

Friends of Weir Wood Newsletter

Newsletter No.99

Winter 2022



Welcome!

FRIENDS 2023 AGM

Our AGM is all booked and will be on Friday March 31st, 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 usual agenda will be:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of 2022 AGM Minutes
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Membership Secretary & Website Editor Report
6. Treasurer's Report & Approval of 2022 Accounts and acceptance of the Auditor
7. Election of Officers and Committee
8. Any Other Business - Any Questions.

Following the AGM formal business, I am very pleased to announce that our guest speaker will be James Adler who is the Chief Executive for the Conservators of the Ashdown Forest. He will be giving us an illustrated talk on an exciting new project he is currently involved with entitled: "Weald to Waves (Restoring wildlife corridors from Ashdown Forest to the sea)". This will be, as the name suggests, about the creating/restoring of green corridors linking Ashdown Forest to Knepp and then down to the coast.

Because of our close proximity to the Ashdown Forest, it is hoped Southern Water will formally agree for Weir Wood Nature Reserve to be included as part of that green corridor project.

Nb: There is also a recently published new photographic book about the Ashdown Forest entitled "Through the Seasons". James will be bringing some copies along to the AGM talk that will be available for purchase.

**"Weald to Waves"
(Restoring wildlife corridors from
Ashdown Forest to the sea)**

by James Adler

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

Tea & Coffee will be available in the break

Admission - donations appreciated

Everyone welcome

(Doors open 7pm)

Fungi Foray/Autumn Walk

12th November was bright, sunny, and unseasonably warm. The fine weather brought out a good crowd of some 25 friends that gathered for the start. We made our way slowly through the woods looking for fungi and anything of interest.

The strong smell of rotting meat drew attention to a stink horn by the side of the path. It was exuding black slime. When we returned an hour or so later the slime had gone. It had been taken by flies and beetles. The spores are carried in the slime and dispersed by insects. A Scarlet Caterpillar club fungus was found on Pintail Bank. This fungus is generally scarce and a new record for Weir Wood. It's a parasite on the pupae of moths. A selection of other fungi was also seen during the walk.

The members were shown some of the recent work carried out: clearing of the iron bog, improvements to the small pond and waterways and glade clearings. We walked as far as the end of Pintail Point. Some of the visitors who had not been there before were surprised by the great views from this viewpoint. We then walked back to the car park and on to Whillet's meadows.

The bird ringers had set up their nets in the reed bed earlier and already had a few Reed Buntings ready for us to see when we arrived. Most members were interested to watch the measuring, recording, and ringing process. The ringers explained and showed us the different plumages of male and female, young and adult Reed Buntings. During their session they eventually caught 16 Reed Buntings. One adult male already had a ring which had been put on at Icklesham reed bed in November 2020 when the bird was in its first year. They also caught 3 Blue Tits.

Members also visited our new reed bed viewing platform to get raised views across the reed tops and hopefully see an occasional reed bunting drop in.

We finished the walk by splashing through the wet meadows as far as the pond whilst hoping to see Redwing and Starling flock movements, but these failed to show. With fading light most members decided it was time to start walking back. The feedback we received was they had a very enjoyable afternoon.

Any that stayed later would have seen some worried bird ringers! Just as they were about to take the nets down, a flock of circa 150 Starlings flew down towards the nets. Fortunately, the ringers managed to stop the need for a mass Starling recovery in the dark, removing nets quickly enough for only 2 to become trapped, which were ringed.

Up until then reed bed roost counts had only produced handfuls of Starlings roosting, as most flew over, so a mass Starling invasion (nightmare scenario) at dusk was thought unlikely to occur!!!

