadow Vetchling). A few butterflies were on the wing, including Marbled White, Common Blue, Meadow Brown and Small Heath.

After descending back to the vehicle, we made the short journey to Hawkley, where we had a pub lunch. The verge opposite the pub had *Athyrium filix-femina* (Lady-fern) and *Polystichum aculeatum* (Hard Shield-fern). We also saw a Yellow Shell moth.

We now joined the A3 southwards to the National Nature Reserve of Butser Hill. Parking in the car park, we set off in a chilly wind, for a short walk. The elevation of the site afforded some splendid views down to the Solent.

Due to the weather, we saw no butterflies. However, Paul pointed out a few plant species not usually associated with chalk grassland: Rumex acetosella (Sheep's Sorrel), Hypochaeris radicata (Cat's-ear), Digitalis purpurea (Foxglove) and Potentilla erecta (Tormentil), all present due to nitrogen deposition or leaching, both of which reduce the floral richness of a site.

Our final stop of the day was on Portsdown Hill, overlooking the city of Portsmouth. Here we found Melampyrum arvense (Field Cow-wheat), Anacamptis pyramidalis (Pyramidal Orchid), Dactylorhiza fuchsii (Common Spotted-orchid), Ophrys apifera (Bee Orchid), the curious Orobanche hederae var. monochroma (Ivy Broomrape) and Digitalis lutea (Small Yellow Foxglove). We also added Five-spot Burnet moth and Brown-banded Carder Bee, before it was time to make our way back to our hotel for supper.

Day 3

2

Sunday 17th June

Beacon Hill - The Warren

Today, we set out in a south-westerly direction. Our objective was the scarp slope of Beacon Hill, near the village of Exton. It was a dull, grey morning, after overnight rain, but the cloud was high, and the sun put in the occasional appearance. A Willow Beauty moth was reported, resting on the door of the hotel.

Soon after leaving the hotel, we made a short stop on the side of the A32 to examine an area of cleared woodland. Here, we found a massive stand of several thousand spikes of *Digitalis purpurea* (Foxglove), *Lysimachia nemorum* (Yellow Pimpernel), *Allium ursinum* (Ramsons), *Veronica chamaedrys* (Germander Speedwell) and *Circaea lutetiana* (Enchanter's Nightshade).

Moving on, we parked the minibus at Beacon Hill, and set off along the access track. However, before we had moved, a Clay Triple-lines moth was spotted resting on a Nettle leaf, and the distinctive call of the Song Thrush was also heard. As we made our way along the track, Agrimonia eupatorium (Agrimony), Potentilla anserina (Silverweed), Lonicera periclymenum (Honeysuckle) and several large specimens of Taxus baccata (Yew) were all noted. We soon emerged onto the open hillside, where we added Cruciata laevipes (Crosswort), Rhinanthus minor agg. (Yellow-rattle), Scabiosa columbaria (Small Scabious), Helianthemum nummularium (Rock-rose), Orchis anthropophora (Man Orchid), Asperula cynanchica (Squinancy-wort) and the stunning Dactylorhiza fuchsii var. rhodochila (a red-lipped form of Common Spotted-orchid). Meadow Brown, Small Heath, Marbled White and Common Blue butterflies were seen, as well as Common Carpet, Six-spot Burnet and Red-tailed Bumblebee. For the birds, there were Common Swift, Yellowhammer, Robin, and a fly-over of three Mediterranean Gulls.

Re-tracing our route back to the car park, we now moved down to the village of Exton, where took lunch in the garden of the Shoe public house, on the banks of the Meon river. Along the bank of the stream we saw *Scrophularia auriculata* (Water Figwort) and *Filipendula ulmaria* (Meadow-sweet).

After lunch, we set off northwards, towards the Warren National Nature Reserve. Parking on a quiet lane, we made our way into a 'Hanger' (a beechwood on a hill, referred to by Gilbert White in his Natural History of Selbourne). Early finds were *Sanicula europaea* (Sanicle), *Galium odoratum* (Sweet Woodruff) and *Mercurialis perennis* (Dog's Mercury). Further down the hill, we added *Asplenium scolopendrium* (Hart's-tongue Fern), *Dryopteris filix-mas* (Male-fern), *Dryopteris dilitata* (Broad Buckler-fern) and the rare native, *Hypericum androsaemum* (Tutsan).

