



LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

NEWSletter

Issue No 188

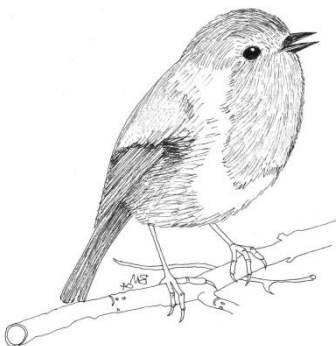
November 2020

Touch and Go...

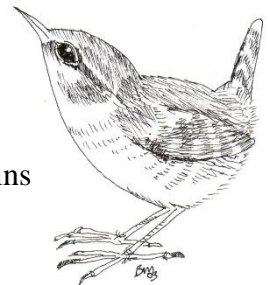
Yet another spanner in the works, trying to prevent the volunteers from working in Foal Hurst Wood and due to the extra lockdown through November, the proper volunteers' day was postponed. Nine people endured the cold and mud on the alternative day, the 6th December

There were five tasks and a lot was achieved. Two people started clearing the brambles around the Wetland and planted some hazel whips to start a hazel hedge. Two people went back to the hedge along Allotments Way to tidy the stems and to rake the ground to clear any fallen brush. Three people worked clearing the last of the coppice work. Ray used his chain saw to put points on the stakes cut ready for the hedge. We have about one hundred stakes ready now so we are half way along with our needs. And I moved the sharpened stakes from the coppice area to the hedge and prepared bindings. I don't know how the others felt but it seemed that the morning flew by and we were finishing for lunch long before I was ready to stop. It was a very successful morning so a big thank you to everyone who changed their plans to come that day.

The Wednesday team have been working in spite of the additional lockdown. It is easy to keep well distanced in such a large work area but with the rain in November the ground has become muddy and slippery, increasing the risks. The coppice work is nearly all done except the really large trees which the Council Estates Team will need to fell for us



I went through the wood on the 5th Dec. and cleared all the culverts of leaves and mud. Two of them were nearly blocked and took quite a while to finish properly. I hope to have cleared the leaves from the paths by the time you read this newsletter. I have noticed several robins and wrens asserting their territories in the wood. I find it quite lovely to see and hear them as they prepare for winter.



If they survive, they will be well established for the spring. Both birds feed on insects and I have seen several collections of meal worms as I have wandered through the trees so there should be enough food for them unless we get snow.

FHW NEWS *letter*

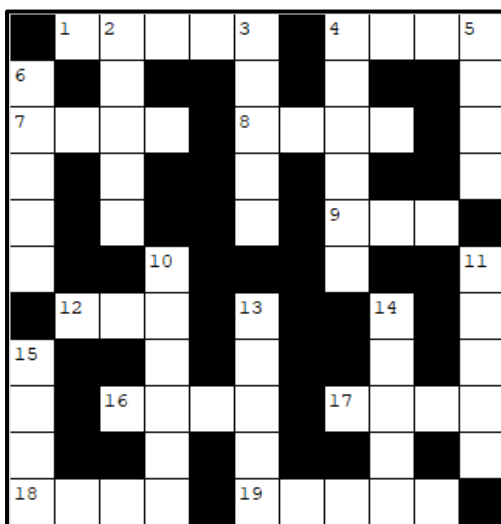
The collection ponds Berkeley Homes dug next to the reserve have all filled quite nicely. They seem to be doing their job well so it will be interesting to see how quickly they become naturalised with wildlife. The next move should be to plant several willows or alders round the ponds to help with water control but we will have to see what happens. If Berkeley don't plant the trees it is possible the volunteers may be able to plant some on our side of the fence.

Covid 19 struck again, I spoke to Steve Songhurst about the dormouse numbers and he informed me that due to Covid the dormouse surveys have not been carried out. Somewhere along the chain of dormouse authority it was decided that owing to a possibility of passing the disease on to wildlife, the dormouse surveys should be suspended until further notice, the same applies to the bat surveys particularly the winter hibernation count. As a result I cannot give you any stats as I would normally do at this time of year.

The next work day will be Sunday December 27th. We will meet again in the Badsell Road car park at 09.30 and apportion the work according to the numbers. The plan is to start laying the hedge along Allotments Way and other jobs related to this. I would like someone to continue clearing the brambles at the Wetland and there may be work in the coppice area if the Council Team have felled our trees for us. Remember to bring your own drink and snacks and wear good strong footwear, and plenty of layers to protect against rain and cold. I look forward to seeing you all then. *Merry Christmas!*

Peter Prince

FHW Crossword No 155



Clues Across 1. See 2 Down. 4 & 6 Down. Achieved on 6th, (4,5). 7. Woodworking tool, (4). 8. Tawnys maybe, (4). 9. Quercus, (3). 12. Busy insect, (3). 16. Finished, (4). 17. To cut down a tree, (4). 18. Amphibians, (4). 19. Undergrowth debris, (5)

Clues Down 2 & 1 Across. Planted around the wetland Area, (5,5). 3. Heavy rain and wind, (5). 4. Bird of prey, (6). 5. Repetition of sound, (4). 6. See 4 Across. 10. Culvert blockers, (6). 11. Festive foliage, (5). 13. Small tree, (5). 14. *Troglodytes troglodytes*, (4). 15. How many Volunteers on 6th Dec, (4).

Solutions to FHW Crossword No 154

Across 2,5, Coppice area. 6. Two. 9,19. Large Poplars. 11. Error. 12. O.B.E. 13. Winds. 14. Limbs. 16. Ewe. 17. Sloe
Down 1. Lea. 2 & 8. Clearing brambles. 3. Path. 4. Coo. 7. Birds. 8. Lower. 10. Eos. 11. Eel. 15. Dell. 16. Ego. 18. Elm.

Any News?

Items for next Issue by
 3rd Jan 2021 please, to:-

80 Forest Road, Paddock Wood
 Kent TN 12 6JX
 email b.mace452@btinternet.com