

Out on the Towans:

The wonders on our doorstep

by Martin Rule, Towans Ranger

Writing this in early April, I've still not seen a swallow, wheatear or sand martin – but I have seen a healthy-looking male adder, heard some lovely uplifting skylark song and smelt the coconutty gorse. By the time you read this, our special Towans wildlife will have been flowering, buzzing and singing for some time. This is the season for going outdoors and appreciating the wonders we have on our doorstep.

I've been heartened recently to have met some lovely children – and staff! – from two local schools, who have enjoyed a tour around Gwithian Green. It's been an absolute pleasure to see their enthusiasm and sense of wonder at nature. I've also been struck afresh by how much knowledge many of them already have about wildlife and the environment.

These two schools have committed to running weekly trips into the Towans, which is fantastic, and something I'm trying to aim for with all

the local schools. One thing the pandemic surely showed us is how restorative getting outside – especially into 'wild' nature – is for all of us. I'm also sensing that children have a natural desire to do something positive for the environment – this perhaps almost despite (or maybe because of?) how overwhelming the climate and biodiversity crisis is.

One specific positive project we can all get involved with in this area is the North Cornwall Beelines project, run by Buglife. The aim is to plant and encourage various plants that help to conserve pollinating insects – some of which, in this area, are becoming scarce. Friends of the Towans has recently adopted a flowerbed on Penpol Terrace in Hayle, and we aim to plant many wildflowers there.

Our programme of wildlife events has started, so keep an eye on our website or Facebook page for details. Due to increasing demand, you'll need to book ahead for all our events, to help us manage group safety, parking, and insurance requirements. A particular one to look out for will be a Bioblitz on 25th and 26th June around Gwithian, where our aim will be to record as many species as possible within 24 hours. This will also mark the second International Sand Dune Day, so you'd expect to see us taking part!

Another quick reminder, please, to keep your dog on a lead during April to the end of June, in particular when you're close to tussocky areas of grass, to help allow our skylarks and meadow pipits to nest. Thank you, and please spread the word among your dog-walking friends!

Enjoy the start of summer, and if you'd like to get involved with our work, just email me at martinrule@talktalk.net

www.friendsofthetowans.co.uk

