



Gunton Wood



We have achieved an enormous amount of work in the last three months, with large numbers of workers turning up, possibly due to the lovely weather – the shade in the woods giving a little respite from the, sometimes, excessive heat. As is usual during the summer holidays, we have had the help of Max and Will. They are always keen to help in whatever way they can and of course, they do enjoy the cakes at coffee time.

The area in front of the sheds has been paved, using old slabs donated last year. This has helped with getting wheelbarrows and mowers in and out and hopefully will stop mud being taken into the sheds in the winter. We have installed a new solar light in the tool shed and the old one which was no

longer working has now been repaired and re-installed, so it's a bit like Blackpool illuminations in there now. Shed number one has been emptied, sorted and tidied up.

Strong winds have brought down several branches and a tree over the summer months. One large branch on the main path down to PwH fell across the fence, so it was cut up and cleared away and then the fence repaired and reinstated. A tree which fell from the wild wood across the hedge into the wild flower meadow was cut up using the two-handed saw and the resulting logs were removed to be used for path edging. The men are always happy doing lumberjack work, particularly as it usually involves a lot of "project planning"!

The dock weeds in the wild flower meadow were a big problem again this year, so in July the bottom half was cut with the mower before they could seed (the orchids were marked with stakes and tape, so they were not damaged).

A lot of time has been spent keeping the path edges clear of nettles & brambles, and cutting back overhanging branches. The entrances have also been kept clear, particularly the one leading from the top of Moore's Lane into the PwH field, where an old stump had to be removed from the middle of the archway. We have dug a French drain (a trench with gravel in) at the junction of the main path with the side path opposite the dog bin. This is an experiment to see if it will help with drainage and stop the build-up of mud on the main path.



The pond always gets covered in duck weed during the summer months so most weeks two or three men will be clearing it away. They use a log on ropes to pull the weed close the edge so it can then be removed with nets. The pipe leading into the pond has been cleared using several sets of drain rods borrowed from various people. A rope has now been fed through the pipe which can be used from time to time to drag a rag through, hopefully keeping it clear.

The ladies have been working in the B&B area and have installed a bug hotel, so now it's a fully residential area!

A space was levelled and paving slabs used as cornerstones, then two

wooden pallets were stacked and the top covered with roofing felt and then grass and twigs. Straw, old pipes filled with canes, fir cones and broken tiles were used to fill the layers and underneath so we wait now to see what creatures will check in.

The B&B area has also been strimmed and raked and we have dug up the grass in one small area where we have planted foxgloves and evening primrose. We will try to keep this area free from grass and if it is successful, we will create some more 'grass-free' areas, to give the wild flowers a better chance.



The seat opposite the B&B area had to be repaired and replaced, after it was found that the legs had rotted. It has been strengthened as well, so hopefully will be O.K now.

A little seat that we built in the PwH field a couple of years ago, next to the Moore's Lane hedge, had broken so it has been re-built. And, the seat at the top of the PwH field was overlooked when all the other seats were painted, but that has now been done.

We have started cleaning out the bird boxes in readiness for over-wintering, one contained an old nest with eight abandoned eggs - what a shame. Most of the bat boxes need to be replaced, so we hope to get that done before the spring.

We have had two small fires in the pit in the farmer's field, which we quickly dealt with. The ladies do try to keep the pit free from litter, so there is less material around to use for fires.



And finally, we have started making hay while the sun is still shining. The wild flower meadow has had its first cut and we have started raking. This is always a labour intensive job, so most of us are working together, which always makes an enjoyable morning. It will probably take another two weeks to complete, so we are hoping that the dry weather will continue for a little longer.



Foxburrow Wood

We have cleared Himalayan Balsam again, to try and keep it under control, particularly around some new trees that we planted last year. It sometimes feels like a lost cause but, “every little helps and doing something is better than doing nothing”. We also cut back undergrowth from the Gunton Church Lane entrance and path and cleared away a small tree that was blocking an entrance on the A47.

