

The Shingle Issue

Spring and Summer 2015
Newsletter of the Dungeness National Nature Reserve

No 15



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.

Unique emerald moth spreads its wings across Dungeness NNR

A project to conserve the Sussex emerald moth at Dungeness has seen some exciting results in summer 2014, the Sussex emerald moth project has announced.

This rare species of moth is unique to Dungeness and recent years have seen numbers falling. The moth feeds on wild carrot, which is also a favourite grub for local rabbits.

Local landowners EDF Energy, Magnox Limited, and RSPB have been working with Natural England, Butterfly Conservation and Romney Marsh

Countryside Partnership to grow wild carrot in trial areas, and their efforts have been worthwhile with moth larvae recorded in each of the plots.

"This is rewarding

news," said Christine Blythe, Biodiversity Manager at EDF Energy.

"We proved in 2013 that we can get wild carrot to grow on the shingle from seed and now, by finding the larvae, we have shown that the population of Sussex emerald moth is benefiting."

Dungeness is the only known location in Britain where this nationally rare moth can be found. The population has been dwindling probably due to a combination

of environmental factors including high winter rainfall levels and grazing by rabbits on the wild carrot.

To give the moths a helping hand, the partners have each set up trial sites where the vegetated shingle habitat has been fenced off from rabbits. Wild carrot seed, collected locally, was sown in the plots and following surveys carried out this spring the project team has revealed good news that Sussex emerald moth larvae have been found in each of the fenced-off sites.

Craig Edwards, site warden at the RSPB Dungeness said: "The aim of the partnership is to continue managing the trial plots ensuring that we have good numbers of wild carrot plants for the moth larvae to feed on. Ultimately, we hope to establish a healthy population of the Sussex emerald moth which can spread to a wider area, to ensure that we don't lose this insect which is unique to the shingle at Dungeness."

Jo Dear of Natural England added, "The early success is hugely rewarding for the partnership and a testament to all the hard work and goodwill put in by everyone involved. In response to the recent decline in numbers of the Sussex emerald moth at Dungeness, the partnership's actions are already making a significant contribution towards its continued breeding success. Natural England is delighted to support this innovative project and by working together across the Dungeness peninsula the partnership is providing a lifeline for the Sussex emerald moth on this extraordinary site."



SOUND MIRRORS OPEN DAY

Sunday 19 July 2015 10am-5pm

At the back of Lade Pit are the now famous three Listening Devices built in the 1920s and 30s as part of a national early warning system against possible enemy aircraft. This is one of only two sites in the world where you can see all three designs. The Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership have arranged with the landowner, CEMEX an opportunity for residents and visitors to visit the site under your own steam as part of an Open Day. We have been leading tours and the Open Days for 17 years.

This will be the only opportunity to cross the bridge and access the island at this private site in 2015, so please put it in the diary. The RMCP will be present all day to talk you through them, give out free information and help with any inquiries.

No need to book and we only ask for a good donation from everyone. Dogs are welcome on leads.

LEADER: Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership (01797 367934 or 07770 670316). MEET: We recommend parking in the free Lade car park on Coast Drive (half way between the Pilot Pub and Romney Sands, TN29 9PE



(TR 085 208) and follow the temporary signs to the island.

It is a 20min stroll from your car down Taylor Road and across the shingle and long dirt tracks to the bridge and island, some of the walking will be on loose pebbles.

Staff and volunteers will be positioned at the bridge and on the island. Last entry 4.30pm. DISTANCE: 3 miles in total there and back!

Filming at Dungeness? Please read this first

The Dungeness Point is a private Estate and is part of the Dungeness National Nature Reserve and is popular with tourists, birdwatchers, anglers and photographers owing to its unique landscape.

To give an idea of how popular it is with one user group, in 2014 the Dungeness Estate had a total of 119

fashion and film shoots on the Estate, many of these from students.

A proportion of these fashion and film shoots were illegal in that they had come on to the Estate without the necessary paperwork, including payment, and had not discussed and agreed their plans with the land managers.

All fashion photography and film groups must have prior permission from the Dungeness Estate, producing their Public Liability Insurance documents and booking online at www.dungenesstrust.co.uk

Any unbooked groups found on the Estate will be asked to leave. Film crews, photographers and fashion shoots have frequently caused problems for residents across Dungeness Estate, damaging their property, invading privacy and being generally disruptive.

If you wish to discuss your plans or thoughts and find out what is possible and what is not, it is best to contact Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership first on 01797 367934 or mail@rmcp.co.uk



Estate's new toll booth



At the entrance to the private Dungeness Estate a new toll booth will be constructed in 2015 to charge visitors driving on to the Estate. Funds will go towards site and infrastructure management on the Estate.

The Dungeness Estate, which is part of the National Nature Reserve, now receives over 600,000 visitors to the point each year. Up to now the vehicles which drive along the estate road have done so for free.

