



FRIENDS OF NORTHCLIFFE

NEWSLETTER
November 2014



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Looking at the events' diary for 2014 and the articles in this Newsletter there has been a lot going on at Northcliffe and the year hasn't ended yet! Still to come in December we have the Christmas Special with a visit from a very special person (details later in this newsletter) on the 14th, the Winter Solstice Bird Watching/Feeding on the 20th and on the 27th December it is the BMES 'Mince Pie Steam Up' – what a lovely way to end the year. At the same time why not treat yourself to a new Eco cotton shopping bag or buy one or two for gifts. These good quality bags will be on sale for £3 each or two for £5.

Those members helping in the conservation days have done a great job again this year and they are always glad to see new people joining them – well done everybody. Have a look at what's coming up and if you are not sure if it is something you will be able to manage contact Julia and have a word. By the time you read this Newsletter the run-up to Christmas will be upon us and the Committee wish you all a Happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you at our events in 2015.

Our AGM will take place on 15 January 2015 at Kirkgate Centre at 7pm, and we would love to see you there.

Liz Hansen
Editor



Bags will be available
for purchase at events
and at other times
please contact
Liz and Geoff Morrison
on 01274 580 794



Cover photograph/ Melanie Bruzzese

WELCOME



What a fantastic summer we've had! It's had its wet moments, but by and large we've enjoyed a beautiful and elongated season. It's only now, as I write this, that the season seems to be turning into what I suspect might be a very short autumn. It's been memorable too – for the first time, the Northcliffe Arts Project graced the surroundings with beautiful butterfly sculptures up on the meadow (more on this later). The Rae Gala had another successful year, with hundreds of local people enjoying the entertainment, food and train rides. And Paula and Nicola at Sponge Tree have continued with their monthly Saplings events.

I'm really grateful to everyone involved in the conservation activities that have been taking place over the summer. On a personal note, it's the first year since I came to Shipley that I haven't taken part in any of the balsam bashes – a combination of a job that takes me down to London midweek most of the time, and spending Daddy time with Caitlin on a Saturday morning to catch up and reconnect. So I feel a combination of guilt and pride when we walk through the woods as a family, and I see the very visible effects of our efforts. Many thanks to Julia, Hugh and John for leading sessions, and to all the folk who support our efforts. I hope to see you at some of our winter conservation activities, all being well.

In my last article, I welcomed a new committee member, Val Harris. In this article, I'm sad to announce the departure of another – Melanie Bruzzese, our Events Officer. Melanie has decided that she would like to concentrate more on family, and hopes that she will be able to come back to it in a few years' time once school begins. Although she doesn't stand down until the AGM in January, Melanie wanted Friends of Northcliffe to have as much opportunity as possible to find a replacement before then. I'm sure we'll have more to say on Melanie's outstanding contribution once her term has ended, but for now, the committee said at our last meeting how grateful they are for everything she's done in her five years in charge, and how sorry they'll be to see her go.





That means that we're looking for two really important and critical posts to be filled – Events Officer, and Promotions Officer. The role of Events Officer involves the planning, co-ordination and running of the non-Conservation activities for Friends of Northcliffe – things like the Rae Gala, the Easter event, Big Lunch, etc. Melanie will be on hand to support the next person coming into the role, so you won't be cast in at the deep end. The Promotions Officer will work closely with the Events Officer, Membership Officer and other committee members to promote events, membership and Northcliffe itself. For both roles, enthusiasm and commitment are more important than previous experience. If you want an informal chat about either role, please contact me on 07976 714 580 or email stevebruzzese@yahoo.co.uk

Our membership continues to be strong, although it would be nice to convert some of our strong Twitter and Facebook following into members! If any of you are reading this, you'll find details of how to join within this newsletter. And we'll be ending the year with a flourish too, as the inaugural Santa Special steams into Northcliffe on Sunday 14 December, in conjunction with our friends at Bradford Model Engineering Society.

There's more details elsewhere in this newsletter, and remember, there are many ways to keep abreast of what's happening. There's the website, emails, and for those who aren't internet-enabled, we advertise every event in our noticeboards at the Cliffe Wood Avenue entrance, in the play area, and near the golf club.

It's with sadness that I tell you about the passing away of another of our long-standing supporters, Pam Lofthouse. On behalf of Friends of Northcliffe, I offer our sincere condolences to all her family and friends.

