

Friends of Epping Forest

Newsletter Autumn 2013

www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk



GREEN BELT AT RISK?



Green belt land at Uphire. Photo: Judy Adams

The challenges to the green belt are enormous. First proposed by the Greater London Regional Planning Committee in 1935, the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 allowed local authorities to include green belt proposals in their development plans.

Many years on in 2012, the Government produced a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which identified the purposes of including land within the green belt:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging with one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

On 1 July 2013, Brandon Lewis MP, the minister with responsibility for travellers, made a statement to the House of Commons. "The Secretary of State wishes to make clear that, in considering planning applications, although each case will depend on its facts, he considers that the single issue of unmet demand, whether for traveller sites or for conventional housing, is unlikely to outweigh harm to the green belt and other harm to constitute the 'very special circumstances' justifying inappropriate development in the green belt." [From London Green Belt Council, 27 September 2013.]

This seems to be very good news for the green belt! But analysis by the *Daily Telegraph* published on 27 September this year has found that large areas of land are to be removed from the designation of green belt to provide space for more than 95,000 homes under proposals that have been made public by councils.

BBC News (25 August 2013) in "Green belt house plans 'double'" reported that in 2013, 150,000 houses were planned (81,000 in 2012). Earlier, on 6 September 2012, the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) reported that, in a written ministerial statement, Government encouraged local councils to use existing laws to review the extent of green belt land in their local areas. As an incentive to use these powers, councils who review green belt land in their local plans will have their local plan examination process prioritised.

Epping Forest District Council area is over 92% green belt. In its Planning our Future — Issues and Options Consultation Document 2012, it states clearly that "there will have to be some release of Green Belt land adjoining settlements to meet the needs for housing and employment growth in the period up to 2033".

Consultations

The Friends are currently dealing with two pre-planning consultations for housing: one by Land Fund Ltd opposite the school in Uphire; the other by Commercial Estates Group and Hallam Land Management for Latton Priory to the south of Harlow. Both of these are in green belt.

In addition, Knollys Nursery, following refusal of a first application, has submitted a second planning application for land adjoining buffer land at Uphire, quite close to Gifford Wood!

Through our membership of both the London Green Belt Council and the CPRE we campaign for green belt protection and share approaches and intelligence to help us locally. The CPRE has recently developed a charter to save the countryside and is inviting people to sign up. It hopes to create a groundswell of support for the countryside and encourage decision-makers to give it the best possible protection. Have a look at www.cpre.org.uk.

We will continue to be vigilant – let us know if you can help us.
Judy Adams

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Committee Members are the Trustees of the Charity.

Views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Friends of Epping Forest Committee.

Dear Friend...

Our AGM saw a number of changes this year. Ken Hoy had decided to retire as a Trustee, but we were very pleased that we were able to honour his long and dedicated contribution to the Friends by electing him our first Vice President. This means he still has an important role in the Friends, we are able to draw on his considerable experience and he is still writing for us, as well as continuing as a good friend!

Sue McKinley, Mike Smith and Jean Brockington were re-elected as Vice Chairman, Secretary and Membership Secretary respectively. Committee members re-elected were: Peter Read, Bill Dexter, Tricia Moxey and Peter Wrobel.

Since the AGM, Bill Dexter has decided to resign as Trustee. He has been a Committee member for many years, recalling the early days of the Centenary Festival on Chingford Plain and many of the earlier issues in the Friends. Thank you to Bill for his efforts over the years. Fortunately he will be continuing to provide the Forest Supper with support (yes, he is the man who makes the table decorations!) and to help out with sales events, for which we are grateful.

We were very pleased that Forest Superintendent Paul Thomson attended our AGM and gave a talk on the Forest. A large topic as you say, but given the developing new Management Plan for the Forest, very timely. He outlined the whole range of functions that are the responsibilities of the Conservators of the Forest and provided a comprehensive insight into the challenges facing the Forest. Lots of food for thought!

Further to the AGM, we have now completed our Membership leaflet, the first one for more than 10 years. We have enclosed one with your *Newsletter*, which we hope you will pass on to a neighbour or friend and encourage them to join us too.

As you will see from this *Newsletter*, we would still welcome support with marketing, events and policy/planning.

Judy Adams



The Annual General Meeting was held at Bancroft Preparatory School. Photo: Peter Wrobel

A GOOD SUMMER FOR BUTTERFLIES?

After a cold spring, July and August have seen glorious warmth and sunshine, so can we expect our butterflies to have been restored to rude health after a succession of poor summers?

