



FRIENDS OF NORTHCLIFFE

Year Book 2019
Edition 1



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

You will have noticed that there have been no Newsletters since March 2018 – this is because it was becoming more and more difficult to source material and the decision was made to have a Year Book to be published after the AGM, so here is the first edition and I hope you enjoy reading all the articles.

At the time of going to press we are unable to give definite dates for some events including several planned walks to hopefully include heritage, birds, flowers, bats, ghost moths and possibly some others – the bird one is at 7am on 6 May when we will look at the birds of Northcliffe that are up and about.

I wish to advise all members that this will be the last edition of me editing your publication so if there is anybody out there who would like to take on the editor's job please contact Steve Bruzzese. Many thanks to the many people who have complemented us on our productions.

Thanks also to those who have contributed articles over the last 5 years whilst I have been editor – I couldn't have done it without your loyalty and expertise.



Liz Hansen
Editor



Annual Report January–December 2018

by Steve Bruzzese



Overview

This year has seen our group having to actively campaign against a decision by the Council to include Northcliffe as a potential site for a new crematorium. The community really came out in support against the proposal, with Val Harris orchestrating a successful campaign to defeat it.

We had our usual activities earlier in the year, but plans for a community engagement event in October to try and attract more active volunteers had to be postponed. The momentum of the campaign, and the new folk it has attracted, could well be an opportunity for 2019. After all, we may have won this campaign, but what about the future? Where is our voice in the current running of the park? What will happen as central government funding for Councils continues to decrease, and further decisions about where to spend and save money have to be made? This incident has demonstrated that the community has a dangerously low level of input into decisions about land held in trust that affects them as beneficiaries. In my view as Chair, this should be our focus for 2019 and beyond – to build more meaningful and constructive relationships with Council officers and decision-makers, and be consulted with and involved at a much earlier stage. Collectively, we have a lot of skills and knowledge, and that should be

drawn upon by the Council more than it is now.

At the AGM in January 2018, Julia Pearson stepped down from her role as Conservation Officer, a position she had held for almost 10 years. During that time Julia has spearheaded our efforts to reduce Himalayan Balsam, and increase the biodiversity of the woodlands through good management, amongst many other things. Julia did continue to be a general committee member, so her involvement is continuing, but her work as outgoing Conservation Officer was recognised with a vote of thanks at the AGM.

We would like to extend the customary thanks to all the people who help us with our activities – our members, volunteers, event leaders, committee members and the general public who support our events and activities. We also thank the groups we collaborated with and whose facilities and services we used this year, such as Bradford Model Engineering Society (BMES), Northcliffe Environmental Enterprises Team (NEET), Northcliffe Allotments Society (NAS), Shipley Club, St. Paul's Church, Bradford Environmental Education Service (BEES), Kirkgate Centre and RSPB Bradford and Airedale Local Group. Thanks are also due to Morrisons Enterprise 5 store for their generous support of our Santa Special, and also to Q20 Events, who lent us props for Santa's



grotto. And a final thank you to Bradford Council for their continued support, particularly the Parks & Landscape Service and the Trees & Woodland Team. We've also seen great support from two Council Officers, Mick Priestley and Antonio Smith, as we worked through the detail of the crematorium proposals.

Northcliffe Says No Campaign

In the summer we heard the news that Northcliffe had been put on a list of possible crematoria sites for North Bradford, to replace the Nab Wood one that is polluting the valley and attracting fines, and cannot be replaced because there isn't enough land.

A member of FON quickly got an on-line petition going objecting to the use of Northcliffe for this purpose, and the Dogs of Northcliffe set up their lines of bones around the proposed site and got good local publicity. A meeting for anyone who wanted to help with the campaign was soon organised at the bowling club and 100 people crammed in.

A campaign group was formed, people offered their help with leafletting, petitioning, organising events, and raising funds. A meeting was sought with the key council officials who explained what was happening, why now, what process they were engaged in and we talked about why people were so angry and against the proposal.

Some people started to look at Charity Commission rulings in similar situations while others organised a rally in the park in September. Between us we managed to leaflet 4000 houses around the park.

The rally was attended by several hundred people who marched behind the Peace Artists band, from the main gates to the possible site of the crematorium. They linked arms around the outline to show how much land would be taken and how it would split the park in two. The rally got good press coverage and raised the awareness of local people to what was going on.

The petition had attracted a couple of thousand signatures and was presented to the full council meeting in October by many people wearing Northcliffe Says No tee shirts. Steve as chair of FON addressed the full council and our local green councillors, Martin and Kevin, had put forward a motion to the council that Northcliffe should be taken off the list, the Labour leadership put an amendment which all the Labour councillors voted, which left Northcliffe on the list of possible sites for the crematorium while consultants undertook a feasibility study.

Meanwhile we had produced an ecological summary paper about Northcliffe and another about how Northcliffe supports people's health and well-being, and these will be presented to the feasibility consultants as soon as we can get to them. The first report from the consultants, based on desk research and a walk over, will be presented to the Council Executive on the 8th January. It would be nice to see Northcliffe eliminated at this stage, but we cannot be sure of that. We have continued to collect more petition signatures and these will be sent to the executive for their meeting.

Meanwhile the Humans of Northcliffe campaign continues to collect stories about the importance of Northcliffe to people who use it. Members of the campaign group are ploughing through lots of documents about planning permissions, others are looking in fine detail at the governance documents affecting the park, while lawyers are preparing our complaint to the Charity Commissioners if Northcliffe is left on the list. The meadow area was surveyed in the summer and we now have enough different flowers and grasses to qualify for a Local Wildlife Site and that was confirmed in the middle of December. This designation gives us more power to oppose any planning application. The campaign group have organised some actions over Christmas on the possible site and are working on a publicity campaign for the New Year.

Since the compilation of this report, the Executive of Bradford Council have voted to exclude Northcliffe from the list of potential sites, following an initial feasibility study run by an independent consultancy. This is great news, and although not strictly in the reporting year for this annual report, is nevertheless worth including and celebrating. Thanks to everyone who supported us, in particular to Val Harris for running the campaign group, and Tony Woods for the huge amount of research that informed much of the campaign.

Conservation

This year we have run more conservation sessions than at any time in the past. The mid-week group met every month apart from November when the weather was

too poor to work; so over the year 18 x 2 hour sessions took place with between 4 and 8 people attending. Six other sessions were held, some on another mid-week day and others in evenings or at weekends – the evening and weekend sessions attracted between 6–15 people.

The mid-week group continued to repair paths with the chippings supplied by the council; plant trees; clear up the debris from various storms and make habitat piles; thin some trees and coppice others; keep the silt traps on the dyke cleared; build leaky dams; and maintain the bird feeding area in good repair.

One weekend group worked to clear the vegetation from the damp areas within Old Spring Wood to enable these areas to remain as damp areas and not dry out, one mid-week session also worked in Old Spring Wood to repair the damage when a large tree was taken down and left, and to generally tidy up the area.

All the groups that met over the summer spent time pulling up the balsam in Northcliffe Woods and this year we made a serious inroad into the plants, let's hope there are fewer next year! We found that they had travelled to the top allotments and we worked with the allotment society to try and remove them from the communal plot.

Joint work with the Allotment Society continued on the project site between the two sets of allotments where we have worked on a wildlife area, continued to create tree nursery beds and planted a hazel hedge and a sloe hedge. The Forest of Bradford continued to supply trees as



we needed them, and they planted a thorn hedge along the top allotment site to help improve security on the site as well as creating different habitats for birds.

Overall our work to increase biodiversity is paying off, and the regular bird watchers report that there are more interesting birds nesting in Northcliffe. When the bird boxes were cleared out this year well over 2/3rd of them were found to have been used for nesting – 2 out of the 3 tree creeper boxes had been used which was really good news.

We hosted a couple of visits from groups from outside Shipley, one from Low Wood, a Yorkshire Wildlife Reserve near Keighley, and a Birding Group from Ilkley.

We have been working to the original management plan agreed with the council when we set up the mid-week group, and following a recent walking meeting with the relevant council officer we will be updating the plan over the winter. This will include planting in some parts of the park – on the edge of the existing groups of trees, and creating more scrubby edges to support birds. We will be looking to plant more berry bearing and colourful small trees and shrubs. We have been successful with a bid to the Woodland Trust and will be receiving over 400 trees to plant the High Bank Lane end of the park, probably in March (look out for the adverts and come and join us). We also plan to plant some bluebells in this area to try and establish a new area of bluebells and wood anemones. We will also be looking to plant some more trees along the main tarmac path to replace those that have

been taken out because they died back and became unsafe.

The Big Garden Bird Watch organised between the RSPB, FON and the Allotment Society, took place on a miserable day in January, let's hope the one due in the coming January has better weather!

This year we said good bye to some people who have moved away and welcome some others to the group. We are always looking for new volunteers to help with any of our conservation activities, so do get in touch if you would like to know more. If you know of any groups who would like to put in a session working in Northcliffe then please let us know and we may be able to arrange something.

Heritage

In the first part of the year Tony Woods started to redraft his full and final report on the Heritage project. An initial start was made on a 12 page summary document and plans were made for a final exhibition panel and a public meeting later in the year. Then for many reasons both political and personal the Heritage project had a fairly quiet last part of the year. The council's decision to think about building a crematorium on Northcliffe took a lot of energy from key people in the heritage project as the Northcliffe Says No campaign took over the summer and autumn and is on-going. We have mapped out one potential self-guided walk along the dyke and through the woods with various deviations up the S shaped track towards the golf course. This work is now being picked back up again and we hope to have a draft prepared over the winter.

Guy Barford has delivered a talk on the findings of the heritage project to about 35 members of the Active Citizens group who meet at St Peters Church.

Jane Robinson took the display boards to the international Celebrating Our Woodland Heritage Conference which was held Friday 16 to Sunday 18 November 2018 at the University of Bradford. The boards were looked at by many people, and one questioner after one of the presentations even mentioned them by name and praised them. Funding has been obtained to complete the final board and hopefully that will happen before too long.

Events

The continued lack of an events officer continues to limit the activities we are able to put on. Melanie Bruzzese has continued to ensure our major events take place (Rae Gala and Easter event).

The regular Big Garden Birdwatch took place in January, with the support of members from the Bradford and Airedale RSPB Group. The weather was atrocious, and only a handful of people turned up. We are hoping a change of day and better weather will improve attendance in 2019. The Easter Bunny picnic unfortunately had to be cancelled, as weather once again thwarted the careful preparations we had made.

The Rae Gala took place on its traditional slot of the first weekend in July, with another bumper turnout. We renewed our partnership with Q20 Events as part of the Shipley Street Arts festival, with their elephants roaming around the Gala as they had in Shipley town centre the

previous day. Thanks as ever to all our stallholders and performers, and John Dembickjy from the Council's Parks and Landscape Service, standing in for Sean Gardner who has been part of the furniture at previous Galas – a super substitute, thanks John! Many thanks also to BMES, volunteers from FoN and people who made donations of cakes and money on the day – without you, the event would not be the success that it is.

The fifth annual Santa Special, in conjunction with BMES, rounded off the year. We decided to reduce numbers slightly this year to make logistics easier, and the event a more pleasant experience for the volunteers who work so hard to put it on. This meant that following the priority booking period for FoN and BMES members, no public sales were required. Thanks to all the volunteers from FoN and BMES who helped in the run-up and on the day, particularly Melanie, Ken and John (Santa). We'd also like to thank Morrisons Idle Enterprise 5 for their generous help with gifts, and Q20 Events for the loan of props for Santa's Grotto.

A massive thank you to all our event leaders and generous members, who have donated their time, baking, produce and prizes over the year. You all do a fantastic job. Thank you also to the Parks and Landscape Service for giving us the continued use of the tennis pavilion for storage of our equipment, we are really grateful, in particular to John Dembickjy who is a great support.



Promotion

We continue to have a vacancy for a Promotions officer. Thanks to Val, Joan and Keith, who have kept the noticeboards up to date with FoN events. Thanks also to Guy Barford for representing FoN with the Active Citizens Group meeting at St Peter's Church.

Social media continues to be our strongest promotional channel. Twitter now has 1,036 followers, and our Facebook page has 552 likes. Our hashtag #NorthcliffeSaysNo reached over 10,000 people during the most active phase of the campaign. There is still a vacancy for a promotions officer, so please do get in touch if you can help.

Newsletters

We produced one newsletter this year, and then decided to move to a more regular and concise bulletin, with an annual yearbook that would contain the annual report plus other articles. We would like to thank Phil Morrison who continues to provide his expert services free of charge; the members who regularly deliver it locally; and Shipley Print for their excellent service. Many members receive the newsletter by e-mail only, and this saves us money and delivery time. However a printed copy can always be useful, and passed on to prospective new members. Do e-mail Joan if you would like a printed copy again.

Our current Editor, Liz Hansen, is still looking for a successor, although this will no longer be a regular requirement like the newsletter. If you are the creative type, or enjoy writing, or just have an interest

(or know someone who does), then please get in touch.

Membership

We had 214 members as at the end of December 2018. We have had 51 new members, boosted by the #NorthcliffeSaysNo campaign, and overall have increased by 30 from 184 last year.

Sadly, one of our longest standing members, Brenda Shields, passed away in December. On behalf of all our members, we would like to offer our sincere condolences to Brenda's family and friends.

Administration

We have continued to hold planning meetings at the Shipley Club, and we thank them for their continuing support. We are holding our AGM at the Kirkgate Centre, to maintain our links with and support another important community facility.

Finance

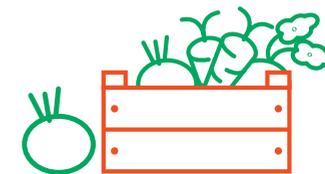
Finances continue to be well managed and healthy as evidenced by our Annual Accounts. We intend to agree a budget at the AGM.

Acknowledgements

Report prepared by Steve Bruzzese on behalf of the Committee: Steve Bruzzese (Chair), Guy Barford (Deputy Chair), Sheila Parkin (Secretary), Joan Newman (Treasurer and Membership), Val Harris (Conservation and Heritage job-share), Keith Scott (Website), Liz Hansen (Newsletter), Tony Woods (Heritage job-share), Julia Pearson, Joan Stevens (General Committee Members). With contributions from Joan Newman, Liz Hansen, Val Harris, Melanie Bruzzese and Steve Bruzzese.

Northcliffe Allotment Society

by Val Harris



We took on more of the day-to-day management this year and in 2019 we plan to be fully self-managing and independent of the council.

The sites are fully let and we have a reasonable waiting list. We have created 8 new plots on an area that hasn't been used as allotment for many many years and they will be let soon. We are creating a new community space behind our club house.

We have started to make flower beds and with the help of FON midweek group we have created a wild life friendly area at the back of the site and have already seen an increase in birds and insects. We are going to set up a monthly weekend gardening group, which anyone can join, to take over the community gardens, keeping on top of the beds we have planted and making more of this area safe and interesting so we can open it to anyone to use.

This new group will also be developing a new community orchard on a nearby plot. So if you are interested in some gardening and pruning then look out for the posters about this group starting, probably in March, or get in touch if you want to find out more; contact allotmentval@phoncoop.coop or call on **01274 582191**.

We held our annual bonfire night event which this year was the most popular ever and a lovely atmosphere. Every year we open the club house to the RSPB and FON to run the Big Garden Birdwatch at the feeding area, this year it will be Saturday 26 January 1-3 pm. We will hold our annual plant swap and sale, with cakes etc, at the clubhouse on Saturday 8 June 2-4 pm



A Selection of Wild Flowers in Northcliffe Meadow

by Julia Pearson



Orange Hawkweed

This dandelion-like flower grows in spreading patches in the thin soils on the hill near High Bank Lane. It has a rosette of blue-green leaves and a hairy stem about 15cm tall. It is known to many people as Fox and Cubs, so named not just because of its vivid orange colour, but because whilst some flowers are unfurled there are always further immature buds, the 'cubs', waiting to open.

Another name it was known by in the past was 'Grim the Collier' because of the black hairs on the stem resembling a coalminer after a shift down the mine. But the derogatory use of Grim may also be adopted as this vigorous plant can pose a problem in some settings. However, in our meadow its long flowering period is a welcome splash of colour and, more importantly, a great source of nectar for the insects.

Yellow Rattle

This yellow flower, the petals fused into a tube, appears between May and August, and is spreading in several areas of the meadow. We think it must have been introduced on the tractor tyres when the meadow has been cut, as the seed is only viable in the year it is produced so cannot have been lying dormant in the soil. When the seeds are ripe they rattle in their capsule, said to be an indication the hay is ready to cut. The plant is semi-parasitic; it fixes onto the roots of the grasses that it grows amongst (Yorkshire Fog being one of its favourites), extracting water and minerals and reducing the vigour of the grass. In the long term the presence of Yellow Rattle should help increase the diversity and abundance of flower species in the meadow.



Orchids

Over the past few years we have enjoyed watching the emergence of an orchid population. Common Spotted Orchid was the first to be recorded in the lower area near the pavilion, followed by Southern Marsh Orchid. These two species are both from the Dactylophiza family and hybridise freely. The hybrids show a mix of characteristics and generally appear more robust and vigorous.

There is an established colony of orchids on the bend on High Bank Lane, so this may be where the seeds originated. The tiny seeds (think of a speck of dust) are distributed on the wind, but the success of germination requires the seed to land where it can form a symbiotic relationship with fungus in the soil. Unlike most plants the seed does not have its own built-in food supply, so they rely on the fungus to sustain the seedling until it is developed enough to produce chlorophyll and can photosynthesis. It can take years until it is mature enough to flower, but the strategy then is to produce a lot of seeds, about half a million a year, to increase the chance that some will land in a suitable place.



Lesser Stitchwort

This straggly plant with small white flowers and narrow pointed leaves can be found in the lower area of the meadow, its delicate stems being supported by the grasses. It is similar to Greater Stitchwort which can be found in the woods, but it is smaller; the flowers have 5 deeply divided petals and only 5–12mm across. It is not thought to have the same medicinal properties as Greater Stitchwort, which was used to ease 'stitches' in your side. (A preparation of stitchwort and acorns in wine was a standard remedy!).

Please watch out for details of a Wild Flower walk that we are planning for some time in June 2019.



Northcliffe Meadow

A Special Place

by Hugh Firman



Ten years ago, following a suggestion by Friends of Northcliffe, Bradford Council took the bold decision to manage most of the grasslands of Northcliffe as a hay meadow. Seeing the wonderful tapestry of different coloured grasses and wildflowers with swallows and bats swooping low to hunt insects it is difficult to imagine that, prior to 2008, the grassland was mown every few weeks.

How much the floristic diversity has increased was made clear in mid-June when a small group of fellow botanists and I carried out a survey. The purpose of the survey was to establish whether the meadow qualified as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS). LWSs are the best places for wildlife in West Yorkshire, they receive some measure of protection in the planning system and are priorities for wildlife conservation.

Grasslands are assessed according to the number of 'indicator species', plants only found on high quality grasslands. 8 widely distributed species are required and our group found a magnificent 13 with a further 4 sparsely occurring species. The widely distributed species found were sweet vernal-grass, wavy hair-grass, yellow rattle, cuckoo flower, black knapweed, common spotted orchid, southern marsh-orchid, heath bedstraw,

meadow vetchling, common bird's-foot-trefoil, heath wood-rush, sheep's sorrel, and lesser stitchwort. Rarer occurring indicator species included oxeye daisy, bluebell, red bartsia and hybrid spotted orchid. By way of comparison, a similar survey in 2009 found just four indicator species!

The meadow forms part of a wildlife corridor of grasslands stretching west alongside High Bank Lane and Stoney Ridge Road. The network also includes the small grassland at the top of Moorhead Lane just across the road from Northcliffe which we also surveyed this summer and which also meets the LWS criteria.

On behalf of Friends of Northcliffe, I duly submitted the records and paperwork and I am delighted to report that Northcliffe Meadow and High Bank Lane Meadow were designated as LWSs in December 2018. They join Northcliffe and Old Spring Woods which were designated a few years ago. This designation may prove crucial if anybody comes along with a daft idea such as building a crematorium!

I hope, when Spring eventually arrives, you will be able to get out and explore and enjoy Northcliffe meadow; we are lucky to have such a wonderful place on our doorsteps.

BMES 2018

Full steam ahead

by Ken Shipley

Easter is the traditional start of our running season and the run up to it is usually fairly sedate with just track and garden maintenance taking place.

However, in 2018 we were frantically completing the renewal of our raised level track which had been started as soon as the 2017 season finished. We did manage but it was a close-run thing.

We run various events during the year in partnership with FoN. The first one being The Easter Bunny event on 31st March, unfortunately this had to be cancelled due to the heavy rainfall beforehand.

The Big Lunch took place in June followed by "Rae Day". This is the biggest joint venture we hold each year on the first Sunday in July. The weather was glorious for this one and a very pleasant and successful day was enjoyed by all.



December sees Mel's dream fulfilled with the Santa Special when after a train ride to the grotto Santa listens to the children's requests and gives all the well-behaved ones a gift. Every year up to press we've been blessed with pretty good weather for a December day. Let's hope it continues for 2019.



As well as the joint events BMES try and run trains most Sunday afternoons, weather permitting, from 2.00–4.00 pm, starting at Easter to the end of October. We also run Birthday parties on selected Saturdays during the summer, these can be booked by emailing John Mills at j.mills@technical3d.co.uk

Booking opens at the beginning of January.

On behalf of BMES and FoN I should like to thank everyone involved in helping to make the events a success.



SANTA SPECIAL 2018



Our annual event, now entering its 6th year, took place on Sunday 9 December.

As usual, the event sold out well in advance, this time requiring no external publicity. We reduced the numbers this year in order to create a more pleasant experience for passengers and volunteers alike. That means it's moving closer to becoming a member-only event, with both Bradford Model Engineering Society (BMES) and Friends of Northcliffe members taking advantage of an exclusive priority booking period.

The reduction in numbers really helped things run smoothly. Things were calm and ordered both on the platforms and in the grotto.

It's great to see so many children enjoying this special event, and just as important that our hard-working volunteers enjoy it too. As ever, our sincere thanks go to all our friends at BMES and FoN volunteers who ran things on the day, as well as to Morrisons Enterprise 5 and Q20 Events for supporting us with gifts and props.

Thanks also to Melanie and Ken for being the organising force behind the event; John, Caitlin, Holly, Sheila, Nicola and Linda for their efforts in the grotto; and to all of you reading this who came along on the day.





MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2018



Welcome to the many new families who joined us this year, and to those who renewed membership from a few years back as a result of the #SayNo campaign against the crematorium proposal.

We currently have 212 memberships. (184 at 2018 AGM)

Subscriptions for 2019/2020 have already been paid by some families, and a few have set up a standing order to pay yearly.

Membership fees (Fixed at 2016 AGM and will be kept into 2019)

Family	£7
Family concession	£6
Single	£5
Single concession	£4

Many members have been generous and paid more than their renewal fees every year. We have had extra payments designated to the general fund, bird food, bird boxes, conservation and to the SayNo campaign and we thank you for this.

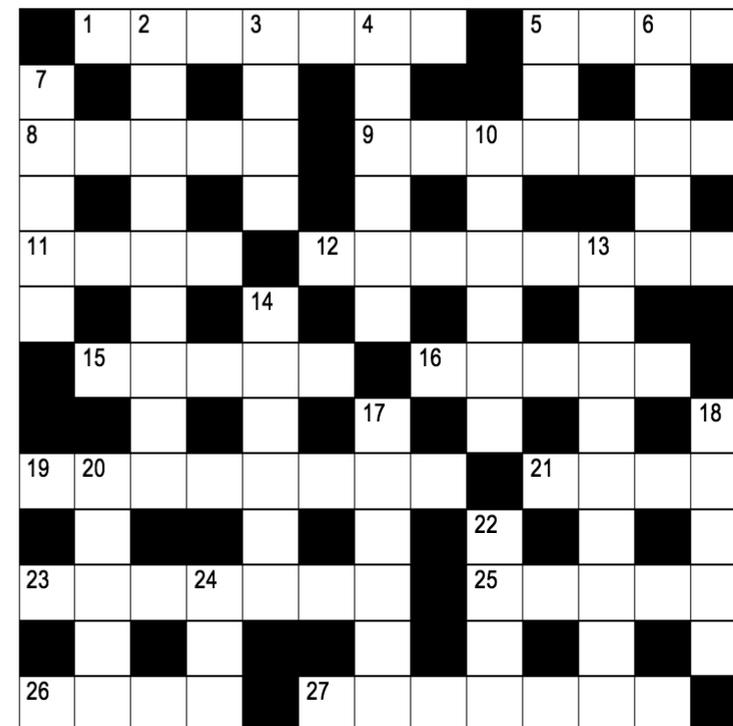
The membership year starts in April, so if you have given an e-mail address in your membership details you will receive a reminder in March. Early payment helps us with planning for the year, so please bear that in mind.

Many members are happy with e-mail only contact and have therefore been receiving the Newsletter electronically however from 2019 there will only be a Year Book.



Joan Newman
FoN Treasurer/Membership,
January 2018

NORTHCLIFFE CROSSWORD 2019



Across

- 1 Perches in the park for humans (7)
- 5 Young kangaroo (4)
- 8 A lion makes these noises (5)
- 9 A common UK goose with a colour in its name (7)
- 11 A method of fastening string & rope (4)
- 12 Medicinal plant with white daisy-like flowers (8)
- 15 A slum mixed up for trees producing ornamental and edible apples (5)
- 16 Torte converts to a carnivorous water mammal (5)
- 19 Birds often seen flying up here (8)
- 21 Lazy (4)
- 23 Reverse flips to become a place left for nature (7)
- 25 Tracks for vehicles (5)
- 26 Second hand (4)
- 27 Description of old scrubby trees (7)

Down

- 2 Change a tape over – see water drying up (9)
- 3 Payment by this or card (4)
- 4 Sea leg flips to become large soaring birds (6)
- 5 A noisy colourful crow (3)
- 6 A seer rearranges to wipe out (5)
- 7 Raked flips to be come a male duck (5)
- 10 Steven twisted – e.g. Santa Special and Rae Gala (6)
- 13 i.e. raffled is a large thrush-like bird (9)
- 14 A writer is in our hat (6)
- 17 Latent turned into natural ability (6)
- 18 A huge delicious celebration meal (5)
- 20 Serve changes direction (5)
- 22 Tiny brown bird with a cocked tail (4)
- 24 The last one (3)

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

Composed by Joan Newman, assisted by Douglas Lumb



Northcliffe Bird Report 2018

by Chris Gill and Margot Rowan

The following birds – a total of 43 species – were recorded in Northcliffe woods, meadow, allotments and park during 2018:

Grey Heron, Pheasant, Sparrowhawk, Kestrel, Herring Gull, Black-headed Gull, Stock Dove, Wood Pigeon, Collared Dove, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Tawny Owl, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Swift, Swallow, House Martin, Pied Wagtail, Starling, Wren, Dunnock, Jay, Magpie, Carrion Crow, Jackdaw, Blackcap, Whitethroat, Chiffchaff, Robin, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush, Fieldfare, Redwing, Blue Tit, Coal Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Great Tit, Nuthatch, Tree Creeper, House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch. Many of these birds are resident breeders; others are breeding migrants (summer visitors from overseas) or winter visitors.

The house sparrow, starling, song thrush, mistle thrush, fieldfare and redwing are categorised as Red List birds of high conservation priority which means their national status is under threat. A further 7 bird species (stock dove, swift, house martin, dunnock, bullfinch, kestrel and



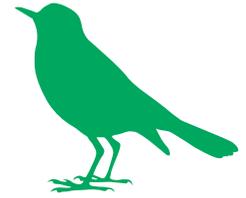
tawny owl) are on the Amber List because their breeding population has declined by more than 25%. All these birds depend on the diverse habitat of Northcliffe for food, nesting and roosting sites.

Making a bird-friendly habitat

Volunteer groups work in the woods regularly to enhance bio-diversity. More than 30 bird boxes were in place by the spring and more than 20 of these were used this year for breeding. When you walk in Northcliffe you might notice that the boxes are not all the same. That is because different birds have different needs. (Small birds also use bird boxes for shelter in the winter months.) For example, a box for a tree creeper has an entrance slit rather than a hole to mimic a slit in a tree. However, this Northcliffe tree creeper (photographed in May of this year by Martin Potter) found its own nesting site!



Most of our favourite songbirds – blackbirds, robins, wrens, blackcaps for example – nest on the ground or very close to the ground. To protect their eggs and young from predators they need dense vegetation in which to build their nests. To provide this necessary environment, volunteers have been busy constructing woodpiles and planting low level bushes. Where necessary, paths have been diverted away from known nesting sites.



Food for the birds

Nearly 300 plant species have been recorded at Northcliffe, particularly in the meadow. Plants attract insects. A good example of this is Birdsfoot Trefoil which provides food for 160 different insects.

Many of the Northcliffe birds depend on insects for food for themselves and their young.

Berry-producing plants and trees are essential food sources for many birds in the colder months.

Seed-feeders like these two handsome goldfinch enjoy our bird feeders. The feeding station is an excellent opportunity to introduce young birders to tits, finches, woodpeckers, robins, dunnocks, blackbirds and even the occasional pheasant!



This is a volunteer using woodchip to keep the paths usable in the winter.

Other volunteer jobs include wildlife monitoring, cutting back brambles from paths, building log piles, planting hedges and trees and regularly filling the bird feeders in the feeding station.



Now & Then

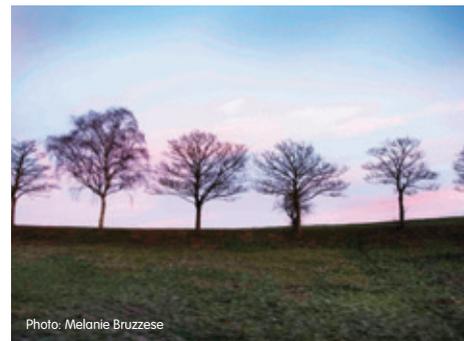
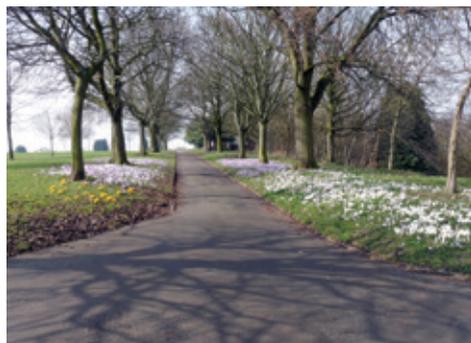
by Pete Shuttleworth



The greatest impact this year for FoN has undoubtedly been the announcement that Northcliffe is being considered as the location for a new crematorium. This came as a great shock but it's the second time in recent years that we have been faced with the fact that part of the park could be built upon. Approximately 25 years ago a planning application was made to construct a car park part way up High Bank Lane and the Friends at that time campaigned vigorously against it – so how did that campaign differ from our present day efforts?

The problems that both committees faced were very similar. At heart we are an environmental group aimed at preserving the park so our collective skills point towards this aim, rather than one of campaigning. Our current chairman, Steve, has done a fantastic job of making everyone aware of the impending threat by making sure that members are kept

up to date via the FoN website, organising a mass awareness meeting, petitioning Bradford Council and kick starting the Northcliffe Say No campaign. On the other hand the committee of 25 years ago was led by Gladys Shuttleworth. Their numbers were smaller and access to the internet was limited so meetings had to be organised through word of mouth, with the campaign being highlighted in editions of the Target and Telegraph and Argus.



In each case though members were united by a combined feeling that what was being proposed was wrong and was not for the benefit of the local population. Their subsequent commitment and determination has shone through on every occasion.

Both campaigns rely upon the wording of the deed under which the land was gifted for public use. The car park application failed prior to its planning stage because it could not be shown that the ground was being used for the "benefit of the public". On the other hand if a proposal is submitted to the planning authorities that is for the benefit of the public (which some might argue includes a crematorium), then would a subsequent application succeed?



This is a debate that we may have to consider in the future but for the time being we are awaiting the results of a feasibility study that is looking into five possible sites within the Bradford boundary. Two crematoria are planned on these sites and if Northcliffe is recommended for one of them then obviously the fight continues.

Whilst we have a pause into the New Year, let us remind ourselves as to why FoN are in opposition to the proposal. There is something about the park that people really value. Whether it's the quietness, the open space, memories of a happy childhood sledging down devils bump, wildlife, woodlands – to name but a few. In effect, emotional roots have been established which members don't want to see disturbed. We like the park as it has always been and collectively we have a responsibility to pass this gift to the people of Shipley onto the next generation. Today this is our fight. This is our now, and then let's hope that tomorrow someone will say that we too did a good job.



Northcliffe Says No Campaign

by Val Harris



In the summer we heard the news that Northcliffe had been put on a list of possible crematoria sites for North Bradford, to replace the Nab Wood one that is polluting the valley and attracting fines, and cannot be replaced because there isn't enough land.

A member of FON quickly got an on-line petition going objecting to the use of Northcliffe for this purpose, and the Dogs of Northcliffe set up their lines of bones around the proposed site and got good local publicity. A meeting for anyone who wanted to help with the campaign was soon organised at the bowling club and 100 people crammed in.



A campaign group was formed, people offered their help with leafleting, petitioning, organising events, and raising funds. A meeting was sought with the key council officials who explained what was happening, why now, what process they were engaged in and we talked about why people were so angry and against the proposal.

Some people started to look at Charity Commission rulings in similar situations while others organised a rally in the park in September. Between us we managed to leaflet 4000 houses around the park. The rally was attended by several hundred people who marched behind the Peace Artists band, from the main gates to the possible site of the crematorium. They filled the outline to show how much land would be taken and how it would split the park in two. The rally got good press coverage and raised the awareness of local people to what was going on.



The petition had attracted a couple of thousand signatures and was presented to the full council meeting in October by many people wearing Northcliffe Says No tee shirts. Steve, as chair of FON, addressed the full council and our local green Councillors, Martin and Kevin, put forward a motion to the council that Northcliffe should be taken off the list, the Labour leadership put an amendment which all the Labour Councillors voted, which left Northcliffe on the list of possible sites for the crematorium while consultants undertake a feasibility study.

Meanwhile we had produced an ecological summary paper about Northcliffe and another about how Northcliffe supports people's health and well-being, and these will be presented to the feasibility consultants as soon as we can get to them. The first report from the consultants, based on desk research and a walk over, will be presented to the Council Executive on the 8 January. It would be nice to see Northcliffe eliminated at this stage, but we cannot be sure of that. We have continued to collect more petition signatures and these will be sent to the executive for their meeting.



Meanwhile the Humans of Northcliffe campaign continues to collect stories about the importance of Northcliffe to people who use it. Members of the campaign group are ploughing through lots of documents about planning permissions, others are looking in fine detail at the governance documents affecting the park, while lawyers are preparing our complaint to the Charity Commissioners if Northcliffe is left on the list. The meadow area was surveyed in the summer and we now have enough different flowers and grasses to qualify for a Local wildlife site and that was confirmed in the middle of December, this designation gives us more power to oppose any planning application. The campaign group have organised some actions over Christmas on the possible site and are working on a publicity campaign for the new year.



WOODY'S SPOT for younger friends

By Jeannie Kopasz



WHO ARE THE GOOD GUYS AND THE BAD GUYS AT NORTHCLIFFE?

Spring

We usually find it easy to tell the good guys from the bad. Good guys are popular and everyone likes them while the baddies are just altogether bad. End of story. But it's not so straightforward in the natural world – the world of birds and animals, flowers and insects. In their world it's more difficult to define what is good or bad.

Take dandelions, for example. Good or bad? Gardeners go to great lengths to keep their paths and flower beds free from dandelions which they think of as weeds. Gardeners don't like weeds. So, does that make dandelions Bad Guys? You probably won't think so if you ever see the meadow at Northcliffe carpeted with golden yellow dandelions in the spring. It's a stunning sight. They are so common here that we take them for granted but visitors from the Far East (where dandelions don't grow) often think they are the most beautiful flowers they have ever seen.

Native American Indians have a legend about the dandelion. They say that the South Wind (known to them as Shawwondassee) lived in a warm country where there were many flowers

and birds. Shawwondassee loved his homeland and wanted the people of other countries to have some of the flowers that made him so happy. He had seen how bleak and barren the northlands were so he sent some birds to scatter flower seeds over the empty prairie. The following year, Shawwondassee saw, from a distance, what he thought was a beautiful girl standing amongst the grasslands. She was dressed in the brightest green and her yellow hair blew in the soft breeze as she lifted her face to the sun. Everyone who saw her was happy. One day, the South Wind was sad to see that the golden yellow hair had become as white as snow. He sighed deeply and, as he breathed, the lovely girl disappeared before his eyes leaving only a soft, feathery down amongst the grass.

Soon, the North Wind came rushing across the prairie bringing snow and ice. The following spring, when the snow had melted, Shawwondassee was surprised – and happy – to see many beautiful yellow haired girls in the places where the white down had settled on the ground the previous year. Dandelions had come to stay, appearing year after year just as they do now at Northcliffe. Good Guys or Bad Guys?

WORD CHAIN

Find 10 words in the chain, including the names of 2 plants, 3 trees, 1 bird and 4 animals (of which two are molluscs). The last letter of each name is the first letter of the next.

CLOVERANUTHATCHEDGEHOGREYSQUIRRELARCHORSECHESTNUTEASELSNAILSLUGS

Summer

In summer, the meadows and woods at Northcliffe are home to a rich variety of wild flowers.

We see speedwell and birdsfoot trefoil on the meadow, ramsons and bluebells in the woods and yellow flag iris and wild angelica at the pond area to mention but a few. On the steep slopes beyond the pond grows a tall, stately plant with masses of showy flowers. This is Indian balsam. The Victorians brought it from the Himalayas in the mid-19th century and planted it in their gardens. Since then it has spread further afield and made itself at home in damp woods and on river banks.

Its helmet shaped flowers vary in colour from the palest of pinks to the deepest crimson. There are lots of great alternative names for Indian, or Himalayan, balsam. Policeman's helmet and Bee-bums* are descriptive of the flower and Touch-me-not and Stinky Pops refer to the explosive habit of its ripe seed pods. In fact, it's the seed pods themselves which are the secret of its success as one seed pod is able to 'fire' hundreds of seeds at a time to a distance of up to 10 metres.

Have you ever held one or two ripe pods tightly in your hand and waited for them burst open? It feels like having a handful of wriggling insects in your hand!

This sounds like a fun plant with lots going for it! What's not to like? It must be a Good Guy. But, NO! Himalayan balsam, from an environmental point of view, is one of the real Baddies and its growth must be controlled. The dense and excessive spread of Himalayan balsam exclude other native plants from their natural habitat. When it dies back in the winter the ground is left bare and liable to erosion. Bad news for the hillside! For this reason, Friends of Northcliffe volunteers are aiming to control it by uprooting it in the early summer before the flowers set seed. So – Himalayan balsam – Bad Guy!

*Just in case you're wondering about this name Bees are attracted to Himalayan balsam but once they enter the helmet shaped flowers their bums are all that can be seen of them!



TRACKWORD

Draw lines to match the fruiting bodies (seeds) to their correct trees or plants.

Red Berries

Conkers

Explosive Pods

Keys (Samara)

Acorns

Hips

Haws

Hooked Seeds

Burs

Mast

Oak

Hawthorn

Beech

Wild Rose

Himalayan Balsam

Cleavers (Goosegrass)

Horsechestnut

Rowan (Mountain Ash)

Sycamore

Burdock



TRACKWORD

The name of a bright yellow spring flower has been wrapped around the grid. Find the name and then try to make more words by tracking from letter to letter in any direction. If you find more than ten, give yourself a clap!

C E L
N E A
I D N

Spring

The ripening berries on the rowan (mountain ash) are like little scarlet jewels. They were green in July and have since changed through yellow and orange in the countdown to autumn.

The long grass on the meadow has been cut, turned, baled as hay and taken away. Early morning dog walkers' comment on the unaccustomed chill in the air. The morning mist melts away as the sun breaks through and heralds another perfect autumn day. At any time of the year, an early walk across the meadow can be rewarded by the sight of roe deer fleeing back to the shelter of the woods with all the ease and grace of ballet dancers. This beautiful, shy animal feeds mainly on grass, berries and ferns. We'll overlook its occasional habit of damaging trees by eating the bark or new shoots and call it a Good Guy!

The swallows and martins have already embarked on their long and dangerous journey. Squirrels are busy in the wood, collecting acorns and beech nuts to see them through the cold days of winter. The leaves on the trees have taken on their beautiful autumn colours.

Now is the time to look at the fungi which can be found in the woods. Remember that some fungi can make you very ill so don't handle anything unless you are with someone who can identify fungi with certainty.

A fungus is a non-flowering plant which lacks chlorophyll. All living things need food. Plants which have chlorophyll are able to use it to interact with sunlight to meet their needs. Most fungi, on the other hand, 'feed' on the organic matter of dead plants (or even animals). This may sound a bit gruesome but, in doing this, fungi are carrying out a very important job – recycling. For example, fungi can process fallen leaves – which then release essential elements to benefit other plants.

Probably the most easily recognised fungus is the fly agaric is the red and white toadstool often portrayed in picture books or on greetings cards. Attractive though it is, do remember that fly agaric is poisonous. So, what's the verdict on fungi? Good guys or bad guys? Mostly good guys if you leave them alone to get on with their important work.





'One toadstool is a fungus. More than one becomes fungi.'

Autumn

The ripening berries on the rowan (mountain ash) are like little scarlet jewels. They were green in July and have since changed through yellow and orange in the countdown to autumn.

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Winter

Winter brings cold winds, rain, sleet and snow. It is a difficult time for birds and wild animals. They need food and shelter which are often hard to find. Their homes may be lost to flooding or storms. Food is scarce and, without it, they can die. This, in fact, is how most birds die.

Some animals cope with winter by going into hibernation, which is a very long sleep. Others, like the squirrel, just rest up throughout the worst of the winter but go looking for their food stores on sunnier days. The late arrival of spring is probably the worst thing of all for animals who are already hungry and weakened by months of cold, wet weather. The late snow of March 2018 was a disaster for them even though it was great for the sledgers at Northcliffe. The hillside near the golf club became a winter sports ground for all, while giant snowmen colonised the cricket pitch near the play area.

At the beginning of December, Santa Claus returned to Northcliffe for one day only. His visitors boarded trains at the BMES station house and enjoyed travelling in style to the grotto. It was generally agreed that 'Santa's Right-Hand Elf' and the BMES (Braford Model Engineering Society) team could give British Rail a few tips on how to run railways! These really were the GOOD GUYS!



Answers:

Word Chain:

clover rowan nuthatch hedgehog grey squirrel larch horsechestnut teasels snails slugs

Fruit And Nut Cases:

red berries – rowan; conkers – horse chestnut; explosive pods – Himalayan balsam; keys – sycamore; acorns – oak; hips – wild rose; haws – hawthorn; hooked seeds – cleavers; burs – burdock; mast – beech.





If you'd like to discover more about Friends of Northcliffe
and learn about our activities and history at
www.friendsofnorthcliffe.org.uk

Or to join the Friends of Northcliffe visit
www.friendsofnorthcliffe.org.uk/join-us.html

Email: friendsofnorthcliffe@gmail.com

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Answers to Crossword 2019

Across

1 Benches; 5 Joey; 8 Roars; 9 Greylag; 11 Knot; 12 Feverfew; 15 Malus; 16 Otter; 19 Overhead; 21 Idle;
23 Reserve; 25 Roads; 26 Used; 27 Stunted

Down

2 Evaporate; 3 Cash; 4 Eagles; 5 Jay; 6 Erase; 7 Drake; 10 Events; 13 Fieldfare; 14 Author; 17 Talent;
18 Feast; 20 Veers; 22 Wren; 24 End