



LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

NEWSletter

Issue No 211

October 2023

Round 2, Seconds Tick Away, and the Clocks Changed.

On the 4th of October, after the September work day, Steve and I continued the coppicing. It dawned on me that there are many more large trees in this area and it is unlikely we will manage to coppice the whole plot. Therefore I went back to cut down some more trees the next day.

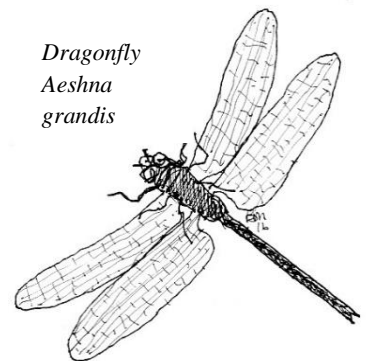
On the 9th, contractors started to replace the remaining old bridges. Those along Muddy Way were finished first and by the 11th they were working on the three bridges along The Spur to The Rookery. Also on the 11th, Steve and I cut down more trees and it was beginning to look like my previous fears may have been unfounded. Time will tell.

On several occasions at the beginning of the month I saw tiny frogs crawling or hopping through the woods. These would have been this year's hatchlings but they had all apparently gone by the 18th once the weather turned colder. There were also numbers of red admiral and peacock butterflies flitting in the meadows presumably looking for places to hibernate.

Steve and I cut more trees on the 18th but while Steve was clearing what he felled I am sorry to say that I just felled the trees and left them. Someone was going to have a big job clearing it all as some of them were nearly a foot thick.

On the 25th Ray cut several trees with his chainsaw while Steve and I continued working on the smaller stuff. The following day I returned and felled three large trees including the first of the wonky larch. All together we left quite a pile of fallen timber for Sunday the 29th ready for making into dead hedges and log piles. As was the case earlier in the month, when the warm weather returned temporarily, there were lots of tiny frogs again looking for places to hibernate. There were dragon flies still flying in the meadows and a flock of long tailed tits were singing in the north-east corner of the wood. Hardly any trees had shed their leaves yet whereas ten years ago the trees would have been bare by now! Leaf fall is getting later and later each year.

*Dragonfly
Aeshna
grandis*



So now we come to the crunch, or should it be the slurp, slip and slide. It rained a lot on the Friday and Saturday before the 29th so it was wet and muddy when we arrived, with a heavy threat of rain for most of the morning, there having been several short sharp showers between 6 and 9 am.

Nevertheless, thirteen brave and daring folk came, Canute like, to challenge the weather including Chris who ventured into the fray for the first time. After an hour of vigorous forced labour we had cleared three quarters of the mess I made. Quite an achievement for such a short time and I think everyone felt pleased.

However, the rain came and turned the morass into a quagmire and we started losing people in the mud. I could see by the worried faces that everyone would rather be at home in the warm, than digging their comrades out. So we packed up even before the tea and coffee ration was issued, although, we did all have a biscuit as reward for our labours before we set foot on the road home.

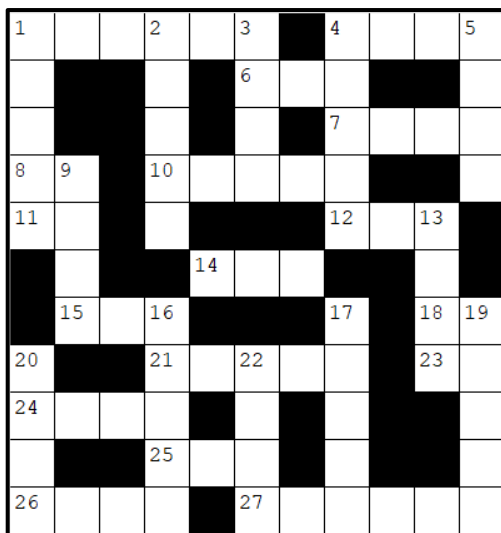
So eleven weary souls made their way back to the car park, but by the time we reached the cars the rain had all but ceased! Not being those who give up in the face of adversity we continued homeward for some well-earned rest and nourishment. As it happened the rain hardly showed its face after we had all left except the odd token drop to show it could if it wanted to. Oh well.

Anyway, I have to thank and commend all of those who turned up and hope the experience has not put you all off coming again when it might be snowing. There were several requests for a hut or a marquee to shelter in during inclement weather, or at least some covers for the pitch during the rain. Simone brought an umbrella but hogged it to herself. I am seriously considering all the options but at the moment I think swimming costumes will be the best option!

The next work day commences at 09.30 in the car park on **Sunday 26th November**, long after the horrors of Halloween and Guy Fawkes are over, when we will be continuing the saga of the Foal Hurst Coppice.

Peter Prince

FHW Crossword No 175



Clues Across 1.& 1 Down. State of Volunteers on 29th, (3,3,5). 4. See 25 Across. 6. Epoch, (3). 7. Grassy hollow, (4). 8. Noted Artist, (1.1). 10. See 3 Down. 11. Greeting, (2). 12. Hard cased fruit (3). 14. Marsh, (3). 15. Pollinator, (3). 18. Conjunction, (2). 21. Garden Pest, (5). 23. Alternative, (2). 24. Appendage for flight, (4). 25 FHW?, (1.1.1). 26,4 & 5 Down. Not ten years ago, (4,4,4). 27. Quagmire, (6).

Clues Down 1. See 1 Across. 2 'Top Dog', (5). 3 & 10 Across. Woodland barrier, (4,5). 4. Weighed down, (5). 5. See 25 Across. 9. The High Weald? (1.1.1.1). 13. Threesome, (4). 16. Raptor, (5). 17. Smell, (5). 19. Amphibians, (5). 20. Not present ! (1.1.1.1). 22. Hurt, (4).

Solutions to FHW Crossword No 174

Across 1. Bat. 4. Field. 7. Pool. 8. Meadow. 10. Wit. 13. Lists. 16. Correct. 18. Air. 9. Raceme. 23. Wood. 24. Voles. 25. Ash.

Down 2. Arum. 3. Pond. 4 Flower. 5. Earwig. 6. Dr. 9. Ants. 10. Tits. 12. Flea. 14. Sorrel. 15. Shrews. 17. Ice. 20. Crow. 21. Efts. 22. CV.

Any News?

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

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