

Friends News

Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park (FORCP)

Issue 20

Spring 2003

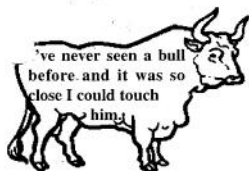
Wildlife Watch meet Rosie and Friends

Rushcliffe Country Park Wildlife Watch group had a different venue for their monthly meeting on February 8th. Instead of working on the Park we went on a visit to Manor Farm Animal Centre at East Leake. We were a large party with 24 children and 14 adults. We were lucky to have a dry but cloudy day.

It was my first visit to the Centre and I was impressed by the wide range of animals to be seen. A lot of them are Rescue animals and are spending their last years in comfort. The oldest animal was a 30 year old donkey which impressed the children.

We had a guided tour of the farm and the children were allowed to touch and, where appropriate, handle the animals.

- Some comments from the children -



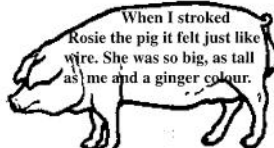
I liked the bullock in the next pen.

There were lots of different kinds of guinea pigs and rabbits to look at and hold. Some of them kept hiding under the straw.

I liked it when the guide told the pot-bellied pig to sit and it sat. One of the pigs only had one tusk, it looked like a very long tooth.

The straw maze was fun to go in. Someone went in the tunnel with a children's tractor and got stuck. One of the grown ups had to crawl in and get him out.

The goats were fun to watch especially when Billy Biscuit grabbed Angie's fluorescent jacket and tore it.



There were very good examples of Willow Weaving and Willow Sculptures to see which members of the FORCP in particular found very interesting!

There was a good play area with old tyres for the children to play with. Rolling them down a slope was great fun and it was interesting to see them make up their own games. Girls and boys enjoyed playing football in an enclosed ball game area where they could expend some of their energy.

A ride back up the hill on Ernie the milk float was enjoyed by the children. The adults had to walk! A very enjoyable and enlightening visit
Jean Gray Wildlife Watch Leader



PONDS A PLENTY

Ponds may have been on the decline around the country, but here at the Park we are doing our bit to reverse the trend. Since the start of the Ranger service, and with the invaluable help of the 'Friends', we have created a seasonal pond near the business park, and re-instated the new ponds in the south-east corner of the Park.

Now, thanks to the hard work of 'Friends' and volunteers, the pond designed for dragonflies is complete. As you can imagine the digging was not easy, however lining the pond was great fun, and we finished it off with an attractive pebble shore. Thanks also go to Rob Carrier who designed the pond, and kept an eye on the levels.

Another pond within the tree nursery is under construction, so water loving plants and animals are going to be spoilt for choice.





NATURE NOTES from Churchside



One of the most noticeable features in the centre of the village since last autumn has been the presence of a flock of jackdaws, the smallest member of the crow family. They seem also to be the most vocal. The birds roosted in St. Peter's Church tower, but in March this year their entrance has been blocked, so they have had to move elsewhere before the breeding season begins. We recognise that the birds might have been seen as a nuisance, nevertheless I am sorry to see them go.

Throughout most of the winter, a regular feeder at Churchside has been a colourful grey wagtail. Its name seems inappropriate because much of the bird is bright yellow.



Long-tailed tits were frequent visitors between 9.30 and 10.30am, during November and February. Also in February, on the 28th to be exact, two frogs returned to our garden pond at 4.15pm. They were followed by others within 30 minutes, and by 1st March, at least 24 were breeding in the pond.

Also on that date a pair of blue tits were exploring the nesting box, which has been in use for several years.

Other regular visitors are a pair of collared doves and the grey squirrels, which although regarded as pests, are very attractive.

Kenneth Lawson

Recent Records

Lake Visitors 1 herring gull, 4 teal and a great crested grebe were seen on Jan. 3rd; 2 shovellers and 2 cormorants were seen on Jan. 10th; 3 wigeon were seen on Jan. 11th; and 1 snipe was seen on Jan. 23rd.

Bee Orchids -17 rosettes have been found near the tree nursery. Hopefully they can be cordoned off, so that they don't get mown.

Greylag Geese -42 were seen flying overhead on Jan. 22nd.

Any articles for the next edition of the Friends News can be sent to 11 Peacock Close, Ruddington, NG11 6JF, left at the Rangers' Office or e.mail LMculjim@aol.com

Visit your local Nature Reserves

Every year there is an opportunity to visit several of our local Nature Reserves in their spring wildflower finery, with points of interest marked and the people who look after the site on hand. Each of these sites have their own particular characteristics and all are well worth a visit.

Sunday May 4th - Bunny Wood Spring Wildflower Day 10am till 4pm. For spring woodland flowers, in particular Bunny's fine bluebells display, ably supported by a range of other woodland flowers. Bunny



is an old Elm history, but during the 1960's Dutch Elm disease Notts Wildlife site by British Subsequently worked to re-justing a system of rotational coppicing. On the A60 just beyond Bunny village.



wood with a long history the 1960's Dutch swept the woodland. Trust were given the Gypsum in 1981.

NWT volunteers have store the wood, instituting a system of rotational coppicing. On the A60 just beyond Bunny village.

Sunday 18th May - Keyworth Meadow Open Day - from 11am to 4pm. Providing a chance to visit one of the less well known wildflower sites in the area.



This site is owned by Keyworth Parish Council and managed by a group of local volunteers. It lies along the Fairham Brook and consists

meadows, ponds and scrub woodland. Keyworth Meadow lies along Lings Lane, at the end of Main St, Keyworth and will be signposted.