Enjoy the winter in Northcliffe, and make sure you still get out and about even though it's colder. Some of the most beautiful scenery can be seen on the coldest of days. We have a sledge that got no use at all last year, so we're hoping Caitlin gets to experience that this year! (Ed: I bet you can't wait to get on it too!)

All the best, and season's greetings to everyone.

Steve Bruzzese



CONSERVATION NEWS

By Julia Pearson

Our main conservation work during the summer has been removal of Himalayan Balsam. After a bit of a slow start, we increased our efforts in July, and revisited areas in August and in the end were pleased with progress.

If you missed out, don't worry, there will be more next year, although we will monitor the outcome of biological control trials that started in July 2014.

Defra Ministers took the decision to allow the release of a rust fungus at locations in Berkshire, Cornwall and Middlesex as part of field trials, following eight years of research. We will report on this in more detail in a future newsletter.

We have also continued the pond and path management work, clearing leaf litter with the help of 30 ASDA workers.





The volunteer efforts resulted in 54 feet of wall in 2 sections being completed where an informal path from the wood enters the meadow. People passing have been very complimentary of progress and of the end result.

Since then, John has completed work on his 'probationary project', a smaller section of some 12 feet.

Several other FoN members have expressed an interest, so it is hoped that drystone wall repair work can continue in Old Spring Wood in future.

Winter sessions start on 22 November.



Drystone walling has been a new conservation activity this year, undertaken by Martin Love and John Bromley. Martin is a part-time professional waller (and now a Walling Instructor) and together with John they wanted to explore the logistics of repairing derelict walls within Northcliffe. Support has been received from Colin Whitfield, Assistant Woodlands Manager, a risk assessment has been undertaken, and the first sections of wall at the top of Old Spring Wood have been repaired.

It was necessary to collect stone in March, before the undergrowth covered them. This included the top copings, some of which had rolled down the hillside. There was a pause whilst the bluebells were in flower. The walling started in early June and continued over a six week period.

ANOTHER NEW CONSERVATION ACTIVITY; THE ECO WALL BUG HOTEL

By Melanie Bruzese and Jane McDonald

HIVE and the Northcliffe Arts Project have joined forces to create an eco wall as part of the 8 week ecotherapy project (www.mind.org.uk, www.ecotherapyheals.com). The insect hotel will essentially be a collection of twigs and leaves and other inspired natural materials from Northcliffe Woods, which will then be used creatively through clay workshops at HIVE to produce an eco wall. The final art piece will create a network of holes and crevices that will provide roosting, feeding and hibernation spaces for a host of invertebrates and maybe amphibians too.



Week 1

The ecotherapy project is underway. The ecotherapy team spent a short time listening and looking, paying attention to the colours and birdsong in the beautiful environment of Northcliffe. They then went on to explore the bottom woodland area and collected textured plant material for the workshop at Hive the following week.

Week 2

HIVE and the eco therapy team use material collected in Northcliffe woodland to imprint into clay pieces. When fired and glazed these will form part of the eco wall. The final piece will be available to view in November on the bottom path of Northcliffe Woods, just beyond the miniature railway making it accessible for everyone to view the minibeasts.

To find out more about HIVE workshops visit www.hivebradford.org.uk





Sponge Tree kick started the Northcliffe Arts Project with their wonderful willow woven butterfly sculptures on the Northcliffe Meadow.

Thanks to Community First Funding we were able to bring inspiring educational and seasonal creativity to the outdoors. As part of a seasonal project three giant butterflies were created and put on display from August through to October. The wings were beautifully woven by Paula and Nicola of Sponge Tree, keeping the structure open so the wind could pass through. The workshop ran on 3 August for the local community to make smaller versions to take home, as well as adding their personalised 'wishes' on recycled colour fabric to an additional sculpture. It was a huge success, with a wonderful desire to search for butterflies (an information leaflet is available to download from our website).

The sculptures were used as a conservation educational project, and are now on tour around local schools in Shipley.

Next summer a local school will re-erect the sculptures in the meadow, creating a community tradition of searching for butterflies, and adding personalised good wishes or messages to the wishing butterfly.

