

Friends of Judy Woods

Newsletter Spring 2019



Many of us are involved with other groups as well as Judy Woods, and some of committee member Sally Tetlow's time is spent at a place Mary and I finally got around to visiting recently. Sally is a volunteer at Rodley Nature Reserve, near Horsforth. It's a smashing place, with lots of bird hides. We will certainly be going there again.

In February three of us took up an invitation to attend an open meeting of the West Yorkshire Bat Group. The evening was hosted by Maggie Brown and her colleague, Carl. It was good to meet up again with Sal Kerry (nee Bullimore), formerly of the Royds organisation, who was such a key player in our early days, and with Jane Liddle, a former FOJW committee member. Jane is now the Bat Group's membership secretary. We had a short talk explaining what the bat project is about, and an outline of how the project was set up and how study sites were chosen. Then we were advised about the completing of a survey including the use of the bat microphone and tablet. We were shown the information generated last year from the initial surveys, and what the group's plans were for this coming year. Mary and I were greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm of our FOJW colleague, Julie Parkinson. To take an active part in the surveys one needs to be a member of the West Yorkshire Bat Group, so the three of us signed up and paid our very modest membership fee.

So, what will we be doing? Well, during 2019 the group is hoping to carry out more bat activity surveys in order to build up a picture of the best habitats for bats in West Yorkshire. Each survey involves a walk along given routes (transects) on two separate evenings between May and August. They need to be carried out on a mild dry night, starting an hour after sunset for 90 minutes. Top quality equipment will be available to record where and what bat activity there is. The nearest area to Judy Woods, which the Bat Group has chosen, is at Bailiff Bridge, so that is where we will be having our evening stroll. It will be a new experience for us, and our contribution to the work of the West Yorkshire Bat Group. We will keep you updated. So, watch this space as they say!

All the best to everyone

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Chairman

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Winter Walk in Judy Woods

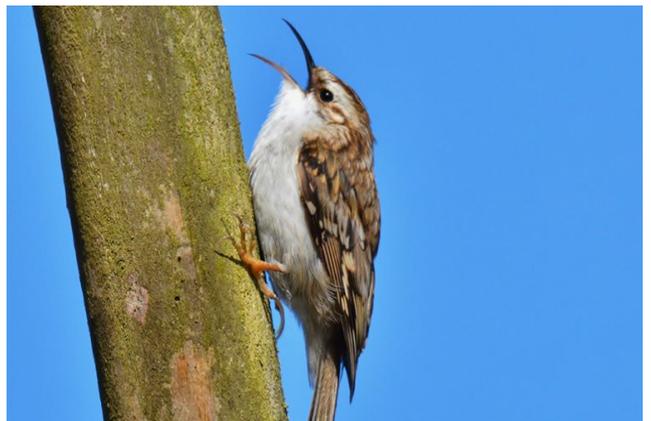
Our final walk of the year took place on a particularly miserable day. Rain greeted the start as our loyal group of seven PTG members, suitably attired in wet-weather gear. A large beech, which had been recently felled near the entrance, had opened up a dramatic view. The beck was flowing strongly and we noted that there were still a number of survivors amongst the trees planted on the embankment by the Clifton Beck Project team. With the woods now looking bare after a late autumn, it was good to have a close look at the landscape and observe the contours of the land which reflect the history of the woods. Fungi were still in evidence and approaching Judy Bridge we were delighted to see a Brambling, an uncommon bird in our woods, searching for food amongst the leaf litter.

Our walk then took us on the red marker route to the point where it joins Mary's Walk. We then followed the main path through Royds Hall Great Wood to return to our start point. On our way we came across what had been a 'stick man' event which had been organised that afternoon for families. This appeared to have been well supported. We were not the only ones to brave the wet conditions that day.

Seasons Greetings

The Seasons Greetings event was again held at the Harold Club between Christmas and New Year. It was a pleasant if cold walk and as in previous years we were entertained by The Thieving Magpies Morris team and the Bradshaw Mummers. Outside The Magpies performed and kept warm with their energetic performance, leaping about with staves. Inside, it was great to see the Mummers in a more intimate setting, enabling us to appreciate the subtlety of their humour and dramatic delivery. (Please notice the irony in the previous sentence). Christmas Carols were sung, pie and peas were consumed and mulled wine and beer drunk, and the traditional 'Good Time' was had by all. A popular feature of this event near the close of the proceedings was the singing, by the mummers and some of the folk singers present, of Hail Smiling Morn, now a tradition. For those newsletter readers who attended, this our most popular event, thank you and for those who missed it why not give it a go next year and bring your family and friends?

