

Friends of Selsdon Wood



Working to improve our wood

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Chairman's August/ September Newsletter

FRIENDS of SELSDON WOOD OPEN DAY



Please come and join us for our 4th Open day on Sunday 4th September 2011 from 12 noon to 4pm. We will be in the Selsdon Wood car park, off Old Farleigh Road, as in previous years.

Linda Morris, our Secretary has been very busy inviting stall holders ensuring our **4th Open Day** will again be a success. **Stall holders** will include RSPB Croydon, Croydon Bee Keepers, Croydon Friends of the Earth, East Surrey Badger Protection Society, Surrey Downs Project, East Surrey Wood Turners and Local Pottery. We will also have a few new stall holders including Foal Farm, 66th Selsdon Squadron Cadets and two local craft stalls – Garden Ornaments and Cards & Jewellery.

Heather Govier has worked hard promoting **the photo competition**. These entries will be on display for visitors to vote for on the day.



For the children we have a Story Time session at 2pm and an ongoing Scavenger Hunt.



Refreshments will be provided by the 2nd Selsdon & Addington Scouts and will include burgers as well as tea, drinks and cold snacks.

There will be two walks : 12.30 and 2.45pm. They will be for about an hour.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!

Memorial Glade (inc. Old Bird Pool):

Many of you will have noticed that we are trying to make this area look more presentable. Unfortunately for a few seasons it will look pretty dreadful as we get some of the trees and unwanted plants under control.

Vandals, corrosion and cost have conspired to make it impossible for water to be piped up to the 'Bird Pool'. We are repairing the bird bath on top of the cairn but **it will be up to you to keep it filled** and we thank those of you who leave water and perhaps make a wish. We don't thank vandals, when we have to clear leaves and sticks filling the bird bath.

The bed of the old pond may only be maintained as a damp area - rainwater is unlikely to lie for long – we have to give more thought to this. The blackberry bushes around the glade have proved to be a magnet for butterflies like Comma, White Admiral, Red Admiral, Peacock, Silver-washed Fritillary (pictured in the Glade) and others and will be maintained.

The inscription on the rock is a quotation from Henry Van Dyke's poem 'God of the Open Air'. The final request is from Mrs Wood whose husband Colonel H S Wood's ashes are scattered here.



**These are the things we prize and hold of dearest worth:
The light of the sapphire skies, Peace of the silent hills,
Shelter of the forests, comfort of the grass,
Music of birds, murmur of little rills
Henry Van Dyke
We dearly loved the birds
Be kind to them**

The inscription on the memorial appears on a small card on an adjacent post. The sandstone rock is showing severe signs of wear so please do not attempt to clean its surface. Does anyone know anything about Colonel Wood and when was the memorial placed here?

July Bat Walk & Moth Trap:

On our July Bat Walk several bats were detected and seen flitting by but the highlight was our Moth Trap. Malcolm had caught a number of moths. He went on to show us photographs of moths we might see in the coming weeks. The most interesting was the Jersey Tiger moth that has extended its range from the coast to Crystal Palace. Tiger moths fly by day and night and could still be around in September.

The more usual Garden Tiger



Jersey Tiger



The Month Ahead:

By September bird migration will be reaching its height with our summer migrants leaving the country at the same time as incoming birds arrive from places like Scandinavia. During migration almost anything can turn up anywhere so it is worth keeping your eyes and ears open. Investigate odd noises from birds in bushes and don't neglect the skies - birds of prey pass through this country on their way to Africa. With a lot of luck, early September might bring in a Wryneck and, later, birds like Yellow-browed Warbler along with the commoner winter visitors such as Redwing, Fieldfare, Siskin and Brambling. Hobby, Sparrowhawk, Buzzard, Honey Buzzard, Marsh Harrier have all been seen over the wood around this time.

Now is a good time to compare the leaves on different trees as an aid to their identification. Note how the bark changes from young saplings to mature trees. Have a look for the 'rhomboid lenticels' (pictured here); aeration pores in the bark of a White Poplar in David's Crook – just to the right of the site of the burnt down shelter. Note that we have protected young White Poplar suckers from grazing with cages and branches. Fruits and berries are another aid to identification and some of these are edible - Sweet Chestnuts sometimes produce a large crop and some of the Blackthorn bushes lend their fruits to the making of Sloe Gin.



Dates for your diary:

Open Day – Sept 4th 12 noon to 4pm.

Don't forget to come!

Work days – Sept 25th, Oct 2nd & 23rd.

Meet at 10am in Selsdon Wood car park off Old Farleigh Road.

You work for as long as suits you and choose jobs to suit your strength. Tools are provided but please bring a drink and food if you feel you need them.

If you need more information contact Ted closer to the time on 020-8651 0558 or e-mail: forsythted@aol.com

We are very grateful to a few new volunteers but we still need more!

Members meetings - Aug 22nd, Sept 26th & Oct 31st.

All are from 8 to 10pm in The Forum, Forestdale.

Guided walks – Meet at Old Farleigh Road car park.
Our walks are slow and easy - lasting about 2 hours.

Sunday October 9th 10am –

'Discover Fungi & Fruit' led by Dr Jane McLaughlin.

Final Thoughts

As you see our last walk this year will be "**Discover Fungi and Fruit**". Jane McLaughlin, our walk leader, is a member of the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society and the ACCS.

A similar walk led by Jane in 2010 was enjoyed by all who attended, 37 species were identified within a short walk. If you missed out last year please make a note to join us Sunday 10th October 2011.



Dawn Gibbons