It was now time to make our way back to the hotel, for group members to complete their preparations for their homeward journeys.

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Species Lists

Plants

Scientific Name English Name (if any) Location

PTERIDOPHYTES

LEPTOSPORANGIATE FERNS TRUE FERNS

Aspeniaceae Spleenwort Family

Asp[elium ruta-murariaWall-rueHawkleyAsplenium scolopendriumHart's-tongue FernThe Warren

Dennstaedtiaceae Bracken Family

Pteridium aquilinum Bracken Noar Hill

Dryopteridaceae Buckler-fern Family

Dryopteris dilitataBroad Buckler-fernThe WarrenDryopteris filix-masMale-fernThe WarrenPolystichum aculeatumHard Shield-fernHawkley

Woodsiaceae Lady-fern Family

Anthyrium filix-femina Lady-fern Hawkley

GYMNOSPERMS CONIFERS

Cupressaceae Juniper Family

Juniperus communis Juniper Beacon Hill

Taxaceae Yew Family

Taxus baccata Yew Beacon Hill

ANGIOSPERMS FLOWERING PLANTS

DICOTYLEDONS

Apiaceae Carrot Family

Aegipodium podagariaGround ElderPortsdown HillAnthriscus sylvestrisCow ParsleyNoar HillHeracleum sphondylliumHogweedNoar HillSanicula europaeaSanicleThe Warren

Aquifoliaceae Holly Family

Ilex aquifolia Holly The Warren

Araliaceae Ivy Family

Hedera helix agg Ivy Portsdown Hill

Asteraceae (Compositae) Daisy Family

Achillea millefolium Yarrow Portsdown Hill

Bellis perennis Daisy The Trooper car park

Contourse piges

Centaurea nigraKnapweedNoar HillCentaurea scabiosaGreater KnapweedPortsdown HillCirsium palustreMarsh ThistleA32 near Monkwood

Cucurbitaceae

Bryonia dioica

Scientific Name	English Name (if any)	Location
Lapsana communis	Nipplewort	Noar Hill
Leucanthemum vulgare	Ox-eye Daisy	Noar Hill
Pilosella officinarum	Mouse-eared Hawkweed	Noar Hill
Senecio erucifolius	Hoary Ragwort	Noar Hill
Senecio jacobaea	Common Ragwort	Noar Hill
Senecio vulgaris	Groundsel	The Trooper car park
Sonchus asper	Prickly Sow-thistle	Noar Hill
Sonchus oleraceus	Smooth Sow-thistle	The Trooper car park
Taraxacum agg	Dandelion	Noar Hill
Tragapogon pratensis	Goat's-beard	Beacon Hill
Boraginaceae	Forget-me-not Family	
Echium vulgare	Viper's Bugloss	Butser Hill NNR
Myosotis arvensis	Field Forget-me-not	Portsdown Hill
Brassicaceae	Cabbage Family	
Alliaria petiolata	Garlic Mustard	Noar Hill
Capsella bursa-pastoris	Shepherd's Purse	The Trooper car park
Campanulaceae	Bellflower Family	
Campanula glomerata	Clustered Bellflower	Noar Hill
Caprifoliaceae	Honeysuckle Family	
Lonicera periclymenum	Honeysuckle	A32 near Monkwood
Sambucus nigra	Elder	Noar Hill
Viburnum lantana	Wayfaring Tree	Noar Hill
Viburnum opulus	Guelder Rose	Portsdown Hill
Caryophyllaceae	Pink Family	
Arenaria serpyllifolia subsp. serpyllifoia	Thyme-leaved Sandwort	A32 near Monkwood
Cerastium fontanum	Common Mouse-ear	A32 near Monkwood
Silene dioica	Red Campion	Butser Hill NNR
Silene vulgaris	Bladder Campion	A32 near Monkwood
Celastraceae	Spindle Family	
Euonymus europaeus	Spindle	Noar Hill
Cistaceae	Rock-rose Family	
Helianthemum nummularium	Common Rock-rose	Beacon Hill
Convolvulaceae	Bindweed Family	
Calystegia sepium	Hedge Bindweed	The Warren
Convolvulus arvensis	Field Bindweed	Portsdown Hill
Cornaceae	Dogwood Family	
Cornus sanguinea	Dogwood	Portsdown Hill
Corylaceae	Hazel Family	
Corylus avellana	Hazel	Noar Hill

