Friends of Forest Farm

SPRING 2023 127

It hardly seems any time since we were wishing you a happy new year and here we are officially in to Spring, with Easter just around the corner. We hope you've enjoyed the passing and unfolding of the seasons at Forest Farm as much as we have! Now that we can say with confidence Spring has arrived, after what has been quite a challenging Winter, it is inspiring to read the report from Alec showing how our wildlife is bursting back into life.



Water is a dominant theme in this edition. Last year we struggled to maintain adequate water levels in the canal and the various ponds. As you will read, much activity has been put into the canal and other water features and more will be required later in the year. Let us hope for enough rain this coming Summer.

Our regular activities have proved to be very popular. The Winter Talks programme has been particularly well attended with capacity audiences. The connecting theme is the Glamorgan Canal and our industrial heritage. We hope that you enjoy the article about these industrial pioneers and their legacy. The Sunday Volunteers programme has also been well attended and the hard work makes a visible difference.

The bird hides are well used as ever, even if somewhat spartan. There are some plans in the pipeline to try and make them a little more comfortable and appealing. The Reserve has been subject to a number of incidents of vandalism of late. There is an article explaining about our contacts with Cardiff Council and the Police regarding this problem. Your practical assistance with reporting can help to tackle the problem.

A reminder that our Annual General Meeting is in April. Whilst perhaps not the most exciting event of the year, it is vital to the proper functioning of the organisation and it is a chance for you to express your views and ideas. For those members who pay their subscription through PayPal we would appreciate you looking at the article on Page 11.

Thank you for your continuing support. We look forward to your feedback and to seeing you out and about at the Reserve – oh, and don't forget the Ranger's Open Day on 10 June which promises to be a great family day. Let's hope the sun shines!

Paul and Naomi Brightmore

RANGERS' REPORT JANUARY - MARCH 2023

As ever, we have had a very busy period with lots of work going on around the reserve. This work has been carried out by the Rangers, Ranger volunteers, Friends of Forest Farm and Innovate Trust. All the people involved have put a lot of time and effort into keeping the reserve in good condition and safeguarding the wildlife and nature that surrounds us, helping to preserve and protect Forest Farm for now and future generations. Cardiff Council and the Ranger team would like to thank all involved for their hard work and effort.

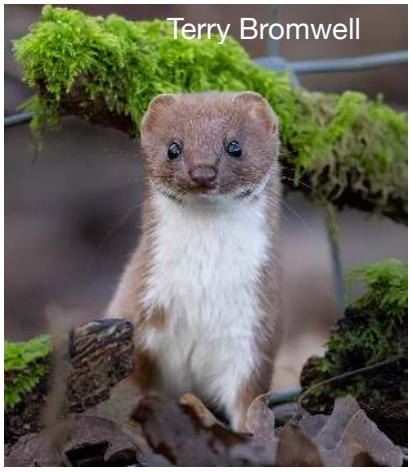
The section of path at the end of the canal has now been repaired, and so we have been able to keep water levels higher and thus push more water into the wetlands, holding more water in the canal to help prevent the problems of drying out we encountered last year. Let's hope we do not go into drought situation again this summer. There are still some problems with the pond and wetland system but these will have to wait until the Autumn before we can look at them again. Now it is time for the Winter work to slowly come to an end as we reach toward Spring, and it is time to let nature take over.

The ponds and wetlands will again become breeding grounds for a host of creatures and plants, and Spring will be busy and bursting with life. I have been very pleased to see Daffodils, Snowdrops, Primroses and Bluebells, which have been planted over the Autumn and Winter period, showing through. All of these provide colour but more importantly provide early nectar for the emerging insects. It has been great to see the Hazel catkins out with the tiny pink flowers and to see early bees nectaring.



Some other notable sightings have included the local Dipper singing away at middle lock. We have cleaned some rubbish out of this area and will add a small weir and some extra rocks to improve the habitat for this beautiful bird. While in the scout field I had 17 Herons fly over, which was quite a sight. One decided to take up residence on the ponds and try to wipe out the population of spawning frogs and toads. It has had its fill, but we still had a lot more frogspawn in all our ponds with some small tadpoles already showing.

