

Friends of Selsdon Wood



Working to improve our wood

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Chairman's February/ March Newsletter

Celebrating the Diamond Jubilee

Early in 2012, Selsdon Rainbows, Brownies & Guides asked the FSW for a plot to plant 60 trees to mark our Queen's Diamond Jubilee - one tree for each of Her Majesty's 60-year reign. The FSW found space for them in the Jubilee Plantation. The 8 varieties of native trees were in the form of well rooted whips 20cm to 30cm high: silver birch, holly, wild cherry, wild rose, rowan, hazel, hawthorn and dogwood. The girls had obtained the whips (young trees) from the Woodland Trust for free, using Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers they had collected last year.

The original date for planting (February 11th 2012) had to be cancelled due to snow but the event was rearranged for Saturday 3rd March and a few Friends spent a number of days preparing the plot. Four sections were marked out in the southern corner of the plantation and 15 holes were pre-dug in each section, and marked with a stake labelled with the name of the tree to be planted there.

On a sunny Saturday afternoon, two dozen Rainbows, Brownies and Guides met a number of Friends in the car park. The girls came equipped with their own trowels, spades and gloves and were accompanied by Jo Wheeler, coordinator for the Brownies, Rainbows and Guides plus several supportive parents. After a group photograph in front of the Selsdon Wood Bear, David Malins introduced the project. Whips had been pre-sorted and labelled into four buckets. The girls and their parents were divided into 4 teams and the girls carried their buckets and spades up the hill to the site. There they had a short instruction (including a warning on staying safe). They then set to with great enthusiasm to plant the whips in the prepared holes. They watered each planting (the Friends had brought plenty of water) and then stood back to admire their work. The whole task was completed in less than an hour and was rounded off with another photograph - this time in front of the gate with its name board saying 'Jubilee Plantation'.

Each of the girls was given a certificate marking the event and all took away an FSW information leaflet and map. Many of the older girls readily spotted the position of the



Jubilee Plantation on the map (labeled Jub.) and all promised to return in coming years to watch the progress of their saplings. Read some of the girls' comments on the day on the PAWs page of the website.

We hope these trees fare better than the beeches planted in 1977 to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee. Many of these have disappeared and others show signs of severe deer and squirrel damage. A few of their progeny survive and we must look after them. A deer fence has now been put up around the plot containing the Diamond Jubilee planting and the FSW planting in March 2011.

Nature Notes:

Some blackthorn bushes are in full flower and will shortly be joined by hawthorn. Some bluebells are already in flower - we hope they will not be past their best before our Bluebell Walk on 28th April. Wood anemones are well advanced. Warm weather with little rain may cause them to finish early so get out and enjoy them. Other early flowers include early purple orchid, dog violet, wood anemone, lesser celandine, sweet woodruff and wood sorrel. Bracket fungi of various sorts are still visible and there may be some spring-fruiting fungi emerging from the soil. Migrant birds will be moving in to the country and the songs of the summer migrants will be joining those of our resident birds. Listen for the first chiffchaffs, blackcaps and perhaps willow warbler. Brimstone and peacock butterflies have already been seen and soon we will see orange-tips and occasional small tortoiseshells and red admirals. Look out for Bee flies. They look like plain brown bees but they hover over flowers and use their long proboscis to probe for nectar.

Dates for your diary – see website for full programme

Work days – **Sundays: April 1st, May 6th, June 3rd, July 1st.**

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

You choose jobs to suit your strength. Tools are provided but please bring a drink and food if you feel you need them. You work for as long as suits you - some of us work until about 2.30pm, others leave earlier. If you need more information please contact Ted closer to the time on 020-8651 0558 or e-mail: forsythted@aol.com

Members meetings – **Mondays: April 23rd (please note this is a change of date), May 28th, June 25th.** All from 8 to 10pm in The Forum, Forestdale.

Guided Walks of Discovery – Meet at Old Farleigh Road car park.

Our Walks are slow and easy - lasting about 2 hours.

April Sat 28th 2pm. Bluebells & Spring Flowers with the Friends.

May Sun 13th 11am. Spring Birds & Flowers with the Friends.

also

May Fri to Sun 25th, 26th, 27th. Charcoal burning Weekend – buy your supplies of charcoal on Sunday afternoon. See more information in the next newsletter. We need the help of the Friends at this event (and at the **Open Day on 2nd September**) so please keep these dates free for us!

Final Thoughts

Check the website for regular news updates, latest sightings of flora and fauna and additions to the 'Rogues Gallery' of dogs <http://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk>.

We would love to receive your contributions for any of this. Please contact us through the website or by phone or email (details at the head of this newsletter).