The very first Northcliffe Arts Project has encouraged people of all ages to use natural and recycled materials, explore the grassland while in search of butterflies and helped the use of our senses while having fun with art outdoors. Please support the Northcliffe Arts Project so that we can promote good health and wellbeing in a stimulating and creative way. I would like to give a special thanks to everyone who helped to make this event happen.

The next event in the Northcliffe Arts Project is being run by HIVE, see update in the conservation section of the newsletter. Thanks to Joy and Jane at HIVE for making Ecotherapy part of Northcliffe.

WHAT'S ON? EVENTS DIARY



WOODLAND MANAGEMENT SESSIONS

This winter we will continue with our work to reduce the number of beech saplings. We do this work to benefit the oak, rowan and bluebells which suffer in the dense shade of the introduced beech trees. Winter sessions start on 22 November.

For all sessions meet at the bench near the golf club. Wear suitable clothes and strong footwear. Gloves and tools will be provided but please bring your own if you can.

Saturday 22 November
10am–12noon

Sunday 7 December
2–4pm

As a thank you to all those who have taken part in conservation activities over the year, we will be providing cakes and hot drinks to round off the afternoon.

Saturday 31 January
10am–12noon

March Sun 1 March
2–4pm

BIG GARDEN BIRD WATCH SUNDAY

25 January 2014
2–4pm

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! In association with the Airedale & Bradford local group of RSPB.

Contact:
Hugh Firman 07712 867 610
h.firman@btinternet.com

Please always check the Notice Boards in case an event has been cancelled. (See Chair's report.)



Liz Hansen asked Philip Davies MP for his personal views about Northcliffe and how he sees this facility as our MP.



The friends of Northcliffe is a local community group that was created through a collective initiative to ensure Northcliffe woods and playing fields are maintained to their full potential and accessible for all. Due to the generosity and time given up, it has allowed many residents, local and further afield, to use and appreciate Northcliffe woods. As a result, Northcliffe is a thriving, active and beautiful piece of landscape, appreciated by all ages, that has been allowed to flourish.

As the Member of Parliament for Shipley, and indeed a member of Friends of Northcliffe myself, I feel honoured to have such a fantastic community group in my constituency.

The work they do is immeasurable in ensuring Northcliffe is maintained as an essential part of the local community. Indeed, I know how much my children enjoy coming to Northcliffe!



The helpers meet regularly to clear paths, cut back plants that may have become overgrown and carry out every day gardening and outdoor maintenance that ensures that paths are clear, and the woods are at their best, showing off the natural beauty that Northcliffe offers. They also do essential work in protecting and encouraging wildlife and landscape conservation and work closely with the neighbourhood area committee and local councillors to ensure that projects move forward and the group has momentum in implementing these ideas.

However, their reach goes beyond this vital work. Friends of Northcliffe not only maintain the upkeep of the woods, but they also involve themselves as a community organisation ensuring the woods are used for events by local residents. They host nature walks, dawn walks and even history walks on a regular basis for those who are interested in these specific areas and would like to learn more. And more recently, they have come to organise events that have become essential parts of the community calendar.

Currently the Friends of Northcliffe organise three large events annually. The Rae Gala is an event that is particularly prominent in the local community and all proceeds go back into the constant improvement of the park and its facilities. This gala invites families and residents of all ages to come together and use the park, where stalls, barbecues and many other things are taking place.



Photo
Chris Pearson

In Easter the Friends of Northcliffe arrange some fitting festivities with picnics, egg decorating competitions and even the Easter Bunny! And finally the 'Big Lunch', an initiative derived from the Eden project, brings together many local communities following the theme of good food and company. As if this wasn't enough, cream tea is something they soon plan to add to the agenda – I think I will find that temptation to hard to resist!

Not only are these initiatives fun and fantastic, but unfortunately these types of events are becoming increasingly rare. Outdoor areas are not as widely used as they once were, and that is why it is so important that we support organisations such as the Friends of Northcliffe to ensure Northcliffe woods are still able to be enjoyed by all, from children playing football, to grandparents having picnics, for generations to come.



NORTHCLIFFE BIRD FEEDING AREA

By Hugh Firman



The bird feeding area (which is situated adjacent to Northcliffe Woods, between the lower and upper allotments) is still popular with people and birds alike, as these great photographs by Ian Watson show.

