



FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD

FQW Newsletter

A roundup of information, news and activities in Queen's Wood, Muswell Hill

November 2009

Dates For Your Diary:

Working Parties:

All meet at The Lodge 10.30am -12pm.
Tools will be provided but bring gloves
27th November, 29th December, **no
January session**, 28th February

New Year Party

Sunday 31st January 2010.

You will be receiving an invitation in early December for our popular New Year party - a special one this year as this will be the start of celebrations for Friends of Queen's Wood 10th year since we were formally constituted.

Membership renewal: A membership renewal form for 2010 is included with this newsletter. Please pay promptly to save unnecessary follow ups.

Annual General Meeting

25th March 2010. Look for details about venue and time in the next newsletter.

Committee:

At the AGM the following were elected:

Lucy Roots Chair 8883 8875, John Dorken Treasurer, Rebecca Dowman Publicity, Sarah Graham-Brown Ecology, Alison Watson Membership 8883 0734, Gemma Harris, Sue Smith, Jane Warren, David Warren, Michael Johns.

Contact FQW

Lucy Roots 8883 8875 or for further information about membership or contributing to the newsletter please contact 020 8883 0734 or e-mail alison.watson9@googlemail.com

Stop Press

Just as this newsletter was going to press, we heard that Biffa (the landfill tax) have given Froglife the balance of the funding needed for the new frogpool (see overleaf). Work is likely to start in January.

News from the wood

Lucy Roots



Autumn has come late with the trees green for most of October and warm sunshine encouraging the berries on hawthorn and holly.

This year the large wild service tree, also known as the Chequer Tree, has fruited and its juicy red berries are squasy underfoot. The only mature sweet chestnut has

produced a few fruits for the first time to our knowledge. This tree usually grows on sandy soil so is a rarity in the wood.

An unusual frilly fungus, the zoned rosette fungus (*Podoscopyha Multizonata*) has appeared at the base of an old oak tree. This is the same as one that appeared a few years ago in the Witches Coven. In the summer a few plants of the yellow pimpernel were found in the organic garden and old records show that this used to be found in the wood itself.



The emergence of plants in the newly coppiced area, some new and others recorded in the past, has continued to please all those who were involved in the decision to coppice this dark area near the Wood Vale entrance. David Bevan has been training a team of volunteers to monitor this re-growth and the two sessions so far carried out have been very rewarding for all concerned. Armed with clipboards, lenses and data sheets we

could be seen on hands and knees looking at small plants and noting how already new hornbeam seedlings were emerging as well as the opportunist bramble.

However the greatest pleasure was in the seeds, dormant for many years, which were released from their dark burial in the soil and sprang to life. One was a seed which can lie dormant for up to 200 years – the Slender St. John's Wort (*Hypericum Pulchrum*) - which was previously found by David Bevan in the 1990s . David tells us it was recorded in woods 'near Hampstead' in 1695 by an apothecary, James Petiver. In all 140 species have been recorded in the newly coppiced area, compared with 36 before the clearing took place and 25 of these have never been recorded before in the wood.



New Management Plan and Flora Survey

Sarah Graham-Brown

It is nearly ten years since FQW commissioned the first management brief for Queen's Wood. Dr. Meg Game's work has proved invaluable in suggesting how we can manage the flora and fauna of this ancient woodland, one of the few surviving areas close to the centre of London.

Now Friends of Queen's Wood with Haringey Council have commissioned a new management plan to take account of changes which have taken place in the woods since 2000. One of the main challenges is to balance the conservation of this valuable natural habitat with the need of the adults and children to enjoy and learn from the woods. Another question we are all asking is what impact the changing climate may have on which species will flourish in future and which will decline. The plan will review a range of issues, from drainage, to the health of the trees, and protection of rare or endangered species.

This work will be made easier by a comprehensive survey of the flora of Queen's Wood already carried out by David Bevan over the past two years. He has discovered numbers of new species, both native and 'exotics', particularly in the latest coppice, cut in February 2009. It is hoped to have the plan completed by March 2010. Watch the FQW website for further information as we will be posting ideas for the plan and asking for your response. The final plan will be available on both FQW and Haringey Council websites.

David Bevan will be present the Flora survey to the Botanical Society of British Isles on November 17th and it will then be available on a website. Your subscriptions and donations have made this survey possible and it will be available to our members at the end of December.

Wildlife Ponds and Amphibian Life

Alison Watson

In September Rebecca Turpin from the Froglife Trust gave a very enjoyable slideshow to Friends. She told us there are 13 native species of frogs, toads and newts in UK. In last 199 years over ¾ of Britain's ponds have been lost so amphibians really need our help. There are plans to create a natural pond on the site of the old paddling pool, plus two more lower down in the new coppiced area. They will have clay lining with a dipping platform for children, refuges and waterplants round the edge. There are considerable advantages in a woodland habitat and the plan is fully supported by Ian Holt, Haringey's Nature Conservation Officer. Friends have been consulted about the idea and everyone is in favour. There were questions following the talk about safety and it was explained that the edge will be very shallow. There could be low fencing around initially until the natural planting has grown. Although we have some funding the balance has yet to be raised.

Musings of an ex-commuter

John Dorken

The paths between the Connaught Gardens and Muswell Hill entrances have crumbled just a little less since I hung up my often well muddied city shoes after almost 30 years of coursing through the Woods on my way to and from work (some 11000 trips by my reckoning). To my shame I was sometimes on auto-pilot but a little prod of consciousness was always inspiring, with something different to experience each day. In the early days there was the often surly nod from one of the park keepers sweeping the leaves or even the snow from the paths. There were shimmerings of the unfolding pale green verdure in the spring and the glints of gold and yellow in the autumn. Convocations of squirrels scattered at my approach and a game was to try to locate woodpeckers as they hammered away (I was successful only once). Life is a now a little less fraught but a little less uplifting.

Tree Trust for Haringey



The Tree Trust for Haringey is a registered charity which has helped in the funding and planting of hundreds of trees in neighbourhood streets, in and around schools and parks.

It works in partnership with Haringey Council Park and Neighbourhood Offices, the 'Sustainable Haringey' and 'Haringey Biodiversity Action Partnership' action groups as well as the FQW group and similar organisations.

Tree Trust for Haringey is expanding its website which now includes an online calendar of events for 'tree lovers' in addition to useful information and the ubiquitous blog. It will soon be starting to send out an email 'tree news' which people can sign up to on the website - for all this and more visit <http://www.TTFH.org.uk>

An idea for Christmas

How about giving membership to FQW for a friend or a whole family?"