

# The Greensand Trust

July 2010 -  
September 2010

## Greensand Highlights

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### Adder basking in the sun



Photo by John Pitts



As part of a review of the Beds & Luton Biodiversity Action Plan, the Greensand Trust has updated the Species Action Plan for the adder. Adders have been declining in England for the last 60-70 years due to their habitats being destroyed and fragmented. Direct persecution has also been an issue. Historically, adders were recorded throughout Bedfordshire, although they were most frequently encountered on the dry soils of the Greensand Ridge and the Chalk Hills. They are now known only from three sites in the county – and are rarely encountered even there. The Action Plan outlines the work necessary to conserve this fascinating reptile. This work has been funded by Natural England's Countdown 2010 Biodiversity Action Fund.



Year of Biodiversity 2010  
[www.greensandtrust.org](http://www.greensandtrust.org)

## Volunteers improve ROW

Despite the wet weather, volunteers worked with Greensand Trust rangers to replace an old railway sleeper bridge across a ditch near Thrift Wood.



Volunteers constructing the bridge



The completed bridge!

## Stone Lane Community Woodland has a helping hand

Aldwyck Housing Group volunteered their staff to help the Trust in Stone Lane Community Woodland, Heath & Reach, as part of their Give & Gain day. The group cleared vegetation around the young trees planted by the

community a few years ago and cut back the path making it more accessible.



*'Everyone worked well together and it was a lovely setting, it was nice to be able to contribute in this way. We saw the most beautiful pink butterfly as well as a very large dragonfly it was like something from Harry Potter. The day was well organised by our team leader and by the Greensand Trust, particularly enjoyed the doughnuts.'*

## Preserving Our Orchards helps national survey

Anita Burroughs from the People's Trust for Endangered Species led a workshop for the Bedfordshire and Luton Orchard group. The workshop was on the Traditional Orchard survey about to be launched in Bedfordshire. The Orchard group would now like support from anyone who would like to help with the survey. Training will be given. If you are interested contact Alexe Rose on 01525 378101.

Visit [www.greensandtrust.org](http://www.greensandtrust.org). for more news throughout the year



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## Faith Woodlands Communities

The Faith Woodlands Communities Project aims to help promote mutual understanding between people of all faiths, through the common ground of the natural world. The Forestry Commission have provided an area of Maulden Wood which is being used as a sacred space and a labyrinth. The Trust is a delivery partner and will be involved in helping to manage the site and lead guided walks and educational activities.

## Silsoe Green Infrastructure Plan

Silsoe Green Infrastructure (GI) plan was part of a number of GI plans commissioned by Central Bedfordshire Council. The plan was developed through workshops with the residents of Silsoe and will be a community owned document. Silsoe Parish Council have agreed the final version of the GI plan and will display it at the upcoming annual Parish meeting.

## Walkers go batty!

Visitors in Ampthill Park were led on a walk with Bob Cornes from Bedfordshire Bat Group. The Group managed to hear Daubenton, Natterer and Pipistrelle bats on the bat detectors.

## Open University volunteers

Staff from the Open University Faculty of Education and Language Studies helped with heathland regeneration in Oak Wood. Nine volunteers pulled birch saplings from an area of the woodland in which we are trying to encourage the heather to grow. The saplings were donated to the Community Tree Trust to be planted on other local woodland sites.



'I was able to get to know people I didn't know well before the day. We shared ideas, experiences and doughnuts as we worked and were proud to be able to see the difference we made to the landscape. After lunch, some of us were given a fascinating guided walk by the senior park ranger telling us about the history, flora and fauna we saw.'

For more information on the Heathlands of the Greensand Ridge project visit [www.greensandtrust.org](http://www.greensandtrust.org)

News from around the Trust

## Sandy Smith Nature Reserve

The second bird ringing event in the reserve recorded a young Kingfisher in July. Bird ringing is carried out by experienced specialists so the bird is not harmed when the small, lightweight ring is fitted onto the birds leg.



