

Friends of Weir Wood Newsletter

Newsletter No. 83

Winter '18/19



Welcome!

FRIENDS 2019 AGM

Our AGM is **Friday March 29th**, at our usual venue in Forest Row. We will start with the formal AGM business at 7:15pm followed by our Guest Speaker at 8pm. The AGM agenda will be:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of 2018 AGM Minutes
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Report.
5. Membership Secretary & Website Editor Report
6. Treasurer's Report & Approval of 2018 Accounts and acceptance of the Auditor
7. Election of Officers and Committee.
8. Any Other Business - Any Questions.

We are a friendly Committee team, who are looking for a new Committee member, particularly someone who could take on some secretarial work, such as taking of Committee meeting minutes (we normally have only 4 meetings a year), or perhaps if you have some wildlife knowledge & experience. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact us.

For 2019, I am pleased to announce that Matt Eade, a very well respected and knowledgeable local Sussex birder and wildlife photographer, is to give us an illustrated talk titled "Birding in Sussex & Beyond".

Matt knows the Sussex birding areas and habitats intimately with a 316 species list for the county, his local patch is around the Cuckmere valley area, where he is also the recorder for the Kittiwake breeding colony in Seaford. He is well travelled having visited six of the seven continents on wildlife trips, including Antarctica, and his talk will include not just Sussex but also a look at the wildlife of that area.

Friday March 29th

"Birding in Sussex & Beyond" (Antarctica)

**Community Centre, Hartfield Road, Forest Row,
East Sussex, RH18 5DZ**

Tea & Coffee will be available in the break

Everyone welcome

Admission - donations appreciated

(Doors open 7pm)

Fungi walk report

The walk on Sunday 16th September was well attended, and the weather was fine.

The dry summer was a concern, as fungi generally prefer moist conditions, so we were pleased that although not numerous, there were some fungi fruiting bodies to be found.

Nick Aplin - the Chairman of The Sussex Fungus Group and a County Fungus Recorder led the walk, plus he brought members of his Group along who kept up with the different finds and helped us with ID explanations etc.

This help included additional expertise from the other Sussex County Fungus Recorder, Martin Allinson, who had decided to come along, and Brad Scott the (continued...)

County Bryophyte (Mosses and Liverworts) Recorder. My thanks go to them all for their invaluable help and assistance.

Those various expert eyes managed to find a wide range of fungi examples and some unusual species. 41 species of Fungi were formally identified.

These included *Anguillospora rosea* (= *Orbilia rosea*) which was found by Martin Allinson and is new to Sussex. *Hymenoscyphus kathiae* which Nick Alpin found last year at Weir Wood when it was a new UK species, was found again, and is now the second UK record. Both these species are unusual as they are aquatic based species.

Of the more common species found, of local interest was a piece of wood that had been stained green by fungi.

This was identified as *Chlorociboria aeruginascens* aka Green Elfcup or Woodcup (pic on our website). This had local history interest as in the 18th and 19th centuries such wood was prized for making the famous Tunbridge Ware, a specialised marquetry made of different woods and natural stains to form pictures and patterns.

Brad Scott noted a Bionectriaceae fungi specimen that may be new to the UK. It was growing on Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*) stems. (We have not yet had any official confirmation).

During the walk some strange jelly blobs were noticed by a walk member on the leaves of a tree, these blobs looked like they contained eggs and tiny grubs, (pic on our website). Further investigation was carried out and expert advice sought that confirmed they were the eggs of a caddis fly – probably *Glyphotaelius pellucidus* – Mottled Sedge which is common around the reservoir.

The life cycle of this caddis fly is interesting as very few caddis fly species actually lay their eggs out of the water. Once laid the grubs grow from the eggs, emerge from their jelly and fall into the water, where they live on the bottom as larvae. Eventually the larvae emerge into the adult flying form and repeat the cycle by laying more eggs on leaves over water.

By Bob Johnson

Members' Spring Flowers & Birds Walk

Spring walk for members will be on **Saturday 27th April** when we hope the bluebells will be at their best. The usual timetable, leaving the hide car park at 9:15.

