

Introduction

Thank you to Stuart Meier for leading the History of the Woods Walk through Ashenground Wood and Linda Howard-Bateman for leading the Photography Afternoon. Thank you to all who attended our AGM in March and to Michael Blencowe, who once again gave a very informative and enjoyable illustrated talk on Nocturnal Wildlife in Sussex and beyond. We still have the Bat Walk and the Fungi Hunt to look forward to and we have some exciting new ways for you to get involved including a new Wildlife Sighting Database.

The History of the Woods – Part 1 The ground you walk on

Millions of years ago, the land of the Sussex Weald was rent by earthquakes as the land shifted. Here where Haywards Heath now stands, rocky dykes were forced vertically upwards hundreds of metres, forming the ridge where the Bridleway now runs, and the ridge further north which carries the A272.

Between these ridges a large hollow was formed, which would have been a lake during the ice age more than 10,000 years ago. Eventually, the stream we know as Foundry Brook carved out a channel (just west of the London to Brighton Railway), and the bowl was drained by it. Over thousands of years, woodland grew up in the area. In Roman times, a road cut through the woods west and north of the village. This was a lesser route than the better known Roman Roads, used for commercial purposes rather than marching armies!

Later, clearings were farmed with cattle grazing and crops grown. Although the town of Haywards Heath developed much later after the railway opened, several farmhouses in the area date from the fourteenth century while there is archaeological evidence of a 'vaccary' (a dairy farm) south of Reading Wood from even earlier times. By the 17th century, a pattern of woodland interspersed with fields had developed into a landscape which is characteristic of the High Weald.



Archaeologist investigating medieval remains on the 'vaccary' site at Bolnore



In 1638, a beautiful estate map of this area known as "the Hayworthe" was produced for the then owner, Nicholas Hardham. This map (see left) is now in the West Sussex County Record Office. Blue arrows have been superimposed on the map to show the location of the Ashenground Bridleway.

Stuart Meier

Conservation Volunteers Welcome! We are always pleased to welcome new volunteers to help with conservation. We meet in Renfields (RH16 4TG) throughout the year (October - March: 1st Sunday and 3rd Saturday of month; April - September: 3rd Saturday of month). Activities include coppicing, mowing, path work and litter picking. Tools are provided, and training given. Please wear suitable footwear and bring gardening gloves. Under 16s must be accompanied. **For more details please call Patrick on 07908 067081.**

Conservation Update

The conservation group's main project since the coppicing season ended has been a very muddy path between Pond Meadow and Four Acre Meadow. After a couple of mornings' labour and many wheel barrow loads of woodchip, those enjoying the woods can benefit from a much-improved path. Thank you to the volunteers for all their hard work and to MSDC for supplying the woodchip. FoABW is very grateful to Network Rail for supplying an equally impressive new bench for Pond Meadow and a number of new bat boxes.

Patrick Burke



In Memory of Janice Tipping



Many of you will have known Janice Tipping (*front and centre in picture*), who sadly passed away in February this year after a sudden and short illness. She was a guiding spirit for our Group right from the beginning; she was at the preliminary meeting of Friends back in 2004, when we agreed to form a group to help look after the woods. Her community involvement went well beyond what she gave us. She was an active fund raiser, our publicity officer, and with her passion for photography she soon became our "official" photographer. She attended most events, and conservation days to build up a pictorial record of our activities. She helped start the fixed-point photographic survey of our woods, and worked on this for several years. Her beautiful pictures of the plants and creatures in our woods have adorned our website as well as our boards and newsletters. Those of us who knew her and worked with her have missed her greatly since she moved to Brighton, and grieve greatly at this final separation.

Plants for gardens close to Ancient Woodland and its protected buffer zones

In the battle of the plants, our woodland needs your help before the Villains take over!

The Villains – what to avoid!

- Laurels
- Bamboos (or get non-invasive / plant in containers)
- Rhododendron – 'ponticum' is the one to avoid (the purple one)
- Eucalyptus
- Spanish bluebell – we are losing the battle elsewhere in Haywards Heath, but here the woods are still full of native bluebells.

Our Heroes! – choose us instead!

- English Bluebells (*hyacinthoides non-scriptus*).
- Hazel
- Guelder rose (*viburnum opulis*)
- Hornbeam
- Dogwood
- Wild roses (dog rose and field rose)
- Native honeysuckle (*lonicera periclymenum*)
- Hawthorn
- Elder
- Field maple

Wildlife Sightings – Season and Year

Thank you to all who have contributed photos and reports to the Spring sighting report.

