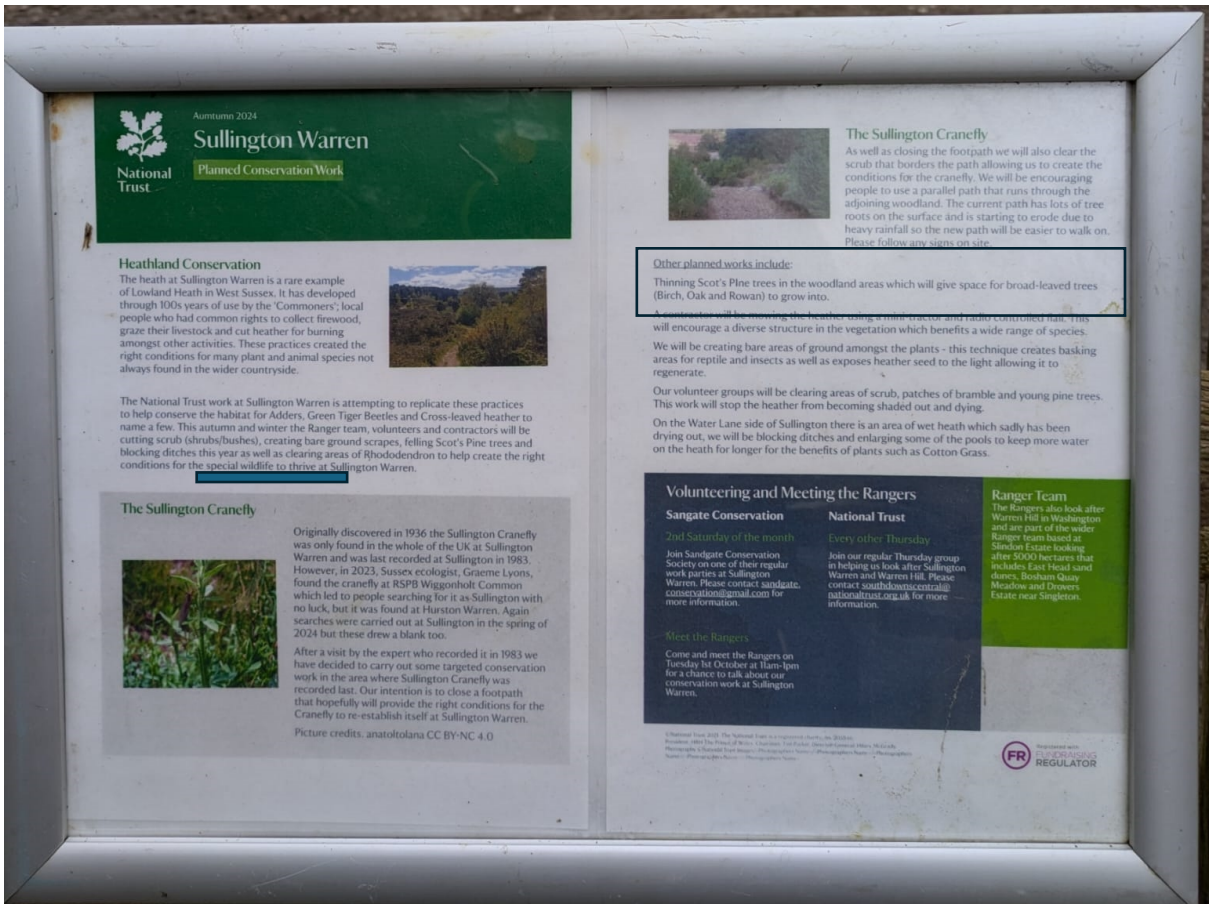
National Trust sign on land ajacent to ours, demonstrating the need to thin Scots Pine



Aumtumn 2024

National Trust

Sullington Warren

Planned Conservation Work

Heathland Conservation

The heath at Sullington Warren is a rare example of Lowland Heath in West Sussex. It has developed through 100s years of use by the 'Commoners'; local people who had common rights to collect firewood, graze their livestock and cut heather for burning amongst other activities. These practices created the right conditions for many plant and animal species not always found in the wider countryside.

