

Gwithian Green Local Nature Reserve



Small Tortoiseshell

Common Blue



Gatekeeper

1 Butterfly Transect

Orange-tip

Over 25 species of butterflies have been recorded on the Green. The Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Wall and the Small Heath are Priority Species. Other butterflies to look out for include the Orange-tip, Brown Argus, Common Blue, Dark Green Fritillary, Comma, Ringlet and Skippers as well as the more widespread species such as Speckled Wood, Small Tortoiseshell, Green-veined White, Gatekeeper and Meadow Brown. There is a butterfly walk (transect) which is signposted and walked once a week by volunteers recording numbers and species with data sent to Butterfly Conservation. There is an abundance of macro and micro moths with 124 being recorded in 4 evenings. Look out for day flying moths such as the Scarlet Tiger, Burnett and Cinnabar!



Gwithian Green lies at the heart of the village and has always been a special place for local people. The Green is very unusual in having a range of important habitats within a very small area which sustain a rich biodiversity in relation to both flora and fauna. Over 200 species of flowering plants and 84 birds have been recorded in the past 20 years. There are a number of priority or scarce species and habitats with a Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) or listed in the Red Data Book (RDB).

Gwithian Green is thought to be part of the site of the medieval manor of Connerton and has an Ancient Pound. It is registered as a Common and was granted Local Nature Reserve status, in 2002. It is managed by Gwinear- Gwithian Parish Council through the Gwithian Green Advisory Group which has representatives from the Parish Council, Cornwall Council, residents, commoners and Friends of Gwithian Green Group. There is a 5 year Management Plan and an Annual Work Plan.

Palmate Newt



5 Ponds

Two ponds have been created near to the bridge which goes over the main stream and a third more recent pond in the acid grassland. They are home to a wonderful range of wildlife which includes Common Frog, Common Toad and Palmate Newt along with aquatic invertebrates such as Water Boatman, Pond Skater and numerous water beetles. The ponds have been colonised by Water Horsetail, Ivy-leaved Crowfoot and Brooklime which can be found on the edges.



Common Frog

2 Dune Grassland

Cinnabar Moth



Cowslip

This habitat constitutes two thirds of the Green. It is composed of windblown sand and contains a high proportion of calcareous shell fragments. The nutrient-poor, base-rich thin soil supports a tremendous diversity of plants including Cowslips, Red Fescue, Kidney Vetch, Salad Burnet, Hairy Sedge and Sand Sedge. Rabbit grazing is extensive and maintains a short sward of vegetation which keeps many undesirable species at bay.



Rabbit grazing

3 Gwithian Stream

Broad-bodied Chaser Dragonfly (Steve Jones)

One main stream runs West to East through the Green to join the Red River, its origin is believed to be a mine adit. It is fed by three smaller streams, springs and a drainage ditch from the road. The dominant plant species in the stream is Fool's Water-cress and Hemlock Water-dropwort with Hemp Agrimony along the banks. Where the stream goes under the grass track Whirligig Beetles can be seen along with Dragonflies and Damselflies. Signs of otter activity have also been identified.