Great Northern Diver – 1 from 10/11 to 2/12. **Spoonbill** – 2 on 20/10 & 21/10.
Little Grebe – 1 on 1/10, 2 from 4/11 to 14/11, 3 on 13/11, 1 on 15/11 & 17/11, up to 4 from 1/12 to 8/12 then 1 regularly (counts over), 7 on 10/12, 5 on 12/12, 8 on 14/12, 2 from 23/12 to 28/12.
Great Crested Grebe – Regular (counts over 3), 4 on 25/9, 5 on 4/10, 18 on 8/10, 28 on 9/10, 20 on 16/10, 6 on 11/11, 4 regularly from 13/11 to 14/12.
Mute Swan – 8 on 25/9 & 5/10 then 2 reported regularly (counts over), 4 on 10/12 & 15/12, 3 on 20/12.
Cormorant – Regular (counts over 12), 15 on 29/9, 19 on 31/10, 18 on 7/11, 32 on 13/11, 15 on 18/11 18 on 19/11, 36 on 22/11, 34 on 24/11, 51 on 29/11, 25 on 11/12.
Little Egret – 2 on 24/9 & 25/9, 1 on 26/9, 4/10 & 16/10, 1 on 28/11, 10/12, 11/12, 18/12 & 27/12.
Great White Egret – 1 on 27/9, 3/10 to 6/10 & 10/10, 2 on 28/10, 1 on 4/11 & 5/11.
Grey Heron – Up to 2 regularly (counts over), 11 on 25/9, 7 on 1/10, 14 on 4/10 & 6/10, 3 on 7/10, 9 on 9/10, 6 on 10/10, 10 on 16/10, 11 on 21/10, 3 on 4/11, 4 on 8/11, 3 on 13/11.
Greylag Goose – Regular (counts over 25), 44 on 3/10, 56 on 9/10, 99 on 15/10, 110 on 16/10, 177 on 17/10, 160 on 21/10, 135 on 23/10, 174 on 3/11, 141 on 4/11, 50 on 8/11, 70 on 12/11, 187 on 13/11, 159 on 14/11, 50 on 18/11, 28 on 22/11, 135 on 28/11, 168 on 29/11, 213 on 30/11, 92 on 1/12, 63 on 10/12, 28 on 11/12, 114 on 27/12, 80 on 28/12.
Canada/Greylag hybrid Goose – 13 on 26/9, 6 on 9/10, 12 on 11/12.
Canada Goose – (counts over 15), 28 on 25/9, 57 on 29/9, 23 on 1/10, 41 on 3/10, 17 on 4/10, 142 on 6/10, 32 on 7/10, 29 on 9/10, 19 on 21/10, 16 on 13/11 & 14/11. **White Farnyard Goose** – 4 regularly.
Egyptian Goose – Up to 3 regularly (counts over), 5 on 27/9, 11 on 29/9, 8 on 1/10, 9 on 3/10, 15 on 4/10, 5 on 5/10, 12 on 6/10, 6 on 7/10, 7 on 9/10 & 17/10, 4 on 15/10, 5 on 20/10, 9 on 21/10, 4 on 3/11 & 28/11, 6 on 2/12, 5 on 27/12.
Barnacle Goose – 55 on 27/12 & 28/12. **Brent Goose** – 215 on 13/11 flyover, 3 on 26/12.
Mandarin – 2 on 25/9 & 30/9, 4 on 1/10, 3 on 3/10, 1 on 4/10, 9 on 17/10, 8 on 4/11, 2 on 7/11, 11/11 & 12/11, 7 on 13/11, 5 on 19/11, 1 on 22/11, 8/12 & 11/12, 3 on 24/11, 2 on 12/12, 4 on 20/12, 2 on 27/12.
Wigeon – 2 on 9/10, 10/10 & 25/10, 3 on 30/10, 4 on 31/10, 2 from 10/11 to 15/11 with 5 on 12/11 & 14/11, 6 on 13/11, 9 on 4/12, 1 on 20/12, 8 on 27/12. **Ruddy Shelduck** – 1 on 29/11.
Gadwall – 2 regularly from 21/10 to 11/12 (counts over), 4 on 7/11 & 15/11, 5 on 14/11 & 30/11, 3 on 4/12, 4 on 12/12, 1 on 20/12. **Wood Duck** – 1m on 10/12, 3f on 11/12, 1f on 14/12, 2f on 27/12.
Teal – 100+ regularly from 25/9 to 4/11 with highs of 109 on 8/10 & 31/10 & 114 on 25/10, 34 on 7/11, 22 on 8/11, (counts over 20), 26 on 11/11, 39 on 14/11, 41 on 10/12, 38 on 11/12, 77 on 12/12, 25 on 13/12, 46 on 14/12.
Mallard - Resident (counts over 35), up to 40 from 1/10 to 3/10, 67 on 4/10, 46 on 6/10, 52 on 9/10, 44 on 25/10, 37 on 30/10, 50 on 1/11, 67 on 4/11, 141 on 7/11, 66 on 8/11, 80 on 10/11, 107 on 11/11, 74 on 13/11, 48 on 14/11, 45 on 22/11, 38 on 24/11, 41 on 4/12, 83 on 11/12, 36 on 12/12, 134 on 14/12, 42 on 18/12. **White Feral Duck** – 1 occasionally.
Shoveler – 2 on 30/9 & 1/10, 1 from 4/10 to 9/10, 2 on 14/12, 4 on 18/12.
Pochard – 2 from 17/11 to 19/11, 6 on 22/11 & 24/11, 1 on 11/12 & 12/12, up to 3 from 14/12 to 28/12.