Charges and exemptions will be decided in the coming months by the Estate as well as management of the visitors and traffic and this will be updated in future editions of *The Shingle Issue*.

EDF acquires Long Pits and pledges to enhance its biodiversity

EDF Energy is the new owner of the former gravel workings next to Dungeness B known as the Long Pits following their sale by Cemex UK Operations.

The site is part of the Dungeness Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is also a proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA) in recognition of their bird interest.

The energy company has pledged its commitment to ensuring the work done towards maintaining biodiversity on the existing site is replicated on the newly acquired land.

"The Long Pits site is a significant addition to our landholding at Dungeness and we recognise its unique wildlife interest" said Christine Blythe, EDF Energy's



Biodiversity Manager. "Our aim will be to manage it within the scope of the Biodiversity Benchmark accreditation which we were awarded by the Wildlife Trust a year ago for our existing site. Our first priority is to familiarise ourselves with the site and its wildlife, and to meet with key local stakeholders including Natural England, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership, the local angling

group and the Dungeness Bird Observatory. We will then be able to determine what we need to do to manage the site to conserve and enhance its special biodiversity."

In line with EDF Energy's commitment to zero harm, fly tipped material is to be cleared from the site and new signs warning of obvious dangers like deep water are to be put in place.

Your help needed to keep beaches clean

Through the winter 2014 / 2015 the Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership, with a number of volunteers, has tried to keep on top of the rubbish along the tideline from Littlestone, Greatstone, Lade, Lydd on sea, down to Dungeness.

This is on top of the work the RMCP already does across the Dungeness National Nature Reserve with the part time litter warden at Dungeness and the Veolia seasonal litter warden who works Greatstone Beach in the spring and summer.

Owen Leyshon, RMCP said "The work of volunteers is invaluable and I would like to give special thanks to them, but to all residents who roll up their sleeves and make a positive difference to the place we all work and live in – and to make the district a better and cleaner place."

We need more dog walkers and residents who walk along the beach through the winter months

just to help remove rubbish. We will provide the grey rubbish bags, gloves and litterpickers as part of assisting. If you wish to help out and make a difference on the

beaches at Littlestone to Dungeness, get in touch with Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership on 01797 367934 mail@rmcp.co.uk



Guided walk dates 2015...

Sunday 10 May 2pm

IT'S 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!

Suggested donation £2 appreciated.

LEADER: Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership (01797 367934 or 07770 670316). MEET: Old Lighthouse car park, Dungeness Road, Dungeness NNR - Sat Nav - TN29 9NB (TR 089 169). DISTANCE: 2 miles (2.5 hours).



Nature Reserve to see some of the hundreds of species of plants which grow across Dungeness. LEADER: Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership 01797 367934 or 07770 670316. MEET: Car park, Old Lighthouse, Dungeness NNR, Sat Nav TN29 9NB (TR 089 169). DISTANCE: 2 miles (2 hours).

Sunday 30 August 2pm

BROWN AND CRISPY

Take an opportunity to look at what will probably be a brown, crispy and dry shingle desert like landscape and what has survived and what has not.

Suggested donation £2 appreciated. LEADER: Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership (01797 367934 or 07770 670316). MEET: Old Lighthouse car park, Dungeness Road, Dungeness (TR 089 169) - Sat Nav - TN29 9NB. DISTANCE: 2 miles (2.5 hours).

Sunday 7 June 2pm

THE FLOWERS OF DUNGENESS

A walk with the warden around this fascinating National

...and dates for beachcleans too!

Sunday 20 September 2015 10am

NATIONAL BEACHCLEAN - DUNGENESS POINT

Come along and help record the rubbish, then bag it and remove it from the beach. We are into our 19th year of completing the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) Beachwatch and the section we will do will take a few hours...Cakes and biscuits will be used as a tempter and we will also provide the gloves and litterpickers and the essential clipboards and pencils!! LEADER: Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership on 01797 367934 or 07770 670316.

MEET: At the red and white barrier between the Old Lighthouse and the Power Station fence line at TN29 9NB (TR 089 169) at Dungeness Point (NNR).

Sunday 3 January 2016 - 10am

BEACHCLEAN - GREATSTONE BEACH

The RMCP, with volunteers, have been clearing rubbish through the winter months on the beach for over ten years. Start the New Year with something positive by helping to collect and bag rubbish and remove it from the beach. We will provide the bags, gloves and litterpickers. We will also provide hot drinks, cakes and biscuits which will be used as a tempter. The more people who turn up, the more rubbish will be removed. LEADER: Owen Leyshon, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership on 01797 367934 or 07770 670316.

MEET: Jolly Fisherman car park (Pay and Display), The Parade, Greatstone. (TR 081 228).

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

Owen Leyshon 01797 367934

mail@rmcp.co.uk Website www.rmcp.co.uk
www.dungeness-nnr.co.uk

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.

Dungeness RSPB

Dungeness RSPB - Part of the Dungeness NNR. Site manager - Martin Randall 01797 320588.

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