

'FRIENDS OF THE TOWANS'

Events March-May 2015

Firstly, many thanks to you all for taking an interest in the Towans and expressing enthusiasm about getting involved.

In particular, thanks to those of you who have come along to recent events – the litter pick in January and the scrub-bash, both on Upton Towans Cornwall Wildlife Trust reserve, at the end of February. We had 19 people on the scrub-bash, which was very encouraging indeed, and gives us confidence to develop this group further.

As you'll see, I'm adopting the idea of alternating a Wednesday outing with a Saturday one, and aiming for two outings each month.

I don't want to depress you, or scare you off with the amount of scrub we need to clear, or litter to pick up, so I am aiming to mix in a number of guided walks as well, so we can all learn more about the wonderful Towans environment, its wildlife and history. Please feel free to let me know if you have any ideas or requests.

Weds March 18th, 10am until around 2pm, St Ives Bay Holiday Park

We will continue to clear invasive sea buckthorn (very spiky!) from part of the holiday park that lies within the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Its spread threatens the native vegetation. Turn off the Hay;e-Gwithian road half mile north of the Loggans/LIDL roundabout. Meet at Park reception – there is room to park. Grid ref: SW 574/392.

Sat March 28th, 10am until around 2pm, St Ives Bay Holiday Park

Details as above.

Weds April 15th, 10am until 2pm-ish, Mexico Towans, Phillack

We will be removing dead undergrowth (not spiky this time) from the Towans to the north of Phillack Church, to encourage dune grassland vegetation to emerge.

Meet outside Phillack Church Grid ref: SW 565/384. If you plan to come, phone me to discuss parking possibilities – bear in mind it will be Easter holidays by then.

Sat April 25th, 10am until 2pm-ish, St Gothian Sands, Gwithian

A less vigorous event, we'll mix a litter-pick in and around the nature reserve with some observation of returning migrant birds using the lagoons.

Meet at roadside entrance to reserve, just north of Gwithian village Grid Ref: SW587/415

Weds 13th May, 10-2ish, Lethlean Towans, near Phillack

Work will be the same as we undertook on April 15th, but this time in the neighbouring property. Easiest to meet outside Phillack Church, but again, phone, text or email me if you plan to come and I can help with parking suggestions.

I'm leaving a gap next at the moment, while I try to arrange a wildflower walk, as the dune grassland will be starting to flower profusely by now – more details to follow. If this does not happen, I will organise something else and will let you know.

Sat June 20th, 2pm-4ish, Gwithian Green Reserve

Join local butterfly expert and conservationist Sally Foster for a walk in the Gwithian/Godrevy area looking at the wide range of butterflies to be found here. In particular, we will search for the silver studded-blue, one of the most important wildlife species in the Towans, and a reason why much of our scrub-clearance is taking place. Meet in car park just north of Gwithian Church SW 586/413. Please bring refreshments. Leader and contact: Sally Foster, 01736 753 259.

Sunday July 5th, 11am-1.30-ish, Upton Towans

Another local butterfly expert and recorder Dick Goodere will lead a walk through the dune complex that makes up Upton Towans Cornwall Wildlife Trust reserve. This is a great place to see butterflies; in particular we hope to watch dark green fritillaries and silver-studded blues. Meet by the gate near the tall chimney Grid Ref: SW 579/396. Please bring packed lunch. Leader and contact: Dick Goodere, 01736 753 077

I hope this whets your appetite to get involved. I am trying to serve you up a range of events at a range of locations across the Towans, so that we can all get to know the area better. Please feel free to circulate this programme to friends, neighbours etc.

I will bring tools and gloves, tea/coffee and biscuits to all events except the butterfly walks, but please bring your own suitable outdoor clothing, especially boots.

I will run through a risk assessment before each task, but you should be aware that the Towans is an open, exposed environment. We may have to contend with sun from above and adders from below on a good day, and with rain and wind when it's not so good....

It would be useful but not essential if you could indicate to me via text, phone or email if you do plan to attend, just to give me an idea of numbers of tools, tea bags etc.

I look forward to seeing you soon!

Martin Rule, Towans Ranger 07854 123 877 martinrule@talktalk.net