Red-crested Pochard – 1 from 13/11 to 17/11, 1 on 11,12,15,19 & 26/12.
Pintail – 1 regularly from 29/9 to 13/11. **Goosander** – 2 on 9/12.
Tufted Duck – 1 on 26/9, 3 on 10/11, 4 on 12/11, 1 on 15/11 & 17/11, 3 on 18/11 (counts over), 5 on 22/11, 4 on 24/11, then up to 6 but with 8 on 2/12 & 11/12, 10 on 12/12 & 18/12, 18 on 14/12, 19 on 15/12, 7 on 28/12.
Common Buzzard – 1 reported regularly (counts over), 4 on 25/9, 2 on 29/9 & 1/10, 6 on 9/10, 2 on 10/10, 7/11 & 12/11, 2 on 1/12 & 11/12. **Peregrine** – 1 on 30/9, 10/10 & 1/12.
Sparrowhawk – 1 regularly from 1/10 to 15/10, 3 on 25/10 & 3/11, 1 on 13,18 & 28/11, 1 on 2, 6, 12 & 27/12.
Kestrel – Up to 2 from 25/9 to 2/10, 1 on 4/10 & 8/10, 2 on 9/10 & 25/10, 1 on 17/10 & 21/10, 2 on 11/11 & 13/11, 1 on 28/11, 30/11, 1/12, 20/12 & 27/12. **Merlin** – 1 on 26/9 & 14/12.
Goshawk – 1 on 24/9, 1/10 & 12/10, 1 on 10/11 & 13/11.
Osprey - 1 on 24/9, 19/10 & 5/11. **Marsh Harrier** - 1 on 12/10.
Red Kite – 1 on 24/9, 1/10, 4/10 & 5/10, 2 on 8/10 & 16/10, 1 on 17/10, 25/10 & 10/11, 2 on 24/11, 1 on 30/11 & 14/12, 2 on 26/12. **Pheasant** – Regular (counts over 5), 6 on 8/11, 8 on 11/11.
Moorhen – Resident (Counts over 2), 3 on 25/9 & 4/10, 4 on 26/9, 7 on 9/10, 5 on 16/10 & 31/10, 4 on 25/10, 3 on 11/12 & 12/12. **Water Rail** – 1 on 12/11, 2 on 24/11, 4/12 & 10/12.
Coot – 2 on 25/10, 1 on 31/10, 15/11 & 24/11 then 1 regularly (Counts over), 2 on 1/12, 3 on 6/12 & 11/12, 2 on 8/12, 5 on 12/12, 2 on 15/12, 6 on 18/12, 4 on 19/12, 3 on 20/12, 2 on 22/12 & 27/12.
Bar-tailed Godwit – 1 on 20/10. **Redshank** – 1 on 10/10.
Ringed Plover – 1 from 29/9 to 6/10. **Golden Plover** – 11 flyover on 5/11, 105 flyover on 13/11.
Dunlin – 1 on 27/9 & 29/9, 2 on 21/10, 1 from 23/10 to 31/10, 2 on 1/11.
Common Snipe – 6 on 24/9 & 25/9, 10 on 26/9, 2 on 27/9 & 30/9, 1 on 1/10, 6 on 2/10, 4 on 4/10, 2 on 10/10 & 30/10, 5 on 3/11, 1 on 12/12, 14/12 & 27/12. **Ruff** – 3 from 29/9 to 8/10, 1 on 9/10 & 10/10.
Lapwing – up to 36 from 25/9 to 8/10 with 37 on 4/10, 26 on 9/10, 30 from 15/10 to 17/10, 37 on 20/10, 39 on 21/10 then up to 37 until 1/11, 25 on 3/11, 1 on 4/11, 4 on 12/11, 20 on 13/11 36 on 14/11, 10 on 10/12.
Common Sandpiper – 1 on 26/9 & 10/10, 2 on 16/10, 1 on 28/10.
Tawny Owl – 1 on 27/9 & 10/10, 3 heard on 12/11, 1 on 18/11. **Barn Owl** – 1 on 9/11.
Black Headed Gull – (counts over 25), 90 on 25/9, 113 on 1/10, 31 on 6/10, 40 on 7/10, 66 on 9/10, 35 on 11/11, 66 on 13/11, 38 on 14/11, 900 flyover on 24/11, 760 roost on 25/11, 87 on 1/12, 105 on 10/12, 77 on 11/12, 220 on 14/12, 28 on 27/12. **Little Gull** – 1 on 29/11.
Common Gull – 2 on 5/10 & 20/10, 1 on 10/10 & 3/11, 6 on 1/11, 2 on 14/11, 10 from 22/11 to 25/11, 2 on 28/11, 4 on 30/11, 3 on 11/12, 1 on 14/12. **Mediterranean Gull** – 2 on 5/10.
Herring Gull – 36 on 30/9, 10 on 9/10, 30 on 10/11, 1 on 11/11. 2 on 13/11, 8 on 24/11, 50 roost on 25/11, 1 on 1/12, 11/12 & 27/12. **LBB Gull** – 1 on 9/10, 17/10 & 31/10, 1 on 25/11.
GBB Gull – 1 on 26/9 & 27/9, 2 on 19/12. **Collared Dove** – 1 on 25/10 & 27/12.
Wood Pigeon – Ubiquitous (counts over 70), 88 on 24/10, 3086visual-migration on 25/10, 2260vis-mig on 31/10, 110 on 4/11, 2050vis-mig on 7/11, 100 on 10/11, 180 on 13/11, 120 on 17/11, 150 on 28/11, 400 on 4/12, 100 on 27/12.