If only it were that simple! We have about 23 species resident in the Forest. Five of these (brimstone, comma, peacock, small tortoiseshell and red admiral) over-winter in the



A better year for the large skipper, whose numbers have been depressed since 2007. Photo: David Miller

adult stage and so will have struggled this spring, along with the spring-loving orange-tip.

Others have two or more broods. The early broods of small white, green-veined white, common blue, small heath, speckled wood and the scarce small copper will have suffered. Small heath butterflies have been increasing over the past few years and had a better second brood, and the double-brooded small tortoiseshell did particularly well. The three common skippers (large, Essex and small) emerge in June and will have benefitted from a delayed emergence into the warmer days of July, but numbers have been depressed since 2007.

It is the late emergers which have done really well: ringlet, meadow brown and gatekeeper. Of special interest this year has been the return of one of our more beautiful butterflies, the white admiral, especially in the Bury Wood area. There have also been four sightings of silver-washed fritillary in the Forest and reports of green hairstreak from Wanstead Flats. The most common hairstreak in the Forest is the purple hairstreak, which



A welcome return: the white admiral was particularly noticeable in the Bury Wood area. Photo: Andrew Jewels



The orange-tip, showing its delicate underwing pattern. Photo: David Miller

seems to have had an average year despite the good weather. There have been no reports of white-letter hairstreak and only one of brown argus.

What this means for next year is difficult to tell, unless you're willing to predict next spring's weather! But the sunshine will have meant that butterflies on the wing since July should have had good mating and egg-laying conditions. The single brooded orange-tip may have suffered most from the poor spring weather.

Apart from the weather, the other major factor influencing butterfly populations in the Forest is the management and the opening up of the rides and Forest (thinning and renewed pollarding).

Among the volunteer groups working in the Forest are those working with the Epping Forest Centenary Trust, with the Happy Loppers working in Bury Wood between the Cuckoo Pits and Three Planks Ride, the Scout Project opening up the Forest alongside Jubilee Ride, and the weekly Green Team working along Green Ride and Clay Road in the Forest northwest of Loughton. This work is likely to have most benefit for the speckled wood, ringlet and white admiral. Certainly the white admiral's food plant, honeysuckle, has had a prolific year. Opening up the rides also improves the structure of the habitat and gives a chance to light-demanding flowers to proliferate. Some of these are an important source of nectar for butterflies, moths and other insects.

And have you ever considered looking out for the day-flying moths, which are generally less conspicuous among our more familiar butterflies? This doesn't apply to the black/red cinnabar and six-spot burnet moths of course, but does for the more subtly coloured burnet companion, Mother Shipton, latticed heath, common heath and the fast-flying emperor moth. Well, if you've got a moment or many next summer, why not keep a lookout for all of these and pass your sightings on to the Forest offices. You might even see a purple emperor butterfly – the Forest is now thought to host a small population.

I'd like to thank Andy Froud, an ecologist from the Corporation of London, for sharing his knowledge of the Forest's butterflies with me, and register my appreciation of the volunteers who monitor the butterflies in the Forest by maintaining three transects, visiting each 26 weeks a year. That's commitment! **David Miller, Conservation Officer, Epping Forest Centenary Trust**

FOREST MATTERS

Epping Forest Management Plan

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, the production of a new 10-year plan for Epping Forest is developing. It is now likely that consultation on the first phase will be during late autumn/early spring. If you wish to be made aware of the progress, please let me have your email if you have not already done so and we will let you know. We will send out an update when more information is available. Looking ahead, you will be able to access information about this at www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforestconsult. **Judy Adams**

Jubilee Pond is full again!



Jubilee Pond as it appeared several months ago, when a new liner was put in place. Photo: Bob and Sandy Gibbons

Our last *Newsletter* mentioned the works at Jubilee Pond on Wanstead Flats. Those works are now complete. Why not go and have a look yourself? Volunteers will be helping with some planting up of the margins; the remainder will regenerate naturally during the next year or two. **JA**

Cattle grazing



Red Poll cattle grazing in the Forest. Photo: Jeremy Dagley

The four cattle grids are now largely installed: at Crossroads just up from the Robin Hood; along Rangers Road, at Forest Side at Honeylane; and along the Wake Road. The gates are yet to be added. With the main road fencing and sections of invisible fencing now in place for minor roads, the area from Rangers Road to the Wake Arms (700 hectares) on the west of the A404 can soon be grazed.