I have been greeted every morning as I open up the buildings with a Song Thrush singing away from one the Scots pines at the back of the farmhouse, a superb way to start the day. The best sighting yet was opposite the farmhouse on the wooden fence by the dragonfly pond: 2 Green Woodpeckers had a fight and displayed to each other, something I had not seen before. Last, but not least, was a great view of a Weasel in the hedgerow over by the conservation field.



As we move into the breeding season I will put up some new signs to remind people to keep to the paths, and to keep their dogs on a lead in the gated and marked circular walk around the canal and past the hides. Please can everyone take note of the signs, as this is the most sensitive part of the reserve and by keeping disturbance to a minimum we will all have a chance to see some of the wonderful wildlife Forest Farm has to offer.

Alec Stewart, Ranger

GLAMORGANSHIRE CANAL



The repairs to the bottom end of the towpath have now been completed. The canal-side edge, which had 'sunk' somewhat, has been reinstated. This will prevent the canal overflowing the towpath, which also means that the level of the water in the canal can be kept higher as and when required.

Being able to keep the level of water in the canal higher means that more water will flow into the wetlands, which will be very important if we have another prolonged hot and dry summer. It also means that this stretch of the towpath is no longer at risk of being washed away.

The work was undertaken by Kordel, a groundworks and civil engineering company based in Gwaelod-Y-Garth. It was arranged and funded by Cardiff Council.

As you may know, works are currently underway restoring part of the Cardiff Canal to form a new public area in the centre of Cardiff, called the Cardiff Canal Quarter. Trees, shrubs and benches will be installed around the previously buried canal, as well as an amphitheatre-style outdoor stage. Cardiff council wants to make this a "vibrant" area and to reduce the risk of flooding, and the project has received funding from the Welsh Government and the City Deal.

Here on Forest Farm, we have the last remaining stretch of water from the Glamorganshire Canal. It is a significant reminder of our industrial history and it was critical to the industrial transformation of Cardiff, as well as now being a greatly loved nature reserve. It is great to see the canal repair work that has recently been completed, but also worrying that so much of this last stretch seems to be silting up and falling into disrepair. In light of the significant work being undertaken on a stretch of canal that was long abandoned, surely now is the time to ask what are the council's long-term plans for the remainder of the canal on the Forest Farm reserve?

OTHER PLANS

The project to install a Green Roof on each of hides continues (see the previous edition of the Newsletter for more information).

We are now actively working on putting up display panels in the two hides explaining more about the wonderful wildlife to be seen there. Hopefully this will not take too long!

We are also at the early stages of investigating having display panels along the canal itself telling about this amazing historical monument.

Renovation of the destroyed barn by Cardiff Council is making progress albeit very slowly and is still in the planning process. It appears to be somewhat bogged down in the bureaucracy at present and our Chairperson is in contact with the authorities about it.

GOOSANDER: MERGUS MERGANSER



We usually think of Summer as the season that bird species come to the UK to breed. However the Winter months also see many visitors. One striking species that is now frequently seen is the Goosander - albeit on the Taff river rather than inside the reserve. The Radyr railway bridge is often a good place to spot them, although they can be seen anywhere along the river. These photographs of a pair show what beautiful creatures they are.

DESCRIPTION: A handsome, streamlined duck, goosanders are larger than mallards and belong to the sawbill family. Called the 'sawbills' because of their long, narrow bills with saw-like 'teeth' which are good for gripping fish. A long, streamlined bird, it is perfectly shaped for swimming after fish.



Female goosanders are grey, with a white throat and a shaggy crest of longer feathers at the back of the reddish-brown head. Breeding drakes (males) are white, with dark iridescent-green heads and black backs. Goosanders have long red bills that are hooked at the end and widen closer to the face. When not in their breeding plumage (July-October), both males and females are usually grey, with a reddish brown head and a white chin.



BEHAVIOUR: Goosanders spend much of their time afloat, fishing and often sleeping on open water. They are among the very few ducks that catch fish for food, along with their 'sawbill' relatives, the red-breasted merganser and smew, all of which use the long, serrated bill for fishing. They have excellent vision and will hunt well into dusk, or even after dark. They often swim in small groups along the shoreline, dipping their heads and peering underwater to search for prey and then diving with a slight leap. They can stay under for up to two minutes, but they normally dive for less than 30 seconds. Although largely fish-eating, goosanders also eat molluscs, crustaceans, worms, insect larvae, amphibians, small mammals and birds. Their love of salmon and trout has brought them into conflict with fishermen. Goosanders nest in holes in trees along the riverbank.

