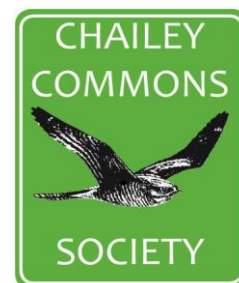




Chailey Commons Society



NEWSLETTER SPRING 2025

Welcome to the Spring Newsletter

Well, it has certainly been warm and really a contrast to the cold of February and March



PHEW!
It's been very warm in the blazing >>>>



The rainfall has been the lowest on record and locally the score is Mar – 7.5mm (0.3in) and April – 20.5mm (0.8in) and so far in May 29mm (1.14in).

Where the ground was soggy and sticky it has turned to a hard surface so can we have rain please!

Update – May 21st Rain at last – heavy showers passing through – big spots of rain hitting leaves hard so no watering tonight! Luckily, it was fine for our spring outdoor activities and the bird and flower walks were enjoyed, there are reports below.

It will soon be nightjar time so we are hoping our surveys will be good. We are arranging two evening surveys – June 7th and June 28th – meeting at the Sports Club car park North Chailey.

We need helpers to look and listen from about 9.15.p.m. for an hour or so. Like to help with these? Let me know please on email 'members@chaileychcommons.org.uk' or 01444831098. Thank you.

William

News from the commons

Memorial Common

Dry as everywhere. The wildlife refuges have been set up again and we are hoping for good results. Please respect the temporary barrier markers which indicate the preferred area to allow the nesting birds the peace and privacy which they need and dogs under control as usual.

Surveys are being held on June 7th and 28th so do join us if you can and help in this late evening activity. (members@chaileychcommons.org.uk).

The cattle can go on this common once again and they can cross over from the other two lower commons.

Thank you to Jon D. for sending in this great picture of an adder sunbathing on the grass on Memorial common.

If you see any of our valuable wildlife do take a photo and send it in to 'sightings@chaileychcommons.org.uk'.



Red House Common

The ponies are still doing their grazing and nibbling. You may have seen them rubbing on trees and bushes and this is to clear the heavier winter coat. In summer they have a much lighter covering of hair, The 'lookers' when doing the daily checks have been pleased that all seven are now often seen together in the open areas enjoying the spring sunshine. It won't be long, however, before they will be able to hide in the tall bracken, not deliberately of course but seeking food. There is sufficient food available, and we do ask that they are not fed by visitors but left to do their own foraging.

The wildlife refuge is set up again on the north slope and we are hoping that there will be nightjars again across the north slope. There are plenty of paths available around the area so we hope that it will do the job and provide seclusion as intended.

Lane End Common

This common is free of livestock so it is available for walking without meeting anything. You might however see the deer which are usually there and please do have dogs under control and there could be a fawn or two hiding quietly under cover.

The wood ants are beginning to wake up again and the large mounds of brown material are usually covered in a constantly moving cover of ants as they set up the nests and establish foraging routes leading away from the main mound. Examined closely there is clearly two-way traffic along these designated routes and its amazing that they are so well organized.