We will start by going into our woodland study area for the woodland flowers and bluebells, plus we hope to see some spring nesting birds before returning back to the car park for a short break. (Bring a flask)

The second part of the walk will be over Whillet's to have a look at the meadows, pond and reed bed, returning back to the car park for around 12:45.

No need to book, just turn up. Please wear stout walking shoes or boots as the paths may be wet/muddy and are uneven in places.

Friends Open Day – Sunday 14th July

Please make a note of the above date for your diary. More details about the "Open Day" will follow in our next newsletter.

Little Grebe – 2 from 28/10 to 30/10, 1 on 26/11, 1 on 9/12, 14/12 & 24/12.
Great Crested Grebe – Regular (counts over 40), 78 on 13/9, 63 on 30/9, 58 on 21/10, 61 on 22/10, 56 on 23/10, 61 on 29/10, 80 on 11/11, 62 on 18/11, 72 on 21/11, 77 on 26/11, then numbers dropped (counts over 15) 20 on 9/12, 21 on 22/12.
Cormorant – Regular (counts over 15), 21 on 23/9, 31 on 2/10, 57 on 18/10, 21 on 21/10, 54 on 22/10, 32 on 29/10, 37 on 30/10 & 11/11, 55 on 18/11, 26 on 29/11, 33 on 2/12, 48 on 9/12.
Great White Egret – 1 regularly from 19/9 to 4/10, 1 on 15/10 & 17/10, 1 on 9/11.
Little Egret – 1 on 13/9 & 21/9, 1 on 29/10, 1 on 16/12. **White Stork** – 1 flyover on 11/10.
Grey Heron – Regular, 7 on 13/9, up to 3 occ. from 19/9 to 21/10, 8 on 22/10, 2 on 29/10, 3 on 30/10 then up to 2 regularly throughout November, 3 on 2/12, 5 on 9/12, 1 on 14/12, 2 on 16/12, 1 on 22/12.
Mute Swan – 1 on 25/9 & 30/9, 3 on 8/10 & 10/10, 2 on 14/10, 1 on 15/10 to 18/10, 2 on 21/10, 3 on 22/10, 2 on 23/10 & 25/10, 1 on 28/10 to 30/10, 4 on 4/11, 3 on 9/11, 1 on 11/11, 2/12 & 4/12, 2 on 9/12.
Greylag Goose – Regular, 2 on 13/9, 28 on 23/9, 65 on 25/9, 147 on 30/9 (counts over 120), 158 on 1/10, 170 on 7/10, 250 on 14/10, 260 on 15/10 to 23/10 (counts over 220), 350 on 27/10, 373 on 28/10, 395 on 29/10, 235 on 30/10, 352 on 4/11, 297 on 9/11, 237 on 11/11, 233 on 18/11, 259 on 25/11, 251 on 9/12, 257 on 11/12, 270 on 16/12, 304 on 17/12. There have also been a few Hybrid Geese noted.
Canada Goose – 83 on 13/9, 1 on 23/9 & 30/9, 50 on 17/10, 42 on 18/10, up to 5 from 21/10 to 23/10 then 1 intermittently until 34 on 2/12, 35 on 9/12 then up to 2 until end of period.