Stock Dove – 3 from 25/9 to 6/10, 10 on 9/10, 6 on 16/10, 24 on 25/10, 2 on 11/11, 1 on 30/11 & 11/12, 2 on 20/12 & 27/12.
Kingfisher – 1 regularly until 11/12 (counts over), 2 on 9/10, 4/11, 12/11 & 19/11, 2 on 10/12.
Green Woodpecker – 1 on 24/10 & 31/10, 1 on 13/11 & 29/11, 1 on 27/12.
Gt Spotted Woodpecker – 1 regularly from 25/9 to 9/10, 1 on 25/10, 7/11 & 11/11, 2 on 13/11, 1 on 15/11 & 19/11, 1 regularly from 1/12 to 13/12, 2 on 20/12, 1 on 22/12. **Skylark** – 2 on 9/10 & 24/10, 1 on 16/10 & 31/10, 3 on 25/10 & 12/12.
House Martin – (counts over 10), 15 on 24/9, 24 on 25/9, 100 on 26/9, 60 from 29/9 to 1/10, 20 on 2/10 & 4/10, 50 on 6/10, 68 on 9/10, 14 on 17/10 then 1 on 21/10 was the last record. **Sand Martin** – 1 on 26/9 & 2/10.
Swallow - 2 on 25/9, 10 on 26/9, up to 10 from 29/9 to 1/10, 22 on 2/10, 5 on 4/10, 4 on 6/10, 5 on 20/10.
Meadow Pipit – Regular (counts over 4) 15 on 30/9, 5 on 1/10, 10 on 2/10 & 4/10, 7 on 6/10, 47 on 9/10, 23 on 10/10, 13 on 15/10, 7 on 16/10, 21 on 17/10, 17 on 25/10, 9 on 31/10, 6 on 10/11, 25 on 13/11, 11 on 30/11.
Grey Wagtail – 2 regularly from 25/9 to 4/10, 1 on 7/10, 5 on 9/10, 1 on 15/10, 18/10 24/10 & 31/10, 2 on 25/10 & 1/11, 1 on 13/11, 17/11 & 19/11, 2 on 24/11 & 28/11, 1 on 30/11, 10/12, 11/12 & 18/12.
Pied Wagtail – Up to 3 regularly (counts over), 4 on 25/9, 15 on 26/9, 30 on 27/9, 10 on 30/9, 25 on 1/10, 12 on 2/10, 4 on 8/10, 15/10 & 25/10, 8 on 9/10, 20 on 21/10, 7 on 30/10 & 13/11, 4 on 12/12.
White Wagtail – 2 on 2/10, 4 on 5/10. **Robin** – (counts over 5), 6 on 9/10.
Blackbird, Wren, Dunnock – Regular and resident. No counts over 5.
Stonechat – 1 regularly until 30/11 (counts over), 6 on 29/9 & 30/9, 8 from 1/10 to 8/10, 3 on 10/10, 2 on 23/10, 3 on 27/10 & 31/10, 4 on 30/10, 2 on 1/11, 8/11, 12/11, 14/11 & 15/11, 1 on 12/12.
Northern Wheatear – 1 on 31/10 & 1/11. **Black Redstart** – 1 on 25/10.
Song Thrush – 1 on 15/10 & 25/10, 2 on 24/10 & 31/10, 1 on 13/11 & 18/11, 2 on 4/12, 1 on 11/12 & 18/12.
Mistle Thrush – 9 on 26/9, 1 on 9/10, 16/10 & 20/10, 11 on 25/10, 1 on 31/10, 4 on 24/11, 2 on 30/11, 1 on 11/12.
Redwing – 1 on 26/9, (counts over 3), 11 on 30/9, 10 on 15/10, 7 on 16/10, 4 on 17/10, 50 on 20/10, 102 on 21/10, 63 on 24/10, 286 vis-mig on 25/10, 23 on 28/10, 18 on 30/10, 28 on 31/10, 6 on 3/11, 10 on 12/11, 25 on 13/11, 10 on 24/11, 14 on 11/12, 25 on 22/12 & 27/12.
Fieldfare – 3 on 20/10, 5 on 21/10, 7 on 25/10, 4 on 28/10, 15 on 30/10, 68 on 31/10, 10 on 1/11, 1 on 3/11, 38 on 7/11, 13 on 13/11 & 14/11, 1 on 4/12, 2 on 12/12, 35 on 27/12.
Blackcap – 1 on 26/9, 2 on 8/10, 1 on 15/10. **Lesser Whitethroat** – 1 on 5/10.
Chiffchaff – 5 on 25/9, 6 on 26/9, 2 on 27/9 & 29/9, 3 on 30/9, 1 on 1/10, 2/10 & 4/10, 2 on 6/10, 10 on 8/10, 6 on 9/10, 5 on 15/10, 3 on 16/10, 1 on 24/10, 31/10, 10/11 & 29/11.
Goldcrest - 1 on 25/9, 26/9 & 3/10, 2 on 9/10, 1 on 25/10, 8/11, 14/11 & 17/11.