They first bred in in the UK in 1871, initially in Scotland and since 1970 it has spread across northern England into Wales, reaching south-western England. Their habitat is upland rivers in summer. In winter they move to lakes, gravel pits and reservoirs, occasionally to sheltered estuaries. They can now be seen on the Taff all year round but are more common in winter.

The Wildlife Trusts https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/birds/waterfowl/goosander
Scottish Wildlife Trust https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/species/goosander/
Nature Spot https://www.naturespot.org.uk/species/goosander
RSPB https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/goosander
Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_merganser#Breeding

PHOTOGRAPHS: Steve Ffphotos

FRIENDS OF FOREST FARM TALKS 2023

Our series of monthly evening talks has continued with growing popularity, and the January and February talks were linked by a common theme – the Glamorganshire Canal, opened in 1798, the last remaining stretch of which remains to be enjoyed on the Forest Farm reserve.

The Glamorganshire Canal ran from Merthyr Tydfil to Cardiff and began its working life following construction in 1798. Financed by the wealthy ironmasters of Merthyr Tydfil, especially Richard Crawshay of Cyfartha Ironworks, the canal was the solution to the issue of transporting iron ore, coal and limestone from the valleys to Cardiff and onwards around the world. The canal was 25 miles long, dropping in height 542 feet and requiring 50 locks before it reached the sea lock at Cardiff Docks. Along the way it of course provided transport for many other businesses and industrial developments. At our winter talks, we found out more about some of the industrialists who used the canal from its earliest days.

Cyfarthfa Ironworks and Richard Crawshay

In January Chris Parry, of the Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Art Gallery Merthyr Tydfil gave an excellent talk to over 50 people, about Richard Crawshay (1739-1810).



We heard about Richard and his phenomenal rise to wealth and power. The son of a Yorkshire farmer who in 1757 arrived penniless in London after an argument with his father. He got employment at an iron weighouse and worked his way up, eventually inheriting the business. Crawshay then sold the business to buy an iron wholesaling business, becoming one of London's leading iron merchants.

Due to a lack of charcoal for smelting iron, coke was often used and coal was readily available in South Wales. By 1764 Merthyr Tydfil had three coke blast furnaces in operation, including Cyfarthfa owned by Anthony Bacon, producing cast iron. The area had suitable coal, iron ore limestone and water power, and land could be obtained cheaply. The main problem was that there were no roads and existing transport by pack horse was difficult, slow and expensive.

Photo credit: Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Trust

By 1775 Crawshay was acting as agent, and partner to Bacon, in what was now the largest ironworks in Wales. When Bacon died, Crawshay, took on a shared lease of the Cyfarthfa Iron works with Bacon's son.

Crawshay realised that wrought iron fetched a much higher price than cast iron and decided to convert his works to produce wrought iron. He took out a licence to purify cast iron into wrought iron, a process known as "puddling" the iron. Refining this complex process took several years and cost £50,000 (a lot of money then) for little profit. Crawshay's business partners withdrew; he remained in London to run his business there. The final process developed by 1793 became known as the "Welsh Process". In 1794 he finally became the sole owner. Crawshay left London, moving to Cyfarthfa and managing the ironworks himself.

The need for better transport for his business led Crawshay to become the major investor in the construction and management of the Glamorganshire Canal, which opened in 1798. This proved to be a crucial development and facilitated expansion at Cyfarthfa. The iron works now became very profitable. By 1803 he was employing 1500 people and was producing over 10,000 tons of iron per year.

When he died in 1810 he was worth £1.5 million, one of the wealthiest men in Britain. He was buried in Llandaf Cathedral. His son and grandson carried on the business and the grandson built Cyfarthfa Castle. Crawshays were associated with the South Wales iron industry until the 1890s and some of the descendants still live in South Wales to this day.

Nantgarw China works and William Billingsley





Our February talk was entertainingly delivered by the Museum Director, Charles Fountain.