Newsletter by Email Reminder

Save the Planet and us 80p! A big thank you to those that have elected to receive their newsletter via email rather than printed copy, you have saved GWCP valuable funds. We have had a fantastic response over the years, with less than 50 members still receiving a printed version. If you provide any committee member with your email address or send an email to info@guntonwoodland.org.uk we will make sure you receive an email copy and not a printed copy. You can of course go back to a paper copy if you change your mind.

GWCP Get A New Chair And A New Vice!

The GWCP committee had a brief meeting on the morning of August 9th and it was proposed that we elect David Briggs (currently Honorary President) as Chairman, this was carried unanimously. Following on from that, it was proposed that Andrew Bretton should be elected Vice Chairman, this was also carried unanimously. Andrew will learn the ropes from David and will gradually take over some of David's responsibilities which should ease the pressure on the role of Chairman.

Tesco “Bags of Help” Project

GWCP came first in the local Tesco “Bags of Help” scheme which meant we were awarded £3,000 towards a project to resurface part of the main path, from the main gate to the top of Moore’s Lane. We have so far received 75% of the award and the rest will be on completion. The work on the path should start on October 10th and will mean the path being closed for a few days although the side paths will remain open.

Thank you to all of you who voted for us with your blue tokens and a special “Thank You” to Tesco for running this scheme.

Main Path Closures

As mentioned above, part of the main path will be resurfaced in mid October but the side paths will remain open. The main path will also be closed near the Pleasurewood Hills end. This is to allow Anglian Water to do pipe laying work across PwH’s concrete drive, through the copse, across the main path and into the farmer’s field up to the disused railway bridge. We do not have an exact date for this closure but it is imminent and diversions will be in place. There will be heavy machinery moving around while the work is ongoing so the path has to be closed. This does mean the bridge over the ditch from the main path into the field will be replaced with something more substantial to take the weight of the heavy machinery. So hopefully, when all this work is complete, we will have a nice new surface on the path and a nice new bridge into the field.

GWCP 2019 Calendar

The 2019 “Moths” calendar is now on sale at only £6. It contains stunning photos of local moths provided by Edwina Beaumont. Available from Rosemary Briggs – 01502 515944.



Social Events

Bury St Edmunds Day Trip – Wednesday July 18th 2018

On 18th July a coach, full with members and friends, set off from Gunton Church Lane on a day trip to visit Bury St Edmunds. About half of the group stopped off at the famous Green King brewery for a 90 minute tour. After the tour they were treated to a taste of several different ales. The rest of the group spent time in the Abbey Gardens and were able to walk around the town visiting the Wednesday market. At 12.30pm we boarded the coach for a short drive to West Stow and Fuller's Mill Garden where we had a buffet lunch waiting for us set out under a marquee. At 2pm, when the garden opened, we were able to explore the grounds at our leisure. The garden was created by a past head brewer from the Green King brewery, the late Mr Bernard Tickner. There was a lovely display of various plants, shrubs and trees with water features mingled throughout. Unfortunately, these were not at their best due to the prolonged drought we have all suffered this summer. A most enjoyable day with weather to suit.



Bingo, Fish & Chips evening - Friday 7th Sept 2018

A very enjoyable evening was held at St Benedict's Church Hall when 58 members and friends of GWCP had "eyes down" for 8 games of Bingo, a raffle at half time and a lucky ticket draw for a basket of fruit. David arrived with the pre ordered fish and chips at the interval which was followed by tea or coffee and a surprise ice cream dessert (kindly donated by TESCO) all served very efficiently by Rosemary's catering team. Once again, by popular demand, our Bingo caller was that cheeky cockney and West Ham supporter, Pat McCade, who did a wonderful job keeping us all amused throughout the evening. All agreed that it had been an extremely enjoyable evening and here's to next year!! Our grateful thanks to everyone who so kindly donated prizes for the raffle and all the helpers. We raised £156 on the evening which will go towards GWCP funds to help maintain our beautiful woods.



Future Events –

Day Trip to Bury St Edmunds Christmas Craft Fayre – Saturday 24th Nov 2018 - £12 pp. **Full – waiting list started.**

Snape Christmas Show – Saturday 8th Dec 2018 - £27 pp. **Full – waiting list started.**

AGM 2019 – Wednesday 17th April, 2019.

