

# The Shingle Issue



Spring/Summer 2009

Newsletter of the Dungeness National Nature Reserve

No 10

## THE SHINGLE ISSUE

**WELCOME** to the *Shingle Issue*, the newsletter for the Dungeness National Nature Reserve. Read on to find out more about some of the exciting projects from Dungeness to Greatstone.

*A rabbit nibbled gorsebush at Dungeness.*



## Three plans will help map out reserve's next five years

**T**his spring, the Romney Marsh Countryside Project has been asked to write three important management plans for the area.

The first is the next five year plan for the Dungeness National Nature Reserve which includes Dungeness and the coastline up to Greatstone and blocks of land around Greatstone Primary School. This plan follows on from two previous plans dating back to the late 1990s which were completed by Natural England.

The second management plan involves a large area of shingle and bushes known as the Long Pits/Crane Ponds which are owned by a gravel company called CEMEX. The area covers 120 hectares of land stretching from the top of the Power Station approach road, across to the entrance to the Dungeness Estate and down nearly to the Old Lighthouse.

The area is well used by dog walkers, anglers and birdwatchers and is now heavily scrubbed over in bushes and brambles. These plans will be completed later this spring and we welcome any comments, thoughts and ideas from residents and visitors if they wish to get involved.

### **Involvement**

Details of the third plan are outlined on page two.

With all three plans, the Romney Marsh Countryside Project would hope for local involvement whether by helping on site, reporting any problems or by informing us of any interesting wildlife sightings.

For further information on any of these management plans please contact Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Project on 01797 367934 or [mail@rmcp.co.uk](mailto:mail@rmcp.co.uk) or try visit the websites [www.rmcp.co.uk](http://www.rmcp.co.uk) or [www.dungeness-nnr.co.uk](http://www.dungeness-nnr.co.uk)

# Open day reflects mirrors' popularity

**A**fter organising and leading the ever popular Sound Mirror guided walks for 11 years now with Dr Richard Scarth, the Romney Marsh Countryside Project is pleased to announce it is organising an **open day on Sunday 19th July between 10am and 5pm.**

We are trying to reduce the massive number of people who turn up for the guided walks this year and we hope many will make the effort for the open day in a bid to keep the number of people on the walks to under 200!

The Sound Mirrors, concrete dishes or listening ears were built in the 1920s and 1930s to detect enemy aircraft as part of the early warning system for Britain. All three designs are at Lade, the only place in Britain and the structures are also a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Please park in the Lade car park off Coast Drive at Lade. This car park is a mile north from the Pilot pub on Dungeness and has no height barrier, it has toilets and parking is free. Walk down Taylor Road which is opposite and follow the signs across the shingle and along the track to the bridge - where staff will be waiting to provide information throughout the day.

The event is free, but we rely on donations to cover our costs for these events

and suggest a £2 per person donation.

If you are unable to make this open day, the Romney Marsh Countryside Project and Dr Scarth will be leading **two guided tours to the Sound Mirrors on Sunday 16th August and Sunday 13th September. Both meet at Lade car park at 2pm. No need to book, but a donation is appreciated.**

For more information contact the Romney Marsh Countryside Project on 01797 367934 or mail@rmcp.co.uk or look on the website [www.rmcp.co.uk](http://www.rmcp.co.uk)



## Dunes at heart of third plan



**T**he third and final five year plan to be completed this spring by the Romney Marsh Countryside Project is for the Greatstone Dunes, which is owned by Shepway District Council and is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Again getting the right balance between the human pressures and the wildlife is vital – with the main thrust of the proposed works over the next five years is to reduce the coverage of the prickly sea buck-

thorn patches in the dunes and to check the spread of the garden flowers which are throughout the dunes.

Issues like dog fouling, fly tipping of garden material and access will also be addressed.

For further information on the management plan for Greatstone Dunes, please contact Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Project on 01797 367934 or mail@rmcp.co.uk

## New Shingle Trail marks beach life

**A** new trail has been installed by the Romney Marsh Countryside Project which takes you from the Romney Sands Railway Halt/caravan park along the Greatstone Beach and across to the shingle behind Merritt Road and Roberts Road, before looping back to the beach and the halt.