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Cucumber Family White Bryony

Noar Hill

Scientific Name **English Name (if any)** Location

Dipsacaceae **Teasel Family**

Butser Hill NNR Teasel Dipsacus fullonum Knautia arvensis Field Scabious Portsdown Hill Scabiosa columbaria **Small Scabious** Noar Hill

Euphorbiaceae **Spurge Family**

A32 Near Monkwood Euphorbia amygdaloides Wood Spurge Euphorbia lathyris Caper Spurge Portsdown Hill Mercurialis perennis Dog's Mercury The Warren

Fabaceae (Leguminosae) **Pea Family**

Anthyllis vulneraria Kidney Vetch Noar Hill Yellow Vetchling Noar Hill Lathyrus pratensis Lotus corniculatus Bird's-foot Trefoil Noar Hill

Lotus pedunculatus (L. uliginosus) Greater Bird's-foot Trefoil A32 Near Monkwood

Medicago lupulina Black Medick Noar Hill Ononis repens Restharrow Noar Hill Trifolium campestris Hop Trefoil Portsdown Hill Trifolium dubium Lesser Yellow Trefoil Portsdown Hill Trifolium pratense **Red Clover** Portsdown Hill Trifolium repens White Clover Noar Hill **Tufted Vetch** Portsdown Hill Vicia cracca **Bush Vetch** Noar Hill Vicia sepium

Fagaceae Oak & Beech Family

Fagus sylvatica Beech Chawton Quercus robur Pendunculate Oak The Warren

Geraniaceae **Geranium Family**

Geranium molle Dove's-foot Crane's-bill Portsdown Hill Hedgerow Crane's-bill Noar Hill Geranium pyrenaicum Geranium robertianum Herb-Robert Noar Hill

St. John's-wort Family Hypericaceae

The Warren Hypericum androseamum Tutsan Hypericum hirsutum Hairy St.John's-wort Noar Hill Perforate St. John's-wort Hypericum perforatum Portsdown Hill

Lamiaceae **Dead-nettle Family**

Mentha aquatica Water Mint Exton Oreganum vulgare Marjoram Beacon Hill Portsdown Hill Prunella vulgaris Selfheal Stachys sylvatica Hedge Woundwort Noar Hill Thymus polytrichus Noar Hill

Wild Thyme

Linaceae Flax Family

Noar Hill Linum catharticum Purging or Fairy Flax

Lythraceae **Purple-loosestrife Family**

Lythrum salicaria Purple-loosestrife Exton

Oleaceae **Olive Family**

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Butser Hill NNR Fraxinus excelsior Ash

Scientific Name English Name (if any) Location

Ligustrum vulgare Wild Privet Portsdown Hill

Onagraceae

Chamerion angustifoliumRosebay WillowherbNoar HillCircaea lutetianaEnchanter's NightshadeThe WarrenEpilobium hirsutumGreat WillowherbPortsdown HillEpilobium parviflorumSmall-flowered WillowherbA32 near Monkwood

Willowherb Family

Orobanchaceae Broomrape Family

Melampyrum arvenseField Cow-wheatPortsdown HillOrobanche hederae var. monochromaIvy BroomrapePortsdown HillOrobanche elatiorKnapweed BroomrapeNoar HillRhinanthus minor aggYellow-rattleNoar Hill

Oxalidaceae Wood-sorrel Family

Oxalis acetosella Wood-sorrel The Warren (leaves)

Plantaginaceae Plantain Family

Plantago lanceolataRibwort PlantainNoar HillPlantago majorGreater PlantainThe Trooper car park

Plantago media Hoary or Lamb's-tail Plantain Noar Hill

Polygalaceae Milkwort Family

Polygala vulgaris Common Milkwort Noar Hill

Polygonaceae Knotweed Family

Rumex acetosellaSheep's SorrelButser Hill NNRRumex crispusCurled DockA32 Near Monkwood