Juvenile Kingfisher by Steve Squire

Other wildlife sightings in Sandy Smith Nature Reserve include: Dingy Skipper and Marbled White butterflies, Pyramidal Orchids, Bee Orchids, and Common Spotted Orchids as well as Grasshopper Warblers.

## Walk in the meadows

The Greensand Trust led a walk for members of the Bedfordshire Natural History Society around the Ouzel meadows in Leighton Buzzard. All enjoyed the walk despite the extremely wet weather!

## Wildlife sightings

Good numbers of Silver Washed Fritillaries, Purple Hairstreaks, White Admirals and Purple Emperors were seen in Kings Wood.

Sixty-seven Broad-leaved Helleborine spikes were recorded in Kings Wood.

Ten Grey Heron nests were recorded in Rushmere. Each nest had up to 4 youngsters although their numbers gradually went down through predation from Buzzards and the young falling out of the nest.

Barn owls took up residence in the barn owl boxes erected in Avery's Meadow Conservation area.

Over 10 different species of butterfly were seen on the butterfly walks led by volunteer Judith Knight. Eighteen adults and ten children attended the two walks to learn about the lifecycle of the butterfly.

## Summer fun

A series of 'Summer Fun' activities were held in Stockgrove. Activities included storytelling and 'Discover the Nature'. The latter attracted over 35 children who had great fun pond dipping, finding creepy crawlies, drawing and looking at nature. Thanks to volunteers for their help.

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## Summer grazing

Nine Shorthorn cattle, a notably docile breed, are being used this year on the Ouzel meadows in Leighton Buzzard. There has been almost negligible fouling of the cycle track and no reports of conflict between dog walkers or their dogs and the cattle.

In July sixteen Manx Loughton sheep arrived on Rammamere Heath. Together with three Exmoor ponies they graze the heath during the summer months. Grazing is essential to the successful management of the heath. In the past few years there have been attacks on the sheep. This year the public have been asked not to take their dogs into the fenced area. To date we have only recorded one dog in the area. Thank you everyone for your support.



photo by Bob Hook

Sheep on  
Rammamere  
Heath

## Wadelows Nature Reserve

The Greensand Trust have signed an agreement with Wadelows Nature Reserve Management Committee. The agreement means that the Trust will deliver environmental education (1-2 days per week) for schools on the reserve and in the purpose built education facility.

A twilight session was held for teachers of local primary schools to introduce them to Wadelows Nature Reserve and the education programmes that the Greensand Trust delivers there.

Wadelows Nature Reserve is at the back of Poplars Garden Centre in Toddington. It is easily accessible from the M1 junction. If you would like further information please contact the Greensand Trust Education team on 01525 378101.

## Doggie Fun Day

Doggie Fun Day was held in Stockgrove Country Park and was a great success. Four hundred people attended and £200 was raised for Appledown Rescue. Many thanks for all the people who helped on the day and to the organising committee for all their hard work. Also a big thank you to Denne Country Supplies who supplied the rosettes and doggie bags and to The Pet Stop who supplied the treats.

News from around the Trust



2010 is the fourth year that the Trust has held the Bug Lab tour. This year around 190 children and their families attended ventured out into their local greenspaces despite the wet and windy conditions.

£252.36 was raised from donations for the craft activity. Take home your own bug creation!

Sites visited by the tour in 2010:

Stockgrove Country Park, Heath and Reach  
Amphill Park  
Houghton Hall Park, Houghton Regis  
Tiddenfoot Waterside Park, Linslade  
Flitwick Woods  
Edgewick Farm, Woburn Sands  
Appenine Way greenspace, Leighton Buzzard  
Vimy Road riverside, Linslade

The Greensand Trust would like to thank the following partners for funding some of the sessions or allowing use of their site; LC2 learning community, Central Bedfordshire Council, Amphill Town Council, Woburn Sands Town Council, Aspley Guise Parish Council.

