

The Shingle Issue



Summer 2012
Newsletter of the Dungeness National Nature Reserve

No 12

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.

Making progress to improve a corner of Dungeness

The Long Pits which are owned by a gravel company called CEMEX covers an area of around 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.

The Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership has been working in this area for two years under a Higher Level Stewardship Scheme.

In that time about three hectares of willow scrub have been removed by

contractors and volunteers during work parties in 2011.

We have worked on the margins of the bottom Long Pit and have seen a tremendous increase in the rare plant Lesser Water Plantain around the muddy margins. Many other rare marginal plants have been lost over the last 50 years but we hope further discoveries will be made in years to come.

Only 50 years ago the complete shingle landscape of this part of Dungeness had not a single bush or tree growing and although the grazing animals have gone, we would like to return some of the landscape to what it was – to encourage some of the rare wildlife to return.

The RMCP has work parties (on the last Wednesday of each month) so please put these in your diaries:

Meet on the side of the road at the top of the Long Pits at 10am on 31 Oct, 28 Nov 2012, 30 Jan and 27 Feb 2013.

Extra dates include Friday 16 and 23 Nov, Sunday 9th Dec 2012 and Sunday 17th Feb 2013.

For further information please contact Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership on 01797 367934 or mail@rmcp.co.uk or try looking at the websites www.rmcp.co.uk or www.dungeness-nnr.co.uk



Big effort to reduce Sea Buckthorn at Greatstone Dunes

The vast majority of Greatstone Dunes is owned by Shepway District Council (SDC) and is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

The Sea Buckthorn has spread over large areas in the past twenty years and is threatening to shade

out the unique wildlife, as well as providing the main feeding plant for large numbers of Brown-Tailed Moth caterpillars.

In a joint partnership between Shepway District Council and ourselves the removal is part of a wider programme of a planned reduction of Sea Buckthorn cover over a 5 year period, (2011-2016) funded by Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship scheme. The removal of the sea buckthorn is part of a programme to improve the access of the dunes for residents and visitors, to reduce the risk of Brown Tail moth caterpillar infestations and to

increase the botanical and invertebrate interest in the Dunes which the rapid spread of the buckthorn was threatening.

Please join us on our Volunteer task days to help cut, remove and burn the Sea Buckthorn. We provide gloves, tools and refreshments. You will need to wear old working clothes and boots or stout shoes.

Work parties will be in Greatstone Dunes on the first Tuesday of the month. Please meet at the large Shepway District Council car park, opposite the Jolly Fisherman pub at 10am.

For further information or getting involved in the future of the Dunes please contact Mark Tuson, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership on 01797 367934 or mail@rmcp.co.uk



Announcing sound mirror tour dates

The Sound Mirrors, concrete dishes or listening ears were built in the 1920s and 1930s to detect enemy aircraft as part of an early warning system for Britain. All three designs are at Lade/ Greatstone, the only place in Britain where these structures can be found.

The Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership is pleased to announce we are organising an **Open Day on Sunday 8th July 2012 between 10am and 5pm.**

For the Open Day – Please make your own way to the Mirrors. Follow the signs from Lade car park. Walk down Taylor Road which is opposite and take the signposted signs across the shingle and along the track to the bridge - where staff will be waiting to provide information throughout the day. A donation will be appreciated.

Guided Tours on Sunday 12th August and Sunday 4th November 2012. Both will start at 2pm.

Meet at Lade Car Park. No need to book, but a donation is appreciated.



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 public toilets and parking is free. Grid Reference – TR 085 208 or Sat Nav – TN29 9PE.

For more information contact Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership on 01797 367934 or mail@rmcp.co.uk or look on the website www.rmcp.co.uk

Tackling the aliens growing on reserve

Certain exotic, garden plants have been spreading out from gardens on to the Dungeness National Nature Reserve (NNR) during the last decade. The Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership is again targeting these 'aliens' 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 we don't want to be left with an impossible task in the future.

Russian Vine, Silver Ragwort, Red Hot Pokers, Yucca plants and Red Valerian are the species we will be tackling from Greatstone Primary School down Coast Drive to Lydd-on-Sea. This works which is on going includes the front and back of the houses.

We are also keeping a close eye on any garden



material flytipped on the NNR, particularly at the back of people's property, and we ask for the cooperation from all residents in keeping the NNR free of garden rubbish. Please dispose of any garden rubbish in compost bins or in the excellent recycling facility in Mountfield Road, New Romney.

