

Friends of Selsdon Wood

Working to improve our wood



phone: 020-8657 0423 e-mail: selsdonwood@gmail.com website: www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk

September/ October 2013 Newsletter

FSW Open Day September 1st

For once the weather for Open Day was fair, so we looked forward to a successful event. The pitches had all been marked out in advance and a band of Friends and other supporters turned up early in the morning to help get everything set up for a noon start.

The Friends had four gazebos: one showing what the Friends do in the wood, recruiting membership and making logs available for a donation of £4; a second with displays and activities for children; a third selling tombola tickets, white elephants and books; and a fourth (shared with the Selsdon Residents Association) housing the annual Photo Competition and sales of 2014 FSW Calendars. All were kept busy throughout the four hours with over 150 visitors and we welcomed 14 new members and raised just over £200 for our work.

The additional invited stalls covered a wide range of interests and goods – supporting badgers, birds and bees, and selling wood craft and pottery items. Refreshments were provided by the local scouts and there were guided walks for all ages and activities for children including a scavenger hunt, face painting and story time.



The FSW annual Photographic Competition Senior winner was 'Tawny Owl' by David Malins and the Junior winner was 'Fairy Mushrooms' by Finlay Le Voi (aged 11). These are shown along with all the other shortlisted photographs on the Photo Competition page of the FSW website.

This year there were 21 entrants who submitted over 90 photographs. From those, a shortlist of 50 were selected and printed for display on Open Day when the public were invited to participate in a secret ballot to select the winners in each category. Over 100 visitors voted and the winners of the Junior and Senior competitions were each offered a voucher, kindly donated by our sponsor, Snappy Snaps of Croydon. Our competition has been held each year since 2010.

The Friends would like to thank all who helped at Open Day, especially Linda Morris the event organiser.

Photographs of the day are on the Events page of the FSW website <http://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk>

FSW Lost Property Box

The Friends Lost Property box on the notice board by the car park has already been an absolute boon to 2 dog walkers who lost their keys. Their letters of thanks are published on the Home page of our website. Frank Kippin wrote to tell the story of how his keys fell out of his pocket while out walking his dog, Denzel on the morning of Sunday 8th September. After a day of frantic searching - *"In the late evening I was out with Denzel and checked the box. Eureka I found the keys!!! I wish to thank the finder profusely for re-uniting me with my keys. My other half 'complained' that I had the luck of the Devil in finding the keys and therefore did not learn my lesson."*

The previous month Zoe Hiley had a similar experience when she lost her car keys and was quoted a ridiculously high price for a replacement. She also spent much time hunting for them and - *"A couple of days later I looked in the lost property box for a third time and... there they were. I couldn't quite believe my good fortune! I had noticed when searching this box how the contents kept changing, so people must be identifying and connecting with it. I certainly did, and to me it has proved invaluable. A great addition to the Selsdon Woods so I have found. I just wish I could thank the person who found my Honda car keys."*

Currently the box contains a 52mm Lumix lens cap, a toy monkey and a couple of dog tags. A lilac blanket and comforter with an elephant's head have been removed for safe keeping - contact us if you have lost them.





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.

FSW Publications

Obtainable from Selsdon Library or contact us - see above.

FSW Colour Information Leaflet - containing Membership Application form and Programme.

FSW Membership Application form.

FSW Selsdon Wood Map.

FSW Red & Green Walks leaflet.

Nature Notes

This is probably the best time to look for fungi. Many fall into the category of “cap and stem” - like a supermarket mushroom, and occupy a variety of places in woodland. Our prize winning photo is of a type of bonnet fungus. They can be found in groups on fallen branches and trees, but some are solitary and may be found peeping out from the vegetation on the ground, or even amongst grass some distance from trees. Colour of the cap can vary from the garish scarlet with white dots of the Fly Agaric, the favourite of illustrators of fairy tales, through the yellow of Sulphur Tuft, to the varied subtle shades of many other species. While there are hundreds of cap and stem types, there are many other shapes adopted by fungi. Earthballs are spherical and grow on the ground, earth tongues are flattened stems which poke out of the soil, jellies of various colours are blobs of material found on twigs, oysterlings are whitish-pink fungi like a stemless cap attached to dead bramble stems, jelly ears are floppy fungi usually on Elders. There are woodwarts and corals, stagshorns and crusts, brains and brackets. The bracket fungi are usually long-lasting and can be found at any time of the year on standing and fallen timber. Before trying to identify a fungus check the species of tree on which it grows or which is growing nearby - some fungi are associated with particular tree species. Buying an identification book or borrowing one from the library will be of great assistance. Thirty-three species of the fungi found in our wood are shown on the Flora page of our website. If you spot any different ones do please let us have a photograph to add to our collection.