The National Trust work at Sullington Warren is attempting to replicate these practices to help conserve the habitat for Adders, Green Tiger Beetles and Cross-leaved heather to name a few. This autumn and winter the Ranger team, volunteers and contractors will be cutting scrub (shrubs/bushes), creating bare ground scrapes, felling Scot's Pine trees and blocking ditches this year as well as clearing areas of Rhododendron to help create the right conditions for the special wildlife to thrive at Sullington Warren.

The Sullington Cranefly

Originally discovered in 1936 the Sullington Cranefly was only found in the whole of the UK at Sullington Warren and was last recorded at Sullington in 1983. However, in 2023, Sussex ecologist, Graeme Lyons, found the cranefly at RSPB Wiggonholt Common which led to people searching for it as Sullington with no luck, but it was found at Hurston Warren. Again searches were carried out at Sullington in the spring of 2024 but these drew a blank too.

After a visit by the expert who recorded it in 1983 we have decided to carry out some targeted conservation work in the area where Sullington Cranefly was recorded last. Our intention is to close a footpath that hopefully will provide the right conditions for the Cranefly to re-establish itself at Sullington Warren.

Picture credits. anatoltolana CC BY-NC 4.0

The Sullington Cranefly

As well as closing the footpath we will also clear the scrub that borders the path allowing us to create the conditions for the cranefly. We will be encouraging people to use a parallel path that runs through the adjoining woodland. The current path has lots of tree roots on the surface and is starting to erode due to heavy rainfall so the new path will be easier to walk on. Please follow any signs on site.

Other planned works include:

Thinning Scot's Pine trees in the woodland areas which will give space for broad-leaved trees (Birch, Oak and Rowan) to grow into.

A contractor will be mowing the heather using a mini-tractor and radio controlled flail. This will encourage a diverse structure in the vegetation which benefits a wide range of species.

We will be creating bare areas of ground amongst the plants - this technique creates basking areas for reptile and insects as well as exposes heather seed to the light allowing it to regenerate.

Our volunteer groups will be clearing areas of scrub, patches of bramble and young pine trees. This work will stop the heather from becoming shaded out and dying.

On the Water Lane side of Sullington there is an area of wet heath which sadly has been drying out, we will be blocking ditches and enlarging some of the pools to keep more water on the heath for longer for the benefits of plants such as Cotton Grass.

Volunteering and Meeting the Rangers

Sangate Conservation

2nd Saturday of the month

Join Sandgate Conservation Society on one of their regular work parties at Sullington Warren. Please contact sandgate.conservation@gmail.com for more information.

National Trust

Every other Thursday

Join our regular Thursday group in helping us look after Sullington Warren and Warren Hill. Please contact southdownscentral@nationaltrust.org.uk for more information.

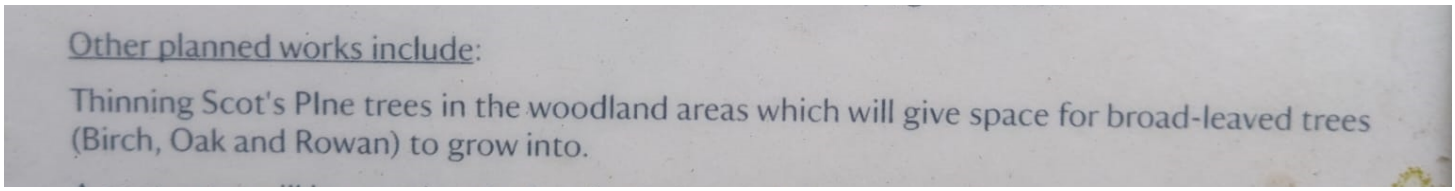
Meet the Rangers

Come and meet the Rangers on Tuesday 1st October at 11am-1pm for a chance to talk about our conservation work at Sullington Warren.

Ranger Team

The Rangers also look after Warren Hill in Washington and are part of the wider Ranger team based at Slindon Estate looking after 5000 hectares that includes East Head sand dunes, Bosham Quay Meadow and Drovers Estate near Singleton.

FUNDRAISING REGULATOR



Other planned works include:

Thinning Scot's Pine trees in the woodland areas which will give space for broad-leaved trees (Birch, Oak and Rowan) to grow into.