Sunday 1st June - Wilwell Farm Cutting Annual Open Day. A must for anyone who enjoys a fine display of wildflowers. Wilwell is an abandoned section of the Great Central Railway saved from landfill by a public campaign in the late 1970's. It is owned by Rushcliffe Borough Council and managed by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. Open from 10am till 4pm, with some 50-60 species labeled + information sheets posted around the reserve. Wilwell is one of Rushcliffe's few SSSI's and is arguably one of the county's best wildflower sites. Expect to see the likes of Southern Marsh Orchid & Bee Orchid. Wilwell is on the B680 between Ruddington & Wilford and will be clearly signed.



Gordon Dyne Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

Rally round Rainbows

Dear Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park

I am delighted to be able to invite you to two forthcoming events at Rushcliffe Country Park, in aid of Rainbows Children's Hospice.

The first date for your diary is **Sunday 22nd June, when we have a 3 mile sponsored walk planned.** This is now an annual event and enjoyed by all who take part. The route has been carefully thought out so that it is easily walked by young and old alike, and pushchairs and wheelchairs will not be a problem. The walk starts at 10am and the last walkers can leave at 2pm, so you can choose a convenient time in your day to take part.



The second event is on **Thursday 24th July at 7.30pm, when "The Merry Wives of Windsor" will be performed by Heartbreak Productions Ltd,** a highly acclaimed, professional group. Tickets £10. Concessions £6. We hope this will be an evening of fun and culture, and hope that people will bring along their picnic, table and chairs, and enjoy their supper whilst being thoroughly entertained.



To obtain sponsor forms or tickets please ring Caroline Hoare on 0115 9452114 or write to : Rainbows Children's Hospice, Lark Rise, Loughborough, Leics., LE11 2HS. (Cheques payable to Rainbows Hospice).

If you would like to offer to help in any way at either event please ring. Every year we have to raise in excess of £1.5 million, to keep our doors open to the 'special' children and their families, who sadly need to use Rainbows. Events such as these enable us to raise these vital funds.

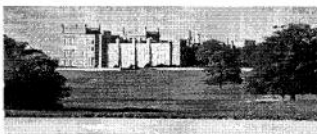
I hope you will be able to join us and bring along your family and friends, to make these events a success.

Thanking you in anticipation, Kind regards, *Caroline Hoare*

Grimsthorpe Castle Visit

Grimsthorpe Castle is a 10 minute drive from the A1 in south Lincolnshire. The estate comprises of farmland, woodland, villages and a 3,000 acre landscaped park, thought to be one of the oldest in England.

The site includes four SSSI's, wood pasture, unimproved lime-



stone grassland, veteran trees, organic farmland and an enormous lake.

The visit on June 7th costs £6.50 and includes a special guided tour looking for early butterflies, tea/coffee and homemade cake. Ring the Rangers' office if you would like to come along.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for the year 2003 – 2004 are now due – minimum £1.00. If you wish to continue receiving your quarterly newsletter, please fill in the form below and return it to the **Rangers' Office, Rushcliffe Country Park, Mere Way, Ruddington, Nottingham. NG11 6JS**

*Delete as applicable

*I/We wish to renew *my/our subscription to the Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park

Name.....

Address.....


Phone Number.....

Rushcliffe Country Park

ACTIVITY DAYS

Unless otherwise stated, all volunteer events are free and open to members of FORCP and non-members.



APRIL


- | | | |
|----------|--|--|
| Wed 9th | History Trail | Time to re-paint the posts, and treat the wood carved sculptures. |
| Sat 19th |  Wetland Management | Making barley straw sausages! and other interesting ways to manage our lake. |
| Wed 23rd | Community Garden/
Tree Nursery | Nipping the weeds in the bud, before they turn into triflids |

MAY

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|----------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Thur 1st | FORCP Meeting | St. Peter's Rooms, Ruddington. New members welcome.
Followed by a talk from Hem about his recent visit to Australia. 7.30pm |
| Sat 3rd | Mystery Day | Can you contain your excitement! |
| Sat 17th | Bird Walk | Guided walk to see the Country Park's bird life. 6.30-8.30pm |
| Wed 21st | Community Garden/
Tree Nursery | Sprucing up the garden for the summer bloom. |

JUNE

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|-----------|---|--|
| Sat 1st | Wilwell Cutting Open Day | Meet at the Ranger's office at the usual time, and then walk to Wilwell Cutting to enjoy the flowering orchids. |
| Sat 7th | Visit | Trip to Grimsthorpe Castle in Lincolnshire, including a guided tour, tea/coffee and homemade cakes. Price: £6.50. Please ring the Rangers to let us know you are coming along. |
| Wed 11th |  Wildflower Survey | Out in the sun, identifying the flowers. Beginners welcome. |
| Sun 22nd | Rainbows Walk of Life | Come along and support Rainbows Children's Hospice to raise vital funds
Ring Caroline Hoare on 0115 9452114 for a sponsor form. |
| Wed. 25th |  Wildflower Survey | Help gather valuable data for our records |

 This symbol denotes the activity is working towards the Notts Biodiversity Action Plan.

Meet at the Rangers' Office at 10.15 am.

Unless stated all events run from 10.30 am - 3.30 pm.

Don't forget some lunch, sturdy hoots and waterproofs.

For more information contact the Rangers' Office **0115 921 5865.**

Produced by the Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park
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