

## Potential Hymenoptera Survey of the Pits

An element of our revenue funding we stipulated a part for funding a base line study of the Pits, something recommended to us by various experts. For example the Millennium Green did a survey 20 years ago, and are currently redoing this survey now, to observe the changes over 20 years.



A survey is also useful as evidence for funding applications.

Because we already had a rich history of surveys of flora and birds, we have opted for a much more specific survey of Hymenoptera (large order of insects, comprising the sawflies, wasps, bees, and ants) because the sandy cliff and open sandy areas are the perfect habitats for many species of wasps and bees, including some rare ones already identified by Hawk Honey.

Adrian Knowles, who was recommended by Graham Hart came to the Pits May 22nd to survey a potential survey. He was a pleasure to walk with, eyes down, and attention to such small detail.

Adrian is the Suffolk recorder for Hymenoptera and works independently for Wildlife trusts and businesses undertaking surveys. Marion Gaze look him around the whole area, but specialised in the cliff area.

He introduced us to *Oedemera nobilitis*, otherwise known as Swollen-thighed Beetle and it's smaller relative *oedemera lurida*.

We found green tiger beetles, which have an interesting relationship with a wasp *methocha cuticulata*, and a tiny spider hunting wasp.

Having trained as a botanist Adrian was familiar with each plant, and explained that each plant has its own little ecosystem of insects, such as weevils on storksbill. By checking these are present, validates the importance of the site.

At the end Adrian suggested extending from Hymenoptera to Hemiptera ie. Lots of other insect groups. He recommended a 3-4 day survey, one day a month for June, July, August and September. Specialising in the cliff area, but taking in other areas if he had time.

Finally Adrian suggested a possible place for sandmartin cliff, which could be discussed with Alan Miller.

Images of the following:

Silver hair grass, clustered clover, buckthorn plantain, silver cinquefoil, crosswort. Lots of lesser trefoil in flower

vernal mining bees – spider hunters; bee wolves; *ammophila sabolosa*; *nysson dimidiatus* (rare)