The Corporation still awaits planning permission for works at Great Gregories Farm to enable the establishment

of a breeding herd and contribute to bringing the cattle numbers on the Forest up to about 150. At present, there are 43 English Longhorns, owned by the Conservators, and 10 Red Poll, which the grazier owns. A hardy breed of cattle, able to graze rough vegetation, they are relatively calm, while inquisitive: they should do well in Epping Forest. **JA**

After the fire



Regrowth: two months after the fire, oak shoots appear at the base of a fire-damaged tree. Photo: Peter Wrobel

On 19 July the largest grass fire of the year blazed at the Hollow Ponds, sending plumes of smoke and flames into the air and even into national TV bulletins. Several acres of the popular site – it represents about 10 per cent of all Forest visits – were badly burnt.

But will the damage be long-term? “We’ve had huge fires on Wanstead Flats before and the gorse has all come back because there is a seed base on the ground,” Head Forest Keeper Keith French told the *Newsletter*. A team from the Corporation has cleared away old thick gorse stems to encourage young plants to regrow. And in September oaks were already putting out new shoots (see photo above).

“Nobody knows the actual cause of the fire,” said the Head Keeper, though he thinks arson is the most likely explanation, given that two separate fires burned at the same time. It could, though, have been a barbecue. “Disposable barbecues are the scourge of the countryside because people light them on the ground but probably don’t realise the smouldering effect on the roots underneath the barbecue,” he said.

Will there be more signs to warn about barbecues? The policy is to keep signage in the Forest at a minimum to retain the natural aspect, he said, adding that the area is patrolled “as often as resources allow”. The Corporation “may have to have more seasonal signs or temporary risk-related signs to make people more aware,” he said. But it’s an uphill task. The Forest is “very leaky” – the Hollow Ponds area has a few major entrances, but lots of minor points of entry.

It took 20 tenders to put out the two fires. But with cuts at Leyton and Leytonstone fire stations, will they be there in the future? “We’ve met [local] councillors and fire officers from London Fire Brigade to discuss concerns about future management issues,” said Keith French. The City is working with the brigade to find ways to reduce the risk of fires and to manage situations when they occur. A spokesperson for London Fire Brigade assured the *Newsletter* that existing targets would continue to be met. **Peter Wrobel**

FRIENDS MATTERS



25 June: Friends of Epping Forest Chair Judy Adams presents a cheque for £5,000 for the Gifford Wood Appeal to Lady Mayoress Clare Gifford. Photo: Peter Wrobel

Well done to us – contributing to the Gifford Wood Appeal

Following the purchase of over 30 acres of land in Upshire, which has been added to Epping Forest, this land became part of the Lord Mayor's Appeal 2013, an Appeal to plant up 4,500 trees on part of the site. It will be planted with native oak and hornbeam and some pioneer species which are more tolerant of projected changes in climate. The great views from the top of the field will be protected.

Given the importance of new land coming into the Forest, the Friends have thrown themselves behind the Appeal. We held our first and very successful Quiz Night, with full attendance and realising over £800 for the Appeal. However the Quiz was won by the City of London staff table, so it is quite clear that we shall have to hold a rematch in the future!

In addition, we have had a number of walks, taken collections at events, attracted individual donations from members of the Friends and some members attended the Lord Mayor's Tree Party, further contributing to the Appeal. That event was an out-of-the-ordinary occurrence for many of us and you can see a photograph above at the rather grand Mansion House.

Tree planting and guided walk

We are working with the Officers at the City of London on a tree planting event – and we'll need your help to plant 2,000 trees at the new Gifford Wood, Upshire, from 11 am to 2 pm on 14 December. The tree planting will be followed by a 30- to 40-minute walk around the new way-marked trail that runs through Gifford Wood and adjacent areas of Epping Forest. For more information, contact the City of London's Epping Forest office on 0208 532 1010 or find out more about Gifford Wood at www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/giffordwoodappeal

In memory of Margaret Rumsey

We were saddened to learn of the death of Margaret Rumsey, a very long-standing member of the Friends. Living in Chingford and then running a nursery with her husband along Sewardstone Road for many years, she was a great supporter of the Forest. Donations in lieu of flowers were made in her memory and these have added to our contribution to Gifford Wood.

Horseman's Sunday Service

A beautiful morning welcomed riders and other visitors at the open air service organised annually by the Epping Forest Riders Association and conducted by Rev Gill Hopkins of the Church of the Holy Innocents at High Beach. Attendance included horses, a number of dogs and a few other animals too. The Service gives thanks for our animals and for their continued wellbeing. Judy attended, though not on horseback, to participate in the service.

Benches

Some years ago, the Friends gave three benches to the City of London. These were prepared and set up by one of our Committee members, Peter Read. He has now refurbished the two remaining, one sited at Epping Forest Centre at High Beach in memory of John Greenwood, an early founder of the Friends, and the other in memory of Sir William Addison, an earlier Verderer in the Forest, soon to be re-sited in the grounds of The View.