The canal was also taken advantage of by William Billingsley when he established the Nantgarw China works in 1813, right on the canal bank and only six miles North of Forest Farm.
Billingsley was a colourful character, with a history of moving from place to place (often fleeing his debts) and acquiring high skills in porcelain production. The family worked at Barr's porcelain factory in Worcester between 1809 and 1812 where Billingsley developed a 'new method of composing porcelain'. Their departure in 1813 from Worcester was abrupt and they were bound by the owners not to disclose to any third party details of the new method.

Now ready to set up his own business, he found the site at Nantgarw, conveniently sitting alongside the new Glamorganshire canal. Without the canal, Billingsley could not have transported in the raw materials, nor could he have transported the finished product away.

Between 1813 and 1820, at Nant Garw, he further developed the secret recipe for his exquisite porcelain. He succeeded in producing the finest porcelain ever made. Nantgarw Porcelain is unique in that it is a bone ash/frit based soft-paste porcelain body which no other porcelain can come close to in translucency or whiteness. Furthermore, the glaze on Nantgarw porcelain is the perfect complement to enamelled decoration giving the colours true vibrancy and allowing the decoration to merge into the glaze. Unfortunately it was very fragile and the vast majority was lost during the firing process, making it a poor commercial proposition!. Porcelain production finished at the site after 1820.

Nantgarw continued as a pottery from 1833 until 1920, under the ownership of the Pardoe family, producing earthenware flowerpots, teapots, stoneware bottles. It was also known world-wide for its clay smoking pipes, each week producing 10,000!

Descendants of the Pardoes continued to live in Nantgarw House until the 1970s after which the house and former China Works site were abandoned and fell into disrepair. In 1989 the semi-derelict site was bought by Taff-Ely County Borough Council, who still today

own the site. After the start of archaeological excavation and restoration of its kilns and buildings, the site opened to the public as the **Nantgarw China Works and Museum**. The Nantgarw China Works Trust was set up in 2007 as a charity. The Trust now leases the whole site from Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

The museum site has the last remaining bottle kilns in Wales and is a scheduled Ancient Monument. It houses some of the rare remaining pieces of Nantgarw porcelain and also offers a guided tour of the works followed by a cream-tea (Pre-booking required). In 2018, after a major research project, Billingsley's previously missing original recipe was recreated and the factory has once again been able to produce a little of the legendary porcelain.

If you want to learn more, look up the websites for Cyfartha Castle Museum and Nantgarw China works museum, or even go and visit.

http://nantgarwchinaworksmuseum.co.uk
https://wellbeingmerthyr.co.uk/venues/museums/museums/

Duncan Hockridge, Albyn Austin and Naomi Brightmore

The Winter Talks Programme

The final talk in the current series will take place in Ararat Community Hall, Whitchurch Common.

19 April 2023 **Followed by the AGM.** **NOTE EARLY TALK START TIME 6.45 PM.**	The story of Insole Court and the family who made it.	John Prior, in costume!

If you have any queries about any of the talks in this series please contact **Duncan on 07870362607.**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please note that the AGM for Friends of Forest Farm is taking place on 19 April 2023 at 8:00 p.m. and is open to all members. As a member you will receive a separate notification of this meeting.

Arson and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) at Forest Farm

(Report of an on-line meeting December 2022 and a Reserve visit February 2023)





Following the brief article in the last Newsletter here is the promised fuller report.

Friends will know that ASB on the Reserve, which includes fly tipping and drug use has been increasing over a number of years, culminating in arson. The fires destroyed our bird hides, and the old stable area which included equipment; the damage is still highly visible next to the Warden's Centre. This bald statement does not reflect the incomprehension, sorrow, frustration and even anger, quite apart from the fact that a valued amenity and Rangers and volunteers' maintenance work over many years was obliterated. The neighbouring allotments have also had equipment stolen from their shipping container which was then burned out.

One of the main suggestions from the meeting was for more and better CCTV. This is being taken up by Nicola Hutchinson (Conservation and Community Development Manager) with Council colleagues, and by Cllr Kate Carr with South Wales Police re crime prevention. It was also noted that poor lighting is a problem for police monitoring, but because it would adversely affect wildlife it is a non-starter. The meeting emphasised that more information and a co-ordinated approach by all parties was needed.

