



LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

NEWSletter

Issue No 197

February 2022

New Year, New Hedge, New Method...

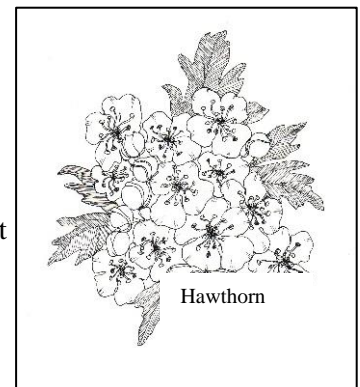
January 30th dawned as a cold but bright sunny day. At 07.15 I gazed upon Venus as the morning star. She will be there for about an hour before sunrise each day for the next month or two until she swaps over again to become the evening star in about May/June time. Nothing to do with the wood, I know, but if you shield your eyes from the sun, Venus can actually be seen all through the day if you know where to look.

On to the important things in life. Nineteen people turned up to lay a hedge, the most volunteers we've had since accounts began, beating the record by 2. There were two new volunteers, Jim and Nigel who are very welcome and I hope will come again. Also John returned to the fold after an absence of more than ten years so welcome back.

With so many volunteers it can be difficult to find work for everyone. We just about had enough tools and fortunately there were four jobs to tackle. Three people went to the coppice area and cut hazel stems for stakes and bindings. Three people laid the hedge. Ray cut points on the stakes, and the rest of us prepared the remaining hedge by trimming unwanted branches, removing the rabbit guards and removing the wire fence from the back of the hedge.

Most of the work was very successful and the first section of the hedge was completed at about one o'clock. Some of the trimming was a little overzealous, but by-and-large everything went very well. We completed more than I had anticipated and we are well on our way to finishing the job in February. We even had an extended tea break while I tried to work out what work to do next, as various jobs were accomplished.

On the 9th of January members of Barsley's department store planted four trees on the north side of the Orchard Meadow for the Queen's Green Canopy Initiative. They are three crab apples and one hawthorn, all of which should grow to be nice standards. I had dug the holes previously but was not able to attend the planting as I caught Covid at the time. Thank you Mr Barsley for this kind donation to the reserve. On the 19th the Wednesday team made a start on the hedge ready for laying on the 30th. We made good headway though the wire fence did give a few problems for us mainly from rolling up the barbed wire once it was released from the posts but also trying to cut some of the other wire free due to tree roots growing through the mesh. Some sixty feet was tackled that day and more on the 26th. It is noticeable how much easier it is to work with the younger trees than with the older trees of last year.

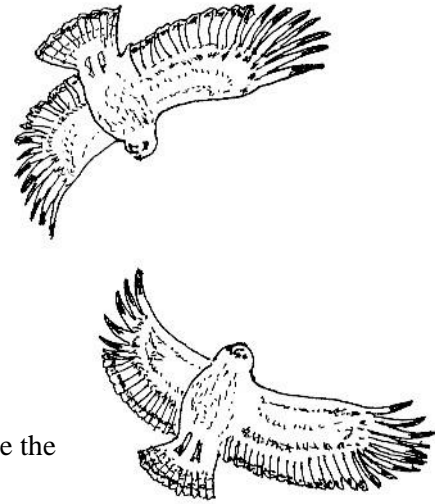


On the 23rd I strimmed some of the grass in the Flower Meadow, raked off the cuttings, sowed some wildflower seed and raked them in. I don't know if any of the plants will grow as I am relying on the rain to water them in, but here's hoping.

FHW NEWS letter

Back to the 30th. I was walking through the wood, away from the paths, with a bundle of cut hazel. I noticed a pair of buzzards flitting, if buzzards can flit, from tree to tree as though they were looking for nest sites.

It was the same area that they used last year so maybe they will settle on a suitable tree and have another brood. The more they can use the wood the better, they will become more accustomed to the people who visit. Unfortunately it is a fact that more people are going to be using our wild spaces and there will be fewer undisturbed places for wildlife. However, perhaps buzzards will become used to us and we could have them nesting on our chimney tops like cranes and storks do in some places.



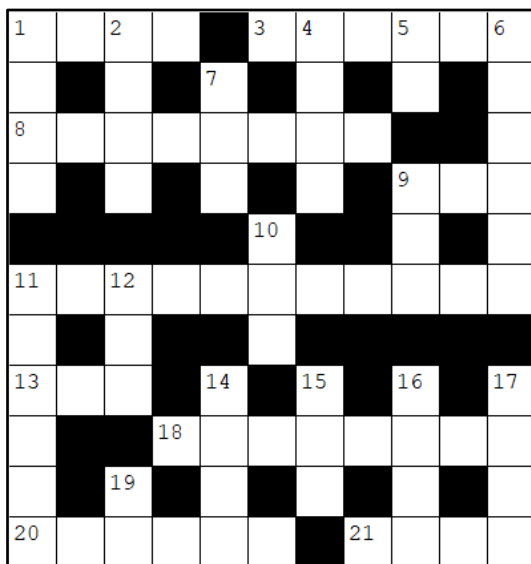
Our next work day will be on Sunday the 27th February when we will be tackling more of the same. I am hoping that we will start replacing some of the dead material we have removed, and complete the double brushing intended.

I look forward to seeing you all at 09.30 in the Badsell Road car park ready and eager to make a difference.

Incidentally, it looks like we have 23 volunteers on the books at present so it was a very good turnout in January. Thank you everyone.

Peter Prince

FHW Crossword No 162



Clues Across 1. Jeer, taunt, (4). 3. They nest on chimneys, (6&6). 8,18. Looking for nest sites,? (8,8) 9. Mongrel, (3). 11. Too much trimming? (11). 13. Menagerie, (3). 18. See 8. 20. See 3. 21. Unit of heredity, (4).

Clues Down 1. Anti Covid measure, (4). 2. Bee sound, (4) 4. Pathway through woodland, (4). 5,19. Prohibited Area. (2,2). 6. Reproductive cell for Ferns etc., (6). 7. Nocturnal mammal, (3). 9. Dove's call, (3). 10. Mushroom, (3). 11. Blackbirds, archaic, (6). 12. Self esteem, (3). 14. Strong criticism, (4). 15. When ? (1.1.1). 16. Barbed maybe, (4). 17. Legendary monster, (4). 19. See 5.

Solutions to FHW Crossword No 161

Across 1. Soil. 3. Deluge. 6. Ado. 7. Lily. 8. Umbel. 10. Trill. 11. Moo. 13. Caw. 14. About. 16. Coypu. 17. Tufa. 18. Ski. 19. Branch. 20. Clay.

Down 1. Solstice. 2. Layers. 3. Double brush. 4. Lobe. 5. Gel. 9. Boundary. 12. Rustic. 15. Cyan. 16. Cur..

Any News?

Items for the next Issue by 5th March please, to:-
80 Forest Road, Paddock Wood, Kent TN12 6JX
email b.mace452@btinternet.com