

Visit to Moored Common – 6th June 2010

7 Friends of Naphill Common paid a visit to Moored Common to see what they have done to conserve and regenerate their common. We met at 10am outside Naphill Village Hall. As there were only 7 of us we shared cars and made our way to Church Road between Lane End and Frieth where we met up with Katy Dunn, the warden for Moored Common.

Moored Common is owned by Lane End Parish Council and is a SSSI. Its meadows are unique because of its geology, it lies on a patch of acidic clay which encourages rare orchids, grasses and butterflies. (According to a hand drawn map by Wilfrid Smith in 1948 Naphill Common used to have Spider, Lesser Butterfly and Spotted Orchids). Over the years this grassland at Moored has been overtaken by scrubby woodland and the meadows have been crowded out resulting in the loss of this meadow habitat.

After telling us about Moored Common Katy took us to North Meadow to show us areas which had been cleared and were returning to meadow. It was here that we came across one of 3 Malaise traps set up for the capture and study of invertebrates on the Common by Oxford Brooks University.



Katy talking to us next to a Malaise trap.

Katy then took us back over Church Road which divides the Common into 2 halves to Middle Meadow (Photograph below). Until recently this was scrubby woodland. The clearance had opened up the area and allowed grasses and other wild flowers to regenerate.



A recently cleared meadow

Moving onto South Meadow we saw several orchids. This area is grassland and wetland on which orchids flourish.



Some of the orchids seen on South Meadow

We then made our way back to the cars via Moor Copse stopping to look at a 'sink hole', some remains of workings and a large clump of 'skunk cabbage'.

The visit was a great insight into what can be done. It was interesting to hear that they have the same sorts of problems that we do with resistance from residents and the difficulties in getting permission to conserve and maintain the Commons.

Many thanks to Trevor Hussey for arranging the visit and a special 'thank you' to Katy Dunn for giving up her time to show us around.