

growing
greener
together



25 September - 3 October 2021

Winchester
Green Week



ENJOYING GOD'S WONDERFUL CREATION - MAGDALEN HILL DOWN

Psalm 121: I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

Magdalen Hill Down is one of Winchester's hidden secrets. It is hard to see from the road, but a track just off the Alresford Road, opposite St Swithun's school is a gateway to some of the best views of the city.



The reserve was once the site of Winchester's ancient fair. In World War I it housed a large army camp and there are information boards about this around the top of the hill.

If you take the path from near St Swithun's school up the hill, you can turn back to look at a wonderful panorama of Winchester and the surrounding hills.





The down is now a butterfly reserve covering 114 acres. In 1995 a project commenced to return the arable land to chalk grassland. It has been sown with native grass and flower seed from other Hampshire sites and has become a haven once again for wildflowers and butterflies.

The site is managed by Butterfly Conservation. Fiona Scully, who is the South Downs Landscape Officer, explained that the charity monitors the numbers and cycles of butterflies and moths across the UK. More is

being learned about moths, who are important pollinators. Warmer temperatures mean that some species that would normally thrive in the south have started to move further north. This year, a cold spring and cooler summer meant that a number of populations were decimated in the early part of the year. The database collects records from volunteers and is a significant resource in understanding how changing weather patterns are affecting the natural world.

This week's challenge: Maybe this week you could take a walk up Magdalen Hill Down and see how many different butterflies and moths you can spot. It's a place to enjoy the wonders of nature. Or leave a patch of your garden unmowed to encourage butterflies and bees?

