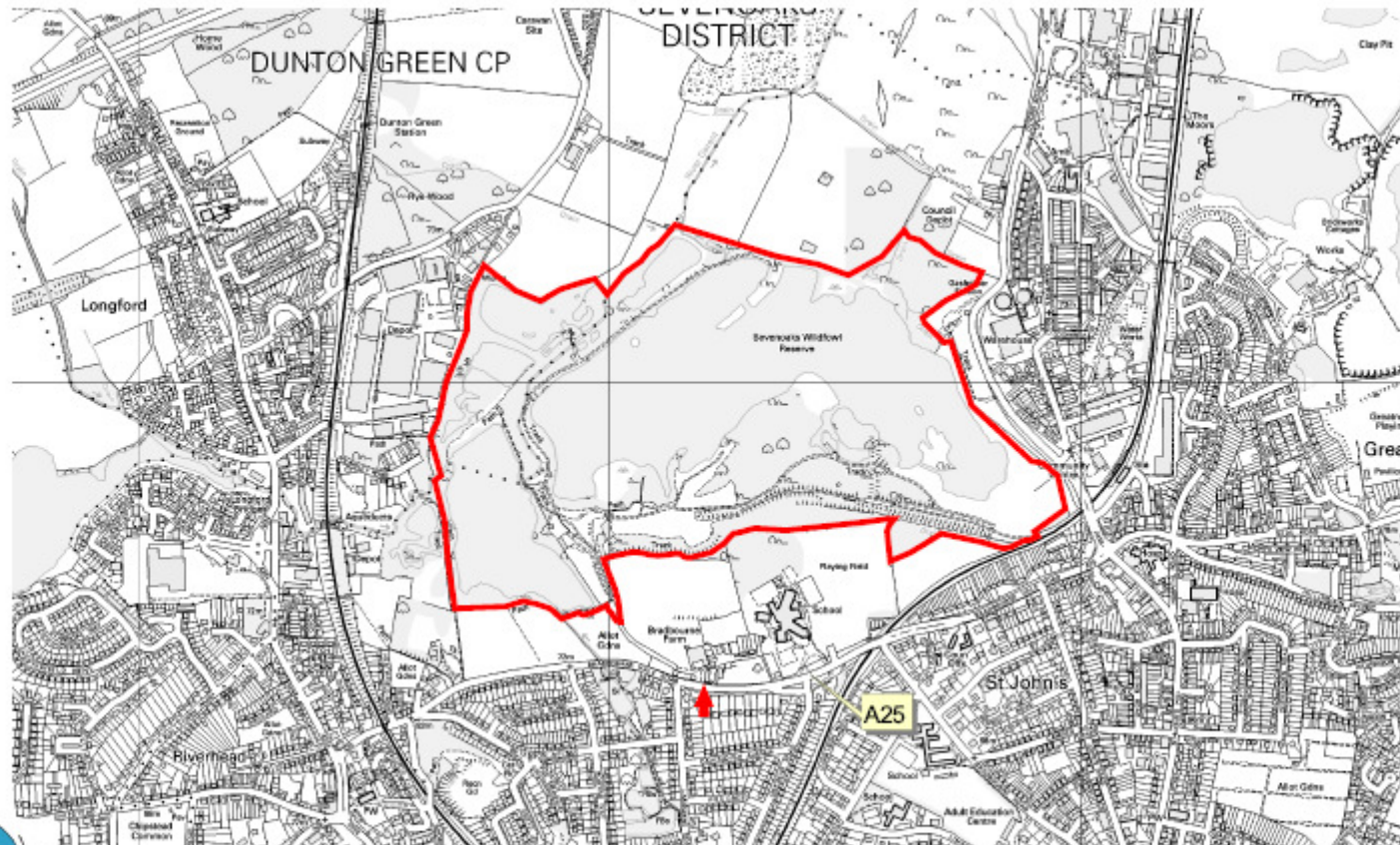


Kent Wildlife Trust Wildlife Study Day Information Sheet

No.	19	Title	An Introduction to Sedges and Rushes	Date	Wednesday 9 June 2010
No. of students	5-15	Start time	10am	Finish time	3-4pm
Leader	<p>Ros Bennett, Botanist and ecologist Ros was formerly a full-time tutor for the Field Studies Council in East Anglia and then organiser and leader of courses for FSC Overseas. She has written books on plants and habitats and has been teaching courses on identification and ecology for many years to all age groups from primary children through to University students, environmental professionals and interested adults.</p>				
Who should attend	<p>This study day is designed for those who, whatever their general botanical knowledge – complete beginner or the more experienced, have not yet tackled the sedges or rushes (or tried and failed!). It is not suitable for those who already have a working knowledge of the common members of these families, for this is an introductory course and we shall not be looking at a very wide selection of species</p>				
Meeting place	<p>Jeffrey Harrison Visitor Centre, Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve, on the north side of the A25, Bradbourne Vale Road, between Riverhead and the Bat and Ball crossroads. Map Ref TQ 520565</p>				
Other sites to be visited	<p>The Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve will offer a range of habitats where we should be able study a good collection of the common species of sedges and rushes</p>				
Programme	<p>At least half the morning will be spent in the classroom getting to grips with the basic features of the Cyperaceae (Sedge family) and Juncaceae (rushes) and particularly those that can be used as clues to identification. Simplified keys will be introduced. We shall concentrate of those species which are common in Kent. The rest of the day will be spent exploring the lovely (and easy) paths around the reserve. Just under two miles maximum.</p>				
Subjects to be covered	<p>The basic structure of sedges and rushes and especially the flowers and fruits. How sedges and rushes can be distinguished from each other and from grasses. How other genera in the sedge family differ from the so called “true” sedges (i.e. those of the genus <i>Carex</i>). The differences between the two genera of rushes – <i>Juncus</i> and <i>Luzula</i>. Key characteristics which help us distinguish the different species. The emphasis of the course will be on identification by close examination as well as considering useful field characteristics. Plenty of guidance will be given in the use of scientific keys to identification</p>				
What to bring	<p>A notebook and pencil. A hand lens magnification x 10 (available for purchase on the course at £4.50). Suitable outdoor clothing and a picnic lunch, though sandwiches, crisps and drinks can be purchased in the visitors centre.</p>				

	<p>A field guide such as “Grasses, Sedges, Rushes and Ferns of Britain and Northern Europe” by Francis Rose as well as “New Flora of the British Isles” by Stace and/or “Excursion Flora” by Clapham Tutin and Warburg if you have either of them.</p>
<p>Other information</p>	<p>This study day is designed to develop a taste and a passion for sedges and rushes. By mid-June many of the species will still be flowering while others will be in fruit (when the sedges are easiest to identify). Sedges have flowers unlike any other families of flowering plants, so beginners, whether or not they are familiar with wild flowers, will have lots to learn. We shall not be hunting for rarities or clocking up a long list of species, but rather we shall spend time consolidating an understanding and developing a confidence to tackle their identification independently.</p> <p>Sedges and rushes feature significantly in many of our wilder habitats. They do not respond well to increased fertilisation or to pollution. And many of them like the ground to be acid and/or waterlogged. They are good indicators therefore of unimproved landscapes. For species which are often dismissed or overlooked, it seems a pity, therefore, not to get to know them better.</p>

Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve



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