Romany Ridge Common

Bird Walks Results

NAME	Scientific	multiple	06.04.25	10.05.25	SEEN & HEARD	HEARD	FLYING OVER
Chiff Chaff	Phylloscopus collybita	yes	✓	✓	yes		
Pheasant	Phasianus colchicus	yes	✓	✓		yes	
Wood pigeon	Columba palumbus	yes	✓	✓	yes		
Blackbird	Turdus merula	yes	✓	✓	yes		
Carrion crow	Corvus corone	yes	✓	✓	yes		
Robin	Erithacus rubecula	yes	✓	✓	yes		
Blue tit	Cyanistes caeruleus	yes	✓	✓	yes		
Greenfinch	Carduelis Chloris	yes	✓	----		yes	
Lesser black backed gull	Larus fuscus		✓	----			yes
Coal tit	Parus ater		✓	----		yes	
Skylark	Alauda arvensis		✓	----		yes	
Great tit	Parus major	yes	✓	----	yes		
Swallow	Hirundo rustica	yes	✓	✓			yes
Pied wagtail	Motacilla alba	yes	✓	----	yes		
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	yes	✓	----			yes
Buzzard	Buteo buteo		✓	✓			yes
Magpie	Pica pica		✓	✓	yes		
Stonechat	Saxicola rubicola	yes	✓	✓	yes		
Yellowhammer	Emberiza citrinella		✓	✓	yes		
Jay	Garrulus glandarius		✓	✓	yes		
Green woodpecker	Picus viridis		✓	----		yes	
Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes	yes	✓	✓		yes	
Cuckoo	Cuculus Canorus		----	✓		yes	
Song thrush	Turdus philomelos		----	✓	yes		
White throat	Sylvia communis	yes	----	✓	yes		
Linnett	Linaria cannabina	yes	----	✓			yes
Garden warbler	Sylvia borin	yes	----	✓	yes		
Blackcap	Sylvia atricapilla		----	✓	yes		
Swift	Apus apus		----	✓			yes

Shown above is the accumulated table for the results of our two Bird Walks in April and May on Romany Ridge. We were lucky with the weather and conditions were near perfect for looking and listening.

This is the common, by rotation, which the Commons Society is using for its 2025 activities.

It is bisected by a stream flowing from a spring adjacent to the A272 and forming a watercourse southward to the wet heath area at the lower end.

Here can be seen the examples of the 'leaky dams' installed by the volunteer groups and these are now beginning to do the job of slowing the flow of water in times of heavy rain.

This is part of the Wilder Ouse project which brings together people across the Ouse catchment to restore natural processes and create a robust Nature Recovery Network.



There has been a programme of planned clearance too on this common. From time to time, it is necessary to clear away the old and collapsed birch and willow to prevent a dense jungle effect setting in.

This is an area adjacent to North Common Road where such a clearance had been made.



The ground water rises here and begins to form a water course going west to join the main stream.

The tussocks shown as grass covered mounds are the remains of old *Molinia* growth '*Molinia caerulea*' known as 'Purple moor grass.'

This is a species of flowering plant in the grass family needing damp moorland to survive.

This is another of the commons where the cattle can roam and graze.

Here is a summary table of the Flower Walk on Romany Ridge

Chailey Commons
Society

Flower Walk 20.05.25

Family and Species	Common Name	
<u>APIACEAE</u>		
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Cow parsley	x
<i>Oenanthe crocata</i>	Hemlock water dropwort	x
<u>ASPARAGACEAE</u>		
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scriptus</i>	Bluebell	x
<u>ASTERACEAE</u>		
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy	x
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping thistle	x
<i>Cirsium dissectum</i>	Meadow thistle	x
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	Marsh thistle	x
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear thistle	x
<i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>	Hemp agrimony	x
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Ox-eye daisy	x
<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	Common fleabane	x
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Common ragwort	x
<i>Taraxacum officinale agg</i>	Dandelion	x
<u>BRASSICACEAE</u>		
<i>Sisymbrium officiale</i>	Hedge mustard	x
<u>CAPRIFOLIACEAE</u>		
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Honeysuckle	x
<u>CARYOPHYLLACEAE</u>		
<i>Sagina procumbens</i>	Procumbent pearlwort	x
<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	Lesser stitchwort	x
<i>Stellaria media</i>	Common chickweed	x
<u>DIPSACACEAE</u>		
<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Teasel	
<i>Succisa pratensis</i>	Devil's bit scabious	x

