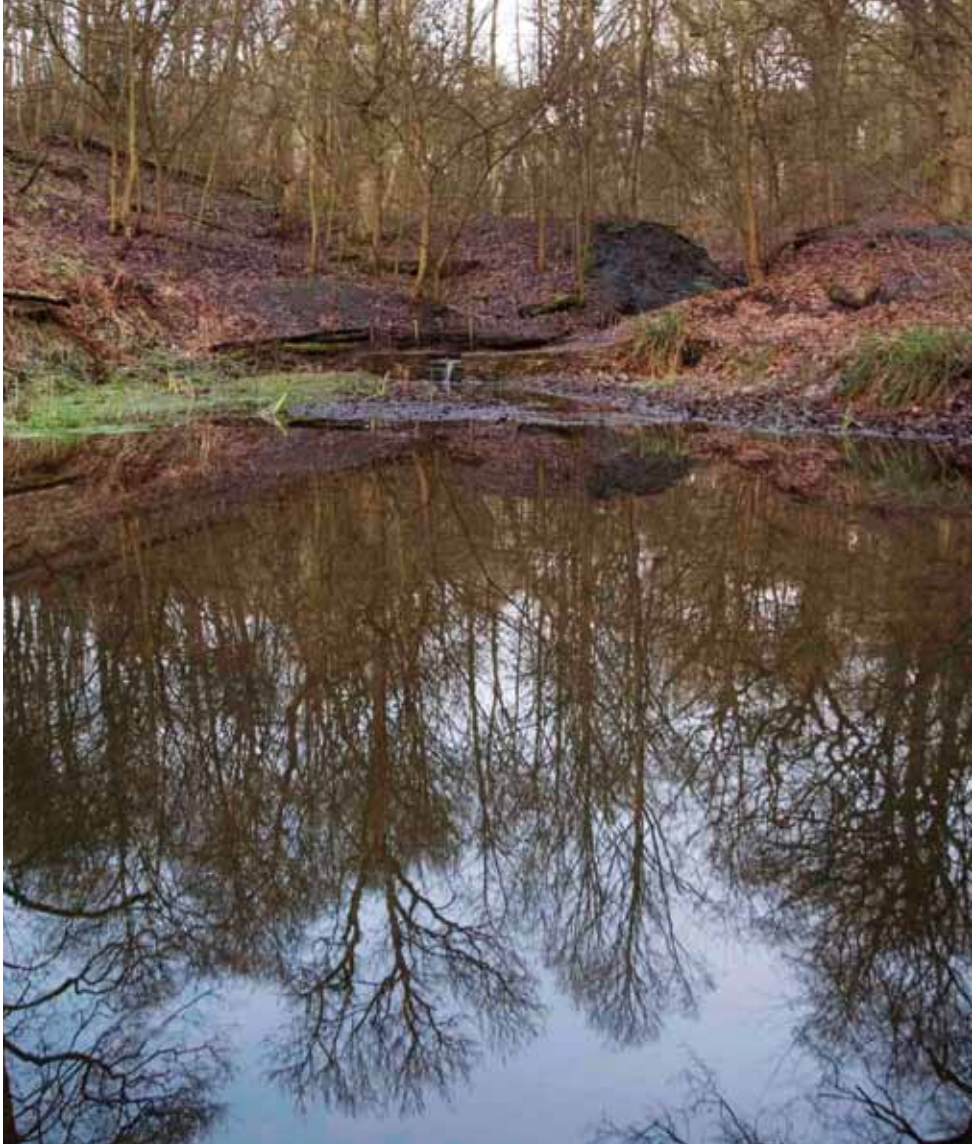




FRIENDS OF NORTHCLIFFE

NEWSLETTER
December 2013



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

What a lovely summer we have had. I hope you have all managed to get out and enjoy what Northcliffe had to offer. Maybe you found Rosie's café, in the NEET area at the allotments. It is a lovely place to sit down and have refreshments (it is open all year) and there is a water bowl for dogs as well! Good spot to visit before or after observing the birds at the feeding area or just for a short break as you walk through Northcliffe. Conservation work is taking place (dates elsewhere in this edition) and anybody who has the time to help out, even for an hour, will be most welcome – just turn up at the place and time indicated and you will receive a warm welcome.

