

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, HORSHAM FIELDS, AMBERLEY

The wildlife and plants supported by the fields which are currently leased by Mrs. Antonia Maas were the subject of a written assessment given to Geoff Uren, Chairman of the Parish Council, in March 2016.

Mrs. Maas writes:-

Dear Geoff,

Re our conversation this morning about the Amberley Fields (i.e. The "Horsham Fields"), I have enclosed a rough list of what I have personally seen but I'm sure there are lots more. Some of the plants and animals are protected these days anyway so building on the land would destroy them.

Last Summer, as I had no sheep, I let the Middle Field grow into a wildflower meadow, and it was amazing what sprung up, apart from the usual buttercup and clover (red and white).

I have tried to provide habitats for everything listed- my private conservation area as it were- and should love to see it properly conserved for the Village when I finally have to give it up. It is an interesting soil mixture, as we are on the Greensand line.

Antonia

(PS. I tried to get the Black Ash listed a few years ago, but the HDC nature conservancy man was out and never rang me back, and I rather let it lapse. (Local resident) Richard robinson knows about this, and so does Mr Loxley (HDC) but I don't think his memory is what it was.)

AMBERLEY FIELDS:-

Location: Adjacent to Martins and the School, Including the Old Piggery.

FLORA:

Thistles- provide food for Gold-finches

Nettles- For butterflies and moths/bees etc. Peacock Butterflies can only pupate on them for survival. Very few in gardens now.

Clover flowers- for bees and insects etc.

Cornflowers and Poppies- planted by me. Also White English Bluebells, Daffodils, many other wild flowers and different grasses including Coltsfoot, wild mint, Sorrell.

Piles of logs, (providing habitat for) Stag beetles, breeding Hedgehogs and Slow worms. Many insects to feed different species of Bat (including one endangered) which roost in my barn (Grade 2 listed).

Black Ash (rare), 2 old Willows

Mud for Swallows to build nests.

No artificial fertilisers used, fields grazed by horses, sheep only (as cows attract too many horseflies and produce cowpats).

Blackberries, small Ferns growing in the old flint walls around. Sloes, and in previous years, Orchids.

FAUNA:

Stag Beetles, Slow worms, Butterflies, including Marsh Fritillary (protected), Hedgehogs, Moles (and, alas, Rabbits) Foxes, Swallows, Owls, House-martins, many nesting birds (including Longtail Tits) Toads/Mice Grasshoppers. Also Woodpeckers, Dragonflies, Pheasant, Ducks.

(NOTE, from Geoff Uren: In April 2016, many Red Kites observed feeding on the wildlife in the "Old Piggery" field, and the Middle Field.)

The original of this deposition is held by me, and is available for the NP evidence base.

Geoff Uren
Chairman, Amberley Parish Council