High Beach Visitor Centre



The Friends have been in discussion with the City of London over High Beach Visitor Centre. As you probably know, the Centre is now operating on reduced hours, open only on weekends and Bank Holidays. We are considering whether The Friends could play a role to enable the Centre to provide additional opening days, perhaps an extra two days a week.

Getting involved like this would be a new departure for us and it would be helpful to learn whether there are members who would be keen to help us staff it. It is rather early days, but an indication of your interest to help would give us more confidence to pursue these discussions.



More than 100 Centennial Walkers received a free cup of coffee from the County Hotel Woodford – the 29th year in succession that the hotel has generously helped the walk. Picture includes walk leader Mike Whitely (centre, with yellow vest) and, to his left, hotel manager Harsh Telang and assistant Dimpal Kumar. A full report of the walk will appear in the next Newsletter. Photo: Robert Good

Capturing views – not through a camera

This autumn and spring we want to capture your views on what the Friends should be doing and indeed about the priorities in the Forest for the next ten years to feed into the management plan. Tell us how we should be responding to the many changes we see.

Our Forest-wide approach is central to the work of the Friends. With an increasing number of local groups now in the area, which we welcome, we need to review and explore our relationship with them.

FOREST QUIZ

You may find this among the fallen autumn leaves. Do you know what it is? Answer below.



The answer to the quiz in the last issue was a bee orchid (*Ophrys apifera*). Obviously this orchid has evolved to lure bumble bees and thus pollinate it, even though the UK species is self-pollinating. It is most likely to be found on the boulder clay of the Forest's buffer lands, as it prefers a chalky soil. It is notorious too for appearing in places unexpectedly, especially in short swards and disturbed soils – including my lawn! **Ken Hoy**

Answer: It is a gall that occurs on oak leaves, called a "cherry gall". It is cherry-sized and has grown during the late summer attached to a vein on an oak leaf. It is caused by the larvae of a very small gall wasp, that feeds, grows and pupates inside the gall – it is then ready to emerge at the end of the winter.

THOSE CUCKOOS...

Chris, the cuckoo we have been following, is still alive. This summer he left Britain after spending the 2013 breeding season again in Norfolk. He was two years old when first radio-tagged in 2011. This year to begin his southward migration, he moved across to Belgium and then on 1st July left to fly southeast over the Alps to somewhere north of Venice. He then moved on via the valley of the Po River to Sicily, where he spent some time fattening up before continuing his journey south.

He left Sicily on 21 July and next signalled from a position south of Lake Chad! He had flown 1885 miles over Libya and crossed the widest part of the Sahara desert in three and a half days!

Once again he was the first of our tagged cuckoos to cross the Sahara safely. By 22 August he had been joined around Lake Chad by three other tagged cuckoos. He was still there in mid-September, and the latest news is he has been joined by another 13 tagged cuckoos from Britain.

Last year he remained in the same area for a month or so before moving to the rainforests of the Congo River, where he stayed during our winter.

But our story has not ended yet...nor ceased to amaze! Not to be outdone by our English cuckoos, French scientists have been radio-tagging French storks. Their migration was southwards through Spain to cross the Mediterranean Sea at its narrowest point, the Straits of Gibraltar.

A stork tagged with a transmitter apparently then moved eastwards across North Africa. Then, it entered Egyptian air space, was detected carrying a radio transmitter and was promptly arrested by the Egyptian authorities – suspected of spying. It's true – honest! (It was released eventually.)

[with thanks to the British Trust for Ornithology] **Ken Hoy**

WALK REPORTS

Discovering Mallinson Park Wood and Highams Park Lake (8 May 2013)

Starting from the Highams Park Lake car park, we headed west through the narrow area of Epping Forest known as The Sale. Before the Forest Act the area was part of the Highams Estate and was used, as the name suggests, for the production of timber for sale. A wild service tree, *Sorbus torminalis*, was growing near a small ditch, which we followed east into what was the Mallinson Estate.

The White House formerly owned by Lt Col Sir Stuart Mallinson is at the centre of the estate. He lived here from 1925-81, expanding the estate to over 10 hectares and creating gardens and an arboretum. In 1978, anxious about the future of the estate after his death and keen for it to provide community interest, Sir Stuart gave the land to the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The house and arboretum area are now leased to Haven House Children's Hospice. Some land was sold for housing, part given over to local Scouts, part is managed by the Rugby Club, and part has been managed as a nature reserve. There is virtually no open public access.

Through the trees could be seen the two pitches of the Woodford Rugby Club with its pavilion and floodlighting masts. Continuing slightly uphill, we took a path created by the Trust for Conservation Volunteers (previously BTCV), using cut holly as dead hedges to define the route. This incorporates the disused track that led to the White House from the lodge cottages on the Bridle Path off Oak Hill.