Action had already been taken by the police with notices giving information about different ways of reporting incidents (including QR codes - which enable more effective and speedy reporting). NB. These have been temporarily removed, but are due to be replaced.

Recently, there was a follow-up visit to the Reserve. It was agreed that a report would be provided on the installation of live CCTV cameras around the site, linked directly to the Council's 24 hour security department. They have direct access to the police. Our secretary Martin Chamberlain requested that CCTV includes coverage around the Wardens Centre and the replacement stable area.

Reporting is absolutely vital. We are the people familiar with the Reserve and we can spot anything unusual or concerning, but casual visitors can help too. Recording incidents is essential; they build a picture, the data can show a pattern of escalation, which means more notice is taken. NOT reporting makes it appear there is not a problem.

How to report incidents to the police:

999 **only for incidents in progress**
101 Otherwise

Online https://www.south-wales.police.uk - follow the link to "Report".
NB. QR codes, when in place, will go to this directly.

'Cuppa with a Copper'
Whitchurch - **Ararat** (the Church on the Common)- Wednesday 11am - 12
Library - Friday 3.30 - 4.30

Tongwynlais - **Ton Thai** - 1st Thursday monthly 12 noon - 1pm
Ainon Baptist Church - last Thursday monthly 11am - 12

Sheila Austin and Martin Chamberlain

MY FAVOURITE PHOTOGRAPH



I was asked for my favourite image taken at Forest Farm. That's a bit difficult when you've filled up a few hard drives with thousands of images, but I remember this one from last summer.

This image of a young Kingfisher and a newt is one of my favourite images taken at Forest Farm.

Last year on the 17th of June one of the recently fledged Kingfishers showed up at hide 1 and after a few failed attempts it caught a newt. It battered the poor creature on the branch for ages, and gave us plenty of photo opportunity until it dropped the newt and flew off embarrassed.

For those who wish to know the technical features, I used a Nikon D500 SLR camera, which was fitted with a Sigma zoom lens (60-600 focal length, set at 600mm). As the bird was moving quickly, I had to use a high shutter speed at 1/1600 sec and F6.3, ISO 400. The picture was then processed with Lightroom, Photoshop and Topaz denoise computer software.

I've been visiting Forest Farm for about 7 years. I'll never forget the first time, when I saw 3 Kingfishers in one day, at both hides and at the canal, this after visiting a hide in South Devon for 3 summers without seeing a single one.

My rate of visiting Forest Farm went up during the lockdown periods, as I couldn't travel around the country with our campervan, and I soon made friends with fellow photographers.This place helped me keep my sanity and I just love to walk around, spot some wildlife and keep in touch with that friendly bunch of photographers. Already looking forward to my next visit.

Thanks,
Andre Van de Sande

HIMALAYAN BALSAM

From May/June onwards, we'll need your help to tackle Himalayan Balsam at Forest Farm!

Himalayan Balsam is a non-native invasive plant that grows rapidly, forming a dense canopy that shades out native plant species. And whilst it's a rich source of nectar and pollen for bees, it competes for pollinating insects with native flowers, reducing their ability to produce seeds. It also spreads rapidly — each plant can produce around 2,500 seeds that can be propelled up to 7 metres when the seed pods 'explode', which they do at the slightest touch.

The good news is that if you see Himalayan Balsam when you're walking round Forest Farm, you can help us tackle the spread. Use the ID sheet if you're not sure what it looks like.

This is what to do:

PULL the plant out of the ground. Make sure to include the roots. Grip the stem as close to the ground as possible — if you hold it too high up, it might just snap further down — and pull in the direction it's growing. Wear gloves and watch out for nettles and brambles!

BREAK the stem by folding it up and make a pile of them on the side of the path.

SQUASH the pile of broken plants down by trampling them. Then leave it to decompose naturally.

NB! If there are ripe seed pods that look like those in either of the pictures, it's very important that you *don't* pull the plant, because it will cause the pods to 'explode' and disperse seeds over a large area. If you're unsure, feel free to leave the plant alone.

And please don't climb any fences or take any risks to get at balsam.

Thank you for your help!

[ID sheet and composite of two pictures of seed pods attached.]