Egyptian Goose – 2 on 13/9, 8/10 & 10/10, 1 on 13/10, 4 on 21/10, 2 on 22/10 & 31/10, 4 on 11/11, 2 on 18/11 & 14/12.
Mandarin - Up to 4 from 21/9 to 24/9, 3 on 28/9, 1 on 1/10, 6 on 2/10, 14 on 14/10, 15 on 18/10, 1 on 29/10 & 30/10, 7 on 11/11 & 20/11, 6 on 24/12.
Wigeon – 1 on 30/9, 1/10, 8/10 & 10/10, 2 from 13/10 to 28/10.
Gadwall – 1 on 14/10, 21/10 to 23/10, 3 on 25/10, 5 on 28/10, 6 on 29/10, 3 on 30/10 & 4/11, 7 on 9/11, 4 on 11/11, 6 on 14/11, 11 on 18/11, 17 from 22/11 to 25/11, 20 on 2/12, 21 on 3/12, 17 on 14/12, 2 on 22/12, 11 on 24/12.
Teal – Regular, 6 on 11/9, up to 14 from 19/9 to 23/9, 19 on 24/9, 21 from 25/9 to 28/9, 23 on 30/9, 24 on 1/10, 26 on 2/10, (counts over 10), 31 on 8/10, 16 on 13/10, 23 on 14/10 & 15/10, 12 on 18/10, 20 on 22/10, 28 on 23/10, 23 on 28/10, 22 on 4/11, 27 on 1/11 (All counts) 8 on 18/11, 3 on 26/11, 5 on 2/12, 3 on 9/12, 6 on 16/12.
Mallard - Resident (counts over 20), 64 on 23/9, 60 on 30/9, 46 on 2/10, 40 on 14/10, 22 on 17/10, 34 on 22/10, 42 on 28/10, 21 on 30/10, 43 on 11/11, 34 on 2/12, 23 on 9/12. Several hybrids also seen.
White Feral Duck – 1 on 11/11, 24/11, 29/11, 6/12 & 9/12.
Shoveler – 1 on 28/9, 30/9, 2/10, 8/10, 13 & 14/10, 1 on 29/10 & 11/11.
Common Pochard - 1 on 18/11, 2 on 14/12. **Goosander** – 1 on 30/11.
Tufted Duck – 1 on 27/9, 30/9 & 13/11, 4 on 18/11, 2 on 11/12.
Common Buzzard – 1 reported regularly (counts over), 3 on 24/9, 5 on 27/9, 2 on 20/10, 3 on 22/10, 2 on 11/11, 9/12 & 16/12, 3 on 17/12. **Rough-Legged Buzzard** – 1 on 3/11.
Sparrowhawk – 1 on 7/10, 2 on 14/10, 1 on 18/10, 21/10 & 22/10, 2 on 11/11, 1 on 25/11, 1 regularly from 9/12 to 24/12.
Kestrel – 1 regularly throughout period (counts over), 2 on 14/10 & 18/10, 2 on 3/11, 21/11 & 2/12.
Red Kite – 1 on 28/9 & 25/11. **Goshawk** – 1 on 30/10.
Pheasant – Regular (counts over 5), 24 on 11/11, 20 on 8/12.
Water Rail - 1 on 25/9 to 4/10, 1 on 3/11, 11/11 & 4/12, 2 on 16/12.
Moorhen – Resident (Counts over 2), 7 from 21/9 to 25/9, 6 on 30/9, 2/10 & 22/10, 9 on 28/10, 7 on 30/10, 10 on 9/11, 13 on 11/11, 3 on 9/12.
Coot - 1 regularly until 2/10 but 3 on 1/10 then 2 regularly throughout period (counts over) 3 on 13/10, 14/10 & 21/10, 3 from 9/12 to 16/12.
Woodcock – 1 on 9/12 & 16/12. **Redshank** – 1 on 30/9.