From here, we visited the nature reserve, managed by members of the Epping Forest branch of the British Naturalists' Association for some 50 years. Clearings have been created to encourage bluebells and wood anemones. We studied the meadow with its many cowslips, and an adjacent clearing with a collection of *Sorbus* species, created as an informal memorial to past members.

Most of the party said they had been unaware of this woodland next to Forest land. This small area provided much to see, leaving little time to explore the more familiar lake. However, we noted a swan family with eight cygnets. We ended by crossing into LBWF recreational area Highams Park, where some members recalled the "prefabs" built here following the Second World War. **Pat and Ron Andrews**

Discovering the Forest's Meadows and Rides (9 June 2013)

(9 June 2013)

A glorious, warm summer's day was perfect to show off the best of Yardley Hill, Yates Meadows and the views across North London and the Lea Valley.

Setting off down the ride along the northern edge of Hawk Wood, one soon became aware of the wide range of wild flowers, trees and shrubs that help make this area so special. The sight and smell of banks of wild garlic were in particular a hint of more to come.



Green and more green at Yates Meadow. Photo: Judy Adams

Reaching Daisy Plain, the slope of Yardley Hill was spread out before us. When added to the Forest in 1899, this was 41 acres of open pasture land. In the succeeding years, few of the Commoners' cattle came here; scrub steadily developed and in some places there are now some substantial trees. While the Conservators have cleared much of this woody vegetation on a number of occasions, less than half is now open. Nevertheless, the chalky boulder clay soil and south facing aspect create an environment unusual in the Forest and particularly conducive to the development of a rich flora. Among many others we found common and greater knapweed, agrimony, wild clematis and ragged robin.

As we climbed the hill and started to walk along the ridge, there were dramatic views across the Lea Valley and further to north London and Hertfordshire. Our path then led us through woodland once again, before we were met by the floral carpet that is Yates Meadow. This eastern end of Yardley Hill was added to the Forest 30 years ago and has a mixed history. We know it was ploughed during World War Two and again during the 1960s, but later returned to pasture. Now the Conservators regularly take a hay crop off the field and this has allowed rich flora to develop. The eagle-eyed were able to pick out a few plants of yellow rattle, and hopefully the mower will encourage this to spread across the field.

Along the ridge we crossed part of the London Loop from Enfield to Chingford. We were not tempted to walk the entire 152 miles around London – not on this occasion anyway! From the top of the meadow we once again had a great view.

Judy Adams

A Midsummer Walk (22 June 2013)

Our Midsummer Eve walk last June saw some thirty of us strike off at 7pm from Chingford Plain car park in brilliant sunshine, and pause to discuss the Conservators' English longhorn cattle corralled there before entering the shade of Bury Wood in the northeast corner of the Plain.

Crossing the Cuckoo Brook bridge before it dribbled into Connaught Water we meandered alongside it upstream, eventually turning east at its entry point from the West Essex golf course to make our way along the Boundary Ride to Almhouse Plain, Round Thicket and Whitehouse Plain.

Whitehouse Plain could well have taken its name from the imposing multi-chimneyed white house opposite, on the corner of Lippitts Hill, with its landscaped walled grounds sloping down to a huge pair of wrought-iron gates on the verge of Church Road. On invitation, we entered.

A couple of our regulars had been here before, a few years ago, when the owner had invited us in to explore the Victorian catacombs in the grounds, and also see Lippitts Hill Lodge, where the famous Victorian poet John Clare (1793-1864) was locked up for four years in 1837. That was the occasion when a couple of our members – a Loughton councillor and his pal Peter Relph, a member of the John Clare Society and author of the book *Four Forest Years* detailing John Clare's stay there – first raised the possibility of a blue heritage plaque confirming the fact.*

Peter Read

High Beach in its Heyday (4 July 2013)

About 38 of us met at the Pillow Mounds car park to explore the High Beach of 100 years ago, a magnet for Victorian day-trippers. A little way down the hill we saw some old beech trees scarred by graffiti from the past. Between 1863 and 1883 schemes were put forward to extend the railway from Chingford through Sewardstonebury to terminate on the lower ground to the west of High Beach. How different the Forest would be today if that had passed through Parliament!

Using old photos, we tried to imagine what it was like for the many thousands who flocked to High Beach from the 1870s up until the Great War. Askew's of Loughton cashed in on the regular trade, bringing visitors by horse-brake from stations in the area. Lou Gumprecht of The King's Oak Hotel was one of many entrepreneurial landlords who provided amusements. His monster bonfire to celebrate the coronation of George V in 1911 must have been 30 feet high and attracted thousands of visitors.

