

Inkpen – 7th March 2009

Field trip report by Jan Haseler

On Saturday 7th March, Jan Haseler led a field trip to Inkpen. The walk started in bright sunshine at BBOWT's Crocus Field reserve. Several thousand crocus flowers were poking up through the grass and there were many more plants which were not in flower. For much of the last year, 4 dexter cows have been grazing in the field, which appears to have helped the crocuses. The far side of the reserve is wetter, with springs and damp flushes. Plants identified included Pignut, Devil's-bit Scabious, Betony and Lesser Spearwort.

The group then walked through the woods to BBOWT's Inkpen Common reserve. Various ferns, including Hard Fern and Soft Shield-fern, were seen in the woods, together with a collection of lichens and liverworts. Frogspawn was found at the edge of one of the ponds in the reserve.

At the Crocus Field:

Several thousand crocuses in flower, many more not flowering

Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*

Lesser Celandine *Ranunculus ficaria*

Lesser Spearwort *Ranunculus flammula*

Common Sorrel *Rumex acetosa*

Primrose *Primula vulgaris*

Barren Strawberry *Potentilla sterilis*

Pignut *Conopodium majus*

Betony *Stachys officinalis*

Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis*

Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre*

An unvigorous rose

Jointed Rush (heavily grazed) *Juncus articulatus*

Soft Rush (ungrazed) *Juncus effusus*

Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*

Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*

Tufted Hair-grass *Deschampsia caespitosa*

Bent Grass *Agrostis* spp.

Fine-leaved Fescue *Festuca* spp.

Perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*

Snowdrops – single and double forms of *Galanthus nivalis*

Song thrush

Dunnock

Rabbit droppings

Mole hills

Bombus terrestris

Fungi: *Hymenochaete rubiginosa* (on large tree stump in field adjacent to crocuses)

Lichens:

Evernia prunastri (various trees throughout the walk)

Lecanora chlorotera (various trees throughout the walk)

Parmelia sulcata (various trees throughout the walk)

Melanelia subaurifera (various trees throughout the walk)

Xanthoria parietina (various trees throughout the walk)

Xanthoria polycarpa (on hawthorn branches/twigs in crocus fields)

Fuscidea lightfootii (large tree in boggy corner of field adjacent to crocus field)

– I am fairly sure of this determination as

the specimen fitted the description in Dobson (2005) and habitat type (i.e. trees in boggy areas). This is of interest as it is uncommon in the area but there only appeared to be one specimen so I could not take a specimen for microscopical examination.

Cladonia fimbriata (on large tree stump in field adjacent to crocuses)

The wood between the Crocus Field and the Inkpen Common reserve:

a Polypody

Soft Shield-fern *Polystichum setiferum*

Hard Fern *Blechnum spicant*

Broad Buckler Fern *Dryopteris dilatata*

Lichens:

Hypogymnia physodes (on oak in woodland)

Flavoparmelia caperata (on oak in woodland)

Thelotrema lepadinum (on oak in woodland)

At the Inkpen Common Reserve:

Creeping-Jenny *Lysimachia nemorum*

Broom *Cytisus scoparius*

Gorse *Ulex europaeus*

Frogspawn

9+ different mosses under a birch by the mire, including a sphagnum

Mnium hornum

Dicranum scoparium

Fungi:

Biscogniauxia nummularia (on beech trunk at the Mire)

Hypoxylon fragiforme (on beech trunk at the Mire)

Piptoporus betulinus (on silver birch trunk at the Mire)

Daedaleopsis confragosa (on willow trunk at the Mire)

Lichens:

Cladonia coniocraea (on basal region of silver birch trunk on Inkpen Common)

– a test with Potassium hydroxide (KOH) gave a K- negative reaction, distinguishing it from the similar species, *C. macilenta*.

The fungi and lichens were determined by Dr James Wearn, the mosses were identified from photographs by Dr Malcolm Storey and the remaining plants etc were identified by various members of the group.