

‘FRIENDS OF THE TOWANS’

BIRDS, BUTTERFLIES & BBQ SEASON 2019

(SUMMER NEWSLETTER & EVENTS)

Hello everyone, thank you for your patience with me in producing this Newsletter and Summer Programme. It always surprises me how quickly the last half of winter goes, once we enter a New Year, with its panic of getting the scheduled scrub cutting completed. Before I know it, we're well into spring and I need to get a programme together ASAP!

Thank you as always to the many of you who have helped up at Godrevy Warren in recent months. You've made a great start to the 10 year project. I know the landowner, Martin Thomas, is really pleased with progress and is looking forward to more collaboration in future. It'll be interesting to see how the wildlife responds to the new clearings we've made, and I'm looking forward to seeing cattle back on the Warren next autumn.

In the next few months we hope to receive confirmation from the Heritage Lottery that we have been successful in the 'Dynamic Dunescapes' project that I've been banging on about for the last few years. I'm also tearing what's left of my hair out trying to negotiate RPA and Natural England to get new Countryside Stewardship agreements on Mexico, Lethlean and St Ives Bay, so hopefully some positive outcomes for the Towans on the horizon.

Our efforts to form the Friends group into a proper constituted organisation (charity or similar), will continue in the near future – thank you to those who have volunteered to become officers or contributed ideas.

In the meantime, please see below our summer programme. A few highlights for you: I'm delighted that both Ian and Colin, 2 of Cornwall's top botanists, have each agreed to lead a botany walk this year, perhaps making up for my slackness last year in not organising one. We've also decided to have another BBQ at Gwithian Green, as last years' seemed to be enjoyed by all who were there.

I hope to organise additional events as well, in particular, some 'archaeology walks' on Godrevy Warren; I will email details around as and when they are fixed.

We are also combining some of the Towans' events with Save our Sand beach cleans this summer, in addition to SoS having their own programme – this reflects a desire in both groups to work more closely together. Note that they've also changed their normal meeting day to a **Thursday**, freeing-up the weekends.

I look forward to your company this summer, and hope you enjoy resting your slash and burn muscles and spotting more of our wonderful wildlife.

SUMMER PROGRAMME – May to September 2019

Please note that some of the start times and days vary from our usual Thurs 10am. Also, unless we are carrying out our usual 10-2pm practical task, it would be worth bringing your own drink and snack – thanks!

Thurs May 2nd Bird-watch at Gwithian, Godrevy and Hell's Mouth

A great area for observing a wide range of birds, including many summer visitors, most of which will be here by now. We usually see at least 50 species on this annual jaunt.

Meet in car park just north of Gwithian Church at SW587/413. **0830am** until 12.30ish

Thurs May 9th Save our Sand beach clean - Riviere Towans

Meet at reception of Riviere Towans Chalet Camp at 10am. . See www.sos-hayle.org.uk

Thurs May 16th Combined SoS beach clean at St Ives Bay Holiday Park, and raking and burning scrub cuttings in Upton Towans CWT reserve

Meet by the pool at St Ives Bay Holiday Park at 10am. We're likely to spend 1-2 hours beach cleaning, then go on to Upton Towans. **Likely to extend beyond our usual 2pm finish.**

Thurs May 30th Botany walk with Colin French – Godrevy area

Colin carried out a survey of Godrevy Warren last year, and will share some of his vast knowledge of the areas' plants with us. We may well head up around the headland as well. Meet in NT car park at Godrevy (the one with the main café) at 10am. Fee payable for non-NT members. **Likely to finish 3pm or later.**

Thurs June 13th Butterfly management at Godrevy Warren

That's code for 'raking bramble cuttings from some of the slopes'. It'll be hot work if it's sunny, so we'll go gently, and hopefully treat ourselves to some lovely views of silver-studded blues in their peak flying season. Meet in NT car park at Godrevy (the one with the main café) at 10am. Fee payable for non-NT members.

Tues July 2nd Butterfly Transect walk at Upton Towans

Anyone is welcome to join Dick Goodere from Cornwall Butterfly Conservation to look for Silver-studded Blues, Dark Green Fritillaries and many other species in this annual survey. Meet at main reserve entrance, near the tall chimney SW 579/397. **1100am** – 2pm.

Weds July 10th Ragwort pulling at Caer Bran CWT reserve, West Penwith

Pencil this date in, I'll confirm details nearer the time, but we hope to combine with a CWT group to remove ragwort on one of their reserves. A chance to visit somewhere different.

Thurs July 11th Botany walk with Ian Bernalick – Hayle Estuary/Mexico Towans

Ian will share his great knowledge of the area's plants with us once again. Meeting place etc to be confirmed nearer the time. **Likely to finish 3pm or later.**

Thurs July 18th Save our Sand beach clean - Beachside Holiday camp

Meet at Beachside reception, 10am. See www.sos-hayle.org.uk

Thurs July 25th Gwithian Green Nature Reserve summer 'tidy up' and BBQ

We'll spend some time checking the stream is flowing ok, cutting paths, removing invasive species and then enjoy our annual BBQ, accompanied, we hope, by views of butterflies and flowers that wouldn't be there if we didn't keep the brambles at bay.

Meet in car park just north of Gwithian Church at SW587/413. 10am - 3pm

Thurs Aug 8th Save our Sand Beach Clean, North Quay, Hayle, & wider Towans litter pick

Meet at gate to beach at North Quay at 2pm. See www.sos-hayle.org.uk. Depending on how much litter we find, we may well extend our efforts across Mexico Towans as well.

Thurs Aug 22nd and Sept 5th Details unknown as yet, but keep these dates clear

I'll confirm what and where, nearer the time, but keep these dates free if you can – thanks!

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. Thanks.

I look forward to seeing you soon

Martin Rule, Towans Ranger

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