On the first turning on the left going down Wellington Hill were three refreshment venues: Riggs Retreat was the largest, the next was Sawyer's more modest establishment and then came the Dick Turpin Ale House. The retreats were large cafés established for those who did not want alcoholic beverages, and their clientele was largely Sunday schools and women's clubs. During the 1980s I talked to a number of older people who could remember that time – amazing to think that literally thousands of people were served sandwiches, cake and tea without the aid of gas, electricity or running water.

We then turned our attention to Paul's Nursery, where the leaves of the lily-of-the-valley, a copper beech and the last of the rhododendrons showed this was not natural woodland. A red flowering hawthorn was one of the plants that made the Paul Brothers of Cheshunt and High Beach famous. Lastly we looked at Speakman's Pond, now shielded from the road by vegetation. Old photos show the bank quite bare from visitors to the nearby Roserville Retreat, another refreshment venue many years ago.

My book *Keepers, Cockneys and Kitchen Maids*, with stories of this period in Epping Forest, can be found on the Friends of Epping Forest website. See also *The Retreats of Epping Forest* by Bernard Ward, published in 1978 by the Conservators of Epping Forest.

Georgina Green

* Next year is the 150th anniversary of the death of John Clare, and to mark it, why not attend our October walk (The Poet's Forest – see page 10) and watch for an article about him in the next *Newsletter*.

Gilbert's Slade in Summer (4 August 2013)

A group of 27 assembled for this walk and as the weather was scheduled to become hot and sunny, we ambled beneath the trees where the temperature was lower! I explained that an understory containing shrub species such as blackthorn, hazel, hawthorn and holly provides nesting sites for birds such as blackbirds, robins and wrens as well as ensuring that there are plenty of invertebrates for food. Hawthorn, oak and willow are eaten by a large number of caterpillars, especially those of a number of moth species, thus providing protein-rich food for birds and mammals such as bats.

In recent years, flash floods have become more frequent, so wooded areas near urban areas are vital as the canopy, understory and ground vegetation all soak up rain delaying the runoff reducing the flood risk!



Tricia Moxey explains how vital trees are. Photo: Kathy Hartnett

Below ground is a vast network of roots with the larger anchoring roots spreading to just beyond the overhead canopy, but the finer-feeding and water-absorbing roots can extend up to 50 metres in all directions and are easily damaged if the ground surface is churned up. We discovered that trailing bramble strands act as an effective deterrent for the majority of walkers, so that most visitor pressure on roots is confined to the main pathways! Trees are sensitive to the high pollution from traffic fumes during long hot summers, making them more vulnerable to attack by diseases.

In recent years, scrub removal by the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers has been successful in encouraging the spread of cow wheat. This is a semi-parasitic plant, taking some nourishment from the roots of grasses. It occurs in other parts of the Forest as it is an indicator plant of ancient woodlands. Its oily seeds are dispersed by ants as they carry them back to colonies to feed their developing larvae. It is the host plant of the caterpillars of the heath fritillary butterfly, now extinct in the Forest. This species has been successfully reintroduced to suitable habitats in other parts of Essex.

The clearance work round one of the ponds and the newly pollarded hornbeams prompted a lively debate about the appearance of such trees. This led to more discussion about the focus of Forest management and the ways that the Forest could/should be managed in the future.

Tricia Moxey

Friends of Epping Forest

Programme of Guided Walks 2014



Join us and discover more of Epping Forest

A varied programme of walks throughout the Forest is organised by the Friends of Epping Forest. Led by knowledgeable Forest enthusiasts, these walks provide an opportunity to find out more about the Forest. Some are a gentle stroll, while others are taken at a faster pace.

Please come suitably dressed for walking in the Forest, which can be wet and muddy. For help in getting to the meeting points, please contact Tricia Moxey on 01277 364522 or Judy Adams, 020 8418 0730.

Walks free, donations welcome.

1 Sunday 23 February 10:30 am – 12:30 pm Exploring around Connaught Water

Join Mike Smith to look for birds at Connaught Water and the adjacent woodland. Meet at the Connaught Water Car Park off Rangers Road, Chingford E4. Grid ref: TQ405951

2 Sunday 30 March 10:30 am – 12:30 pm Waterfowl and other Birds on Wanstead Flats

Come and join bird expert Tim Harris for an amble across the Flats to see and hear some of the many species to be found here at this time of the year. Warm clothing essential and please remember to bring your binoculars! Meet at the Jubilee Pond car park, off Lake House Road, London E11 3NW. Grid ref: TQ403864