Trip to Derbyshire – May 24th – 27th, 2019 - £285 pp. **Full – waiting list started.**

If you are interested in any of the above events please contact Rosemary or David by phone on 01502 515944 or by email to rosemarybriggs.65@btinternet.com and we will let you have a flyer. If you are able to print your own that would be helpful. More details and flyers are available on our website.

Look Out For – by Janet Field

Moths are probably less well-known than butterflies as many of them fly at night. However our 2019 calendar includes both day and night-flying species, many rivalling butterflies for colour.

One moth, the Hummingbird Hawk-moth depicted on the front cover, was observed by two of our woodland workers in their garden feeding on nectar from geraniums. It also loves jasmine, phlox, buddleia, valerian and red campion. This European migrant hovers in front of flowers using its proboscis to extract the nectar. It appears so similar when in hovering mode that some people are convinced they have seen a real hummingbird. Now a frequent visitor to our shores it has been recorded as far north as the Shetlands.

Another day-flying moth is Mother Shipton, although not in our calendar. Its colouring can be quite striking being brown, cream and white with yellowish/white undersides but there can be variations. The mythical name arises as a result of the pattern on its wings. It shows a profiled likeness to a well-known prophetess and supposed old witch of the 16th century. The eye, large nose and protruding pointed chin can clearly be identified on the fore wings. Mother Shipton lived in a cave just outside Knaresborough earning money telling fortunes and making prophecies. Today this area is reputed to be the oldest tourist attraction in England.

So, many moths have an interesting history as do butterflies.



Nature Notes Ancient Woodlands (Barry Shimmield)

The generally accepted definition of the term Ancient Woodland is an area that has been wooded continuously since the year 1600 which was the earliest date that mapping records began. This does not imply an unbroken period of physical cover of trees and shrubs across the entire site because some open space, whether temporary or permanent, is an important component of woodlands. Also trees and shrubs may be regularly cut down as part of a planned management cycle. Since this may have happened many times over the past 400 years it is possible that an Ancient woodland may not contain very old trees.

The sad fact is that in England today only 2% of the woodland cover that existed in 1600 still remains. These precious remnants are home to thousands of native plants and animals, including 256 rare and endangered species that cannot survive elsewhere. Safeguarding these areas is of crucial importance and, after a great deal of pressure from organisations such as the Woodland Trust, at last the Government has recently enacted new planning rules which give ancient woodlands the same level of protection as a World Heritage Site.

An essential part of the battle is to ensure that there is a comprehensive, reliable inventory of all the Ancient Woodland sites across the country. To this end the Woodland Trust is committing more than £1 million to update the existing and very patchy Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) by using the latest digital mapping technology to identify woods even as small as 0.5 hectare. Hopefully, this will ensure that our very own Foxburrow Wood, which is 4.8 hectares, will find its way into the new AWI.

The presence of specific Indicator Species of plants or trees is also often used to confirm the status of an Ancient Woodland, although this test is not infallible and different species lists apply to different geographic areas. As an example, a recent ecological survey in Foxburrow Wood found wood anemone, wood speedwell, dog's mercury, pignut, sanicle, wood sorrel, yellow pimpernel and wood millet. Taken collectively, all these are considered to be ancient woodland indicator species.

And finally...



You may have noticed that Gunton Wood has been rather busier this summer than usual, from dawn to dusk, mainly due to Suffolk Rocks, a craze that has spread all over the country. Basically, young children paint rocks, a picture on one side and an ID on the other. They then, with their parents, go out and hide them in public spaces like Gunton Wood. The children also search for other Rocks and when found they take them home put a photo on the Suffolk Rocks site with the ID from the back so the owner knows it has been found. It can then be kept or more usually re-hidden. It has kept lots of young children all over the country very busy painting and walking around the countryside and no doubt has kept a lot of parents very happy as it's all free. We also seem to have benefited from all these families in the wood – we have had no vandalism this summer (we hope we haven't spoken too soon)!