Common Snipe – 1 on 11/9, 3 on 19/9, 10 on 21/9, up to 4 from 22/9 to 27/9, 5 on 28/9, 7 on 1/10 & 2/10, 5 on 4/10, 2 on 7/10, 8 on 8/10, 11 on 10/10 & 14/10, 12 on 15/10, then up to 8 from 17/10 to 30/10, 1 on 4/11, 3 on 27/11 & 16/12, 1 on 17/12.
Lapwing – 1 regularly until 25/9 with 2 on 24/9, 22 on 30/9, (counts over 5), 13 on 1/10, 9 on 7/10, 17 on 14/10, 13 on 15/10, 9 on 17/10, 10 on 22/10, 16 on 23/10, 30 on 28/10, 25 on 29/10, (1 on 30/10 was the last sighting until) 45 on 2/12, 20 on 9/12.
Green Sandpiper – 2 on 11/9, 1 on 19/9, 3 on 21/9, 2 on 30/9 & 4/10, 1 on 21/10, 22/10, 27/10 & 28/10, 2 on 9/11, 1 on 11/11.
Common Sandpiper – 1 regularly until 25/9, with 4 on 19/9, 3 on 30/9.
Black Headed Gull – Regular throughout the period (counts over 15), 175 on 13/9, 34 on 22/10, 70 on 4/11, 63 on 9/11, 39 on 11/11, 114 on 18/11, c700 roost count on 21/11, 20 on 29/11, 19 on 6/12, 80 on 9/12.
Common Gull – 2 on 28/10, 1 on 11/11, 3 on 18/11, 30 on 21/11, 2 on 25/11, 3 on 26/11 & 2/12, 1 on 9/12.
Herring Gull – 2 on 13/9, 6 on 25/10, 8 on 28/10, 18 on 11/11, 3 on 18/11, 50 roost count on 21/11, 3 on 9/12.
Stock Dove – Regular (counts over 4), 16 on 24/9, 40 on 30/9, 25 on 2/10, 27 on 7/10, 62 on 8/10, 60 on 14/10, 5 on 21/10 & 22/10, 62 on 18/11, 20 on 2/12, 13 on 9/12.
Wood Pigeon – Ubiquitous (counts over 30), 70 on 21/10 & 22/10.
Tawny Owl – 1 on 13/11. **Short-eared Owl** – 1 on 1/12.
Kingfisher – Up to 2 regularly throughout period (counts over), 4 on 30/9 & 18/10, 3 on 9/12.
Ring-necked Parakeet – 1 on 28/10 & 27/11.
Green Woodpecker – 1 on 30/9, 8/10, 14/10, 18/10 & 22/10, 1 on 11/11.
Gt Spotted Woodpecker – 2 on 30/9 & 8/10, 1 on 21/10, 22/10, 4/11, 11/11, 14/11 & 30/11, 2 on 6/12, 3 on 9/12, 1 on 14/12 & 17/12.
Skylark – 1 on 7/10 & 2/12. **Sand Martin** – 3 on 19/9.
House Martin – 40 on 11/9, 10 on 13/9, 140 on 19/9, 4 on 24/9, 80 on 23/9, 40 on 25/9, 4 on 30/9.
Swallow - 6 on 13/9, 42 19/9, 20 on 23/9, 12 on 24/9, 60 on 25/9, 3 on 2/10.
Meadow Pipit - 10 on 24/9, 3 on 25/9, 10 on 30/9, 28 on 8/10, 1 on 14/10, 4 on 15/10, 6 on 28/10, 1 on 4/11 & 11/11.
Grey Wagtail – 1 regularly from 28/9 to 15/10, 2 on 14/10, 3/11 & 11/11, 1 on 4/11 & 9/12, 2 on 16/12.
Pied Wagtail – 1 on 28/9 & 30/9, 2 on 2/10 & 8/10, 3 on 14/10, 1 on 21/10, 2 on 22/10 & 28/10, 5 on 11/11, 2 on 18/11 & 2/12, 1 on 16/12. **Common Redstart** – 1 on 21/9.