Liz Hansen
Editor



WELCOME

It's always nice to begin with good news, and this issue is no exception. John Bromley (who you may recall did a stint as newsletter editor, as well as being a regular at our conservation activities) is leading an exciting new project for us. John had the idea of an archaeological survey back when we were collecting ideas for future projects in January – probably before then, in fact. Since then, he's teamed up with local historians Tony Woods (who has led history walks for us previously) and Derek Barker. After an initial meeting with the Archaeological Science Department at Bradford University, set up by Chris Gaffney, our trio have devised a project to gather all the available geological, historical and archaeological information about the Northcliffe area and put it on record. You can read more about it in this issue.

It's also been great to have the support of a fantastic committee during a difficult time for our family. Melanie's father passed away very recently after a spell in hospital. He lived in Essex, so we have spent pretty much all our time down there this summer. Committee members have helped out enormously, being proactive and progressing whatever they could when we were out of touch. It makes me very proud to be part of such a supportive group, and I want to say a heartfelt thank you for all the thoughtful messages of condolence we received.

Unfortunately, that's meant we haven't had the time or space to develop a couple of new events that we had planned. We were looking forward to Halloween and Christmas events in conjunction with BMES, but these will have to wait until next year. On the Halloween event, many thanks to Hall Royd Residents Group for thinking of us, and teaming up for a lantern walk through Northcliffe. And thanks to our friends in BMES for being so understanding of the circumstances. Watch out for some exciting new partnerships on events next year – we've already had talks with the Norwood Neighbourhood Association and the Shipley Film Society to explore what could be done.



We have a fantastic and very dedicated events committee who work very hard with limited time and people to produce a great calendar of events. We also have a number of willing volunteers who regularly help out at events. However, with more people willing to do a little to help out, there's so much more we could do, so please get in touch with Mel or me (contact details on back page) if you think you could help. You don't have to commit to regular meetings, all you need is an idea of what you'd like to do to help, and we'll work around your availability.

I was saddened to hear of the passing of one of our regular volunteers, Wendy Shackleton. Wendy was a regular at the Gala, always chivvying people to buy raffle tickets and baking lovely cakes for the cake stall. She was very active in the local community, and will be missed by all those who knew her. Our sincerest condolences go out to all Wendy's family and friends.

In other news, the octagonal planter allocated to us has arrived! After a chat with Malcolm Wright, we decided on the play area as a more suitable spot. A large planter in the field by the railway would be inconvenient at large events like Easter and the Rae Gala. Sean Gardner will be restoring it to nearly new condition with teak oil and elbow grease. Sean is also one of our newest members – one of the Parks Department stalwarts and a regular helper at the Rae Gala, Sean is definitely our most active member!

Our Annual General Meeting will take place on January 16th. At the time of writing, a venue has yet to be booked, so watch out for email updates, or see the noticeboards in Northcliffe. If you have any nominations for committee positions, they can be made on the day, or in advance if you wish.

Finally, let me wish you all the best as the leaves are falling and the woodland colours change. I'm sure there is probably much that I've missed in this update, but I will soon be back firing on all cylinders again for Friends of Northcliffe, after a tricky year for the Bruzzese family. It's an exciting time for us, with an active conservation programme, a new playground, a bird feeding area, and plans for much more next year. There's so much to enjoy in our wonderful oasis, and I'm glad you can be a part of it.

Steve Bruzzese
Chair



UNCOVERING THE HERITAGE OF NORTHCLIFFE

Friends of Northcliffe (FON) is exploring with several partners the potential for a Heritage Survey of the area. We hope that this initiative will benefit from the successful work by Bradford University's Archaeological Sciences department, which has supported other community projects at Judy Woods, Baildon Moor and Stanbury Hill.

FON members may recall the stimulating history walks led by Tony Woods in 2012, through Northcliffe Woods and round to Heaton Royds. Tony has worked with local coal mining and brick-making enthusiast, Derek Barker, studying both industries in Shipley and Heaton during the 19th century. The initial results of Tony and Derek's work have now been published in the Bradford Historical & Antiquarian Society journal.*

As a basis for developing a community heritage project for the Northcliffe area, a half day open meeting will be held at Northcliffe Church meeting room, Hall Royd, Shipley on Saturday, November 30th at 9.30am (for a 10am start) until 12.30pm.

Are you interested in working with others to help uncover more of the heritage of the Northcliffe area? Have you already identified interesting ground features? Found intriguing objects, or maps, or photographs that will tell a story?

