



THORNCOMBE VILLAGE TRUST NEWS

Autumn 2009

Number 41

THORNCOMBE VILLAGE TRUST

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New Members

Since last autumn the following people have joined the Trust:

At Southcombe: Victoria and Gervaise Macgregor

In Chard Street, Thorncombe: Katrina Dell

At Marshwood: Frances Bryanton and Bob Eliot

At Fordwater: Marie Parker

At Raymonds Hill: Mr and Mrs Baker

We extend a warm welcome to all and look forward to seeing you at our events. They are listed on the membership card and widely advertised in the Parish magazine and around the village.

Entry is free to members (£1 to visitors) and talks start at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall unless otherwise advertised.

If you have a particular interest or request for a topic that we could cover, please contact John Whitbread on 30525.



Christmas Sale

Many thanks to everyone who contributed and attended our Sale last month. We were delighted with the turn-out, and our proceeds were higher than last year. The cakes, pottery, cards, plants, bric-a-brac, toys and gifts drew a large crowd – and the Dorset Wildlife Trust has already reserved tables for next year!



TVT Questionnaire

We recently sent out a questionnaire to all members asking for their views and input on possible TVT events. We would like to say thank you to the 24 households who returned their questionnaires and all the points raised have been noted.

We will do our best to incorporate these ideas into our future programmes. Comments from members are always welcome, as we can then tailor our Members Meetings/Speakers and any additional events as much as possible to your suggestions.

Some of the events that brought the greatest positive response were a visit to Guy Mallinson's Woodland Workshop, a visit to Chard Junction Nature Reserve and to Kingcombe, and a guided beach walk. Others, such as the fungi walk, butterfly walk and bat walk are dependent on season.

The overall enthusiasm was for local events. We are also very aware of the need to make our meetings accessible to all in terms of timing – trying to arrange some events for weekends and school holidays to make them more inviting to families with young children and those who prefer not to go out in the evening.

If you missed the deadline with the questionnaire please don't hesitate to give us any ideas you may have for events, outings and speakers that you feel would be relevant and interesting – clearly it takes time to organise guides and speakers, so let us know as soon as possible.

Butterfly Survey at Chard Junction Nature Reserve

Report by Professor C R C Paul who has been monitoring butterfly numbers at the reserve:

"I managed four visits this year, including attending the opening on June 17th. Despite the relatively poor weather, I managed to record 18 species. The most exciting discovery was a single Dingy Skipper on July 30th. This species is of conservation concern so it is good to see it on the reserve."

The Dingy Skipper has grey-brown wings with mottled brown markings and two rows of small white spots. It is a small butterfly with a low darting flight and is extremely well camouflaged.



Summary of survey (largest sitings)

	June	July	Sept	Total
Small skipper		9		9
Green-veined white		9	1	10
Common blue (m)	2	5	3	10
Speckled Wood	4	4	19	27
Gatekeeper		59	1	60
Meadow brown	36	31	4	71
Ringlet	11	1		12



Dorset's ancient trees and woodlands are under threat. Over the last two years, The **Dorset Greenwood Tree Project** has identified hundreds of ancient trees across the county, many of them previously unknown and some pre-dating Christianity. In some cases these trees have actually been saved from the threat of felling.

Dorset Wildlife Trust needs to find £105,000 by the end of the year to undertake this vital conservation work.

Thorncombe Village Trust has donated £50 towards this worthwhile project.

Events in the Trust over the last 6 months

The year started with our well attended Plant & Crafts Sale on **May 23rd**. It was announced at the Sale that the TVT would contribute £500 to the Chard Junction Nature Reserve to help replace a bird hide that had been destroyed by fire.

Many TVT members attended the Chard Junction Quarry Nature Reserve open day in **June** to see the work achieved so far. We were rewarded by a tour and sustenance in the form of a pig roast.

In **July** we had a speaker from the Philpot Museum in Lyme Regis, who gave an interesting talk on some of the important roles played by women in rural Dorset during 19th/20th centuries.

The slave trade links in the southwest was the topic for the **September** meeting given by a knowledgeable speaker who was happy to answer the many questions raised by the audience.

In **October** we had the TVT Sunday walk. Once again our thanks to Eve Higgs who planned and led the walk and to the people who donated the cakes and sandwiches for a fantastic spread.

In **November** we had a very interesting illustrated talk on the RSPB Reserves in South Somerset. The largest is West Sedgemoor reserve where there are around 100 pairs of grey herons and one of the greatest concentrations of wading birds and ducks that spend the winter inland. It also has breeding water voles and otters. The reserve is located off the A378 just west of Curry Rivel and would be well worth a visit.

Another reserve that is very topical at this time of year is Ham Wall nature reserve which is in an area well known for some of the largest starling roosts in the country. This is a wetland created from former peat working with reedbeds and swamps and is located off the B3151 near Meare.

The reserves have events and guided walks throughout the year and more information is available on the RSPB website: www.rspb.org.uk.

Forthcoming event:

January 7th (7.30pm start) - "**Across the Divide: In The Village and Beyond**" by Tony Ford.

Across the Divide is a highly successful organisation based in Thorncombe which organises charitable expeditions such as trekking and white-water rafting in locations around the world. This will be a popular talk, so make a note in your diaries.

Don't forget to feed the birds this winter and to clean feeders and bird tables regularly to cut down on infections amongst green finches - bird food is available at our meetings.