Wren, Dunnock, Blackbird, Robin, Magpie – Regular and resident. No counts over 5.

Stonechat – 1 on 24/9, 2 on 30/9, 1 on 1/10 & 8/10, 4 on 10/10 & 13/10, 2 on 15/10 & 18/10, 1 on 21/10, 2 on 28/10 & 11/11, 1 on 13/11, 2 on 18/11, 1 on 11/12, 2 on 16/12.

Song Thrush – 1 on 30/9 & 5/10, 12 on 8/10, 1 on 14/10, 3 on 15/10 & 28/10, 2 on 11/11, 12 on 25/11, 1 on 2/12 & 8/12, 2 on 9/12, 1 on 14/12, 5 on 16/12.

Mistle Thrush – 4 on 24/9, 7 on 30/9, 3 on 8/10, 1 on 14/10, 2 on 15/10 & 28/10, 1 on 29/10, 4/11, 11/11 & 18/11, 4 on 25/11, 5 on 2/12, 1 on 9/12, 3 on 16/12.

Redwing – 469 migration count (mc) on 8/10, 2 on 13/10, 74 on 14/10, 25 on 15/10, 7 on 21/10, 5 on 22/10, 310 (mc) on 28/10, 20 on 29/10, 300 on 3/11, 14 on 4/11, 180 roost count (rc) on 11/11, 380 (rc) on 13/11, 72 on 25/11, 30 on 2/12, 10 on 9/12 & 16/12.

Fieldfare – 52 on 8/10, 13 on 27/10, 226 flyover on 28/10, 6 on 4/11, 1 on 11/11, 40 on 18/11, 80 on 25/11, 6 on 2/12, 2 on 9/12, 1 on 16/12, 74 flyover on 24/12.

Blackcap – 3 on 22/9, 4 on 24/9, 1 on 27/9, 1 on 5/10, 7/10 & 27/10.

Chiffchaff - 1 regularly until 15/10 (counts over), 7 on 21/9, 8 on 22/9, 10 on 24/9, 2 on 27/9, 5 on 30/9, 2 on 10/10, 5 on 14/10, 3 on 18/10, 2 on 20/10, 2 on 2/12 & 14/12.

Reed Warbler – 1 on 22/9 & 30/9.

Goldcrest - 3 on 22/9, 1 on 24/9, 20 on 5/10, 1 on 7/10, 4 on 14/10, 1 on 15/10, 3 on 20/10, 2 on 22/10 & 27/10, 4 on 17/11, 3 on 22/11, 2 on 25/11, 1 on 14/12, 2 on 16/12. **Firecrest** - 1 on 4/11.

L.T. Tit – 3 on 22/9, 9 on 7/10, 15 on 14/10, 1 on 18/10, 4 on 11/11, 3 on 17/11, 1 on 19/11, 3 on 4/12 & 16/12, 14 on 24/12.

Marsh Tit – Up to 2 reported regularly.

Coal Tit – 2 on 24/9, 1 on 20/10 & 22/10, 2 on 27/10 then 1 reported regularly from 4/11 (counts over), 2 on 29/11, 6/12, 9/12, 14/12 & 17/12.

Blue Tit – 4 on 22/9, up to 3 intermittently until winter feeders started in late October when counts of up to 10 were regular (counts over), 17 on 17/11, 27 on 19/11, 26 on 25/11.

Great Tit – Up to 3 throughout period, but 5 on 2/12 & 9/12.

Nuthatch – 1 on 11/9, 2 on 7/10 & 14/10, 1 on 18/10, 22/10, 4/11, 9/11 & 14/11, 2 on 19/11, 1 on 29/11, 2/12 & 6/12, 2 on 14/12, 1 on 16/12 & 17/12.

Tree Creeper – 2 on 8/10, 1 on 4/11, 3 on 2/12, 1 on 11/12 & 16/12.

Jay – 1 occasionally throughout period (counts over), 2 on 24/9, 5 on 30/9, 3 on 2/10, 2 on 7/10, 3 on 8/10, 2 on 14/10 & 22/10, 3 on 28/10, 4/11 & 11/11, 2 on 18/11, 3 on 2/12.

Jackdaw – Occasional, 8 on 23/9, 20 on 2/10, 1 on 21/10, 20 on 22/10.

Rook – 5 on 22/10, 1 on 28/10, 7 on 21/11, 24 on 9/12.

Carrion Crow – Resident in low numbers (counts over 5), 10 on 9/12.

Raven - 1 on 27/9, 1 regularly from 7/10 to 30/10, 2 on 11/11 & 14/11, 1 on 2/12 & 14/12, 2 on 16/12.

Starling – 18 on 30/9, 20 on 2/10, 56 on 28/10, 250 on 29/10, 200 on 4/11 & 13/11, 110 on 26/11, 8 on 2/12, 9 on 9/12, 110 on 16/12.

Chaffinch – Regular (counts over 5), 44 on 8/10, 73 on 28/10, 29 on 29/10, 9 on 25/11, 12 on 2/12.

Brambling – 1 on 28/10.

Yellowhammer – 4 on 25/11.

Greenfinch – 5 on 1/10, 3 on 15/10, 4 on 18/10, 2 on 28/10, 6 on 4/11, 1 on 18/11.