<u>ERICACEA</u>		
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Ling	x
<i>Erica cinerea</i>	Bell heather	x
<i>Erica tetralix</i>	Cross-leaved heath	x
<u>EUPHORBIACEAE</u>		
<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	Dog's mercury	x
<u>FABACEAE</u>		
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Broom	x
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common bird's foot trefoil	x
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	Lesser trefoil	x
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White clover	x
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse	x
<i>Vicia hirsuta</i>	Hairy tare	x
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common vetch	x
<u>JUNCACEAE</u>		
<i>Luzula campestris</i>	Wood rush	x
<u>ONAGRACEAE</u>		
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay willowherb	x
<u>OSMUNDACEAE</u>		
<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	Royal fern	x
<u>PLANTAGINACEAE</u>		
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort plantain	x
<u>POACEAE</u>		
<i>Anthoxanthum odaoratum</i>	Sweet vernal grass	x
<u>POLYGONACEAE</u>		
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common sorrel	x
<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	Sheep's sorrel	x
<u>PRIMULACEAE</u>		
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Scarlet pimpernel	x
<u>RANUNCULACEAE</u>		
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow buttercup	x
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping buttercup	x

<u>RHAMNACEAE</u>		
<i>Frangula alnus</i>	Alder buckthorn	x
<u>ROSACEAE</u>		
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Herb Bennett	x
<i>Potentilla anglica</i>	Trailing tormentil	x
<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	Silverweed	x
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	Tormentil	x
<i>Rosa canina</i>	Dog rose	x
<i>Rubus caesius</i>	Dewberry	x
<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	Bramble	x
<u>RUBIACEAE</u>		
<i>Galium saxatile</i>	Heath bedstraw	x
<u>SCROPHULARIACEAE</u>		
<i>Scrophularia nodosa</i>	Common figwort	x
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Germander speedwell	x
<i>Veronica serpyllifolia</i>	Thyme-leaved speedwell	x
<u>URTICACEAE</u>		
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Stinging nettle	x

Pound Common

One of the lower commons where the cattle can roam.

There has been clearance during the last couple of years and this common is quite open in aspect and looks more like typical heathland. The young birch however is, as ever, growing fast and will need to be checked soon. June is the month for bracken rolling and this is where a heavy roller is used to crush the young bracken stems to break the effect of the photo synthesis of energy from the large spread of the top fronds feeding the roots below.

Bracken lives and increases by extending its rhizome root network a few inches below the surface and sending up new shoots every few centimeters to repeat the energy gathering process. There will be a June programme of bracken rolling on the other commons too, going into areas carefully planned to avoid major disturbance.

Membership Matters

Thank you to all our members who have renewed their subscription for 2025, your support for Chailey Commons Society is, as always, much appreciated.

Unfortunately, we experienced a problem with our bank at around the time many of you were sending standing order or 'faster' payments which has led to a number of membership payments being rejected by the bank. Apologies if you were among those who were affected, our treasurer is in communication with the bank, Santander, about this and reminders have been sent out to members who have not yet renewed.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our walks, talks or events this year.

Sue Berry

An Opportunity – can you help?

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Following the revision of our website a few months ago when we made the changes to bring it up to date, it was set up using 'Wordpress' and is looked after by Adrian, our Treasurer.

We now have an opportunity for someone to join our committee and help us with not only the day-to-day running and maintenance of the website, but to enhance and expand our exposure to a wider audience of all ages so that it can be even more user friendly and can be run in conjunction with social media and Facebook.

This is an ideal time to further promote the Society and help us to publish our activities more widely and appeal to younger members who will have computer and media skills.

Do you have or know someone who has these skills and who would like to become part of our successful and expanding local social group so that we can take full advantage of the opportunities which the community of Chailey and surroundings has?

We look forward to hearing from you and working with you – it will be a great opportunity.

Dates for the Diary

Friday June 12th 9.30.p.m. – 11.00.p.m. Outdoor activity – Nightjar Walk – meet Sports Club car park.

Saturday 12th July 2.00.p.m. – 4.00.p.m. Butterfly Walk – Romany Ridge

Wednesday 20th August 10.00.a.m. – 12.00. midday – Children's Activity – Fun Bug Hunt - Romany Ridge

Hope to see you soon.