Observed in late January was a Treecreeper, quite common in the woods but difficult to see. The Treecreeper is small (Wren size), It has a long, slender, downcurved bill. It is speckly brown back and mainly white breast. They tend to be territorial and consequently stay in the same area. The normal feeding habit is to fly to the bottom of a tree trunk and then walk up the bark (often working in a spiral) on the way picking up insects and spiders from the crevices in the bark, then fly down to the next tree and repeat the process. If disturbed they will remain motionless and the camouflage makes them difficult to spot.



Interesting fact:- in the West Country the Treecreeper is often referred to as the Tree Mouse.



PTG Tasks - The Big One

Highlighted in the last newsletter was the problem of the mineral line path. This photo shows the shale slippage and the partial build of the retaining revetment. A few weeks ago a further problem was caused by mountain bikers building a jump ramp with shale and wood from the nearby Leaky Dam. This destabilised the already compromised structure of the path, so urgency was required to complete the project. Here you see the half built revetment, in foreground is building specialist, Tony.

This picture shows the building team and the near completed structure. Behind the wall is ballast, strengthened with concrete to ensure near indestructibility, the sandy area was subsequently covered with shale to match the rest of the path. The result was declared a good solid job!

PTG - Work Done

November Totals Volunteers 52, Hours 156, Bags collected 25

Plus:- a piece of tyre tread, a car tyre and a car scissors jack.

December Totals Volunteers 36, Hours 98, Bags collected 21

Plus:- plus a large sheet of plastic and a 15l water bottle

January Totals Volunteers 62, Hours 186, Bags collected 34

Plus:- 2 lengths of metal pipe, a large sheet of plastic, a road sign, 8 canvas bags, a length of rod, a large holdall and the legs of a folding stool.

PTG average attendance 12 per week.

Andrew Cutts Quarterly Walks

Andrew who is Bradford Council Assistant Trees & Woodlands Manager, arranged a walk at St Ives for members of the Friends groups for early February. The intention is to have these at different locations in the council area every 3 months so members/volunteers get a chance to see what is going on within the other groups. This is a great idea to cement the connection with the council and the other groups, however, the first of this series was cancelled at the last minute, so will be rescheduled I will report back when they recommence.

Grey Squirrel Frolics

Although Grey Squirrels are often seen in the woods they are invariably alone. However in late January in an area of Low Wood and later in an area of Old Hanna Wood there were a number seen together. They were very active, chasing each other up and down trees and along branches. We concluded that this was a high speed, energetic mating ritual. So if all was successful young Grey's will be in the offing!!

Sighting of a Buzzard in Judy Woods

In late February in a clear blue sky a Buzzard was spotted by Stuart on the edge of the woods searching for food. It was identified by the typical wing formation with feathery tips and high pitched call. Buzzards once quite rare are now the most common UK bird of prey. Keep a sharp eye (and ear) when in or near the woods.

Latest News.

As reported in the last newsletter we were invited to attend the Voluntary & Community Sector Alliance (VCS) funding meeting. A sum of between £250 & £1,000 was available to local volunteer groups with a community based health & well-being focus. We applied for £750 of funding and were informed in due course that we had been awarded a £500 grant. All was well until the confirmation letter arrived which stated that we indeed been awarded £500 however the attached cheque was made out for £750. Honesty prevailed, the cheque was returned and we subsequently received the correct amount. As outlined in the last newsletter it will be used for safety equipment, protective clothing for new and existing PTG members and the provision of additional signage. Thanks go to Ian for attending the initial meeting and for Chairman Geoff for filling in the application form and dealing with the mixed up cheque debacle.

Future Events in 2019

Saturday 6th April 1:30 pm Springtime in Judy Woods - meet Stuart Tordoff and Sally Tetlow at the Station Road entrance, off Huddersfield Road, Wyke BD12 8LA.

Thursday 11th April 7:00 pm Annual General Meeting - speaker from RSPB -Wyke Methodist Church, Laverack Field, (off Towngate) Wyke, Bradford BD12 8JB.

Wednesday 22nd May 1:30 pm Ramble to the Lightcliffe Tea Rooms - meet Sally Tetlow at the Station Road entrance, off Huddersfield Road, Wyke, BD12 8LA (Approx 5 miles) Please remember to bring some money for your delicious refreshments.

Saturday 29th June 10:00 am Balsam Bashing - meet at the Station Road entrance, off Huddersfield Road, Wyke BD12 8LA for a morning of balsam bashing followed by lunch (See website for more details.)

And Finally

The /your AGM is on Thursday 11th April at 7:00 pm (venue details above) The speaker will be Seonaidh Jamieson the talk relates to her latest project "Water for Farmers & Wildlife". Seonaidh as you may recall previously ran the Clifton Beck Project and also worked in our woods with her volunteers, so the presentation will be relevant and interesting. It is important that the members and the committee are on the 'Same Wavelength' so don't forget to come along and support the group, bring yourselves and your enthusiasm, I hope to see you there.