The reports have been varied and wonderful.

BIRDS: Blackbirds, Robins, Song Thrushes, Red Kites, Kestrels, Common Buzzards, Blackcaps, Bullfinches, Chaffinches, Chiffchaffs, Coal Tits, Collard Doves, Goldfinches, G.S.Woodpecker, Green Woodpeckers, Greenfinch, Herring Gull, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Mistle Thrush, Lesser Redpole, Redwings, Siskins, Sparrowhawk, Tawny Owl and many more.



Other sightings include: Insects, Butterflies, Rabbits, Foxes, Badgers, Roe Deer, Newts and Dragonflies.

Lorraine Maynard

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 1st September – Bat Walk: 7.30pm at Ashenground Bridge (Don't forget your torch).

Saturday 15th September - Fungi Hunt

All children are welcome at all FoABW events and all events are free. Any under 16s must be accompanied by an adult

Stats of sightings and Data

Top 5 creatures spotted in June:

Type	Sightings
Robin	27
Blackbird	27
Wren	24
Jackdaw	20
Blue Tit	21

Top 5 Places to Spot Wildlife:

Locations	Sightings
Pond Meadow	110
Railway Path	89
Weavers Meadow	30
Bridleway	29
Pierces Wood	26

Rarest Sightings in June:

1 Sighting: Mole, Barn Owl, Harlequin Ladybird, Stoat and Albino Squirrel

2 Sightings: Fox Cubs, Badgers, Roe Deer, Smooth Newts, Green Veined Butterflies and Southern Hawk Dragonflies

Photographer of the Month: **Kim Berry** – Thanks you Kim for all your incredible pictures!
(Most pictures sent in June)

Laura Maynard



Annual Subscriptions

The Committee is very grateful to those who pay more than the minimum of £5 and paying by standing order reduces our administration costs. You can do one of the following:

- Set up a standing order by requesting the appropriate form from Peter McKerchar.
- Send a cheque to 25 Wealden Way, Haywards Heath, RH16 4AF, payable to FoABW.
- Pay by bank transfer to account no. 10021310, sort code 60-10-26, giving your surname & initials as reference.

Many thanks for your continuing support.

Woodland Word Search

Y L C V B N Q C X S D Q U X F
 E W Y N M S Z B E P R U L O V
 O E W T P U G Y Y A I Y C F T
 M Q B I I M M L V R B E X W F
 F G D E E B F J W R K I B M D
 G E O S L N B O A O C P Y O E
 R Q U R O B R A Z W A G A L G
 C O P G F M M S R O L A E E L
 M R A I W O U U H Z B M W W Y
 T R I R O B I N B R W Y O P H
 D C F C L L W E R I E O F N H
 U S V H K Z S K Z Y Z W E K B
 Z S L C I E G I D K Q I W I S
 R E G D A B T L A D Y B I R D
 T W E N U U Y L F R E T T U B

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|--------|---------|
| Badger | Dragonfly | Mole | Robin |
| Blackbird | Fox | Mouse | Shrew |
| Bumblebee | Frog | Newt | Sparrow |
| Butterfly | Ladybird | Owl | Spider |
| Cricket | Magpie | Rabbit | Worm |

Ashenground and Bolnore Woods are full of beautiful and wonderful creatures! Why not tear off this section, visit these woods and see how many you can find?

- | | | | |
|-----------|-------|---------|-------|
| Badger | _____ | Mole | _____ |
| Blackbird | _____ | Mouse | _____ |
| Bumblebee | _____ | Newt | _____ |
| Butterfly | _____ | Owl | _____ |
| Cricket | _____ | Rabbit | _____ |
| Dragonfly | _____ | Robin | _____ |
| Fox | _____ | Shrew | _____ |
| Frog | _____ | Sparrow | _____ |
| Ladybird | _____ | Spider | _____ |
| Magpie | _____ | Worm | _____ |

What other fantastic creatures can you find?

Get involved – Tell us what you’ve seen!

Some of you already send in your wildlife sightings and we are excited to announce that, if you want to, you can now do it on the move! The link below will take you to a form that you can access via your mobile phone or computer. You can tell us what you saw, where you saw it and even upload your pictures; which could feature in the next newsletter or sighting report.

Just visit this link: www.shorturl.at/wMQ78 and tell us what you’ve seen!