

# Friends News

Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park (FORCP)

Issue 36 Summer 2007

## Where do the days go?

The *Friends* have had another busy few weeks finishing jobs around the Country Park and planning others. We are always looking for new volunteers and with this in mind we had a campaign to encourage more people to join us. I am sure you have all seen 'Your Country Park Needs You' posters scattered around Nottinghamshire. We had four dates when people could come along and meet us and see what we do. The first date was on the day of the 10k run around the Park. We had a tent showing how we were carving benches for the pond dipping area. These benches will be lovely when completed as they have different insects, which can be found in a pond, carved along them. Much work has been put into them and the people who have seen them are very impressed with the work the *Friends* do. There has been a lot of interest and we hope it will encourage more people to join the 'Green Gym' with all the benefits it has to offer. There is nothing more satisfying than to see a completed project and think "I helped with that".

We were trying to get more volunteers to help with refreshments at a weekend so they would be available on a more regular basis to the people who visit the Park. At the moment this is not possible, but hopefully we will recruit more helpers and have the cafe open more often.

We were sorry to hear of Norman Ecob's illness and wish him a speedy recovery and trust it will not be too long before he is back walking the Park. See you soon Norman. *Dorothy Pearson*

## Swan News

At last! After 2 years with no young swans on the Lake, the new pair hatched 7 cygnets on the 7th May, although at this stage we didn't know the number. They spent the first day being brooded by Mum. Tuesday 8th was cold, windy and wettish and she kept them in the nest again, and it wasn't until Wednesday 9th that we actually got to count them. Now they have more than doubled their size and cannot get through the wire fencing around the Lake. This is helpful as there is no risk of them being taken by off-the-lead dogs which, unfortunately are still being seen around the Lake.

## - STOP PRESS - STOP PRESS -

The male swan has died. On Tuesday 26th June he was found beached on the side of the lake and taken to the Vets in Ruddington. His legs were stiff and held out at the side of his body making it impossible for him to swim. After an overnight stay at the Vets it was agreed that he would be returned to the lake and his condition monitored. During the late afternoon of Wednesday he was seen to be unable to float upright so Heather went into the lake to rescue him. She contacted the Yorkshire Swan Rescue Hospital who sent someone to collect him, promising that the whole family would be relocated to Yorkshire while he recovered.

Unfortunately, he died on the way. We have been promised that an autopsy will be carried out and that the results will be forwarded to us.

We now have to make sure that no wandering males (or pairs) try to take over the territory. Until the cygnets grow up they are very vulnerable; they have no flight feathers and the female has shed hers - this is to enable the whole family to fly at the same time later in the year. Hopefully, all the youngsters and mum will survive.



One of the last photos of the Swan family

## Park Update

The last section of the Lake has now been fenced. This is in response to the number of people who still refuse to keep their dogs on a lead in this area and also that people are still allowing their children to go into the water despite the fact that there is a possibility of contracting Weill's Disease. Both positive and negative comments have been received. Gibbies Scrape has also been fenced as a safety measure.

The Park was assessed for the "Green Flag" award on Tuesday 5th June. Whilst we are cautiously hopeful of success, we do not expect the results until mid-July. Thanks to all those

who contributed to the application and to those who were there on the day.

The eyesore around the turbines has been removed (Nortene Netting) and continuous hurdles are in the process of being completed. Coppiced Willow and Ash is being used and this is being taken from St. Peter's School in Ruddington. Thanks are due to Mr Peter Cast, the Headmaster, who kindly allowed us to remove (almost all) of an overgrown coppice in the school grounds. A lorry load of coppice doesn't seem to go very far.

## Rushcliffe Country Park

# ACTIVITY DAYS

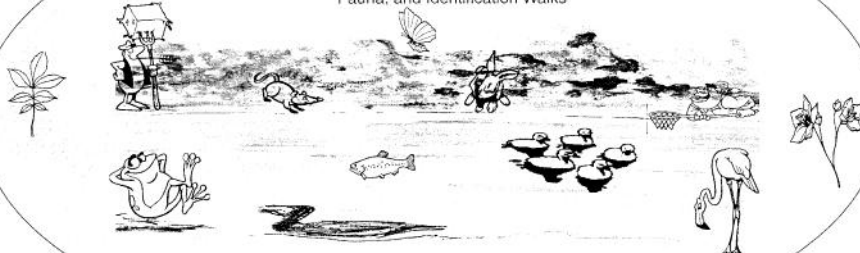
Unless otherwise stated, all volunteer events are free and open to members of FORCP and non-members.

## Work Days

The **Friends** Work Days will be held every Wednesday and Saturday during July, August and September. New Volunteers and Members will be welcome. Please just turn up. Details at bottom of page.

## Tasks to be Done

These will include Moth Trapping, Mammal Trapping, ringing of the Cygnets, Hayrake, Pond Dipping, Flora & Fauna, and Identification Walks



## FORCP Meetings

Wednesday 4th July 2.30pm

Wednesday 5th September 2.30pm



## Wildlife Update

On the 14th April a milestone was reached when the 300th species of Wildflower was identified on the Park. This was Stinking Hellebore and was found behind the flower beds adjacent to the Education Centre.

'Wildflower' may be slightly misleading as some of the species are garden escapes or introduction, but all are recognised as growing on the Park. Listing them tells us what we have and an 'I' introduction or 'E' (escape) on the species list indicates their status.

Since the 14th April, 3 other species have been found. These are *Syrinchium Striatum* (no English name) (E), Common Figwort, found growing in at least 2 floating islands and Purple Iris (I) donated by a lady clearing out a pond.

4 new Species of beetle were identified during a Bug Hunt with children from Lady Bay School in West Bridgford, and a species of lichen was found growing on scrap wood and fence posts in Plantation 23 near the tree nursery

Lastly 5 species of moths have been found around the Education Centre and a further 4 species were identified during a Moth Trapping session on the night of 1st June and led by Dr Sheila Wright of the Biological Records Centre at Wollaton Hall.

This was an advertised event for the local Heritage Initiative and eleven members of the public attended.



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

Meet at the Rangers' Office at 9.30 am.

Unless stated all events run from 10.00 am - 3.30 pm.

**Don't forget some lunch, sturdy boots and waterproofs.**

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



Spotted in the 10K Run on the Country Park on 9th June - No 320 - better known to most of us as Jo Healey of East Midlands Today News programme.

(Photos by Norman Ecob)

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