

Friends of Selsdon Wood



Working to improve our wood

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December 2011/ January 2012 Newsletter

Reporting Problems in Selsdon Wood

Visitors have reported problems when trying to obtain help in Selsdon Wood. The following instructions may be of help – some are new numbers:

For fire, ambulance or illegal activities - Call 999. Our name boards will help you give the location. **Alternatively if you ring 112 on your mobile**, it will automatically give your GPS position to the emergency services.

But if it is not urgent please ring 101.

Motorcycles, Quad bikes or Horse riders are not allowed in Selsdon Wood. If you hear or see them, or people causing malicious damage, please immediately **phone Croydon Council on 020-8760 5565 and ask the switchboard for the Mobile Enforcement Unit (MEU).**

A team will come out to investigate as soon as one is available. If you are unable to contact them or when the office is unmanned - please leave a message.

Tell the FSW what has happened - e-mail: selsdonwood@gmail.com or website:

www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk >Contact Us.

Nature Notes

By the time you get this magazine new life will be appearing in badger setts and fox dens but the young will remain below ground for some weeks. Another mammal which has been quite visible recently is a white squirrel which is often seen in the oak tree outside the Baker Boy Lane/ Court Wood Lane entrance to Selsdon Wood or in Langford's Way. It is thought there may be up to three in that area.



A recent fungus find in the wood has been identified as Common Bird's-Nest fungus (pictured below). These small specimens, growing on a dead twig, were in an immature stage but most books show the mature form in which the top has vanished leaving an open cylinder in which the spore bodies look like eggs in a nest.



Some fungi prefer to fruit in cold conditions so it may be worth looking on long dead twigs and branches for the appearance of Yellow Brain and White Brain fungi. Look for anything unusual and let us know what you find!

Song and Mistle Thrushes have been singing since December and Great Spotted Woodpeckers have been drumming. If there are Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers present you might detect their presence by the high-pitched

"kee-kee-kee" call or by their drumming which is slower and longer than that of the Great Spotted. For the next couple of months both Lesser Redpolls and Siskins are more likely to visit bird feeders in gardens - I hope you feed the birds and put out fresh water for them!

Silver-washed fritillaries

These large butterflies overwinter and mainly fly from May to August. They favour blackberry flowers in summer, like this one in Linden Glade. To encourage Silver-washed fritillary butterflies, the Friends have embarked on a programme of planting plug plants and seeds of the Common Dog Violet. Common Dog Violet is their caterpillars' favourite food plant. Several trays of seed have been sown and they are protected out in the open, because the seeds must be subject to very cold weather conditions to germinate. These will augment the plug plants and seeds we have sown around suitable trees. Next Spring we hope to have hundreds of seedlings to plant. The butterflies lay their eggs on trees with fissured or mossy bark near violets (June-August). On hatching the caterpillars immediately hibernate (August-March) and in spring climb down and seek their food plant (March-May). They pupate suspended in low vegetation (May-July).



Work Team

We are extremely grateful to two Friends of Littleheath who are qualified Chemical treatment and Chain-saw operatives - both have childhood memories of Selsdon Wood. They have enabled us to restart our attack on the alien Mediterranean Cherry Laurel and have made our coppicing much more efficient. Although we would have preferred our own trained personnel, they have made our team much more effective.

Fallen or Falling trees – The Friends have been responsible for cutting up the trees blocking two paths – Beech Grove & Bluebell Grove There are 4 fallen trees that Council contractors will be tackling – 2 on Vale Border, 1 Broad Walk and 1 David's Path.

Dates for your diary

Work days - January 29th, February 5th & 26th, March 4th & 25th.

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: forsvthted@aol.com

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

Members' meetings - January 30th, February 27th.

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

Guided Walks of Discovery –

February Sun 12th 10.30am

'Winter Trees before the buds burst'

led by Meike Weiser (Community Partnership Officer)



Final Thoughts

To make it easier for you to renew your annual membership and perhaps offer us Gift Aid (If you pay tax) and Standing Order payment, please see our separate Renewal e-mail. Please forgive us if you have already renewed.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of you who have so generously added donations. We are certainly putting these additional funds to good use.