The Shingle Trail highlights the wildlife you can find and there are a series of information panels, a special bee waymarker disc and a free leaflet to help the visitor explore the area.

This trail was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of the Dungeness Shingle and Wetland Project which was completed last year.

For more information contact the Romney Marsh Countryside Project on 01797 367934 or mail@rmcp.co.uk

# Litter clearing makes bags of difference at Dungeness . . .

A part time litter warden was first appointed on Dungeness Point in summer 2006.

This initiative has only been made

possible by a wide range of partners who have supported this project. In 2008, a total of 560 rubbish bags were filled by the warden and then these

have been removed as part of the litter bin service by Shepway District Council. This was just from the Dungeness Point area and along the tideline, laybys and car parks.

The funding for this project has come from Shepway District Council, Natural England, Dungeness Estate, Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway, Dungeness Angling Association, Wasp Financial Management and Peter Marlow, Fiona Naylor and Brian Johnson.

On top of this a further 264 bags of rubbish were filled at Dungeness by the Romney Marsh Countryside Project, British

Energy and the Community Offenders as well.

Hopefully, residents and visitors can see the tremendous difference compared to 10 years ago on the Point.



*Russian ivy.*

## Tackling those alien plants

Certain exotic garden plants which have been spreading out from gardens on to the Dungeness National Nature Reserve over the last decade are being targeted this year.

Whether it is digging them up or weedwiping them, we are carefully choosing the worst plant species. As this work is very labour intensive and costs money, we don't want an impossible task in the years to come.

One of the plants causing concern is the Silver Ragwort species growing on Coast Drive, Lydd-on-sea. It has grey leaves and yellow flowers. Digging up the plant has happened this spring and we will be monitoring what the plant does next.

For more information, please contact the Romney Marsh Countryside Project on 01797 367934.

## . . . and on tideline too

It is not just Dungeness where litter needs to be collected. Several volunteers also pick up and bag rubbish along the tideline while walking from Lade to Greatstone.

The RMCP provides the bags and tools. This happens throughout the year and is greatly appreciated.

The volunteers place the bags on the side of the road or by the bins for Shepway District Council to remove. This is part of the wider Dungeness National Nature Reserve and attempts to keep on top of the litter problem in the winter - at a time when no other organised rubbish removal is happening.



# Test your knowledge – which is alien to the Marsh?

Look at the pictures of these four flowers which are found on the National Nature Reserve from Dungeness to Greatstone. Are they British native plants or are they a plant which is spreading from a garden near you? The answers are in the caption.



Pictured from left, Viper's Bugloss (native), Red Valerian (alien), Russian Ivy (alien) and Birds Foot Trefoil (native).

## Two beachclean dates for your diary

The Romney Marsh Countryside Project will be organising two beachcleans for the Dungeness Point in 2009. The first will be on **Sunday 19th April. Meet at the New Lighthouse at 11am.** We will be clearing from the boardwalk around to the Lifeboat Station.

The second beachclean will be part of the Marine Conservation

Society beachcleans which are organised nationally. This will be on **Sunday 20th September. Meet at the Red and White Barrier just beyond the Old Lighthouse at 11am.** We will be clearing a section of beach in front of the power station.

Just turn up, we will provide the litter pickers, gloves and most importantly the refreshments

through the day. For more information, please contact Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Project on 01797 367934 or mail@rmcp.co.uk

## How to get in touch with us

### Romney Marsh Countryside Project

For day to day issues on the Dungeness NNR from Dungeness to Greatstone best to contact the Romney Marsh Countryside Project first. 4x4 vehicles, motorbikes, quadbikes, flytipping, rubbish, management work, volunteering, film crews, group bookings and wildlife sightings. Call Owen Leyshon on 01797 367934 or owenleyshon@rmcp.co.uk

### Natural England

Permission and paper work for any works on the Dungeness NNR and the wider SSSI land. This would involve getting consent for a range of works. Jo Dear, Natural England 01233 811216

### Other useful numbers

Dungeness RSPB – part of Dungeness NNR. Site Manager – Bob Gomes 01797 320588. Educational Groups – Heather Chantler 01797 322666



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