

Nature Notes:

The peculiar weather this year is having an effect on butterflies. The early warm conditions brought out some species early then with colder and wetter conditions they seemed to disappear. However, on any day with a decent temperature, butterflies are being found and in late May we have recorded Orange-tip, Brimstone, Speckled Wood, Peacock, Holly Blue, Small White and Green-veined White. More species should be on the wing in June and the numbers of some will rise.

The breeding success of birds is affected directly by the weather and also by any lack of caterpillars and other insect food. It is important to keep feeding birds in the garden at this time to supplement their natural food. In mid-May, ahead of a weather front, several House Martins, Swallows and Swifts were seen flying over the Selsdon Wood treetops. Other migrants such as Blackcap and Chiffchaff are singing in many parts of the wood, and the resident Tits and Thrushes should have young in the nest or recently fledged. There is still time for incoming migrants to be recorded, particularly if the winds swing round to the south, and this applies to butterflies as well as birds. Keep your eyes open for Hummingbird Hawkmoths hovering briefly beside flowers.

In mid-May there are many Early Purple Orchids in flower but with the passing weeks Pyramidal Orchids will appear in most of the fields and White & Broad-leaved Helleborines in the Centenary Plantation. Old records suggest Bee Orchid has occurred but since they will be in the long grass they may be difficult to find. If anyone does see this species we would like to know.

Dates for your diary – see website for full programme.

Work days – **Sundays: 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: May 28th, June 25th.**

Both are 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, looking at all flora & fauna. - lasting about 2 hours.

June Sun 17th 11am. Summer Flowers with Malcolm Jennings.

July Sat 14th 11am. Summer Butterflies with Malcolm Bridge.

also

May Fri to Sun 25th, 26th, 27th. Charcoal Making Weekend – buy your supplies of charcoal on Sunday afternoon.

Final Thoughts

Growth of the FSW website (<http://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk>) continues with additions this month to the Home page (a selection of scenic views), to the Rogues Gallery on the Dogs page and to the Flora and Fauna page. The main development here is that we are making a set of Tree Spotters Guides (TSGs) available in the Trees and Shrubs section. There will eventually be one for every species of tree and shrub to be found in Selsdon Wood, giving key identifying features and a location map. The TSGs are fully illustrated with photographs taken in our Wood and supplied in the form of downloadable pdfs.