

Wednesday, 23rd September 2015, Circular walk on the Commons with John Jones

'Around in Circles'

This report comes to you as penance for my late arrival at Four Firs CP, which provided Chris with an easy option as to who should be 'persuaded' to write up the walk. Myself and thirteen humans headed north to Woodbury Castle, where our leader gave us the usual info about late-Iron Age hill forts in East Devon (fair enough, given that there were some new members among us). I was more interested in a squirrel that I'd spotted on the ground nearby - if I hadn't been on a lead I'd have given it what for! We continued along the East Devon Way and, although our leader hadn't asked me specifically, I instinctively knew that my job was to make sure the group stayed together, so running free, I patrolled up and down continuously, keeping an eye out for stragglers. The coffee stop was on high ground so that people could appreciate the views of High Peak and Mutters Moor and bask in the warm sun under a Mediterranean-like blue sky. Our leader was very friendly and kept patting me on the head, which made me feel very special as he didn't do it to anybody else.

We then diverged from the East Devon Way, tracking southeast down through the military practice area. I managed to flush out a few butterflies for David Hatch but he remarked that there weren't many about, possibly because the foul weather of the previous week had convinced them it was time to bed down for the winter. There were lots of wonderfully smelly fungi that kept Stella busy with her camera.



We crossed the Stowford stream at the footbridge, though a foolhardy few decided to test out their boots in the ford. Then it was uphill again past the Crook and Uphams plantations, across the model aircraft field and back to base at Four Firs. Our leader was congratulated on finding a mud-free route, although personally I think there's a lot to be said for a quick frolic in some slimy sludge!

K9 Kim

30 September 2015