

Winter 2007



Issue 38

Natural Heritage Project

We are delighted to announce that the Natural Heritage Project is finally complete!

An application was made over two years ago to the Heritage Lottery Fund detailing our intentions. A grant of £22,050 was awarded.

Its aims were to raise awareness among visitors of how the land use has changed dramatically over time, to improve the park's facilities and restore some of the original landscape features that were enjoyed by residents of Ruddington before the war.

This wide ranging project has involved a great many volunteers and local groups.

Here is a summary of our achievements:

We have upgraded the gravel paths around Gibbie's Wood to improve wheelchair access.

Created a network of woodchip paths and glades.

A marshy area once known as Fowemer has been excavated and fully restored with a woven willow bird hide and marginal planting.

Three natural history trails have been created around the park, marked by colour coded wooden posts.

Six interpretation boards have been installed which explain the history and land use of the site.

The trail is supported with a free colour leaflet including a detailed map. (20,000 printed)

Ancient woodland crafts have been taught in hedgelaying and willow weaving workshops.

An outdoor 3D model of the park has been built to help direct visitors.

Several walks have been carried out where the public have been encouraged to explore the local environment.

A series of photographic workshops have been well supported.

A considerable number of photos have been taken to record the on going achievements of the volunteer work.

Numerous research workshops have been carried out to study the bio-diversity of the area. These include

Bird ringing,

Moth trapping,

Surveying wildflowers, fungi and berries,

Mammal trapping

A bat walk

Habitat stacks, frog and mammal boxes have been built and installed.

The data collected from all this research has been published on our new website www.friends-of-rcp.co.uk <<http://www.friends-of-rcp.co.uk/>>. It contains a summary and species lists of all the flora and fauna identified during the time of the project.

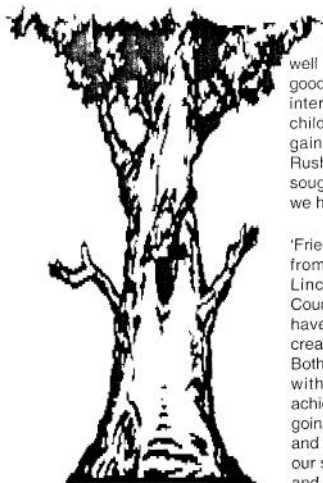
Seeds and seedlings have been collected around the park and nurtured in our tree nursery for replanting.

Finally an audio visual display has been created to remind visitors of the achievements of the project, to be shown in the education centre foyer.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed.

Roger Byrne

SPECIAL VISITORS TO PARK



From little acorns, oak trees grow. I cannot remember who said that, but I just did as that is what I want to say about the Park!!!!

Dorothy Pearson

Rushcliffe County Park is now a well established Country Park with a good reputation for it's many varied and interesting facilities, especially for children. This has culminated in gaining the Green Flag award and Rushcliffe County Park is now being sought out by other Parks to see what we have to offer.

It is therefore no surprise that the 'Friends' have been visited by groups from West Bridgford Park and two Lincolnshire Parks, comprising of Councillors and interested parties, who have wanted to see what has been created and what facilities we have. Both groups were suitably impressed with our enthusiasm and achievements. Many of our ideas are going to be reproduced in other parks and it can only make us feel proud that our skills and talents are appreciated and copied by others.

PARK UPDATE

Since the last issue 12 new species have been identified, although 2 moths were overlooked from previous catches. Of the remaining 10, 6 species were fungi, found by Kinoulton Primary School during their activity day at the park. The remaining 4 species were Green Shieldbug, Nettle-tap Moth, Yellow Ophion (a type of ichneumon wasp) and Harlequin Ladybird, a recent invader from the continent but originally from the far east. The ladybird was found at Weggie Walk on 3rd October by Friends' member Sara whilst trimming overhanging branches.

Two other interesting items both involve birds. A Barn Owl chick ringed in box 4 on 15th June 2004 was recently recaptured by Howard Broughton of the Rushcliffe Barn Owl Group at Wards Farm on 7th November 2007 and on Sunday 25th November whilst ringing at the feeding site in P23, a Chaffinch was caught wearing a Dutch ring

HAPPY NEW YEAR 'FRIENDS'

2007 has been another successful year for the 'Friends' with many ideas coming to fruition. We are blessed with a good, friendly team whose sole aim is to make Rushcliffe Country Park an enjoyable and relaxing place for young and old.