Rumex obtusifolius Broad-leaved Dock Beacon Hill

Primulaceae Primrose Family

Lysimachia nemorumYellow PimpernelA32 Near MonkwoodPrimula verisCowslipNoar Hill (over)

Ranunculaceae Buttercup Family

Clematis vitalbaTraveller's-joyNoar HillRanunculus acrisMeadow ButtercupBeacon HillRanunculus repensCreeping ButtercupNoar Hill

Resedaceae Mignonette Family

Reseda lutea Wild Mignonette Portsdown Hill Reseda luteola Weld Portsdown Hill

Rosaceae Rose Family

Crataegus monogyna **Butser Hill NNR** Hawthawn Fragaria vesca Wild Strawberry Noar Hill Filipendula ulmaria Meadowsweet Exton Geum urbanum Wood Avens or Herb Bennet Noar Hill Potentilla anserina Silverweed Beacon Hill Potentilla erecta **Butser Hill NNR** Tormentil Potentilla sterilis Barren Strawberry A32 Near Monkwood Prunus spinosa Noar Hill

Prunus spinosaBlackthornNoar HillRosa canina aggDog RoseNoar Hill

Scientific Name English Name (if any) Location

Rubus armeniacus Armenian Bramble A32 Near Monkwood

Rubus caesiusDewberryBeacon HillRubus ulmifolius-Noar HillPoterium sanguisorbaSalad BurnetNoar HillSorbus aria aggWhitebeamNoar Hill

Rubiaceae Bedstraw Family

Cruciata laevipesCrosswortNoar HillGalium aparineCleversNoar HillGalium mollugoHedge BedstrawNoar HillGalium verumLadies bedstrawNoar Hill

Salicaceae Willow Family

Salix albaWhite WillowExtonSalix capreaGoat WillowNoar HillSalix x fragilisCrack WillowExton

Sapindaceae Maple Family

Acer campestris Field Maple Beacon Hill

Acer platanoides Norway Maple A32 Near Monkwood

Acer pseudoplatanus Sycamore Beacon Hill

Scrophulariaceae Figwort Family

Scrophularia auriculata Water Figwort Exton

Verbascum thapsus Great Mullein or Aaron's Rod Noar Hill

Urticacae Nettle Family

Urtica dioica Common Nettle Noar Hill

Valerianaceae Valerian Family

Centranthus ruber Red Valerian Portsdown Hill

Veronicacea Speedwell Family

Cymbalaria muralisIvy-leaved ToadflaxHawkleyDigitalis luteaSmall Yellow FoxglovePortsdown HillDigitalis purpureaFoxgloveA32 Near MonkwoodVeronica arvensisWall SpeedwellThe Trooper car parkVeronica chamaedrysGermander SpeedwellA32 Near Monkwood

MONOCOTYLEDONS

Araceae Lords-and-Ladies Family

Arum maculatum Lords-and-Ladies A32 Near Monkwood

Asparagaceae Asparagus Family

Polygonatum multiflorum Solomon's-seal Chawton

Dioscoreaceae Black Bryony Family

Tamus communis Black Bryony Noar Hill

Iridaceae Iris Family

Iris psuedocorus Yellow Flag Exton

Scientific Name English Name (if any) Location

Lily Family

Allium ursinum Ramsons A32 Near Monkwood

Melanthiaceae Herb-Paris Family

Paris quadrifolia Herb-Paris Chawton

Orchidaceae Orchid Family

Anacamptis pyramidalis

Cephalanthera damasonium

Cephalanthera damasonium (apochromatic form)

White Helleborine

Chawton (over)

Chawton

Dactylorhiza fuchsii Common Spotted-orchid Noar Hill

Epipactis helleborine Broad-leaved Helleborine The Warren (leaves)

Gymnadenia conopseaFragrant OrchidNoar HillHerminium monorchisMusk OrchidNoar HillNeottia (Listera) ovataTwaybladeNoar HillOphrys apiferaBee OrchidPortsdown Hill

Poaceae (Gramineae) Grass Family

Anisantha sterilisBarren BromeBeacon HillArrhenathrum elatiusFalse Oat-grassBeacon HillBrachypodium sylvaticumFalse BromeThe WarrenBriza mediaQuaking GrassNoar Hill

