

SGU3A Natural History Group - 12th October 2022 - Cloudy & cool - ST7931

Silton Village Hall - Snails and Hedgerows

11 group members met at the village hall and examined a collection of snails. We identified Garden Snail (*Cornu aspersum*) and Banded Snails - Brown-lipped and White-lipped (*Cepaea nemoralis* and *C hortens*). Using a reference sheet we enjoyed observing the snails' features such as their breathing hole, tentacle and radula for feeding. All our snails' shells grew in a right-handed spiral. We returned our snails to a hedgerow and then explored along this old track observing the amount of wild food for birds and mammals. This included good numbers of berries: - haws, hips, bryony, sloes and ivy.



A Garden Snail's long tentacles hold the eyes while the short ones are sensory.

Most snail shells spiral clockwise

Black Bryony twines clockwise and produces shiny scarlet berries



We looked at the bark rubbings and photos of trees at Penselwood collected last time. The bark had a moss and lichen preventing a clean rubbing. Using a variety of tree reference books we collected a range of descriptions of tree bark, and realised young trees have less typical bark.

BEECH - smooth and silvery-grey, may break into small squares; less often has rippled patches; people have written their names on the bark.

OAK - greyish-brown, finely cracked, ridged and fissured; very thick and rough with the surface broken in small irregular squares; young bark smooth and shiny, but increasingly fissured with age; deep fissures are vertical or horizontal.

ROWAN - Smooth, shiny, purplish-brown with pores - dark dots or lenticels; then horizontal stripes.

SILVER BIRCH - Silvery-white with dark diamond shaped rough patches; old trees deeply fissured at the base of the bole. Young bark reddish. One of the world's hardiest trees.

SWEET CHESTNUT - Purplish-grey, or grey-brown, deeply fissured in a web mesh pattern; older trees have long spiral fissures with horizontal pores, increasingly angled with age; silvery and smooth when young.



Shaggy Inkcap is initially egg-shaped or cylindrical, becoming bell-shaped with an upturned split and blackening margin.



Photos from Sue & Gordon

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