MEMBERSHIP FEES 2023 AND PAYPAL

(IMPORTANT IF YOU USE PAYPAL)

Dear Friend of Forest Farm

At our AGM last year it was agreed to raise the annual membership fee to £8 per year. This is the first increase since 2003.

Many members currently subscribe to Friends of Forest Farm via PayPal, either paying with a debit/credit card or with a PayPal account. If you are one of them, your membership renews automatically each year, and you receive an advance notification from PayPal that this will happen.

Unfortunately, due to the way in which PayPal subscriptions were originally set up, we cannot alter the amount of your subscription, which is currently £5. This is a feature of the original PayPal system over which we have no control.

This unfortunately means that we cannot request the new £8 subscription rate unless you take further action. For this, we apologise.

To make this process as simple as possible for you, we will send you an email shortly before your membership is due for renewal. This will provide instructions explaining what actions we would like you to take, including the relevant web links.

Please note that your new subscription will be more flexible and you will not be required to repeat this process at a later date.

We sincerely appreciate your membership and your help in making Forest Farm a great place in our local community. Our apologies to you, again, for this inconvenience.

If you have any questions or issues, please just contact me at jon@forestfarm.org.uk

Best regards

Jon Wallis

VOLUNTEER REPORT: SPRING 2023

January's work session was spent planting some 'whips' along the line of the new fencing around the allotments. The improved fencing was sadly necessary because of increased vandalism on the allotments, but it did mean that the hedge alongside the path from Forest Farm Road to the stone bridge was thinned out somewhat, leaving it looking rather threadbare and "gappy". It will obviously take a while for the whips to grow, but in time they will fill in the bottom of the hedge nicely.







February's session saw 10 volunteers spend the morning working around the Warden's Centre. The small herb garden to the left of the Warden's Centre had become completely overgrown with weeds, so some people cleared it, and dug-over it over, so that it can be replanted. Others wielded loppers to reduce the height of the long hedge between the Warden's Centre and the dipping pond. The hedge grows rapidly and was well over head height, so it needed reducing to keep it manageable and to stop it overgrowing the path around the dipping pond.

Also during February's session, members of the Friends' committee planted two silver birches in memory of two much-loved regular photographers at Forest Farm, Drew Davies and Gabi Simon. The trees were donated by their family and friends, who were present at the planting.



“The King making a brief appearance @forestfarm Cardiff this morning.”

Drew Davies 26 June 2019

As the trees grow and flourish, they will be an enduring memorial to two people who clearly loved the wildlife at Forest Farm, and who did so much to promote it through their photography.

(The two photographs are a testimonial to the beauty of their work and the wonder they saw in the natural world. Editor)



"I saw a vixen for the first time in my life. It was very exciting!"

Gabi Simon 23 April 2021

At the time of writing, the March volunteering session hasn't taken place, it will be on 26th March, when we'll be planting two trees in the Scout Field (the one on the right, across the bridge at Forest Lock) and clearing bramble from an area of wildflowers.

Jon Wallis.

Sunday Volunteer sessions are usually monthly from 10am to 12 noon, and are advertised on FoFF Facebook and in our newsletter when possible.

Come and join us if you can!

IN MEMORIAM : TREE PLANTING CEREMONY

On Sunday 12th February, a small group of Friends Volunteers and Rangers met the families of Gabi Simon and Drew Davies – both keen photographers who regularly visited Forest farm – to plant trees in remembrance of them both. Readers may recall from earlier reports in our newsletters that both had passed away suddenly and unexpectedly within the past few years. The intervention of Covid has delayed plans for an appropriate event to record their passing.

Two young silver birch trees had been selected by the rangers and suitable locations were chosen to maximise the prospects of the trees reaching maturity. The first has been located in the meadow opposite the main farm buildings, and the second is located in the smaller meadow adjacent to the dipping pond behind the Warden's Centre.

Both families were very appreciative of the gesture and all took part in the planting of the trees.

Anthony Mathews (Chairperson)



Build your birds a nestbox

As we count down the long winter days, have you noticed early morning birdsong is on the rise? This melodious chorus heralds the bird breeding season. National Nestbox Week kicked off on the 14th February and is a great springboard for taking action. So as birds start to get in the mood, let's join in and help by putting up a birdbox or two.