Cynosurus cristatus Crested Dog's-tail Butser Hill NNR

Dactylis glomerataCock's-footChawtonFestuca rubra aggRed FescueNoar HillLolium perennePerennial Rye-grassPortsdown HillMelica unifloraWood MelickThe Warren

Birds (✓=recorded but not counted; h = heard only)

			June		
	Common name	Scientific name	15	16	17
1	Red-legged Partridge	Alectoris rufa		✓	
2	Common Pheasant	Phasianus colchicus		✓	
3	Red Kite	Milvus milvus	✓	✓	
4	Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo		✓	
5	Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus		✓	
6	Black-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus		✓	
7	Mediterranean Gull	Ichthyaetus melanocephalus			✓
8	European Herring Gull	Larus argentatus		✓	
9	Rock Dove [Feral]	Columba livia feral		✓	✓
10	Common Wood Pigeon	Columba palumbus		✓	
11	Eurasian Collared Dove	Streptopelia decaocto		✓	✓
12	Tawny Owl	Strix aluco	Н		
13	Common Swift	Apus apus		✓	
14	European Green Woodpecker	Picus viridis		Н	
15	Common Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus		✓	
16	Eurasian Jay	Garrulus glandarius		✓	
17	Eurasian Magpie	Pica pica		✓	✓
18	Rook	Corvus frugilegus			✓
19	Carrion Crow	Corvus corone		✓	✓
20	Great Tit	Parus major		✓	
21	Eurasian Skylark	Alauda arvensis		✓	

			June		
	Common name	Scientific name	15	16	17
22	Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica		✓	✓
23	Common Chiffchaff	Phylloscopus collybita		Н	
24	Eurasian Blackcap	Sylvia atricapilla		Н	Н
25	Eurasian Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes	Н	Н	
26	Common Starling	Sturnus vulgaris		✓	
27	Common Blackbird	Turdus merula		✓	
28	European Robin	Erithacus rubecula		✓	
29	House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	✓	✓	✓
30	Common Chaffinch	Fringilla coelebs		✓	
31	European Greenfinch	Chloris chloris		Н	
32	European Goldfinch	Carduelis carduelis		✓	
33	Yellowhammer	Emberiza citrinella		✓	

Butterflies

1	Common Blue	Polyommatus icarus	✓
2	Marbled White	Melanargia galathea	✓
3	Meadow Brown	Maniola jurtina	✓
4	Small Heath	Coenonympha pamphilus	✓
5	Speckled Wood	Pararge aegeria tircis	✓
6	Large Skipper	Ochlodes sylvanus	✓

Micro Moths (F = Field; T = Trap)

1	Small Magpie	Anania hortulata	Т	
2	Crambid	Udea ovialis	Т	

Macro Moths

1	Six-spot Burnet Moth	Zygaena filipendulae		F	
2	Five-spot Burnet Moth	Zygaena trifolii		F	
3	Clay Triple-lines	Cyclophora linearia			F
4	Small Dusty Wave	Idaea seriata	Т		
5	Treble Brown Spot	Idaea trigeminata	Т		
6	Riband Wave	Idaea aversata	Т		
7	Common Carpet	Epirrhoe alternata			F
8	Yellow Shell	Camptogramma bilineata		F	
9	Brimstone Moth	Opisthograptis luteolata		F	
10	Willow Beauty	Peribatodes rhomboidaria			F
11	Common White Wave	Cabera pusaria	Т		
12	Heart and Dart	Agrotis exclamationis	Т		
13	Flame	Axylia putris	Т		
14	Smokey Wainscot	Mythimna impura	Т		
15	Straw Dot	Rivula sericealis	Т		
16	Snout	Hypena proboscidalis	Т		

Other Invertebrates

1	Brown-banded Carder Bee	Bombus humilis	✓	
2	Red-tailed Bumblebee	Bombus lapidarius		✓
3	Seven-spot Ladybird	Coccinella 7-punctata		✓
4	Labyrinth Spider	Agelena labyrinthica	✓	

				June	
Commo	n name	Scientific name	15	16	17

Terrestrial Gastropods

1	Brown-lipped Banded Snail	Cepaea nemoralis		✓	
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Mammals

European Roe Deer Capreolus capreolus Butser Hill NNR