The event will:

display materials from local archaeological projects; have presentations by knowledgeable speakers, including Tony and Derek; encourage questions and discussion; seek support for an outline plan for the Northcliffe Heritage Survey.

Shipley Councillors are giving their support, as are officers from several Council departments. Support is expected from other local interest groups.

If you answered 'Yes' to any of the questions above, please come to the meeting, not forgetting to bring any objects, maps or photographs that you have found. If you are unable to attend on this occasion, further meetings will be planned and publicised to share progress on the initiative.

John Bromley

*Cash from the Coal Measures: Mining and Brickmaking in Heaton Woods and Northcliffe 1846-1924, in The Bradford Antiquarian, Third Series, No 17, 2013. Available from Bob Duckett, 22 Holden Lane, Baildon BD17 6HZ, price £6. Cheques payable to Bradford Historical and Antiquarian Society.



CONSERVATION NEWS

By Julia Pearson
Conservation Officer

During the summer we had a productive time tackling the widespread Himalayan balsam in the woods, attempting to work to reduce the population of this invasive non-native plant. Left unchecked the balsam can reduce the biodiversity of our woods by up to 25% and lead to erosion when it dies back leaving bare soil on the slopes. Although it is a repetitive and long term task, we are seeing positive results from our work over the past few years.



We held 6 sessions between June and August, including one with Woodcraft Folk and a work party from DWP. BMES are also working hard to control the plant in the areas around the railway.

Friends of Northcliffe sessions are working from the golf club end down towards the pond and we will revisit these areas next summer. Thirty three woodcraft folk (including parents) tackled a flatter area adjacent to the stream and the young people got stuck in and made a really effective contribution. The group enjoyed themselves and hope this can become

an annual event. Twelve people made up the DWP team, working in a similar area for an afternoon in July. Everyone who participated enjoyed the activity and felt they had contributed something worthwhile.

They were also amazed at how much of a difference could be seen after they had finished. The difficult terrain does pose a problem to access all the areas of balsam, but the positive effects in the areas we can tackle will enable the native woodland flora, such as ferns, wood sorrel and wild angelica, to survive.



Our autumn management tasks have included work on the pond and some paths. We were fairly unlucky with the weather at the end of October when the BEES volunteer team and FoN members got stuck in. The water levels were high and the heavy rain, on the morning of the work, added to the fast flowing stream. We were able to empty the silt traps and dredge the channel and pool areas of the pond. This is an on-going task, probably not helped by the torrential rain just after we had left.

We have removed some of the accumulated leaf litter to try and alleviate some of the muddy areas of the path near the pond, and have also improved stretches of path in Old Spring Wood by creating drainage, raising areas of path and again removing the leaf litter that has built up. We cleared the soil and leaves from the steps, all 200 hundred of them, which lead up from Avondale Road. Whilst we know there are still more leaves to fall, the important task was to remove the soil and leaf litter.



We were quite surprised to receive a visit from the police responding to 'suspicious activity'. Good to know that people are keeping a watchful eye on the woods. (Steps looking good! – Ed)

In November we will start the winter task of thinning the small beech saplings to promote the growth of the oak, rowan and bluebells. Sessions have been scheduled for 11 January and 15 March. See events list for details.





IF YOU GO UP TO THE WOODS FRIDAY...

Everybody has the right to be creative.

Liz Hansen investigates what goes on in Northcliffe on a Friday morning.

What is Sponge Tree I asked myself when I first saw the name? Maybe you are like me and don't know. I got in touch to find out more! So if you "go down to the woods" Friday...



"We have a passion for getting people to be creative and also feel there is a need today to encourage outdoor play and learning, through interaction with nature."

Paula Taylor and Nicola Murray founded Sponge Tree in June 2010. The aim of Sponge Tree is to get everybody to be creative, whoever they are. Sponge Tree is a community arts business that provides sensory and natural art, play, workshops and training, to all members of the community. They are a partnership but do have other workshop providers who help them to deliver their work.

I asked Paula and Nicola if they could tell us a little about themselves and why they set this up. They said: "we have a passion for getting people to be creative and also feel there is a need today to encourage outdoor play and learning, through interaction with nature. Children do not play outdoors like they used to and they need to experience taking risks in a supervised environment. It is important that children experience the outdoors at a young age. Studies have shown that early years outdoor education promotes a child's emotional wellbeing and confidence; attention and concentration skills; physical wellbeing and health; balance and co-ordination; language and communication skills; problem solving skills; and creativity and cooperation in play".

