

Friends of Selsdon Wood

Working to improve our wood



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February/ March 2013 Newsletter

Spring Greetings to all members of the Friends of Selsdon Wood and a special welcome to those who have joined us in the past couple of months.



FSW Logs for Sale

To make use of a little of the timber felled in coppicing and by contractors, we can offer bags of logs for a donation of £4 each. If you, or anyone you know, would like to obtain logs from us please contact Neale Fox for information or to arrange collection – phone 020-8657 0384 or e-mail logs.selsdonwood@btinternet.com.

Don't forget to use a fireguard when burning logs that can spark.

Nature Notes

At the end of March the Siskins that were reported in February are still with us. In Markfield, Forestdale, at the southern end of Court Wood Lane, flocks of at least 20 have been seen, apparently spending time in Bears Wood.

At the other end of the estate, at 54 Brookcroft, flocks of 20 to 30 birds have been descending on bird feeders every day. This photo was taken from our bedroom window. Having 9 feeders, 3 bird baths and a pond does encourage the birds. Why finches drop so much of the seed, I do not know. At least Wood pigeons, Collared doves, Robins, Dunnocks and Blackbirds benefit from this *manna from heaven*. We would be interested in reports of flocks in other parts of the local area. In Selsdon Wood several Great Spotted Woodpeckers have been heard drumming at the same time but so far there have been no reports of Lesser Spotted



Woodpeckers. Many other bird species are singing and now is a good time to learn to identify the songsters if you have not already done so. Apart from the obvious noises made by Great and Blue Tits, Song Thrushes, Mistle Thrushes and Blackbirds, etc, it is worth paying attention to the Nuthatch. Much of the time its call is a loud repeated twit-twit-twit but in the spring it will sing its spring song - a long bubbling trill unlike the call heard throughout the year. Further afield, there was a report of a flock of over 100 Hawfinches at Juniper Bottom, Box Hill. The original report can be seen at <http://devilbirder.blogspot.co.uk/2013/03/haw-galore.html>. Early reports have the first Swallows, Sand Martins and Wheatears coming into the country and there should soon be an increasing stream of incoming migrants, possibly including some unexpected species. Pheasants have also been seen strutting their stuff in David's Crook.

While working in the wood we have found Witches Butter fungus growing on dead twigs, and several pieces of dead wood showed the characteristic green stain produced by the Green Elf Cup fungus. The stained wood is used to produce the green banding in Tunbridge ware, but later in the year the fruiting bodies that give the fungus its name spring up from the wood.

An early flowering Wood Anemone was found in March and by April it is worth looking for the great swathes of pinkish-white flowers particularly off Langford's Way and Court Wood Grove. These will be followed by masses of Bluebells throughout the wood. Our walk is booked for Saturday April 27th but weather conditions could make the bluebells be at their peak a little before or after that date. Keep an eye on the website 'Bluebell Watch' where we will announce when the Bluebells are at their peak.

FSW Publications

Obtainable from Selsdon Library or contact us - see above.

FSW Colour Information Leaflet.

FSW Selsdon Wood Map.

FSW Red & Green Walks leaflet.

Dates for your diary – see website for full programme.

Work days – Sundays: April 7th, May 5th

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

You choose jobs to suit your strength. You soon warm up on a cold day, so don't let the weather deter you. 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: tedforsyth@btinternet.com

Members meetings – Monday April 29th & Tuesday May 21st

From 8 to 10pm in The Forum, Forestdale.

Guided Walks of Discovery – Walks meet at Old Farleigh Road car park. Our Walks are slow and easy - lasting about 2 hours, looking at all flora & fauna.

April Sat 27th 2pm – ‘Bluebells & Spring Flowers’.

May Sun 12th 11am – ‘Spring Birds & Flowers’.

July Sat 20th 11am – ‘Butterflies’ with Malcolm Bridge **

**** Please note the change of date for this last event ****

Charcoal Burning Weekend May Fri to Sun 24th, 25th, 26th – buy your supplies of charcoal on Sunday afternoon. See more information in the May Selsdon Gazette and on our website and posters nearer the date.

September Sun 1st Open Day 12 noon to 4pm –

We are always pleased to meet people who would like to have a stand that has a natural history or local craft theme at this event. If you would like to explore the possibility of attending please contact Linda Morris at 020-8651 4010 or selsdonwood@gmail.com

See the FSW website: www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk It is full of information about Selsdon Wood and what the Friends do to maintain it.

There is a section on the history of our wood. Did you know that Although Selsdon Wood is managed by L B Croydon (with a little help from the Friends) it is owned, and thus protected, by the National Trust.

This came about through the altruistic foresight of a group of Selsdon philanthropists who set up a trust in 1926 to protect and preserve the “Proposed Nature Reserve and Bird Sanctuary” before it was all given over to building land. An appeal was launched in 1925 to raise £3210 to purchase the wood and in order to prevent the land being sold before the money could be raised a group of philanthropists contracted to buy 126 acres of the most heavily wooded section on the north east of the site. These were Sir Lawrence Wonsloy Chubb, Miss Alice Mabel Bonus, Miss Winfred Mary Hudson, Mr Ernest Alfred Earl and Mr Malcolm Grahame Sharpe.

To find out what happened next take a look at the website.

Membership renewal – This issue of the newsletter goes out to all who were members last year. If you have not yet renewed your membership we look forward to receiving your payment shortly☺