Andy, Ann, Kath, Ken, Rebekah and Val regularly fill up the feeders and Joan buys and delivers the bird food. Several members generously contribute to the cost of the food. Thank you all!

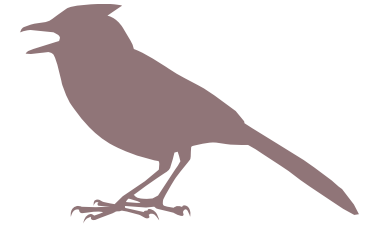
Why not come along on Sunday 25 January 2015 between 2 and 4pm to see the birds and have a cuppa?

Full details on the events page.



HERITAGE AND SURVEY UPDATE

By Val Harris



The working group for the Northcliffe Heritage Project met in the summer and agreed a 9 month plan which focuses on undertaking our own walkover survey across as much of Northcliffe as we can over the winter period when the vegetation has died down. The reason for this is to see what we can find on the ground and to cross reference it to maps and other information we are collecting.

We put up a display at the library Heritage Open Day (thanks Ken for sorting this out!) and gained some volunteers and more personal stories about Northcliffe.

We have now been in touch with the main landowners and received their support and agreement to access their lands for the survey. There have been 2 induction training sessions for volunteers and we plan to set up teams to start the surveying in November (the 6th and 8th) so it's not too late to join us if you are interested in helping with this walk over survey!

Meanwhile Tony and Derek have continued to offer guided walks – the last was in Heaton Woods in early October and attracted 28 people. Other walks may be organised in the coming month for people volunteering for the survey work – please keep an eye on your e-mails for information.

Members of the project have also joined in other events, attending the Fields of Gold seminar at Grassington about a community archaeology project in Bordley Township, and joining the WEA course, which runs on a Friday morning, in Shipley about the Aire Valley.



MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

APRIL 2014 – MARCH 2015

Membership Updates

Condolences to the family and friends of Pam Lofthouse. Pam was a good friend of many of us and well known for her involvement with everything horticultural, as well as an active member of St Peter's church.

Welcome to new members Tim, Seth and Laura Clark and Viv Swaine; and Nicole and Tobias Earley, and Frank and Susan Masley who have re-joined the group.

163 people have paid a subscription for the year to April 2015. A big thank you to those who gave generous donations for our work.

We also say goodbye and good luck to those who have not yet renewed their memberships after all the reminders. Thank you for your membership, and please come back to us in future if you change your minds.

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:

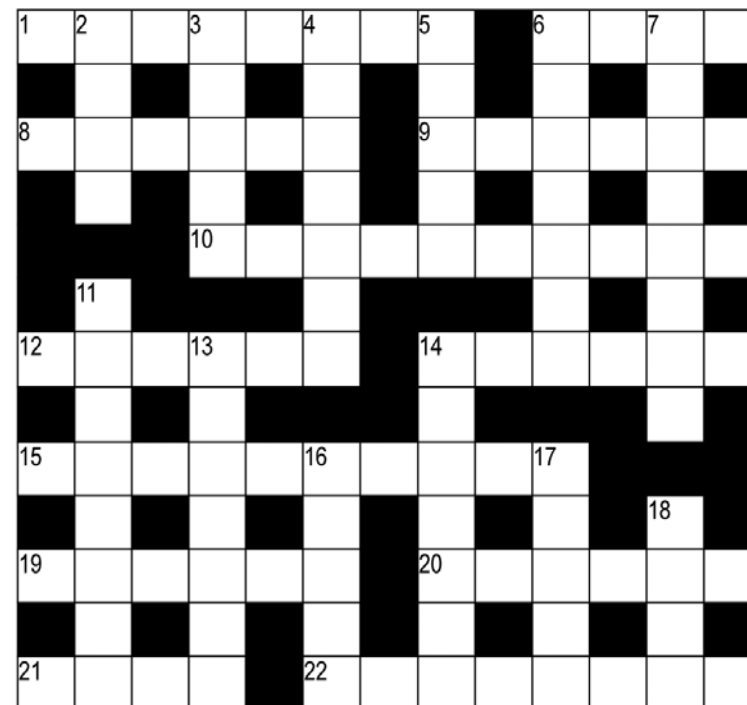
Joan Newman
Treasurer
42 Moorhead Crescent
Shiplay
BD18 4LQ

Again we ask you to think about donations as these helped us considerably last year, especially towards bird food for the feeding station, as well as to general funds.

