

'FRIENDS OF THE TOWANS'

Events May -August 2015

Summary of recent activities

Hello again, how time flies.....yesterday was Helston Flora Day, as well as Election results day, so we now know that spring has definitely sprung and that 'summer has a-come-o'. I'm sure you've all had enough of statistics over the last day or so (I know I have), so I'll just very briefly linger on the facts and figures of our recent outings and then look ahead to future work and events.

In a nutshell, since our outing on March 18th, when Dorothy and I hacked some lumps out of the sea buckthorn on St Ives Bay, each outing has more or less doubled in attendance figures. Ten of us enjoyed a walk in St Gothians and then around Gwithian Green on April 25th. It was a bit cool and cloudy, but we did see signs of spring in the form of a cuckoo, two broods of mallard ducklings, sand martins and a flock of whimbrel (a small migratory curlew), en-route from Africa to the Arctic Circle to breed. Cowslips were abundant on Gwithian Green. We also removed litter, including fairly significant amounts of dog waste from the sites. As we know, this is one of the issues that often spoils a visit to the Towans, so I am grateful for your willingness to help remove at least some of it.

One of the other purposes in running these events is to improve people's knowledge of various parts of the Towans, so it's good that several of the group 'discovered' the gem that is Gwithian Green Nature Reserve on that day.



April 15th 2015, Mexico Towans. Dorothy, Alex and Dickie making headway clearing clematis, bramble and privet. While the south coast had sunshine, we had mist all day, but the fire kept us warm.

Future Events

Sat 30th May, 10-2ish, Gwithian Green Nature Reserve

We will help with several routine tasks on the reserve, but mainly removing large clumps of pendulous sedge and other water plants from the stream, to assist its flow. Bring wellies or waders if you have them. The reserve will be a riot of summer flowers; bring a picnic.

Meet in lay-by just north of Gwithian Church SW 587/414.

Weds 10th June, 10-4ish, WILDFLOWER WALK IN THE TOWANS

Ian Bennallick, co-ordinator of Botanical Cornwall, has kindly agreed to lead a whole day excursion through the Towans with us, visiting Upton, Gwithian Green and Godrevy. Ian is an incredibly knowledgeable botanist who communicates the subject with skill and enthusiasm. I would strongly recommend that you come on this walk if you want to learn loads about the Towans' botany. Bring packed lunch and be prepared to be outside for most of the day – Ian is driven.....!

Meet in the free Gwithian Towans Car Park, Grid Ref SW 5808/4068 – just off the sharp bend on the Hayle-Gwithian road.

Weds 17th June, 9-5ish, National Trust 'BIOBLITZ' at Godrevy

The National Trust is spending the whole day at Godrevy, recording as many wildlife species as possible on their property, to update their records which will then help to guide site management. Many wildlife experts will be present. Come along and help or observe.

Contact: jen.taylor@nationaltrust.org.uk

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

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 BUTTERFLY WALK

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

MONDAY July 20th, 10-2ish, Lethlean Towans, near Phillack

Continuing the work started in May - removing dead privet to encourage dune grassland to regenerate. Easiest to meet outside Phillack Church Grid Ref SW 565/384, but again, phone, text or email me if you plan to come and I can describe our exact work location.

Weds August 12th, 10-2ish, Towans Litter-pick Hayle area

A Towans-tidy-up around Phillack and Mexico Towans – the Hayle end of the Towans. Bring a picnic, and we can end up with some time on the beach if the weather is kind.

Meet outside Phillack Church Grid Ref SW 565/384, but phone, text or email me if you plan to come and I can suggest some parking areas (it will be height of holiday season).

Beach Cleans – Some of you may like to help the Hayle-based group Save our Sands with their regular beach cleans.

Dates are: 20th June Haven, Riviere, 5th July Beachside (both these clash with our dates!!) and 2nd August Hayle Harbour North Quay.

For more info see www.sos-hayle.org.uk

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