They wanted to use Northcliffe to provide woodland play for children and parents in the Shipley and surrounding district and also work closely with the Friends of Northcliffe and Bradford Council during other events in the park. Paula and Nicola think Northcliffe is a fabulous park with something for everyone, including "great" woodland.

They have a lot of different sessions running for many different people. But the Saplings Nature Play group sessions at Northcliffe are aimed at early years – under 5s. Saplings meet every Friday term time, 10.30am – 11.30am, in the wooded area between the meadow and the football pitch. Holiday sessions also take place and these are advertised on the Friends of Northcliffe notice boards.

Whatever the weather the group meets as shelter is provided and parents/ carers are asked to ensure that children dress according to the weather.

Activities include natural and sensory arts/crafts, water play, mud play, weaving, painting, tree swing, story-telling and singing.



I asked what else Sponge Tree does apart from Saplings at Northcliffe:
 "Outside of the work we do at Northcliffe woods we also offer a range of training called 'Branching Out' for practitioners working in Early Years, to learn to do what we do. We train Activities Co-ordinators in the care sector to design and deliver multi-sensory activities inspired by connecting to each other and nature.



"Our 'Budding Artists' groups teach children and adults art techniques and traditional crafts. "We support creative people to believe in their work and develop small enterprises to sell it.

"Finally through our 'Community Roots' we create and deliver community events at festivals and local events which encourage people to talk, laugh, make and create memories together."



Well now I know, and I hope you have gained some knowledge of Sponge Tree as well.

If you would like to find out more you can contact Paula and Nicola using several methods:

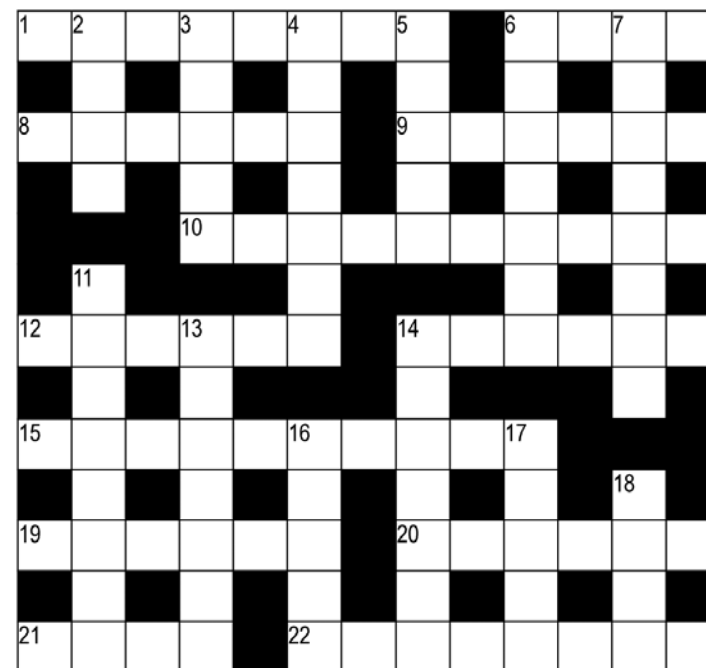
Email
 spongetree@live.com
 spongetree.blogspot.com

FACEBOOK "Sponge Tree"
 TWITTER "spongetree1"

Telephone
 Paula Taylor 07914 389 726
 Nicola Murray 07914 495 626

Photographs courtesy of Spongetree

NORTHCLIFFE CROSSWORD No. 5



Across

1. Occasional winter activity on the park's north facing slope (8)
6. Word associated with ball, man, flake - needed for 1 across (4)
8. Description of part of the south boundary of the woods (6)
9. Ear and net mix to become tidier (6)
10. Shave a clan in turmoil for lots of dangerous 6 across (10)
12. Cold spells in furious stress (6)
14. What is frozen water? (3,3)
15. Heal at last is changed to keep a horse warm (4,1,5)
19. Change his age to a Japanese entertainer (6)
20. Pinches less softly for imperial measure (6)
21. Affirmative acknowledgement - literally yes, yes (2,2)
22. Find pole changed for tadpoles etc. (4,4)

Down

2. This year it's the ladies' turn to ask (4)
3. 4th Greek letter - associated with the Nile (5)
4. Squirrels nest here (2,5)
5. Type of cake - found in Italy (5)
6. SAS cook mashed to wash a crunchy lettuce (4,3)
7. How many trees sound like a single seaside area? (3,5)
11. In our mountain (in the words of the old song) (8)
13. Please or fill, if stays altered (7)
14. Dante's nationality (7)
16. 1,000 (Roman) paws are mixed for a very damp patch (5)
17. All small company is changed to nearby pub (5)
18. Flea jumps about and becomes something at the end of a twig (4)

The answers can be found on the back page of this newsletter.