L.T. Tit – (counts over 2), up to 12 from 25/9 to 30/9, 7 on 1/10, 4 on 8/10, 8 on 9/10, 6 on 15/10 & 24/10, 12 on 25/10, 7 on 7/11, 11 on 10/11 & 17/11, 4 on 11/11 & 1/12, 8 on 14/11, 6 on 10/12 & 27/12, 11 on 11/12, 4 on 20/12.
Marsh Tit – 1 regularly (counts over), 3 on 24/9, 2 on 25/9, 8/11 & 14/11, 3 on 10/11, 13/11 & 17/11, 2 on 1/12 & 8/12, 4 on 9/12, 2 on 18/12, 3 on 20/12, 2 on 27/12.
Coal Tit – 2 on 25/9, 1 on 4/10 & 9/10, 3 on 17/10, 1 on 11/11 then up to 2 regularly (counts over), 3 on 27/12.
Blue Tit – Regular (counts over 5), 6 on 25/9, 7 on 10/11, 10 on 11/11, up to 9 from 17/11 to 8/12, 10 on 11/12, 20 on 20/12, 8 from 18/12 to 22/12. **Great Tit** – Regular (counts over 4), 5 on 11/11, 6 on 17/11, 5 on 11/12, 8 on 12/12.
Nuthatch – 1 on 25/9 & 1/10 to 7/10, 2 on 9/10, 1 on 8/11 & 11/11, 2 on 13/11, 1 from 17/11 to 19/11, 1 on 1/12, 6/12 8/12, 11/12, 18/12, 20/12, 22/12 & 27/12. **Treecreeper** – 1 on 25/9, 17/10 & 31/10, 1 on 11/11, 14/11 & 22/11, 1 on 6/12 & 11/12.
Jay – 2 regularly from 25/9 to 9/10, 3 on 16/10, 25/10 & 8/11, 1 on 10/11, 13/11 & 18/11.
Magpie – Regular (counts over 5), 11 on 25/10.
Jackdaw – (counts over 5), 20 on 1/10, 80 on 3/10, 200 on 9/10, 300 on 21/10, 200 on 7/11, 20 on 8/11.
Rook – 6 on 3/10, 4 on 6/10, 61 on 9/10, 4 on 2/11, 1 on 17/10, 11/11 & 17/11, 25 on 21/10, 11 on 13/11, 8 on 14/11, 50 on 10/12, 3 on 20/12.
Carrion Crow – Resident (counts over 2), 4 on 1/10, 3 on 4/10 & 6/10, 6 on 9/10, 3 on 14/11 & 6/12.
Raven - 3 on 26/9, 2 on 27/9, 1 on 30/9, 9/10 & 10/10, 2 on 15/10, 1 on 10/11, 11/11, 26/12 & 27/12, 2 on 11/12.
Starling – 28 on 2/10, 10 on 9/10, 1 on 24/10, 76 on 25/10, 69 on 30/10, 15 on 31/10, 7 on 3/11, 18 on 7/11, 35 on 8/11, roost count =(rc), 150rc on 12/11, 225rc on 13/11, 10 on 14/11, 9 on 18/11, 309rc on 19/11, 250rc on 4/12, 900rc on 10/12.
House Sparrow – 1 on 16/10. **Brambling** – 1 on 25/10, 2 on 11/11, 1 on 9/12.
Chaffinch – Regular (counts over 2), 9 on 9/10 & 16/10, 5 on 15/10, 21 on 25/10, 5 on 31/10, 4 on 13/11 & 24/11, 3 on 14/11 & 30/11, 4 on 11/12 & 18/12, 3 on 12/12. **Linnet** – 3 on 9/10, 5 on 17/10.
Goldfinch – 1 on 25/9 & 1/10, 15 on 6/10, 4 on 9/10, then 1 regularly (counts over), 34 on 25/10, 12 on 31/10, 4 on 11/11, 10 on 17/11, 4 on 12/12, 8 on 27/12. **Yellowhammer** – 1 on 30/9 & 13/11.
Bullfinch – 2 on 25/9, 1 on 4/10 & 9/10, 3 on 15/10 & 24/10, 1 on 25/10, 4 on 31/10, 2 on 24/11 & 28/11, 1 on 6/12, 2 on 11/12. **Hawfinch** – 3 on 30/11.
Siskin – 7 on 9/10, 1 on 16/10 & 25/10, 6 on 24/10, 4 on 31/10, 1 on 7/11 & 13/11, 7 on 14/11, 2 on 4/12, 4 on 10/12, 41 on 23/12, 50 on 26/12, 3 on 27/12. **Lesser Redpoll** – 2 on 25/10, 1 on 27/12.
Reed Bunting – (roost count=rc), 1 on 9/10 & 16/10, 65rc on 24/10, 69rc on 31/10, 5 on 8/11, 3 on 10/11, 16 on 12/11, 59rc on 13/11, 23rc on 18/11, 72rc on 19/11, 113rc on 24/11, 12 on 29/11, 93rc on 4/12, 25rc on 10/12.