Our avian winter visitors should be coming into the country. Some seem to sidle in almost unnoticed but on occasion species like redwings and fieldfares fly over in enormous flocks. The redwing's call is often heard in the winter woodland – a high-pitched “seep” – while the fieldfare utters a distinctive chuckling call most evident when a flock is in flight. Siskins and redpolls will feed in the woods while there is sufficient food but may enter gardens as the supply dwindles. Bramblings prefer beechmast and may be present in numbers in a year when there is a good crop but otherwise they are elusive birds. Hawfinch is occasionally found in the wood, usually splitting open the kernels of hawthorn and hornbeam seeds. Though greenfinch, chaffinch and goldfinch are native species their numbers can be swelled by an influx from the continent. During autumn and winter they are frequently found in flocks, feeding on weed seeds, on the ground or in trees. [Ted Forsyth](#)

Dates for your diary – see website for full programme

Members meetings – Mondays: October 28th, November 25th.

From 8 to 10pm in The Forum, Forestdale.

Guided Walks of Discovery – meeting at the Selsdon Wood car park off Old Farleigh Road, our walks are slow and easy - lasting about 2 hours, looking at all flora & fauna.

October Sunday 13th 10am Autumn Fungi & Fruit with Jane McLaughlin.

Work days – Sundays: October 6th & 27th, November 3rd & 24th, December 1st & 29th.

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.

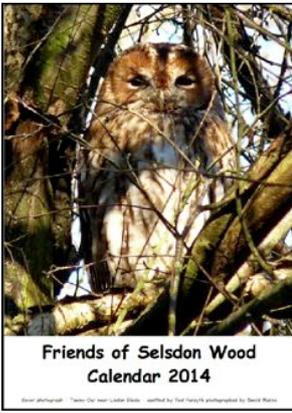
For more information please contact Ted closer to the time on 020-8651 0558 or e-mail: tedforsyth@btinternet.com

Ted's report of the last workday activity on Sunday 29th September gives the flavour of a typical winter session.

I was pleasantly surprised when the volunteer numbers built up to 13 for the first workday of the autumn. While the trolley of tools was being dragged to the coppice area I took a few people to see the Yellow Stagshorn fungus which had returned to the same tree stump in West Gorse where it has appeared in previous years. At the coppice area we had to select a new fire site - a well-lit glade seemed suitable so we set about widening it with the help of Cyril's chainsaw. Once the fire was lit we were kept busy throwing on the material Cyril had cut, but retaining anything which could be used later for tree stakes, charcoal, etc. More material was cut and burned, then a third cut was left for us to deal with next time. While most of us were involved in that activity a smaller group were cutting with hand tools and using the material to strengthen a dead hedge. As predicted, we did find several fungi including a small Fly Agaric and something which was either Toothed Crust or Split Porecrust, and a number of other species.

See the FSW website: www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk

for more information about Selsdon Wood and what the Friends do to maintain it.



FSW Calendar 2014 - full of beautiful photographs of our wood including those shown here
21 x 29.7cm

To reserve a copy phone 020-8657 0423
or e-mail selsdonwood@gmail.com
£5 inc envelope. p&p £1.20



We also have a limited number of Christmas cards showing the amusing photograph of the snowman climbing the tree. This was taken in the FSW coppice area at the top of Langford's Way by John Zareba in January 2013. We never discovered who made the snowman! The cards have the greeting 'Happy Christmas' and are A5 in size. They are available, with envelope, for £1 each. Contact us by phone or email as above.



Annual Photographic Competition

It is very gratifying to receive so many very high quality photographs each year. Many are taken on mobile phone cameras. Many have been cropped and enhanced by computer. The finished standard is extremely high and I have the job of archiving the hard and electronic copies so that they are accessible to the Friends, the Selsdon Gazette and the Forestdale Link for use for FSW publicity purposes. The scenic and natural history shots are beginning to provide a very comprehensive view of Selsdon Wood. It is often difficult to decide which duplicate pictures to keep. However, I would appreciate photographers naming the species they picture, particularly the insects, fungi, flowers and fruits, this will help visitors to our subsequent displays. We also have good coverage of dogs. There is one area that could be enhanced. That is adults and children enjoying Selsdon Wood - walking, exercising, tobogganing, exploring or just relaxing. Have someone walking through or looking at the scene or flowers etc. Parents must realise that by submitting photographs of your children you are giving permission for us to publish them.

[David Malins](#)

Submissions for the 2014 Competition are now invited. Each entrant may submit up to 6 photographs taken in Selsdon Woods between 1st September 2013 and 20th August 2014. As before the winners will be chosen by a secret ballot of the visitors to the FSW Open Day on September 7th 2014. Please submit your photographs to our competition organiser, Heather Govier, either in electronic format by email to selsdonwood@gmail.com or as prints to 219 Oswald, Courtwood Lane, Croydon. CR0 9HG.

Final Thoughts

Although we had a successful Open Day, it could have been better. We were short of helpers in some areas and hope that a few more of you will volunteer to help us next year. You decide how long you can help with setting up, manning stalls, clearing up or any combination of these. Your help would make a difference. Please watch out for appeals before next year's event. [Heather Govier](#)