Composed by Douglas Lumb and Joan Newman



NORTHCLIFFE NATURE NOTES

By Lisa Chadwick-Firman



What a stunning summer we have had, this year! We certainly can't complain! I went for many glorious walks over the meadow, on summer evenings, watching the moths and the bats fluttering about against beautiful warm starlit skies.

I think as I wrote the last nature notes it was unseasonably cold! What a way nature has of catching up and sorting herself out. What a wonderful country we live in, with all these glorious seasons! I would hate to live somewhere more boring.

Now the woods are resplendent again in stunning autumn colours. It is wonderful to watch them change, almost daily. I love the trees in Springs Wood especially, as I see these the most. I stand and admire them from our back door as I wait for the kettle to boil. The first to colour up are the silver birch, and then the ash start to turn a beautiful golden yellow, and now the oaks are starting to turn multiple shades of brown. As for the beech in Northcliffe, well it takes a better poet than me to conjure up the words to do their colours justice!

We have incredible ivy on our garage; it has been covered in thousands of flowers this year. The insects love this late nectar source. One warm day, in early autumn, we could hear the hum of insects from inside the house! There must have been hundreds of hoverflies, bees and wasps all soaking up the energy to get them through the winter. Ivy is a hugely important plant for our struggling bees. If large enough it can also be a great place for nesting birds. We have had blackbirds nesting in ours. Soon they will be gorging themselves on the ivy berries, along with the thrushes, the enormous wood pigeons and other winter visitors. Again because the ivy flowers so much later it also berries late, when most other food sources have run out, making it a vital food source for our over wintering birds. There is an incredible supply of berries this year.



The rowans are just dripping with brilliant red berries – I've never seen so many so we may be due to get a lot of winter visitors this year, like the beautiful red wings, fieldfares and those stunning wax wings – I certainly hope so.

Joan Newman tells us she may have two late broods of blue tits in her garden nest boxes as she has observed a lot of toing and froing from two of her three boxes on the wall of her garage. This must be a record for late October! Does anyone know of other birds nesting this late?

We had incredibly tame hedgehogs in our garden again this year. Well, not so much garden, as kitchen! We had large, medium and tiny baby sizes so of course we named them mummy, daddy and baby 'hedgies'. The little oh... oh so so cute baby hedgehog got so used to me being in the kitchen with her, she trotted up to nibble my toes before going for a little explore of the lounge; drank the cat's water and then curled up for a snooze underneath the TV stand!

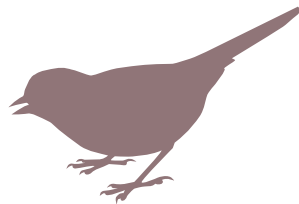
We no longer watch TV... well, with all this wildlife, who needs one!? This little hedgehog got into quite a routine, and some evenings as we were sitting in the lounge she would come out from under the telly, having slept there all night, when we thought we had put her out – needless to say I did spray around after she had left, so we had no unwanted visitors! But how could we resist? She kept us very entertained on an evening for most of the summer... looking forward to the next generation next year!!!

Hope you can get out and enjoy the glorious autumn colours again this year.



WOODY'S SPOT for younger friends

By Jeannie Kopasz



THE X FACTOR!

Parachutes and flying machines, bombs and exploding devices – where? Here in Shipley, at Northcliffe or maybe in your own back garden. Anywhere, in fact, where trees and plants are growing, as these are the means by which their seeds are scattered at the end of the summer. This is called 'seed dispersal'. Plants which grow in only a few isolated areas are more likely to be wiped out altogether than those which are widespread. The ability to colonise new ground is important in the battle for survival, ensuring their continuing existence.

Plants which rely on the wind to carry away their seeds may produce fruits with extremely silky hairs which act like parachutes. Dandelion and Rose-bay Willow-herb are such plants and their seeds may be carried up to 100 miles from the parent plants. Extraordinary journeys! Other airborne seeds may have 'wings' such as those of Sycamore or Ash.