3 Thursday 24 April 10:30 am – 12:30 pm Bluebells in Wanstead Park

Naturalist Tricia Moxey will lead a gentle stroll to see the bluebells and other spring flowers and to hear some of the early spring migrants in this historic park. Meet at the entrance to the Park on Warren Road, Wanstead E11 2LS. Grid ref: TQ414 876



4 **Sunday 18 May 10:30 am – 12:30 pm**
Galleyhill Wood in springtime

Come and discover this little visited part of Epping Forest with Verderer Peter Adams. This ancient hornbeam coppice was formerly part of the estates of the Abbey at Waltham. Meet at Aimes Green, off Galleyhill Road, Waltham Abbey. Grid ref: TL397029

5 **Sunday 8 June 10:30 am – 12:30 pm**
The Lower Forest in Summer

Join Sue McKinley to discover a little more about the Lower Forest, Wintry Wood, the Stump Road and more. See what wildflowers we can find. Meet in the Woodyard Car Park, on Woodyard Road, off Epping Road, Epping. Grid ref: TL475032.

6 **Saturday 21 June 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm**
A Midsummer Evening Walk

Come and join Peter Read on a walk for good views from Pole Hill, and to find out about William Morris, the Greenwich Meridian, wartime defence and the link between T E Lawrence of Arabia and the Forest. Meet in the Forest car park on Chingford Plain, adjacent to the Royal Epping Forest Golf Club car park, Bury Road, Chingford E4 7AZ. Grid ref: TQ394949

7 **Sunday 6 July 10:30 am – 1:00 pm**
A Linear Walk from Epping Long Green to Waltham Abbey

A brisk walk led by Alan Curran exploring the high lands from Epping Long Green. Good views across the Cobbins Brook, Nazeingwood Common and beyond. Meet in the Cornmill Meadows car park on the Crooked Mile B194 north of Waltham Abbey. Then some cars will drive to Epping Long Green for the gently descending walk back to the remaining cars at Cornmill Meadows. Grid ref: TL384016

8 **Saturday 2 August 10:30 am – 12:30 pm**
Ambresbury Banks, Long Running and beyond

Join Ron and Pat Andrews to explore the interesting area between Theydon Bois and Epping. Wildlife-rich heathland, along with the Iron Age Camp. Meet in Jack's Hill car park north, off Coppice Row (B172), Theydon Bois. Grid ref: TQ436996

9 **Sunday 14 September 9:00 am – 5:00 pm**
The Annual Epping Forest Centenary Walk

Discover a little more about the whole Forest! Walk the entire length of Epping Forest in the day or take part in one of the local sections of the long walk. Celebrate how lucky we are to have Epping Forest!

Arranged by the Friends of Epping Forest, with support from the Ramblers' Association and the Corporation of London, the walk marks the centenary of the passing of the Epping Forest Act. For more details, contact 020 8418 0730 or visit www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk

10 **Thursday 2 October 10:30 am – 12:30 pm**
Interpreting Loughton's Forest

Come and join local historian Georgina Green to discover parts of Loughton's Forest; Loughton Camp, Lost Pond, Baldwin's Hill Pond and more. And what parts were arable ground? Meet at Baldwin's Hill, Loughton. Nearby postcode IG10 1SF. Grid ref: TQ427975

11 **Sunday 19 October 10:30 am – 12:30 pm**
An Autumn Stroll in Gernon Bushes for Fruits and Fungi

This is an opportunity to discover what is growing this autumn in the Nature Reserve with guides Tricia Moxey and Reserve Warden Brian McGhie. Meet at the entrance to the Reserve in Garnon Mead, Coopersale. Turn off B181 Epping to North Weald Rd into Coopersale Common Lane and then left into Garnon Mead beyond railway bridge, CM16 7RN. Grid ref: TL476031

12 **Sunday 9 November 10:30 am – 12:30 pm**
Fayre Mead and the Rayne Deer

Explore around Fairmead Lodge and Warren House and the large open areas in between with Verderer Peter Adams. Meet in Fairmead Oak Car Park, Fairmead Road, High Beach. Grid ref: TQ408967

13 **Sunday 7 December 10:30 am – 12:30 pm**
The Festive Season at High Beach

Come and enjoy this part of the Forest for a pre-Christmas celebratory walk led by naturalist Judy Adams. Mince pies and drinks provided at the end. Meet at High Beach Visitor Centre, behind the King's Oak Public House, IG10 4AE. Grid ref: TQ412982

Become a member of the Friends of Epping Forest and help us protect the Forest and help other people learn about and enjoy it. Contact:
Membership Secretary
jean.brockington@btoopenworld.com
020 8529 3077
www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 21 November

Forest Supper

Book your place. The venue will be Hawkey Hall and we'll be working with Alan Beere Catering as last year. Booking form on the back page.

