

King's Meads Nature Reserve, Ware

The largest remaining area of grazed riverside flood meadow in Hertfordshire.

Local wildlife photographer, Steve Chilton visited on 27 May 2009



During a short walk around Chadwell Bank and 'the causway' at King's Meads, I found a flower (photographed) which I wasn't familiar with and has never been recorded at the site before. It is flax of some kind, probably Pale or Perennial Flax though the variety cultivated for linseed oil is also a possibility.

Crosswort (photographed), a scarce flower in Hertfordshire, is in full flower now and is growing conveniently alongside the main footpath.



Look out for three species of Buttercup.

Bulbous Buttercup (photographed) grows on the chalk of Chadwell Bank.

Both Meadow Buttercup (photographed) and Creeping Buttercup grow on the more acid soil of the meadows.



Also in flower now are Mouse-Ear Hawkweed (photographed), Germander Spedwell, Salad Burnet, White Campion, Lesser Trefoil and many others.



The rare Water Violet is also still in flower and can be seen in Manifold Ditch on the far side of the reserve.

There were few insects in flight on this rather dull day but King's Meads is one of the best places in Hertfordshire to see dragonflies with 18 species recorded.

HNHS book *Dragonflies and Damselflies of Hertfordshire* by Alan Reynolds, Tom Gladwin and Christine Shepperson; gives more details, see the publications page on our website for how to buy a copy.

Access to Chadwell Bank is via the A119, Ware Road, opposite the Golf Club, grid reference TL345137. Further details see Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust website www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/herts/