Have you ever been 'bombed' by beech nuts or acorns as squirrels and jays collect their winter food store from the tree tops? Some nuts will be eaten, some will be buried, and others will remain where they fell, but maybe one in a million will grow into an oak tree.

Smaller trees and shrubs are more likely to have their seeds encased in fleshy fruit or berries. Blackberries, rowan berries and rosehips are all eaten by birds that digest the soft outer parts and then expel the hard seeds some distance away. Other seeds which rely on animals for their dispersal are those which have tiny 'hooks' which get caught in the fur of passing animals. Burdock and Cleavers have hooked seeds.

Probably the most exciting method of seed dispersal is the 'exploding device'. Himalayan Balsam is a good example of a plant whose fruits explode. It is a tall, leafy plant with pinkish red stems and purplish pink helmet shaped flowers.* The fruit is a seed pod, or capsule, which is highly sensitive to touch when ripe. At that time, any contact with the capsule can cause it to split, curl and twist explosively, expelling its tiny black seeds in all directions up to a distance of 7 metres.

When there is an excessive spread of any one sort of plant, other plants may be excluded from their natural habitats. Unfortunately, Himalayan Balsam is just such a plant and it has become a problem. Lots of it grows on the hillside beyond the stream in Northcliffe woods and when it dies back in the winter the ground is left bare and liable to erosion. For this reason, Friends of Northcliffe volunteers are aiming to control the spread of Himalayan Balsam by uprooting it before its seed pods ripen.

Look out for examples of these different methods of seed dispersal. You can see all the plants and trees mentioned here in Northcliffe's woods and fields.

*Himalayan Balsam is sometimes called Policeman's helmet or Touch-me-not.

WOODY'S MINI QUIZ

Read the clues below and try to identify the trees or plants.

- 1 This tree has a nut which squirrels like to eat.
— — —
- 2 A plant with a yellow flower and a feathery white seed head.
— — — — — — — — —
- 3 A plant whose leaves ease the pain of a nettle sting.
— — — —
- 4 The fruits of this thorny small tree are known as 'haws'.
— — — — — — — — —
- 5 This tree has large, shiny, brown nuts which can be threaded on string to use in a game.
— — — — — / — — — — — — — — —
- 6 A plant whose seeds are contained in capsules that 'explode' at the slightest touch.
— — — — — — — — — / — — — — — — — — —

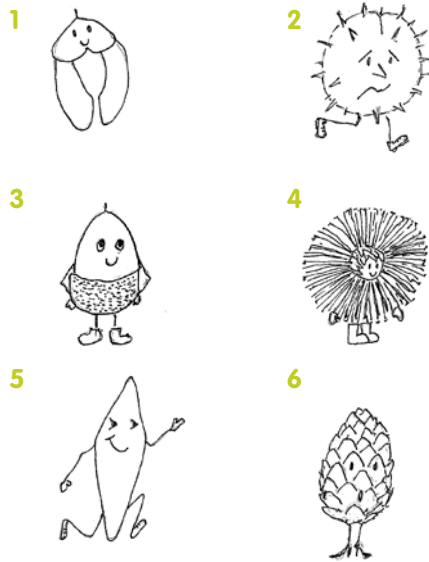
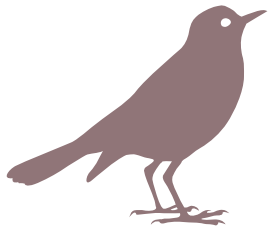
Answers on page 17.



FRUITS IN SUITS

Can you match the 'fruits in suits' to the names of their own trees or plants?

- Oak (acorn)
- Water lily
- Himalayan Balsam
- Horse Chestnut (conker)
- Burdock (bur)
- Sycamore



COLOUR SNAP

This is a colour matching game which is perfect for autumn!

Preparation: Cut out colour samples from paint shade cards that you get from DIY stores. (Shades of red, green, orange, brown and yellow are best for this game.)

Give each player a selection of different shades (5–10 each). Each player's initials should be written on the back of each of his/her colour samples.

On a woodland walk, try to spot natural objects which exactly match your colour samples. Most fallen leaves and nuts are safe to collect but please don't handle fungi or unknown berries! Point things out to whoever is keeping score then hand in your colour sample. At the end of the game, the scorer will see who found the most 'matches'.

You will be surprised at the great variety of autumn colours once you start looking closely.