Saturday 14 December 11 am – 2 pm

Gifford Wood Tree Planting Event and Guided WWalk

Help us plant 2,000 trees at the new Gifford Wood, Upshire, from 11 am to 2 pm. The tree planting will be followed by a 30- to 40-minute walk around the new way-marked trail that runs through Gifford Wood and adjacent areas of Epping Forest. For more information, contact the City of London's Epping Forest office on 0208 532 1010 or find out more about Gifford Wood at www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/giffordwood appeal

CORRECTION

We dated the old photograph of the Fairmead Oak on the front page of the last issue incorrectly. It should have been circa 1930s, not 1870s! The 1870s photograph, which we did not print, shows the same tree with Fairmead Lodge behind. By the 1930s, the Lodge had gone, as in the front cover picture.

EMAIL ADDRESSES, PLEASE!

If you have not yet given us your email address, please act now! It will mean we can communicate more up to date news between *Newsletters*. And don't worry – we will not send the *Newsletter* by email unless you have requested it.

QR code – from phone to web

If you have a smart phone and can scan a QR ("quick response") code with its camera, either with an application that you download or via software that's already installed, scan this QR code and go to the Friends of Epping Forest website.



FRIENDS OF EPPING FOREST CHRISTMAS CARDS

Produced jointly with the City of London



Snow and shadows
Photo: Mike Smith



The Ching
Photo: John Avis



Highams Park Lake
Photo: John Avis

NEW FOR CHRISTMAS 2013

Five different Winter Scenes taken in Epping Forest.

Each pack contains 10 cards (2 of each design)

Price £4.25 per pack.



Young swans
Photo: Gill Woods Photography



Winter wildfowl
Photo: John Avis

GETTING TO KNOW EPPING FOREST by KEN HOY

Updated 2nd edition with over 220 pages of Epping Forest information. Reference to over 300 place names. Over 200 pictures, illustrations and maps of the Forest area (mostly in colour) dating from the early 1800s to the present. On sale in local bookshops.



Price £8.95 per copy. A free copy of the *History of the Friends* when you buy this book from us!

HOW TO ORDER

To order cards or *Getting to Know Epping Forest*, please send cheques (made out to Friends of Epping Forest) with order to Mike Smith, 34 Redbridge Lane West, Wanstead E11 2JU, adding a delivery charge of £2.50 (book) or £1.25 (cards) unless collected from either Mike Smith or Judy Adams (2 High View Close, Loughton, Essex IG10 4EG). See page 2 for phone and email details.

FOREST SUPPER

Thursday, 21 November 2013

Hawkey Hall, Woodford Green (7.00 for 7.30pm)



rice and mixed green salad. Hot buttered potatoes and crusty French bread & butter.

This will be followed by warm apple, sultana & cinnamon pie with cream or sherry trifle. Coffee/tea with Mints will follow.

Wine and soft drinks are included, along with table quizzes about the Forest (no mobile phones for assistance!) and sales goods including this year's Christmas cards.

A good opportunity for you to meet our guests from the Epping Forest and Commons Committee and Officers of the Forest, along with other Friends.

It is a ticket-only event, so please apply soon to ensure you get a place. Tables seat up to 12 people.

And please donate a gift for the raffle. The response has been very generous each year and it helps to raise funds for the Friends.

We'd love to see you at our annual get-together this year, with food provided by Alan Beere Catering.

Join us for a home-cooked cold meat platter, with roast Norfolk turkey, home-cooked gammon ham, roast loin of pork and poached Scottish salmon, accompanied by coleslaw, potato & chives, Mediterranean pasta, oriental

Please complete the booking form in this newsletter and send with your payment **and S.A.E.** to: Hazel Shukla at 6 Knighton Drive, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0NY by 8 November.

REMEMBER – ADMISSION BY TICKETS ONLY



2013 FOREST SUPPER BOOKING FORM

Please provide ticket(s) @ £22.00 each (please list all names below) for the Forest Supper to be held on the 21 November 2013 at Hawkey Hall, Woodford Green:

.....

I would like, if possible, to be seated with (full name please):.....

Please tell us of any special dietary needs, naming the relevant person/s.

NameTelephone No.....

Address.....

.....

I enclose my payment of £..... (cheques made payable to Friends of Epping Forest).
 Please return your completed Booking Form, payment and SAE by 8 November to: Hazel Shukla, 6 Knighton Drive, Woodford Green, IG8 0NY.

Bring your ticket with you on the night – there is a prize for the winning ticket number!

Don't forget to enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope!