

Bearsted Woodland Trust



Newsletter No. 17

2009



Another triumph of community spirit as volunteers
from the village come out to dig the maze.

'AMAZING'

www.bearstedwoodlandtrust.org

Registered Charity 1103585

'Out of the Mouths of Babes'

Year 2 Thurnham Visit

All 3 year 2 classes at Thurnham CE Infant School visited BWT on March 18. As school governor and BWT volunteer, John Wale said 'As you can see from their work, the children learned a lot from their visit. Their observations on the trust and its amenities are wonderful. A high proportion of the 90 pupils present had been before, many with their parents and family.' Below are some extracts from letters received from Blue Class – in their own words! The children were guided by: Dave Johnson, David Ward, Jeff Winn, John Wale

By Olivia

"I enjoyed walking because I wanted to look at the plants, trees and incets. Mr Whale took us round. I didn't like hearing about the rabbit poo. I enjoyed the nature I learned about. There was over 2000 trees. Mr Ashness built the woodland trust because he did not want people (building) houses there. There were mole hills."

By Maddy

"When we was at the Woodland Trust the person that was leading us was called Mr Whales. He first showed us the baby trees that are starting to grow. They had protected stuff around the baby trees so the rabbits won't eat the side of the baby tree if they bite the tree it will die. They showed us foxes holes, rabbit holes and mole holes. You have to be careful because if you put your foot down you could break your leg. There were mole hills as well. We went down to the river. We looked out of the bar. The river wasn't moving. On the river there was a wooden bridge and a bridge made of stones. Once we got to the river we stopped because we had time to have our pear. Once you'd finished your pear we put it in a bag. Then we had a walk. There were two paths that leded the same way I went the curvy way. We stopped at a sign that showed us the picture of insects that they've got. There were lots. Then we went to a building that men were building. They were toilets and people who are disabled can park there. Soon we had to go. We said goodbye."

By Zach

"The rabbit holes are deep and dangerous and big. The person who was showing us around he was called Mr Whale. The mole holl we had to be careful in case we fall down it. The fox holls we need to be careful in case your leg goes down it. If it does it might break it. To get to the cottage there is 13 steps to it. The Woodlen Trust is there so no houses do get built there otherwise it would be covered up with houses and gardens and cars and roads and streets and lampposts and fruit gardens."

By Megan

"I liked the wood land trust because it had a cute bird on the rocks on the stream. It was called a green wagtail (grey wagtail) It had lots of birds and animals who only come out in the summer. Mr Whale took us round the wood land trust. Rabbits lived under the ground. There were people bringing wood to make a building what has push-chairs, wheelchairs, toilets and tractors. Mr Ashness brought the woodland trust. I saw a copper beech tree. The only two buildings where a building what keeps () in it and a cottage."

BIFFA Award

BWT was short listed by BIFFA to go forward to the final round in our category judging in the 'Outdoor Recreation of the Biffaward Awards 2009'. Nathan Williams of Biffa spent two hours on Friday 24 July on site going over every detail that Biffa sponsored, with the construction of the path and bridge during 2007 - 08, plus the general day-to-day running and how we have benefitted from their grant, etc. A financial award is £2,000 for our category and there will be an overall winner of a further £5,000 in a presentation ceremony in October this year. They will be releasing press releases very shortly. Sharon Bayne and Peter Willson showed Mr Williams around and reported the visit went exceptionally well. They have high hopes BWT will win in its category. The winners will be announced on 8 October at the Royal Hall, Harrogate. The judge said he's never seen such a large 'community run' project by volunteers! This is a national competition over the whole of UK.

An Amazing Achievement

The Manning Maze in memory of Frank Manning.



Peter Willson, BWT Deputy Chairman writes: 'I was so proud to be part of the team who took part in 'the big community dig'! I'd like to thank Chris Street, Richard Ashness and Sharon Bayne for all the pre-planning. A very big thank you also goes to John Wale for being the project leader assisted by Chris. Organising and co-ordinating in excess of sixty people was no mean task. A very big thank you to Mark Forrest of Forrest Builders, for the use of his vehicle and advice on the day, without which maybe only a half could have been achieved. In excess of eleven yards of soil were excavated. Because of the terrain this was very hard and difficult





digging as we found out when digging holes in that area in 2004 for the oak avenue!!! More than SIXTY people turned out which was all down to Chris letting everybody know what we were planning to do. Just seeing so many people turning up with their spades, forks and wheel barrows was mind boggling and awesome!!! The Manning Maze is now complete and being used by everyone, young and old, who visits BWT.