Goldfinch – 1 on 2/10, 9 on 7/10, 20 on 8/10 then regular (counts over 6), 20 on 22/10, 8 on 27/10, 18 on 11/11, 20 on 18/11, 37 on 25/11, 15 on 2/12, 7 on 14/12.

Siskin – 2 on 2/10, 43 on 8/10, 1 on 10/10, 8 on 13/10, 3 on 14/10, 5 on 18/10, 2 on 27/10, 1 on 29/10, 10 on 4/11, 6 on 11/11, 210 on 25/11, 9 on 2/12, 1 on 9/12, 14 on 16/12.

Lesser Redpoll - 23 on 18/10, 1 on 28/10, 5 on 4/11, 1 on 11/11, 2 on 18/11.

Common Crossbill – 3 on 22/10, 7 on 29/10. (flyovers)

Reserve News by Bob Johnson**Winter '18/19**

Reserve News Update - During September/October approximately 50% of the Whillet's meadows were cut, and the cut grass raked up by our volunteers and heaped into piles. Our intention will now be to cut 50% of the meadows each year on a rotational basis.

The 1st meadow hedge was trimmed, its mature trees had their canopies raised, and it is now looking much better. A huge log pile near the reed-bed was not beneficial and possibly attracting mink, so this has now been burnt and cleared. The reed-bed had some channels cut through for wildfowl. We also carried out maintenance on the island. The latest Reed Bunting winter roost count was 217 seen over a 2 hour period, plus we have up to 2 Water Rails which are becoming regular winter visitors.

The 2nd meadow pond has had work, a leak at one of its banks was stemmed and the problem area reinforced with dry-mix sandbags that should naturalise with vegetation cover. The dipping platform also had a lick of paint to protect it.

Following the repairs to the blocked land drain earlier in the year, and with the pond and reservoir now full, we decided to give some winter flooding to the wet meadow area for some habitat improvement.

This meadow has had regular autumn Stonechat sightings and the Blackthorn & Hawthorn trees/bushes have attracted Redwings that have roosted there on occasion. (See sightings)

For those visiting the hide we have made a small cleared wet area to the left side this winter that is viewable from the hide. We hope this may attract perhaps a Water Rail or Wagtails etc, and it will give improved views of the usual wildfowl and ground birds that come up to the feeders.

We have cleared more unwanted Grey Alder trees in the study area, which has given more light to the area. After our success of last year, we intend to build another Common Tern raft for the nesting season, making a square of 4 in total.

Richard Lowe - It is my sad duty to report the loss of Richard Lowe, one of our Committee Members. Richard was diagnosed with cancer a while back, but, had been managing to battle his illness until more recently when his health deteriorated with various complications developing, and he passed away just before Christmas.

Our sympathies go to his family & friends. He will be greatly missed. *by Bob Johnson*

ESCC Contract renewal for 2019/20 - I am pleased to advise that East Sussex County Council (ESCC) will be renewing for 2019/20 their 12 month contract with Southern Water therefore continuing to provide us with Ranger assistance.

However, ESCC are to have discussions with others, who may wish to take over their role of assisting us in the future. They are aware we would like someone that has the expertise and commitment to take on the management role, as that would help safeguard the long term future of the site. *by Bob Johnson*

