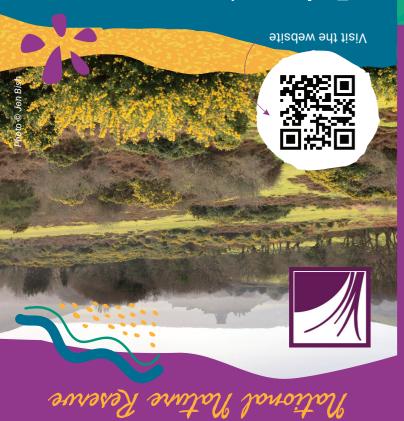
in this exceptional landscape Explore and connect to nature



PURBECK HEATHS

WHAT WE DO

Restore, protect & enhance

Over the last 50 years, we have been restoring heathland across Purbeck, removing forestry plantations, undoing the damage of agricultural intensification and re-wetting drained bogs. Over that time, the efforts of different landowners have reconnected individual heathland areas into what is now the second largest block of heathland in the UK.



We are working together to create the conditions that will allow nature to not just survive but thrive in this landscape. We are taking down some fences between different landowners to create 1,280 hectares of single grazing unit (see map overleaf) to restore a wilder grazing system where cattle, ponies and pigs will wander freely, creating the bare ground habitats that many heathland species depend upon.

We aim to reintroduce lost species into the landscape. Beavers have become known as "ecosystem engineers" for the impact they have on the landscape, recreating rare and currently extinct habitats. We are also working together to ensure the Purbeck Heaths remain an outstanding place for people of all ages to discover wildlife and connect

Silver

studded

say thanks!

blue butterfly

I love living in the heaths

where our special friends,

live. We lay our eggs near

develop into larvae, they

their nests, where they take

care of them. When our eggs

secrete sugar for the ants to

Southern Damselfly

I am a very rare damselfly

and meet other damselflies.

the black meadow ants, also

WHAT LIVES HERE

HISTORY OF THE LANDSCAPE

The heaths were created a few thousand years ago as our ancestors cleared land of trees for early agriculture. Naturally found nutrients from these soils were used up with year upon year of farming, eventually leaving swathes of nutrient-poor scrubland where rare and fragile plants and wildlife have since colonised to form heathland.



Local archaeological evidence show settlements of Iron Age round houses, Roman potteries and salt works from which salt was exported across the Roman Empire from Poole Harbour. Clay extraction still continues today using the road network to transport it onwards, however the old trackway networks along with the scars from World War II can be traced across the landscape we see today.

Purbeck Mineral and Mining Museum rspb

The Purbeck Mineral and Mining Museum at Purbeck Park, Norden explore these fascinating stories further. This museum is run purely by local volunteers so check their website for opening times: www.purbeckminingmuseum.org

EXPLORE THE HEATHS

The Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve (NNR) was declared in 2020 and is internationally important for nature. The land is owned and managed by several different

organisations who are working together to enhance this special place for you to enjoy and wildlife to flourish.

It brings together three pre-existing, much smaller areas of NNR along with the surrounding landscape to make a bigger, better and more joined up area for the animals, plants and their habitats to thrive. This is crucial to the recovery of nature under the climate and ecological emergency.

For more information, please ask at one of the visitor hubs and explore our website www.purbeckheaths.org.uk

NNR Partners







recommended.

giving

nature







WHAT LIVES HERE

A flavour of the incredibly rare things

Purbeck **Mason Wasp**

A striking solitary wasp only known from south-east Dorset in the UK. The adults are dependent on Bell Heather for nectar, and caterpillars of the Heath Button Moth as food for its young.

Yellow centaury

A tiny plant with four-



Photo © Terry Bagley

The things to look out for

I love to perch on top of gorse bushes to keep a lookout. In Dorset, only a few of us survived the severe winter of 1963, but with all the heathland restoration. we are now thriving again.

Dartford Warbler

I migrate from Africa and spend my summer evenings making churring sounds to attract other nightjars - an experience not to be missed! I make my nest and lay my eggs on the ground. I am a nocturnal bird, watch out for my silhouette at dusk, I fly



Nightjar

more like a bat than a bird.

and because I'm not a strong flier, I can only live in certain isolated areas in southern England. By joining up the heath areas, I can move between the mires I love

LOVE THE HEATHS

Parts of the Purbeck Heaths are fragile

Some species of bird migrate from Africa and choose the Purbeck Heaths to breed between February -August. They build their nests exclusively on the ground and are at particular risk of disturbance from dogs not on leads.

Other species of birds arrive from the Arctic in August to spend their winter in our milder climate, feeding on the mudflats and shoreline of Poole Harbour.

Help protect the nature

survive the harsh landscape - it is illegal.

Stay on the footpaths and take note of the signage It's not just about the birds this is a complex landscape where some endangered species need bare ground and others need protection from trampling and disturbance.

People visit and enjoy the

Inspire a connection to nature and place

CONNECT WITH NATURE

The Purbeck Heaths are a wonderful place to connect with nature. Whether exploring on foot, by bike, kayak or horse you could experience wildlife spectacles, amazing sunsets or just find some space to breathe. If you are visiting for the first time, RSPB Arne is

Whatever you choose to do, and whoever comes with you, please do so respectfully - the heaths are fragile.



created through a dedicated partnership, with support from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund and the Wytch Farm Landscape and Access ancement Fund (WFLF). The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is funded by Defra and is being delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.

- Keep dogs on leads. Visit www.dorsetdogs.org.uk for more information and dog friendly sites to visit.
- The types of plants that of heathlands also burn easily. Never have a fire or a BBQ here
- Plan to take your litter home with you after your visit as you may not find a bin whilst you

Purbeck Heaths for different reasons. Please be considerate and tolerant of others



Photo © Alex Hyde, Back from the Brink

