

Whashton Village green walk over 29th May 2024

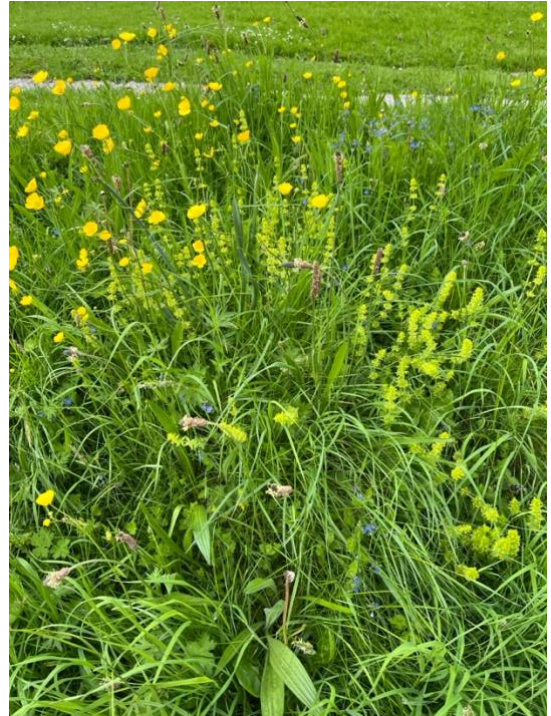
Rachel Richards, B-Lines officer for Buglife with Sally Zaranko

Purpose of Visit:

- To look at how the local flora is responding to changes in management 'rewilding'.
- To provide us with advice on management and species enrichment which benefits pollinators, other wildlife and people.
- To see how/if our work fits in with the [B-Lines - Buglife](#)

The visit consisted of walking the length of the village from the triangle to the Whashton Village sign on entry road to village.

We concentrated our species list on the uncut areas of the village green, back of the green and Bobbys bank. We looked at plants and invertebrates, discussed the appearance of areas, how they are being managed and any improvements which could be made.



The following species were identified:

Flowering plants:

Daisy	Bugle	Wall speedwell
Bulbous Buttercup	Ribwort Plantain	Cow Parsley
Creeping Buttercup	Broad leaved plantain	Groundsel
Meadow buttercup	Prickly sow thistle	Broad-leaved dock
Cuckoo flower	Sow thistle sp	Wood avens
White clover	Black Medic	Bush Vetch
Red clover	Dandelion sp	Forget me not
Self heal	Ragwort	Herb Robert
Cross wort	Spear thistle	Garlic mustard
Oxeye daisy	Yarrow	Creeping Comfrey
Common Sorrel	Mouse-eared chickweed.	Marjoram
Germander speedwell	Hedge bedstraw	Creeping Thistle
Dog Violet	Hedge woundwort	Red Campion
Hogweed		

Grasses:

Yorkshire Fog
Crested Dogs Tail
Cocks foot Grass
Annual meadow grass

Perennial rye Grass
False Oat Grass
Sweet vernal grass
Meadow foxtail
Red Fescue

Invertebrates on the flowers

Common Green Furrow Bee
Micro moths
Leaf beetle
Early Bumblebee
Common Carder bumblebee
Red-tailed Bumblebee
Red-tailed cuckoo Bumblebee
Buff-tailed Bumblebee
Orange-tailed Mining Bee
Silver Y Moth



Common Green Furrow Bee and Red-tailed Cuckoo Bumblebee from Whashton green © Rachel Richards



Overall feedback from Rachel

Leaving areas along the edge of the village green uncut allows wild plants and flowers to grow, flower and set seed providing vital habitat for pollinators and other insects and therefore vital food for small mammals and insect feeding birds such as swallows, swifts and house martins. These birds returning each year to breed and bring joy to all and their breeding success depends on abundant invertebrates.

The collective village effort to balance the needs of the community with the needs of wildlife by wildings areas of green space makes a very important contribution to providing much needed habitat for wildlife. These flowery banks are flourishing, and with a continuation of the correct management (cut and lift) will become increasingly more flower-rich, bringing insects, birds and colour to the village.

In order to balance the needs of wildlife and the community, in some areas where docks and nettles could begin to spread and look untidy to some, these can be removed/reduced by hand (avoiding the use of any chemicals which can be harmful to more than target species). This will make space for more wildflowers and encourage

any of the community who prefer things to look tidier to support the extension of wild flower areas along the length of the green. More details can be found below.