EVENTS

Winter Woodland Management Mornings

We will be continuing with the task of thinning the smaller beech saplings to enable the oak, rowan and birch saplings to mature, and the bluebells to thrive. The task involves felling the small trees with saws and using loppers to convert the brush into habitat piles for invertebrates and small mammals. Tools and gloves will be provided but if you can bring your own that will be helpful.

For all sessions meet at the bench on the path near the golf club at 10am. Dates as below:

Saturday 11th January
10am–12noon

Saturday 15th March
10am–12noon

Big Garden Bird Watch Sunday 26 January 2014 2–4pm

In association with the Airedale & Bradford local group of RSPB

Come along to our bird feeding area to see the birds and be part of the world's largest wildlife survey! Experts will be on hand to help identify the birds and provide advice about how to attract birds to your garden. Refreshments, RSPB sales goods and bird food will be available in the nearby Northcliffe Allotments Society Clubhouse. The bird feeding area is situated adjacent to Northcliffe Woods, between the lower and upper allotments. Just follow the birdies and RSPB signs!

Details of events organised by the local group can be found on the Airedale and Bradford RSPB group website www.rspb.org.uk/groups/airedalebradford and from the RSPB Regional Office, Westleigh Mews, Wakefield Road, Denby Dale, Huddersfield, HD8 8QD, Tel 01484 861148 or on their website www.rspb.org.uk.



MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS APRIL 2013 – MARCH 2014

Welcome to the following new members: Frances, Jason, Frank, Sam and Tom Agar, Sean Gardner, Olive Ridler (age one, our youngest member?), Julia and John Ryan, David and Anne Thornton.

Currently we have 172 memberships. Unfortunately, after several reminders, some people have been removed from our lists.

Subscriptions have remained the same for this year:

Individuals £4
Family £6
Concessions £3
Family concessions £5

Send your details with cash or a cheque made payable to Friends of Northcliffe to:

Joan Newman
Treasurer
42 Moorhead Crescent
ShIPLEY
BD18 4LQ

Make a Difference Week Donation from Yorkshire Building Society Charitable Foundation

Thank you to Yorkshire Building Society for a £100 cheque towards our work in Northcliffe. The campaign is linked to the Society's scheme 'Small Change, Big Difference' where members choose to donate their pence interest to the Charitable Foundation. Five groups applying from the Shipley branch were given awards.

Northcliffe Bird Feeding Area

Since our last update we now have a lined pond, a shelf under the main feeders, supplied and fitted by Guy Barford, and a new arrangement for the viewing slots so viewing is accessible for all to watch the birds.

We have been given several feeders, and some food, by our ex-chair Jenny Cassidy.

The birds keep coming and in mid-October I saw several goldfinches, mainly young ones judging by the lack of bright red on their heads, all feeding on nyjer seed from our new feeder and from the seed spilled on the table.

Volunteers are still needed for a feeding rota – please contact Hugh Firman, Deputy Chair, 01274 594 109 or email h.firman@btinternet.com if you feel able to help.

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE...



Answers to Woody's Mini Quiz

1. Oak 2. Dandelion 3. Dock 4. Hawthorn 5. Horse Chestnut 6. Balsam Himalayan

Answers to Fruits in Suits

1. Sycamore 2. Horse Chestnut (conker) 3. Oak (acorn) 4. Burdock (bur)
5. Himalayan Balsam 6. Water lily





FRIENDS OF NORTHCLIFFE

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Conservation Activities: Julia Pearson

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Membership and Treasurer: Joan Newman

T: 01274 583004 E: joanandmartin@tiscali.co.uk

Secretary: Sheila Parkin

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Website: Keith Scott

T: 01274 585694 E: keith@the-scott-family.org.uk

General Enquiries: friendsofnorthcliffe@gmail.com

Website: www.friendsofnorthcliffe.org.uk

Answers to Crossword no 5

Across

1 Sledging; 6 Snow; 8 Walled; 9 Neater; 10 Avalanche; 12 Crisis;
14 It's ice; 15 Heat a stall; 19 Geisha; 20 Inches; 21 Ay ay; 22 Pond life

Down

2 Leap; 3 Delta; 4 In drays; 5 Genoa; 6 Soak cos; 7 One beech;
11 Greenery; 13 Satisfy; 14 Italian; 16 Swamp; 17 Local; 18 Leaf

Design
Phil Morrison