For more information, please contact Mark Tuson, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership on 01797 367934.

Litter warden has it in the bag

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

This initiative has been only possible by a wide range of partners who have supported this project. In 2011, a total of 437 rubbish bags were filled by the litter warden and these have been removed as part of the litter bin service by Shepway District Council.

This was just from the Dungeness Point area, 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, Dungeness Old Lighthouse, plus Peter Marlow, Fiona Naylor and Brian Johnson.

	Number of rubbish bags removed by part time litter warden on Dungeness	Number of rubbish bags removed by RMCP on Dungeness Estate	Number of rubbish bags removed by volunteers and agencies on Dungeness NNR	Total number of bin bags picked up on Dungeness NNR
2011	413 bags	268 bags	188 bags	869 bags
2010	455 bags	226 bags	139 bags	820 bags
2009	437 bags	179 bags	c100 bags	716 bags
2008	562 bags	141 bags	c75 bags	778 bags
2007	568 bags	102 bags	c75 bags	745 bags



Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership will be organising a beachclean on Dungeness Point as part of the Marine Conservation Society beachcleans which are organised nationally.

This will be on **Sunday 16th September 2012. Meet at the Red and White Barrier between the Old Lighthouse and the power station fence at 10am.** We will be counting and clearing rubbish from a section of beach in front of the power station. This will be our 16th year of monitoring the rubbish.

Just turn up, we will provide the litter pickers, bags and gloves. For more information, please contact Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership on 01797 367934 or mail@rmcp.co.uk

Special order bans 4x4s on shingle



No mechanised vehicles are allowed to drive on the shingle from Greatstone to Dungeness. This Special Conservation Order has been in place for the last 14 years and the fines are now up to £25,000.

A warning letter is sent to offenders in partnership with Natural England, Kent Police and the DVLA. Repeat offenders or cases at our discretion will be prosecuted through the courts.

From the table below you can see beach anglers remain the biggest user group causing damage with 4x4s on the Dungeness NNR.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
4x4-Beach Anglers	8	15	16	6	10	23	20	22	19
4x4-Freshwater Anglers	4	6	3	1	0	0	2	2	0
4x4-Tourists	7	5	2	2	5	5	1	2	2
4x4-Unknown	1	3	4	5	3	1	2	5	4
4x4-Fashion Shoot								1	2
TOTAL	20	29	25	14	18	29	25	32	27

Guided walks on Dungeness NNR

How about coming along on one of these two guided tours to find out more about the Dungeness National Nature Reserve.

Tuesday 14th August 2pm SEASHORE SAUNTER

A quick stroll along the vast beaches of Greatstone on the edge of the Dungeness National Nature Reserve (NNR). We will look for what has been washed up by the sea on the tideline, digging for lugworms and have a look to see what wildlife is lurking in the mud, on the sand or shingle! **LEADER:** Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership (01797 367934 or 07770 670316).

MEET: Lade car park on Coast Drive (half way between the Pilot Pub and Romney Sands) TR 085208 Sat Nav TN29 9PE.

DISTANCE: 0.5 miles (1.5 hours).

Sunday 25th November 2pm IT IS A DESERT OUT THERE!

An opportunity to take a wander out across the shingle of the National Nature Reserve (NNR) to discover the wildlife which lives at Dungeness, but also how the landscape has been formed over centuries by the sea and the animals which have munched across it! **LEADER:** Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership (01797 367934 or 07770 670316). **MEET:** Old Lighthouse car park, Dungeness Road, Dungeness (TR 088 167 or TN29 9NB). **DISTANCE:** 2 miles (2.5 hours). **GRADE:** 3 (Walking on some sections of shingle).

How to get in touch with us

Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership

For day to day issues on the Dungeness NNR from Dungeness to Greatstone please call the Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership first.

Owen Leyshon 01797 367934

mail@rmcp.co.uk

Website www.rmcp.co.uk

www.dungeness-nnr.co.uk

Other useful numbers

Dungeness RSPB – Part of the Dungeness NNR. Site manager – Martin Randall 01797 320588. Educational Groups – Heather Chantler 01797 322666

Reports of 4x4 vehicles, motorbikes, quadbikes, flytipping, rubbish, management work, volunteering, film crews, group bookings and wildlife sightings.

Natural England

Permission and paperwork for any works on the Dungeness NNR and the wider SSSI land. Please call Jo Dear on 03000 604776 or Becky Plunkett (NNR Senior Reserves Manager) on 03000 604755.

The Shingle Issue is produced with the support of:



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