Management Suggestions to encourage more plant species and therefore invertebrates:

Back of the green : chose a section and scythe/brush cut nettles and brambles and rake up the debris and put at back of green near quarry face - lowering the nutrients of some of the nettle dominated areas by removing cuttings will help to encourage more diversity of wildflowers. Do on a rotation each year – maybe 3 sections, so a 3-year rotational cut. This mean there will always be the important nettle habitat but some of this area will have the opportunity to become more flower rich. Nettles support over 100 sp. of invertebrates including 30 which rely solely on nettles. Butterfly species using nettles, include Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma and Small Tortoiseshell.

Possible additions – Wood Cranesbill and Giant Bell Flower may do well in the moderate shade areas once nettles are knocked back a little and are a typical wild road verge species in the area not seen here during the survey. It may be possible to collect seed locally and grow on plants to ensure local provenance. (There are some examples on Rachel Lane)

Within the grassy margins birds-foot trefoil plants could be introduced, if not present, as these are visited by many bees and butterflies. (these are easily grown well from cuttings left in a saucer of water for a few days.)

Edges of the Green (at Hagg Lane end, by finger post near Rachel Lane junction, and on Bobbys Bank above the garden bit). – leave longer, cut twice at end Feb/start of March and also end of July/ start of August. Remove all debris to a compost heap. This will encourage more species and also reduce the coarser grasses from swamping the flowers.

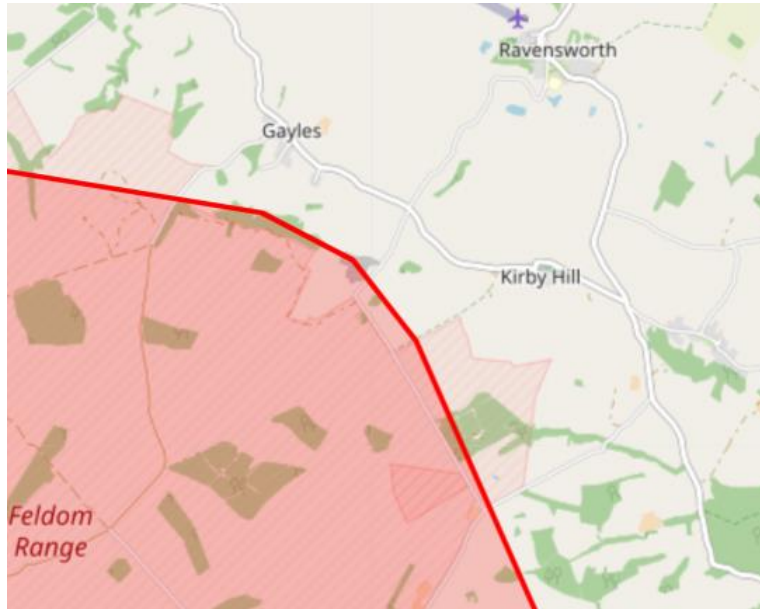
Increase flowery areas and connectivity – with time, and the support of the wider community, it would be beneficial to extend the uncut area along the length of the green up to daffodil level to help insects move along and increase feeding opportunities. With time the flowery margin could be extend on to the top of the green, even if just a metre or two around the edges leaving a short area for dog walking/picnics etc. on the top. Sometimes cutting a wavy, scalloped edge can be very attractive and provide sunny, sheltered microclimates for invertebrates.

Bobbys Bank – at the bottom

Brush cut/scythe twice a year end Feb/start of March and also end of July/ start of August. Remove some hogweed, docks and brambles to give other plants a chance and keep it tidy.

Keep a clear boundary between ‘Cottage Garden planted bank’ and the natural meadow banks . It may be a good idea to reduce the coverage of some garden plants which can outcompete native wildflowers here if left unchecked.

Notes: though they provide colour and spring cheer cultivated Daffodils give little nectar opportunities for pollinators; wild daffodils provide more forage but are more costly to purchase.



B-Lines

The Map above shows the location of B-Lines in relation to Whashton, about 1.8 km 2km away. Though Whashton is not within the B-Lines it can still be added to the B-Lines map [here](#) by clicking on the village green location on the interactive map.

The work you are doing to increase pollinator friendly habitats in and around your village is exactly the kind of work we would like people to add to the map. This helps to motivate more people in your area to do the same. Schools, gardens, fields etc can be added to the map, when managed well for pollinators.

Sally Zaranko 29.5.2024
Rachel Richards 20th June