European Otter



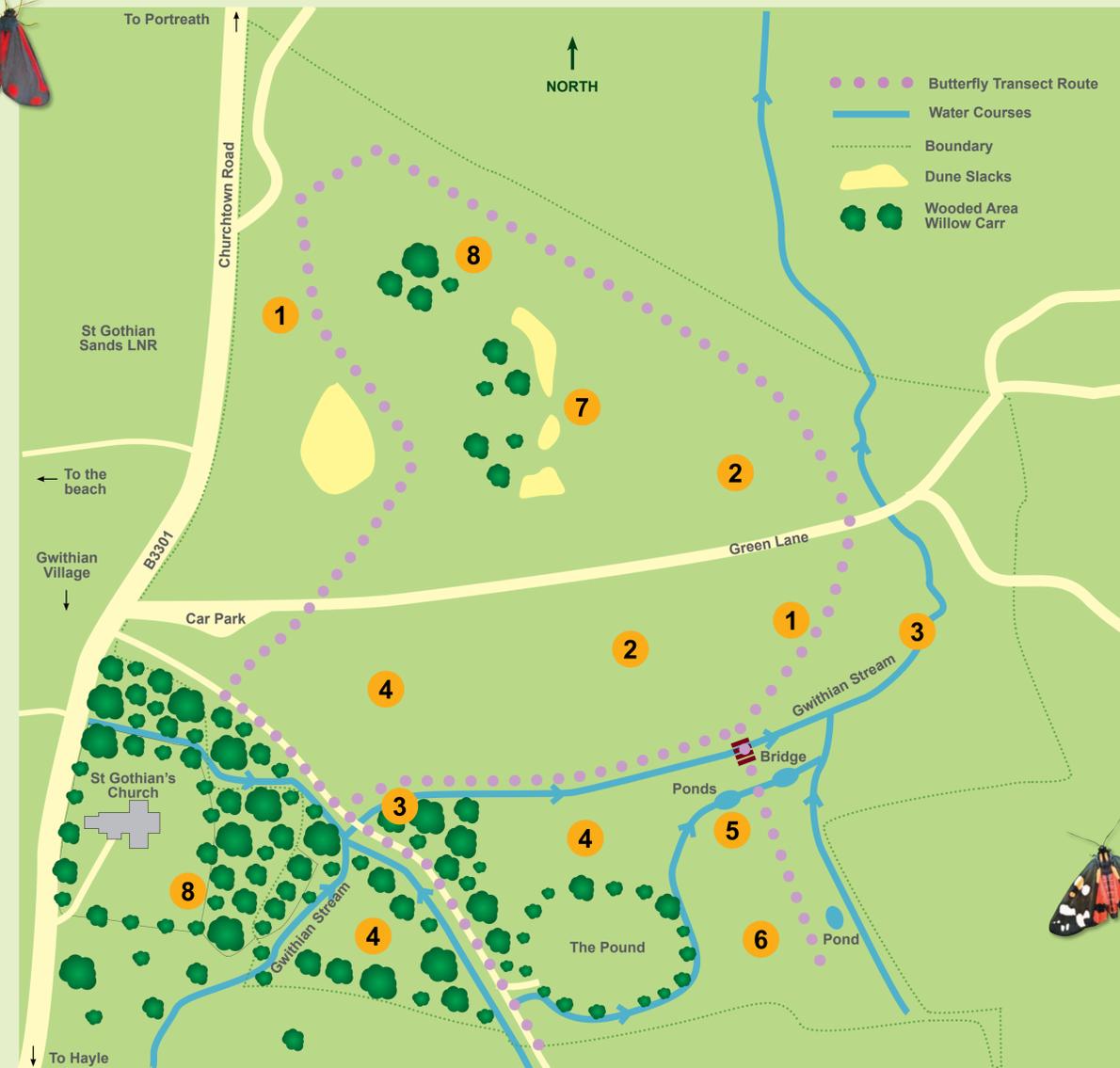
4 Marshland

Sedge Warbler

This is an area to the south of the main stream. Its origins are uncertain but could be related to seepage from the streams and springs in the area. Priority bird species (UK BAP) include Snipe which are winter visitors and Sedge Warblers which breed on the Green. Plant species include Hard Rush, Compact Rush, Common Valerian, Glaucous Sedge and Common Cotton-grass.



Five-spot Burnet Moth



Ragged Robin



6 Acid grassland

This is an area of clay soil south of the main stream. Plants characteristic of this damp habitat include Ragged-robin, Meadowsweet, Southern Marsh Orchid, Lousewort, Purple Moor-grass and Marsh Thistle. In the Autumn the area is carpeted by Devil's-bit Scabious.



Southern Marsh Orchid

Bog Pimpernel



7 Dune Slacks

Dune slacks are UK BAP habitats found dispersed in the dune grassland. They are wet/damp hollows caused by wind eroding the sand down to the water table. A range of flowering plants can be found in the different slacks which include Bog Pimpernel, Early Marsh Orchid, Marsh Marigold, Yellow Flag, Parsley Water-dropwort and Glaucous Bulrush.

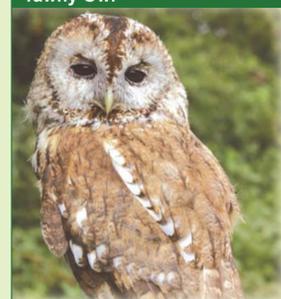


Yellow Iris

Scarlet Tiger Moth



Tawny Owl



8 Woodland

There are two areas of woodland, the larger one being on both sides of the main grass track before and after it crosses the stream. This is an area dominated by Willow with some Ash, Sycamore and Elder. The other area is the Elm Copse in the Northern section of the Green. Mammals and birds that inhabit these woodlands include the Tawny and Barn Owl, Pipistrelle Bat, Common Shrew and Wood Mouse. Near to the Elm Copse there are two Nationally Scarce plants (RDB), Sharp Rush and Autumn Squill.



Grey Willow

Anyone who visits the Green should respect this wonderful but fragile environment which can easily be disturbed by inappropriate use. Dog excrement should be disposed of by owners since it can have an adverse effect on the vegetation, is unpleasant for other walkers and can cause a variety of diseases for humans. Bikes and horses should not be ridden apart from on Green Lane.