Friends News by Bob Johnson

For the last few years, we have had annual contracts with Southern Water (SW) for supplying us with ESCC Ranger support. However, in April 2022 SW advised that they now wanted a 5-year contract to which ESCC have agreed. We were required to provide a new 2022 – 2027 Management Plan, which I have written, and this has been accepted by SW. As owners they are responsible for the Weir Wood SSSI site. There were delays in the issuing of the new 5-year contract, but I can now confirm we have a copy of the duly signed document. This is a positive step and guarantees us longer term ESCC support for the site.

A reminder from Tom that membership renewals are due on the 1st January. See Membership Secretary details below.

Reserve News

The work parties have been busy in the last few months. Those that came along to our Autumn walk will have seen our newly built Whillet's reed bed viewing platform for reed bed wildlife monitoring, which we are very pleased with. Another forthcoming project will be repairs to the meadow pond dipping platform. Its ground support fixings have deteriorated and will need major repairs to ensure it remains safe.

I mentioned in the last newsletter that we had repainted the hide. Since then, we have done further work and fitted a new hide roof, the existing sheeting was in poor condition and leaking.

We also carried out some repairs to the car park surface infilling some of the worst potholes. This is really Forest Row Parish Council's responsibility, not ours. We also unblocked the drain and felled a Willow tree at the car park that was leaning badly and becoming dangerous.

