



Friends of Newenden Meadow

# NEWSLETTER

## Summer 2025

Thanks to everyone who supports us in continuing to improve the flowers in the meadow, enhancing habitat and forage for numerous pollinators and other rare insects. This year the flowers have been particularly abundant and we hope we can spread them over other areas of the field going forward.

### Plants & Insects in Harmony

All summer the wild plants have continued to flower and are visited daily by a lot of bumblebees, solitary bees and other insects including various hover flies and beetles. Grasshoppers and crickets are also in abundance this season. The bumblebees most often seen in the meadow have been Red Tails, Common Carders and Buff Tails. Earlier in the year, we saw a rare queen bumblebee, *Bombus Ruderatus*, in a garden at Copt Hall. She would have recently woken from hibernation and was feeding whilst hunting for a good nesting site. I looked out for more when on my regular bumblebee walks, but she must have moved on to create her nest. Bumblebees had such a hard time last year, it's good to see they are more numerous this season.



### Flowers Flourishing

We have had a good variety of wildflowers in the field, including Green Winged Orchids, Common Spotted Orchid, Dyers Broom, Field Scabious, Meadow Cranesbill, Musk Mallow, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Meadow Vetchling, Grass Vetchling, Tufted Vetch, Ladies Bedstraw, Marsh Woundwort, Water Mint, Marsh Mallow, Oxeye Daisy, and Knapweed, along with less welcome plants such as Dock, Creeping Thistle and Bristly Ox Tongue. These last three, we try hard to keep in check.



## Butterflies Abound

There have been a lot of the beautiful Common Blue butterfly this summer, due to their caterpillar food plant, Birds Foot Trefoil spreading in the field. Other butterflies seen are Speckled Wood, Small Heath, Brown Argus, and Small Copper, and occasionally visits by the migrant Painted Lady and the more common Peacock and Red Admiral.



## Summer Event



We held our Wildflower Meadow Event this year, on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July as the last few drops of rain fell. About thirty people attended during the afternoon and everyone enjoyed a good time. We sold cakes and plants and raffle tickets to our very generous visitors and made the grand total of £307.61! Thanks go to them all and to the very kind people who gave such lovely raffle prizes. We were delighted to welcome Kristen from Germany who is very generously creating a website for us. The bumblebees came out, feeding on the flowers and bumblebee experts Peter and Morgan Greenhalf helped some enthusiastic visitors in the art of catching bees and identifying them before setting them free. I'm delighted to say that Peter caught five of the rare Brown Banded Bumblebee. It's great to think they are finding forage in our field. I will be looking out for them when I do my last bee walks during September and October. Several people signed up to become Friends of Newenden Meadow and if you would like to do so, it's not too late. Email [info@newendenmeadow.org](mailto:info@newendenmeadow.org) for more information.

## Meadow Renewal

Don cut the field for hay and removed the bales in early August. We left areas of Knapweed, Bird's Foot Trefoil and Meadow Vetchling as they were full of flowers. When flowering has stopped we will either top the plants with the tractor or scythe them and spread the seed over the rest of the field. We discussed the gates at the west end of the field with the Selmes Trust and Don, and it is agreed to strengthen them so that we can, hopefully, get the sheep in once again to keep the grass down before winter. All in all it has been a successful flowering season in the village wildflower meadow as we continue to encourage more flowers to grow in the coming years, giving food and habitat for the wildlife and pleasure to the village community. Don't forget to walk along Scott's mown path and take a moment sitting on the bench to enjoy your village field!

