

Pamber Forest Nature Reserve

Quarterly Newsletter October - December 2010

Coppicing progressed well through October into November with two coupes completed in Bentley Green Copse and one in Heath Copse one using contractors and the other using mainly volunteers. The mowing of the rides was completed earlier than in previous years on October 25th/26th. A cold snap in late November with snow in early December hindered progress but didn't stop it so that the coppicing programme was well ahead of schedule by mid December. A new coupe on the edge of Bentley Green Clearing was started mid month but this was short lived as heavy snow fell on the 18th December and this lay until the end of the year curtailing further progress and two work parties had to be cancelled including a corporate group from Cisco Systems.



The month of December was the coldest for over a hundred years with snow falling on many days and some severe frosts. The week before Christmas was particularly cold; the daytime temperature not rising above freezing point and night time temperatures below - 10 C. The temperature being so low meant that the type of snow was light so only very little damage occurred to trees unlike last winter when the heavy wet snow was very damaging.

One of the Dexter cattle that had been suffering from arthritis was put down on 31st October, this was one of the original 'reds' and brings the herd down to 17 animals.

Redwings arrived about a week early on 9th October closely followed by fieldfares on 24th about three weeks earlier than normal, an indication perhaps of the cold weather to come. The only other unusual bird was a rose-ringed parakeet on 17th October. A late sighting of a speckled wood on 1st November concluded this most spectacular of years for butterflies.

Twenty people attended the fungus walk on 3rd October and then on 17th 40 people were on a guided walk conducted for the Basingstoke Conservation Exchange where delegates from Basingstoke's twin towns in France and Germany were joined by local people, some of whom acted as translators. Feedback from the foreign delegates was very positive as they were much impressed by the reserve and the work going on in it.

The HWT AGM was this year hosted by the Northern Team in Basingstoke on 23rd October and in the afternoon 75 people were escorted around the reserve on three walks. The final event of the year was an autumn walk that attracted 19 people on 6th November.

People counters have now been installed at six of the reserve entrances where footfall will be counted for a full year. The data collected will be very useful in targeting our interpretation and helping to support our funding from donor organisations, principally Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council.

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