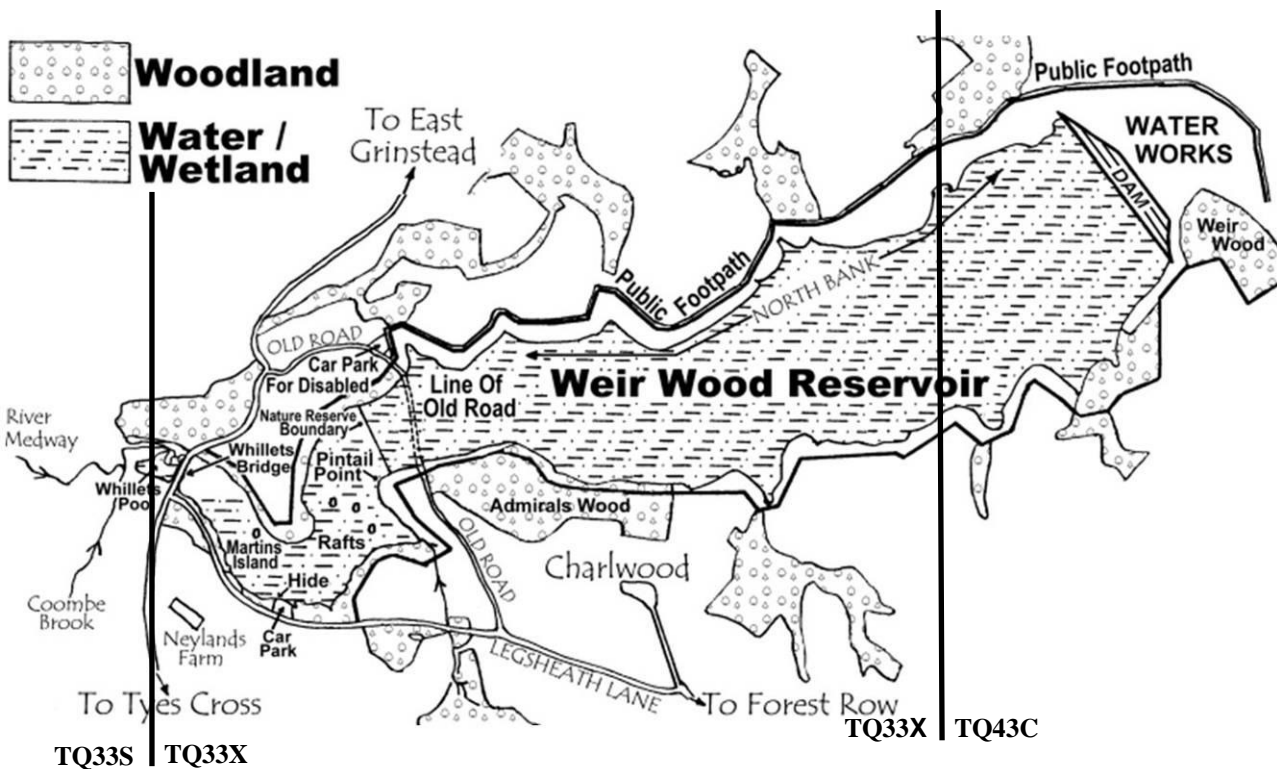
Membership Renewal for 2019 - Your membership of The Friends of Weir Wood Society is due for renewal from 1st January 2019. If you received a printed copy of this Newsletter by post, you should find a renewal request slip with it. Please let us know if you are willing to switch to e-mailed Newsletters in the future.

If you received this Newsletter by email, you should find a renewal reminder attached as well. For the coming year we will be sending membership e-cards by email to those who are happy to receive their Newsletters that way. This saves us significant costs and effort.

You can print your own copy of your membership card or store it on your phone so that you can show it if needed.

The annual membership fee is still only £3 per person. Please let me know if you would like information on how to pay directly by Bank Transfer.

Any additional donation you are able to make will be much appreciated and will greatly help our important conservation work. Thank you and best wishes for the New Year. *by Tom Howard-Jones*



Friends of Weir Wood Society General Information

Chairman: Bob Johnson, 01892 661548
Membership Secretary: Tom Howard-Jones, 01293 883039
Treasurer: Bob Hastings, 01825 763573
Newsletter Editor: Peter Johnson, 01892 661548
Website Editor: Tom Howard-Jones, 01293 883039

E-Mail: info@weirwood.me.uk
E-Mail: membership@weirwood.me.uk
E-Mail: treasurer@weirwood.me.uk
E-Mail: newsletter@weirwood.me.uk
E-Mail: sightings@weirwood.me.uk

Other Contact Information

Tuesday Work Party Volunteers: work@weirwood.me.uk

Website Photos: photos@weirwood.me.uk

Wildlife Sightings: sightings@weirwood.me.uk

Friends General E-Mail address: info@weirwood.me.uk

Website Address: <http://www.weirwood.me.uk>