I would personally like to thank all the 'Friends' who work at the Park. The ideas they come up with are imaginative, fun to create and enjoyed by many. The 'piece de resistance' is the dedicated web site which has been lovingly created. For those of you who do not know, it is --



Thank you all for your time and efforts, it is much appreciated. I would like to wish all of you a healthy and happy 2008.

Dorothy Pearson



FAREWELL TO FRIENDS

Although at the time of writing I have not yet got a date for moving house, I expect to be moving shortly and leaving FORCP. I have been a member for a few years as I first met the Friends the Summer we worked on the owl, the swan bench, the green man and of course the squirrel, all for the newly opened Gibbies Wood. But what will I remember of my time in the Park?

Is it:

Coping with Alan's jokes when woodcarving?
Roger having his lunch out of the biscuit tin?
Wading in the lake?
Discovering how to determine the sex of small birds (if you don't know ask Dorothy)?
Driving through liquid mud behind Gibbies Wood?
Sitting out in the open in Winter having lunch?
Being bossed by Paddy?
Learning how to lay a hedge?
Shifting load after load of yet more wood chippings?
Working alongside the dedicated Ranger team?

Or is it:

Working with a super group of people who give generously of their time and who are willing to tackle all sorts of jobs and learn new skills?

A lot has been achieved in the last few years and FORCP has been a major player in making the park the attractive and popular place it is. So, keep it up Friends, I shall miss you.

John Holden

' BARKING BROWNIES '



The 'Friends' had an idea of trying to introduce, to groups of younger children on a 'have a go basis', the pleasures of conservation and wildlife in the park.

On the evening of 19th September, 2007 18 Brownies from the 3rd Keyworth Brownie Pack arrived to do their first ever conservation work in the park, to spread bark on the Tree Trail path. After an introductory and safety chat from Heather and collie Holly, armed with spades, wheelbarrows and buckets (thanks Roger for repairing the bucket handles) an hour of high excitement and activity followed.

What an enthusiastic and hardworking group, they all wanted to return another time to do more work, light stopped play!

Let's hope we can encourage more groups to 'have a go'. If anyone has any contacts with cub or brownie groups who may be interested in doing light work around the park please ask them to contact the Rangers.

Jill Spafford

MY FOUR-LEGGED 'FRIEND'

I am pleased to say that my guide dog Kris and I have been Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park since the end of June this year. Kris says that he thoroughly enjoys the outdoor life, particularly the areas where he is allowed to be out of his harness and lead, so he can run around freely and play tag with any of the other dogs who are visiting the park.

Kris tells me that he is very partial to all the different flavours and textures of things in the park. The water in the pond dipping area is very tasty. He has helped with spreading woodchips along the path in Gibbies Wood and found that nice and chewy.

Also interesting to him are the sandwiches that the Friends bring for their lunch, but the best and most appealing to him was the rather lovely carrot cake that Gordon's wife made for us all.

We have taken part in willow weaving a fence around the wind turbines. We have painted some notice boards with green paint, luckily Sara noticed that Kris had his own method of painting and was able to wipe his bottom clean before we walked home through Ruddington.

Kris is very much looking forward to the day we are allowed to have a go at driving the buggy.

Sue Shepherd



*The
Rangers
hope you
have all
had a
happy
Christmas
and wish
you all the
best for
the New
Year*

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 from Sat 5th January 2008 - Sat 29th March 2008 (except Sat 22nd March, Easter)

New Volunteers and Members always welcome. See tasks below.

South Notts Bird Ringing Group - Meet every Sunday (Weather permitting) 7.30am-12noon

FORCP Meetings

FORCP Social - 9th Jan 2008

Please note that the walk around Colwick Park, as mentioned in the last Newsletter, has been changed to a walk around our own Park. This is to celebrate the completion of our Natural Heritage Project.

We will be meeting at 1030 hours in the classroom for a prompt start at 1100 hours. We will walk the new trails to view our hard work over the last 2 years.

FORCP Meeting - 16th Jan 2008 @ 1-30pm RCP

FORCP AGM Meeting - Wed 12th March @ 1-30pm RCP

Tasks

Create Arch ways for new access path into Gibbies

Coppicing & thinning


Maintenance of trails ready for the Easter Holidays

Create new directional signs to replace finger posts

Hedgelaying

Early Wildflower ID Walk

Mushrooms and Ladybirds

 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.**

Produced by the Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park
Registered Charity No 1079665



Supported by

Rushcliffe
Borough Council



An independent group associated with
BTCV
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