A membership form is included with this newsletter.

NORTHCLIFFE CROSSWORD

No. 8



Across

1. When it rains this is wise (4,1,3)
6. Favourite food of blackbirds (4)
8. A sacred song (1,5)
9. Trees and bushes have lots of these (6)
10. Part of a football match (6,4)
12. Every 3600 seconds (6)
14. What goes around the tracks in the woods? (6)
15. A bird often heard hammering in spring (10)
19. Medium-sized penguin found in Antarctica (6)
20. Fictional reads (6)
21. Used to make things colourful, sounds terminal! (4)
22. Sore otter wriggles and is underground in the woods (4,4)

Down

2. Tall hills in Europe (4)
3. Set to test us (5)
4. Parrots, budgerigars, myna birds excel at this (7)
5. Undercover part of a boat (5)
6. Popular conversation subject in the UK (7)
7. To remember something (6,2)
11. What they did in Star Trek (where no man has gone before) (2,6)
13. Word puzzles, enigmas, and sometimes used in gardens (7)
14. How many times should one enquire? (3,4)
16. The Rae Gala can be called this (5)
17. Aire or Ouse for example (5)
18. A female singing part (4)

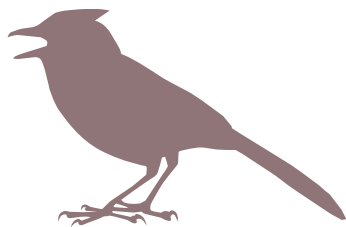
The answers can be found on the back page of this newsletter.

Composed by Douglas Lumb and Joan Newman



NORTHCLIFFE NATURE NOTES

By Lisa Chadwick-Firman



I hope you are enjoying these beautiful Autumn days. The trees are slowly turning into those wonderful hues that we love at this time of year! The low sun gives us the gentle and mellow lighting that we associate with autumn and those gloriously misty mornings.

There is an amazing supply of berries again this year and the rowans in Northcliffe are looking particularly splendid, especially against a blue sky. I have enjoyed watching people foraging, on the woodland edge, for blackberries – they too have been so plentiful, and the branches of brambles laden with these delicious fruits look so appealing to young and old alike. They are such a good food source for our birds too, and foxes also love to eat them.



Soon our resident birds will be joined by flocks of wintering migrants that come here to enjoy our relatively warm winters so keep an eye and an ear open for visiting flocks of thrushes, red wings and field fares and you may even be lucky enough to see those stunning waxwings! I love to hear the skeins of geese that fly overhead at this time of year too.



We have had more exciting birds in our garden too. In September we had 2 tiny weeny baby gold crests on the shrubs by our patio, soooooo cute! Their parents were diligently flying around finding grubs for them to eat. We also had a juvenile spotted flycatcher – I had great views of this, which was very pleasing, as I thought I had heard a male singing in the spring, but had not been confident enough to mention it in the last newsletter! Spotted flycatchers are struggling nationally, and are on the “Red list” for birds of national concern so I was incredibly excited to know that they have bred in, or near, our garden. As I mentioned, in the last newsletter, massive thanks must go to our brilliant council for not over managing the area at the bottom of our gardens on Lynton Drive as this scrubby area is just what warblers love and the birds are certainly reaping the benefits of this type of habitat management.

We have recently had more unusual visitors to our garden and they too are a delight, their call is rather loud and very like “Sweep”, for those of us who remember Sooty and Sweep!

They seem to enjoy sitting in the large tree behind our garage early in a morning and making sure that we know what a beautiful day it is.... and that we ought to be getting up and putting some food on the bird table! They are ring necked parakeets and we love them; they are clearly learning to have the same cheeky sense of humour as our resident jays.

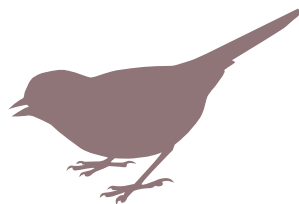
Some alarmist media coverage has suggested that culling may be necessary and that they might affect birds such as starlings and woodpeckers through competition for nest holes. However, the RSPB has stated that no evidence is available to back this up! Until any evidence to the contrary I think we should continue to enjoy these latest additions to a rich and varied wildlife at Northcliffe.