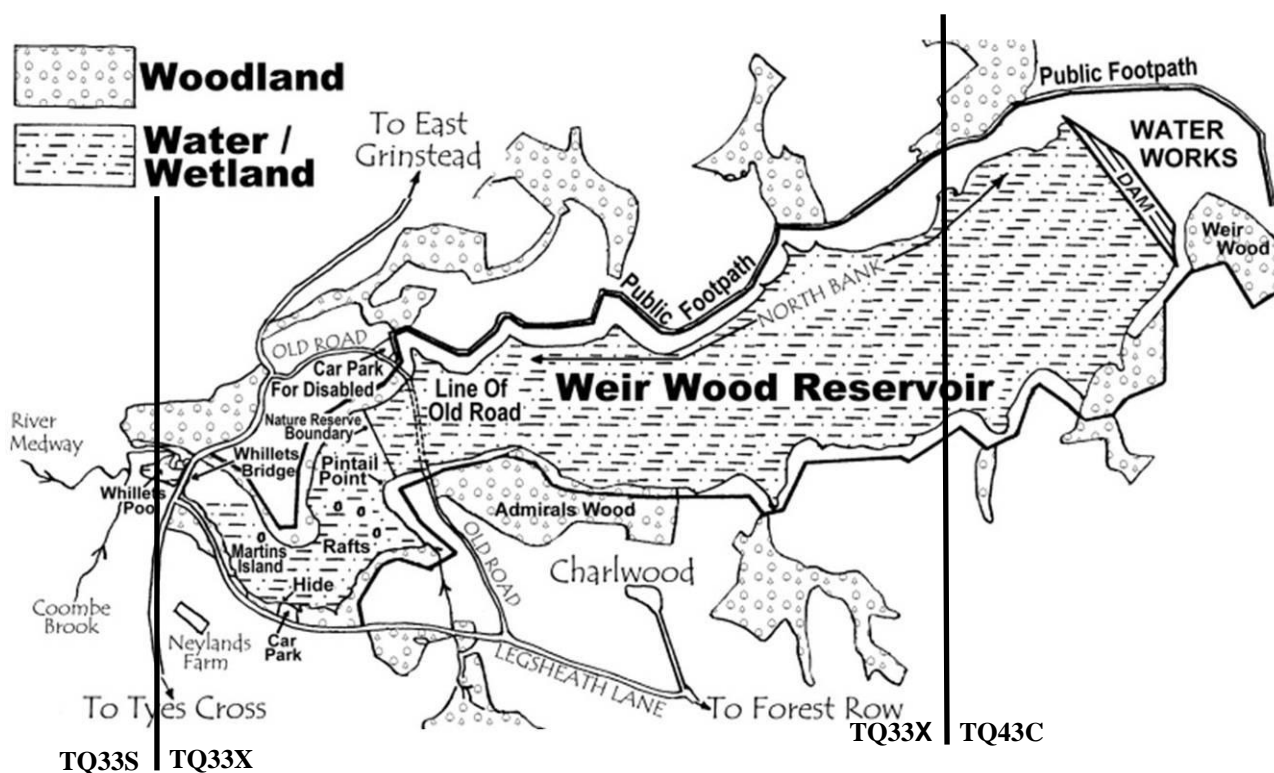
On the reserve's wildlife side, we have also been busy. In the study area the pondlet butyl liner had risen and was effectively emptying the pond. Investigation found that feed water was getting under the liner. An extension was fitted to the pondlet feed pipe, the problem was resolved, and all is now fine. We also cleared some of the reserve feed streams of blockages and excessive vegetation including our marsh pool which is all looking good.

We have recently been overhauling nest boxes and clearing rides and paths through to the study area and Pintail bank. We have also been cutting the reserve's hedges.

In early October we completed the cutting of the dam end North Bank meadows, also Pintail bank and Whillet's meadows. We erected a scaffold pole behind Martin's Island while the water levels were low. The intention is to fix a floating nest platform around the pole as a trial to see if a Great Crested Grebe pair may use it to nest, a system which has had some success elsewhere.

After a very dry summer (drought) the west end of the reservoir became a flowering meadow, attracting many Stonechats in the autumn until a couple of weeks' worth of heavy rain refilled the reservoir and covered most of the vegetation.

There seems to be no game shooting near the west end of the reserve this year, hopefully this may improve the numbers of wintering waterfowl using the reservoir.



Friends of Weir Wood Society General Information

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