

# Rye Harbour Farm

## Habitat Creation Project

No.2 Aug 2010

### New beginnings for Rye Harbour Farm

We are pleased to have been granted planning permission from Rother District Council to begin work on the restoration of Rye Harbour Farm. Work will begin this month and we expect to finish in Spring 2011.

During July we began preparation work, you may have seen the following taking place:

- Mowing of banks, fields and the vehicle route across the farm.
- Erection of fencing to safeguard sensitive existing habitats and protect species such as reptiles and water voles.
- Erection of site safety notices around the perimeter at footpath entrances.

From August we will start creating a range of freshwater wetland habitats at the western end of the farm adjacent to The Ridge, Winchelsea Beach.

### What habitats are being created?

The area will become a series of ponds, ditches and scrapes suitable for wetland plants, breeding and wintering birds, great crested newts, dragonflies, water voles, and a multitude of other wildlife.

We will also strip off soil from shingle ridges to expose the natural shingle beneath. The value of shingle habitat to wildlife is discussed overleaf.

### How is existing wildlife going to be protected?

We have planned the work to take place during the least disruptive time after the bird breeding season. The landscaping works should be complete before winter sets in. We will work around important existing habitats and safeguard protected species such as reptiles and water voles that are already found on the site in low numbers.

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve will be open as usual, and will be unaffected by the work.



*Ruddy Darter, by Rye Harbour Nature Reserve*

### How will the project affect you?

Work will take place Monday to Friday, 7am to 5:30pm and 8am to 6:30pm when near houses.

A works compound for staff will be established close to Lime Kiln Cottage.

There may be some noise from the operation. Areas where works generate dust will be sprayed with water to reduce the amount that becomes airborne.

Footpaths will remain open, with safety information. Vehicle crossing points will be manned to help visitors across the site safely. Please take care and be aware of large vehicles moving across the site, and please do not touch any safety or reptile fencing that you come across.

The new habitats will take a few years to establish. If you would like to help record the new species that move to the site, please get in touch with Rye Harbour Nature Reserve to find out about volunteering opportunities .

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve can be contacted on 01797 223862

**If you have any questions or concerns about the project, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the project team (contact details overleaf).**

## Why is the project creating these particular habitats?

Before the site became a farm in the 1950s, many of these habitats were originally found here including inter-tidal habitat and vegetated shingle ridges.

We are also creating ponds, ditches, wet grassland and wild flower grassland. All of the habitats being created are nationally under threat and contained in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

The Environment Agency made a commitment to restoring Rye Harbour Farm as part of the previous Coastal Sea Defence Scheme on the site, and it forms part of our Folkestone to Cliff End Strategy.

It is also hoped that some of the habitats will be suitable as compensation for forthcoming coastal defence schemes in the area. The results of this project and its ongoing management and surveying will therefore be of significant importance to future projects.

## Why is coastal vegetated shingle important?

Globally, coastal vegetated shingle is a rare habitat, with the only significant amounts found around North West Europe, Japan and New Zealand.

In Europe, Britain holds the majority of this resource. Rye Harbour's shingle ridges are part of the coastline that has evolved from Fairlight to Dungeness over the past 7,000 years. Collectively the areas of shingle at Dungeness and Rye Harbour are thought to be the largest vegetated shingle beach in the world. They are protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under European Law. The ridges on Rye Harbour farm are outside of the SAC.

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve next to the farm has recorded over 450 species of plants and over 2000 species of invertebrates most of which are associated with the vegetated shingle, and transient habitats between the shingle and wetland features.

Over 279 bird species use the reserve, 70 species nest successfully. Many are ground nesting and the vegetated shingle islands and ridges are an important habitat that they use.



*Coastal vegetated shingle, by Tom Cook*

## Who can be contacted about the project?

Peter Richardson	Project Manager 01903 832099
Ian Nunn	Project Executive 01903 832609
Tom Cook	Fisheries, Recreation & Biodiversity Officer 01732 222912
Miles Pickering	Contract Supervisor, Halcrow 07595 199316

## Where can you read a copy of the Environmental Statement?

Environment Agency, Scots Float Depot, Military Road, Playden, Rye, East Sussex, TN31 7PH  
Rother District Council, Planning Division, Town Hall, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex, TN39 3JY  
Or on the Rother District Council Website [www.rother.gov.uk](http://www.rother.gov.uk)

**The next newsletter will be available in January 2010**