



LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

NEWSletter

Issue No 204

December January 2022/23

Stakes and Bindings...

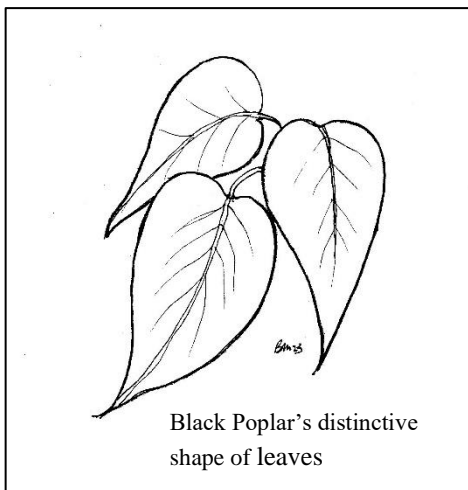
On the 8th January in lieu of the 25th December, nine people volunteered for refreshing exercise. Although it had rained at eight o'clock that morning, by nine it was promising and a weak sun blessed us as we worked. The cutting of six foot long stakes, half of which finished off with points thanks to Ray and his green machine, and making much longer bindings that still required trimming went well. The area we were working was exceptionally good for both products with some of the bindings being fifteen feet long or more, much better than last year when we struggled to cut them even nine feet long.

Anyway, much was achieved. It was an excellent day and we even had our first mince pies of the year, courtesy of Mark and Alison's catering services. I hope everyone made a wish.

Previously, no sooner had we finished on the November work day than some of us were back again on the 30th! Steve, Simone and I cut and cleared trees on both sides of the path. There are still a few trees to fell but it doesn't matter if we miss them. There was bright sunshine which made for warm work, and the birds were singing, particularly the robins.

On the same day Carl from the P.W. Estates Team planted some of the trees the Town Council have been granted for the Queen's Green Canopy Scheme. The trees were supplied by the Woodland Trust and include black poplar, which are very rare in Britain. There are only about 7000 specimens which grow mostly in the English and Welsh border counties. The thirty we are planting in the Paddock Wood area

(not all in our reserve) are all male but will probably double the Kent population. As we have taken so many poplars, the Woodland Trust said they may be able to give us a female specimen next year.



Black Poplar's distinctive shape of leaves

To join the poplars we are planting several alder, grey willow, white willow, goat willow, guelder rose, alder buckthorn and dogwood. The mix is specially compiled by the Woodland Trust and at present there are two hundred trees to be planted. There will be another four hundred trees of a different mix delivered during the early months of this year. So far we have planted along the south and east edges of the Flower Meadow and we anticipate planting along the road and the western boundary in the Orchard Meadow.



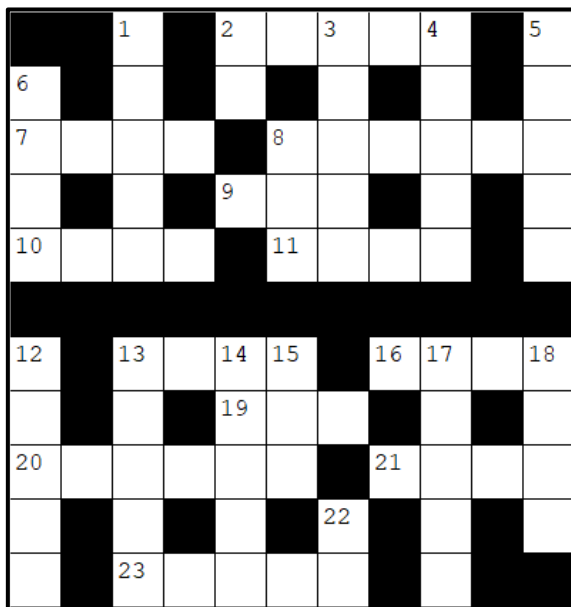
Field vole

On the 7th December, Ray, Steve and I set about finishing the coppicing, managing all the remaining trees except four. Steve and I cut the remainder on the 14th, when all the snow was about. It was a cold but beautiful day with lots of sunshine. We had two very tame robins for company and we managed to finish everything before 11.30. I went for a walk round the reserve and found deer slots, fox prints and evidence of rabbits and other small mammal such as voles or mice. There were fieldfares, blackbirds, long tale tits, great tits and blue tits in the wood, and a bull finch, a crow and several wood pigeons in the Orchard Meadow. A mole had tried to dig up the path making several hills along the section beside the road. The Wetland was still very low then but has since filled up to the brim. Both the ponds in the Orchard Meadow looked about half to three quarters full. I didn't go to the reserve on the 21st or the 28th.

Next volunteers' day will be on Sunday 29th Jan when we will commence hedge laying. See you in the car park at 09.30. Wear long sleeves as you will be reaching into the bushes which are prickly.

Peter Prince

FHW Crossword No 169



Clues Across 2. Small amphibians, (5). 7.8. *Salix Caprea*, (4,6). 9. Not cold, (3). 10. Garden tool, (4). 11. Amble, stroll, (4). 13. Architectural recess, (4). 16. Male deer, (4). 19. Dog's foot, (3). 20. See 1 Down. 21. Gender FHW 1 Down, 20 Across, (4). 23, 7. Female of the species *Capra hircus*, (5,4).

Clues Down 1 & 20 Across. *Populus nigra*, (5,6). 2. Note well ! (1.1). 3 & 8 Across. *Salix alba*, (5,6). 4. Dish of mainly uncooked veg/fruit, (5). 5. Birds of prey., (5). 6. Extract of seaweed, (4). 8. Exclamation of surprise, (3). 12. Small wood, (5). 13. *Populus tremula*, (5). 14. Ova of 17 down, (5). 15. Organ of hearing, (3). 17. Members of the family *bufonidae*, (5). 18 & 8 Across. *Salix cinerea*, (4,6). 22. Belonging to 'me', (2).

Solutions to FHW Crossword No 168

Across 2. Cactus. 5. Bumper. 6. Out fox. 8. Heap. 10. Alert. 18. Ebb. 15. Ill. 16. Leu. 17. Reign. 19. Wolf. 19. Banana. 22. Stormy. 23. Inkcup.

Down 1. Amphibian. 2. Crop. 3. Cut. 4. UFO. 5. Badger. 7. Fieldfare. 9. Akin. 10. Alto. 11. Re. 12. Turkey. 14. Be. 18. Wasp. 20. Awn. 21. Arc.

Any News?

Items for the next Issue by 5th February please, to:-

80 Forest Road, Paddock Wood TN12 6JX
email b.mace452@btinternet.com