Hope you can continue to get out into our glorious woods and park land at Northcliffe.



WOODY'S SPOT for younger friends

By Jeannie Kopasz



THIS IS THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN WE SAY 'GOODBYE' TO SOME OF OUR FAMILIAR BIRDS, INSECTS AND ANIMALS. WHERE ARE THEY ALL GOING – AND WHY?

As winter approaches, the days become shorter and the weather turns colder. Birds and animals that are active during the day rather than at night (Diurnal) are less able to find the food which they like and need to stay alive. Birds which eat only insects, which are in very short supply in the winter, will choose to migrate to warmer countries and they make long, dangerous journeys across the Mediterranean to Africa. The fittest and luckiest will survive and return the following spring. Others will die.



Another survival strategy for animals and insects is to spend the winter either resting or in a deep sleep. This is called hibernation. Hedgehogs find shelter amongst tree roots or under garden sheds and will cover themselves with leaves and moss to keep warm. They sleep soundly throughout the cold months and can sometimes even be heard snoring! Some make the mistake of sheltering in bonfire stacks so always check for them before setting the wood alight. They can safely be moved to a more suitable place.

Winter is a tough time for ladybirds because of the shortage of the insects which they like to eat. In the spring and summer ladybirds feed on aphids – tiny greenflies and blackflies which cause lots of damage to crops and leafy garden plants. When the weather turns cold and food is scarce, ladybirds rest in sheltered places where they can huddle together in very large groups. They might choose to burrow under leaf litter or loose tree bark or even creep into the cracks around window frames. If you should find any, don't disturb them!

The familiar grey squirrel which we see in the woods at Northcliffe will be spotted less frequently in the very cold months. It will have collected and hidden a store of nuts to see it through the winter and it will spend most of its time resting, but not hibernating. On mild winter days it may emerge from its resting place to dig up buried nuts.

Have you ever been lucky enough to see small bats flitting about at Northcliffe on summer evenings? No wonder they are sometimes known as 'flittermice'!

Our smallest and most common bat is the tiny pipistrelle. Because it is a nocturnal mammal it sleeps through the long summer days and comes out at dusk to hunt for insects. You won't see it at all during the colder months as it will be sheltering with lots of other bats – hanging upside down (!) in a dark place such as a barn, a church tower or a cave. Aren't you glad that you don't have to spend the winter like that! So now we know where all these insects, birds and animals will be for the next few months – and isn't it good to know that we will see them again next spring!

TRAKWORD

You'll not see butterflies back at Northcliffe until the weather becomes warmer but you might be able to see the name of a butterfly in the grid below. Then see how many more words you can make by tracking from letter to letter in any direction. You can use any letter more than once.

If you find 10 words give yourself a clap!
If you find 20, or more – WOW!!

R	I	M
B	E	S
N	O	T

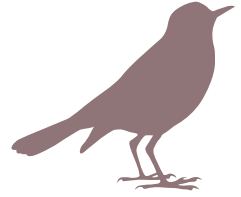
Can you answer the questions below and fill in the missing names? The answers may be found on the back page.

- Which spotted beetle shelters under tree bark?
_ _ _ _ _
- Name a migratory bird with a long forked tail.
_ _ _ _ _
- Which animal spends the winter hanging upside down?
_ _ _ _
- Which bird is generally considered to be very wise?
_ _ _ _
- Which animal might hide in your bonfire pile?
_ _ _ _ _
- Name an animal which hides nuts for a mid-winter feast.
_ _ _ _ _





FRIENDS OF NORTHCLIFFE



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Answers for Crossword No. 8

Across

1 Take a mac; 6 Worm; 8 A psalm; 9 Branch; 10 Second half;
12 Hourly; 14 A train; 15 Woodpecker; 19 Adelle; 20 Novels;
21 Dyes; 22 Tree root

Down

2 Alps; 3 Exams; 4 Mimicry; 5 Cabin; 6 Weather; 7 Recall it;
11 Go boldly; 13 Riddles; 14 Ask once; 16 Event; 17 River; 18 Alto

Woody's Quiz Answers

1. Ladybird 2. Swallow 3. Bat
4. Owl 5. Hedgehog 6. Squirrel

Trakword: BRIMSTONE

Design
Phil Morrison