## Leighton Linslade Canal Festival

The Greensand Trust had a stall at Leighton Linslade Canal Festival in July. Staff and volunteers helped visitors to make butterflies to take home and pass on the message about the Heathlands of the Greensand Ridge Project. £75 was raised through childrens activities, sales of bug house kits and donations. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped out on the day!

## Passport 2010

There are still a few places left on the remaining Passport walks of 2010!

**Autumn Birds Walk**, Stockgrove Country Park  
Saturday 23rd October, 11am - 1.30pm

**Tree Trail Walk**, Flitwick Manor Park  
Saturday 13th November, 11am-1.30pm

**New Years Day Walk**, Maulden - Amphill  
Saturday 1st January 2011, 10am start

Booking for each event is required. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

Email: [info@greensandtrust.org](mailto:info@greensandtrust.org)

Tel: 01525 378101

[www.greensandtrust.org/events.html](http://www.greensandtrust.org/events.html)



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## Working Woodland Centre

Garfield Weston Foundation have awarded a grant of £25,000 to the Working Woodland Centre project.

## Investing in the Greensand Ridge

The Greensand Ridge Rural Development Programme (RDPE) delivery team (Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and the Greensand Trust) continue to work on behalf of the Local Action Group to facilitate applications.

For further information about the investment programme and to see if your project is eligible visit [www.greensand.org.uk](http://www.greensand.org.uk)

## Leighton Buzzard Society talk

A presentation on the history of the Greensand Trust, investments and developments was given to members of the Leighton Buzzard Society.

## Billington Park Fun Day!

The Greensand Trust had a stall at the first Billington Park Community Fun Day. It was well organised and everyone had a great time. Visitors to the stall were able to learn why Stanbridge Meadows are important to preserve.

## Ouzel Valley Park

Volunteers have helped to repair access onto the Ouzel meadows and fencing around the ponds. As well as mowing and raking the wildflower area of Averys Meadow Conservation area in Leighton Buzzard.

## Heath & Reach P3

Members of Heath & Reach P3 group were led on a walk to look for bats. With 23 people listening and looking for signs of bats over our heads we managed to hear several bats on the bat detectors around the village.

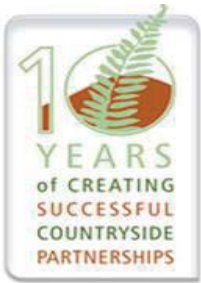
## New Community Development Officer

Simon Knock has joined the Trust from a background of Project Management and Media, with a healthy amount of environmental and conservation work in the mix.

‘During my working career I have always been involved in conservation work, and volunteering’.

Simon joins the Trust Community Development team and will be working with community groups across the Greensand Ridge and surrounding area.

News from around the Trust



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## Waitrose donation for the Greensand Trust

The Greensand Trust have received a donation of £252 from Waitrose in Hitchin.



We were very fortunate to be nominated by our volunteers. We would like to say a huge thanks to all our supporters who voted for us with their tokens. This money will go towards supporting local volunteers working with the Trust.



## COMMA funding

The COMMA fund in association with Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) awarded the Greensand Trust £7,500 for the purchase of Stanbridge County Wildlife Site Meadows in Leighton Buzzard.



For more information about Stanbridge Meadows visit [www.greensandtrust.org](http://www.greensandtrust.org)



## Save our Stanbridge Appeal



Help us save Stanbridge Meadows County Wildlife Site!

The Greensand Trust is asking for help to secure this special wildlife haven, in Leighton Buzzard, for wildlife and people.

The Greensand Trust has already raised most of the funding required but a further £17,000 is needed by Christmas 2010.

[http://www.greensandtrust.org/sos\\_appeal.html](http://www.greensandtrust.org/sos_appeal.html)

Please support us, think of it as an investment with a guaranteed return: a richer, more diverse, more natural environment for everyone and everything living in the Greensand Ridge area, for now and for decades to come.