



LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

NEWSletter

Issue No 210

September 2023

Oops, Here We Go Again...

The end of August was as changeable as the beginning and although I had hoped the grass in the Flower Meadow would be cut some time in August, it didn't actually happen until the 30th. Nobody's fault, just weather and circumstance. In the mean time the butterflies and crickets continued to enjoy the environment. As soon as the meadow was cut the heat wave set in, which was perfect for drying the cut grass. Steve, Simone and I started to rake the cuttings into winnows on the 6th Sept. and continued each day until it was finished on the 9th. I turned the winnows into bails on the 11th and we three started carting the grass off on Wednesday the 13th. We managed half of it on that morning and the rest was removed on the evening of that Wednesday and the following Thursday morning, job done. Much of the grass was just dumped on the edge of the meadow but I used some to slow the stinging nettles and brambles and form a slow-release mulch around the newly planted trees.

While clearing the grass I saw a shrew, a couple of field voles, white tail bumble bees, wasps, black slugs, crickets and several moth types all trying to make homes or find food in the bails. It is incredible how quickly creatures will take advantage of a new situation. I was sorry to disturb them.



Field vole

Wednesday the 20th was windy and started wet. Ray, Simone and I made a start on clearing the coppice area where we will be working for the next three months. Working alongside the central ride to the roundel, this is a plot we have tackled before but only to clear some of the heavy undergrowth and remove some of the larch trees back in 2005. There is still a lot of bramble and quite a few larch most of which need to be taken out this time. There are also a number of Scots Pine which we will leave.

I must have been feeling really energetic or something because on the 22nd I went back to the wetland and dug an extra patch to make the deepest part twice as big. In spite of the rain the previous few days, the ground was like rock and it took me two hours to dig two square metres, one spade deep. However, I was very pleased to see that the wetland is still full of life with unidentified wiggly larvae and burrowing water beetles (Noteridae) which kept rising to the surface to breathe and then diving to the bottom leaf litter again. I counted thirty two individual beetles.

FOAL HURST WOOD

25 YEARS

FHW was officially opened on 3rd May 1999

The Town Council would like to celebrate the anniversary and invites the Volunteers to put forward ideas as to what format this might take.

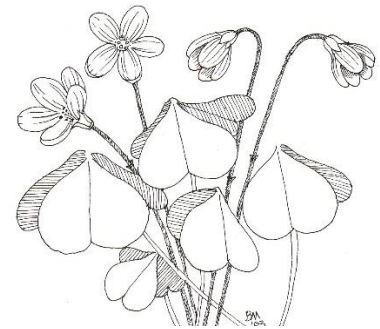
Please send ideas, by 11th Nov, to Ezna Small at:-
deputyclerk@paddockwoodtc.co.uk

So, all too quickly, Sunday the 24th came round. Twelve volunteers arrived including new volunteer Abu who is very welcome as he has some experience of working in woodland. Close to the roundel and along the avenue, eleven of us started clearing the ground ready for the coppice. Ray took his chainsaw and started removing branches from a partially fallen oak along the avenue.

It was a fine warm day with intermittent sunshine and we progressed well in spite of a considerable amount of bramble and very uneven ground forming numerous trip hazards.

There were frogs in the leaf litter and several interesting fungi growing on the rotting trees. Most people finished at noon but Ray, Steve H. and I worked on until almost one. I think it was a good start to the season.

Simone and I returned on the 27th to continue the work. I found two small clumps of wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*). I saw this plant some years ago along Muddy Way but not since so it is nice to know it is still around. It has a clover type leaf with white five petalled flowers in the spring.



Wood Sorrel
Oxalis acetosella

The next volunteer day will be **Sunday October 29th**. The clocks change so you will all be able to have a lie-in before you come.

See you all at 09.30 for more of the same.

Peter Prince,

FHW Crossword No 174



Clues Across

1. Nocturnal mammal, (3). 4 & 24. *Microtus agrestis*, (5,5).
7. Small area of water, (4). 8. See 4 Down. 10. Clever humour, (3).
13. Series of names/items, (5). 16. Correct, (5). 18. Earth's atmosphere, (3). 19. Flowering 'spike', (6). 22 & 14 Down. *Oxalis acetosella*, (4,6).
24. See 4. 25. *Fraxinus*, (3).

Clues Down

2. Member of *Aracea* family. (4). 3. Similar to 7 Across, (4).
- 4 & 8 Across. Cut end of August, (6,6). 5. *Forficula auricularia*, (6).
6. Medical man, (1,1). 9. *Formicidae*, (3), 11. Small birds of *Paridae* Family, (4). 12. Jumping insect, (4). 14. See 22 Across. 15. Little rodents *Sorex Araneus*, (5). 17. Frozen water, (3). 20. *Corvus*, (4). 21. Newts, (5).
22. Summary of career, (1,1).

Solutions to FHW Crossword No173

- Across** 1. Milkmaids. 8. Ant. 9. Hip. 11. And. 12. Compost.
14. It. 15. BA. 20. Sapling. 21. Doe. 22. Lei. 23. Ace. 25. Goldenrod.
- Down** 2. Lords. 3. March. 5. Items. 6. Shoot. 7. GP. 10. Ladies.
13. Teasel. 16. Sprig. 17. Sisal. 18. Agree. 19. Adder. 22. LX. 23. CD.

Any News?

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