Also, once again, thank you to Michael Buckley for taking photographs of the event and also to Judy Buckley for updating our web site the very next day.

And finally, thank you to Ann Manning for supplying the refreshments on the day!

Woodland and Conservation

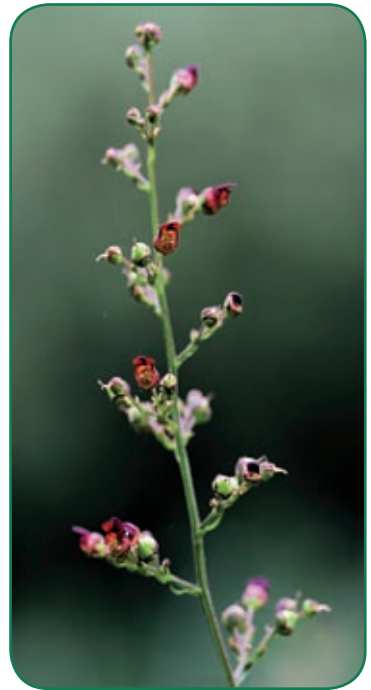
by Sharon Bayne

Tree Sponsorship

Since the Trust first started planting trees in 2004, sponsoring these trees has been incredibly popular. The types of trees and the locations where they are planted are carefully planned to enhance the landscape and to provide an attractive place in the future; not just now but in 20, 50 and 100 years time. Due to this careful planning it is not possible to accommodate individual requests for specific planting locations or tree species, or to 're-home' unwanted garden trees or those grown from seed. There will only be around 10 trees planted this winter and there is currently a waiting list for trees for sponsoring. If you would like to be added to the waiting list please contact Dave Ward on 737133.

Wandering Wetland Plants?

As you've walked down the new sloping path towards the Link bridge you probably did no more than glance at the plants growing on the bank under the hawthorn trees. You may or may not have noticed the wide variety. I did the same – until I stopped to take a closer look and, for a while, was quite confused! What I found was a wide array of wetland plants, usually found growing on the edges of ponds, but in this case growing at the top of the slope on a very dry bank, hundreds of metres from the nearest pond. A bit of lateral thinking revealed the answer. Back in the mid 1990s the owner of the fishing lake dredged the ponds and dumped the spoil over the top of the bank. Many years later the soil was moved during the path construction and the seeds exposed, which miraculously sprang to life. It is unlikely that they will survive in the long term here as the soil is so dry, so enjoy them while you can.



Understanding Woodland Wildlife

The Trust has become involved in a South East wide project which aims to improve understanding of how planted woodlands can develop to maximise their value to wildlife. Headed by the East Malling Research centre and involving experienced nature conservation specialists and organisations, the project will gather information on the wildlife of newly planted woodland and pass this knowledge on to farmers and landowners who want to plant new woodlands. As part of the project the Trust's land has been comprehensively surveyed for birds, bats, insects and plants and recommendations will be made on how management can be improved for all wildlife.

‘Look, it’s a playground!’

The voices of local children say it all. Their appreciation of the new playground makes the decision to build a state of the art, adventure playground indisputably right. The funding of this project came from Maidstone Borough Council to Bearsted Parish Council under s. 106 recreational funding with a total cost of just under £40,000. The land which it has been constructed on has been leased to Bearsted Parish Council by BWT on a 25-year lease. It was invested in a state of the art, wooden adventure play area. Throughout the summer, children of every age have been enjoying this new facility, set in the beautiful surroundings. This has introduced new visitors to BWT, who would otherwise be unaware of our natural haven. It has been constructed for children between 4 and 12 year olds.



2009 Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on Thursday 24 September at 7pm in Bearsted Tennis Club. Bar open and committee members available for informal discussion from 6.30pm. Please try to attend. Your suggestions and comments very welcome. Come and show your support for all the volunteers etc.

Memberships

Everyone is reminded to renew their annual membership. Some are long overdue! Family membership is a minimum of £5 a year, which can be paid by standing order. Alternatively, why not take out a life membership for a one-off payment of £100. For more details please contact Chris on 739713 or chris@bearstedwoodlandtrust.org

Barn Funding

The fundraising total for completing the barn has been given a boost through a further two successful grant applications. Awards for All, a lottery source, has awarded the Trust £4,000. Councillor Paul Carter, Leader of Kent County Council, has also allocated a further £1,000 from his devolved budget towards Phase 2. Many thanks must go to him for his continued support. Funds are still required however so if you would like to make a donation to the ongoing appeal please contact Chris Street, details above.

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