To save costs, get inspired and try your hand at building your own.

Editors Note: Wild About Gardens have given us permission to use their articles and materials. https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-bird-box

WAYS TO BE MORE SUSTAINABLE IN YOUR GARDEN

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT WITH THESE EASY TASKS

- **PLANT A TREE**: **Trees are brilliant at drawing down carbon from the atmosphere.** If all 30 million UK gardeners **planted** a medium-sized tree in their community, school, workplace or garden and nurtured it to maturity, they would store enough carbon equivalent to drive you more than 11 million times around our planet.

- **WATER THE WAY NATURE INTENDED**: **Switch from mains to rains** in your garden to save carbon. Use a water butt containing water that falls onto your roof instead of turning on a tap from the mains supply, or use a watering can instead of a hosepipe.

- **GO PEAT FREE**: **Peatlands are the world's largest carbon store on land. They provide valuable ecosystems for plants and animals and act like sponges, reducing the risk of flooding.** When we take peat for our gardens, carbon is released and habitats are damaged. Keeping peat in bogs – not bags – is a crucial part of the fight against climate change.

- **MAKE YOUR OWN COMPOST**: Carbon saving quantities linked to home composting (as opposed to buying bagged retail compost) are equivalent to 1.85 miles (driven by average car) saved per kg of home compost made.

- **PULL UP A PAVING SLAB**: Garden soils and perennial plantings play an important role in storing carbon.

- **PLANTS FOR POLLINATORS**: **Pollinators need our help. Loss of habitat is one of the main reasons why we see fewer bees, butterflies and other insects visiting our gardens.** Help by growing a wide variety of plants including a mixture of native, near-native and exotic plants to support pollinator diversity.

- **ELECTRIFY YOUR GARDEN**: switch from fossil fuel to electric-powered tools.

- **GROW YOUR OWN BUNCH OF FLOWERS**: Some imported flowers have up to 10 x the carbon footprint of home or UK-grown bouquets.

- **EAT MORE HOME-GROWN, UK, LOCAL AND SEASONAL FRUIT AND VEGETABLES: Buying locally sourced and home-grown produce can save significant amounts of greenhouse gas emissions.** Eat more home-grown UK, local and seasonal fruit and vegetables from local sources or from your own garden or allotment. Growing at home also allows you to choose not to use pesticides – another plus for the planet.

ADAPTED FROM WILD ABOUT GARDENS/ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY: MORE INFORMATION ON THEIR WEBSITE

https://www.rhs.org.uk/gardening-for-the-environment/planet-friendly-gardening-tips?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=CCNM20230119D&utm_content=CCNM20230119D%20CID_e5b5c712167472a910fe95066a569570&utm_source=marketing%20enewsletters&utm_term=Learn%20more

COMING EVENTS AT FOREST FARM

All events meet at the Warden's Hut, Forest Farm Rd, CF14 7JH
and last from 10am-12/12.30 unless otherwise stated.

16 April	Volunteering. Task tbc.	Jon Wallis
19 April 6.45pm	The Story of Insole Court followed by AGM	At Ararat Baptist Church Centre
07 May	Volunteering. Task tbc.	Jon Wallis
10 June	Summer Open Day*	Park Rangers
23 July	Volunteering. Task tbc.	Jon Wallis

***Summer Open Day at Forest Farm Country Park**
10am-15.30pm Saturday **10th June 2023**
Join the Community Park Rangers, Wildlife Trust, and Buglife as they deliver a variety of fun and engaging activities for all ages including Pond-dipping, bug hunting and bird spotting and the Friends of Forest Farm pop up café.

More events or details, including volunteering event tasks, will be posted on our website, so please remember to visit at www.forestfarm.org.uk

EMAIL OR PAPER?

Do you get a paper copy of the newsletter delivered to your home at the moment?
Could you consider changing to receiving it by email instead? It might be better for you, better for the Friends and better for the environment. We appreciate that not everyone is able to receive an electronic copy of the newsletter or might not want to. There are however some definite advantages in doing so. This is your decision which we will respect. No changes will be made unless you tell us to do so. Thank you to those who have already done so.

If you are willing to change to the electronic version please send us an email.
Email editor@forestfarm.org.uk

Please provide: Name
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