



# Trust in the Forest

*Engaging People with Epping Forest*

**Welcome to the Autumn Edition of Trust in the Forest Sept 2013, Issue 23**

## Changes afoot

Our recent AGM brought a number of changes to the Trust. Terence Mallinson, Chairman since our inception, has now retired. He becomes President and Judy Adams is now Chairman. John Besent, a fellow Director with Terence and Superintendent of Epping Forest 1978—2001, has written an appreciation of his chairmanship, which he gave at the Annual Review held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

“Whilst the concept of establishing a charitable trust was the initiative of my predecessor Alfred Qvist, the hugely successful realisation of that concept has been due almost entirely to the personality and efforts of Terence Mallinson.

Terence was in on the Trust from the beginning. He was one of nine influential people living in the locality of Epping Forest who got together and established a trust and who then went on to be the subscribers to the formation of the Trust Company. At its first meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1977 Terence was appointed Chairman.

Under Terence’s leadership, the new Company got off to a cracking start. An appeal was launched. Foundations, charities, Livery Companies, commercial organisations and private individuals were approached to give financial support to the fledgling Trust and in 1980 a special fundraising event was held at Whitbread’s Porter Tun. The result of all this effort was that the Trust had an investment portfolio from which it could derive an income and was in a position to begin its work.

In the early years the focus was on providing information about the Forest through a mobile information unit, new displays at the Hunting Lodge and the provision of a comprehensive map of the Forest. In 1984 the Trust took a leap forward in the involvement of young people in Forest conservation when it launched its Conservation Project. Initially aimed at schools, this project later embraced other groups and more recently the emphasis has been on providing opportunities for people with learning difficulties to experience the Forest, to gain



confidence in using tools and perhaps most important of all, to discover their own potential.

14 years ago another project was added to run alongside the conservation project: the Environmental Awareness Project. This was aimed at younger children and often gave them their first experience of being in woodland and introduced them to the wonders that woodlands possess.

There have been many other successes too during Terence’s years at the helm. These have included funding and building the first wheelchair path, partnership with the Scout Association in establishing and running the annual 5 day scout project, partnership with the Field Centre in running the annual Winter Wonderland week for children with special needs, creating and maintaining

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a wildlife refuge at North Farm, and the adoption by the Forest Schools national programme

Through its 36 years under Terence's prudent guidance, the Trust has been innovative in its programmes and projects. Many of these have been adopted by the City Corporation or the Field Centre with their greater resources. That has been a mark of the success of the Trust. The Trust also inspired the Forestry Commission to establish the Forest Education Initiative, initially in Epping Forest in 1992 and then nationally 2 years later with a special launch at the Field Centre.

Since 1984, the Trust has engaged 15 young men and women as project officers. I have no doubt that all of them would wish to thank Terence for the opportunity he gave them when they were in the early stages of their

careers to work for the Trust; an opportunity which for many of them would lead to the further advancement of their careers with other organisations. This has been a hidden and an unpublicised achievement of the Trust and one of which Terence should be very proud.

In all 36 years of his chairmanship of the Trust, Terence hardly missed a meeting. His commitment to and enthusiasm for the Trust has been outstanding. That is the hallmark of the man; in all the many other things in which he has been involved, he has displayed the same dedication and industry. The Epping Forest Centenary Trust has been enormously fortunate in having Terence Mallinson as its first Chairman and I would like you all to join me and show your appreciation for a remarkable man and a great Chairman."

## Thank you Richard

Thank you too to Richard Morris, who has retired after 10 years as Director and Trustee. He has played a key role in managing our investment portfolio, contributed to the monthly management team meetings with the staff and latterly taken on the role as Treasurer. Many thanks indeed.

## The Green Team

Our Green Team continues to meet regularly each Thursday to carry out management work in the Forest. A number of members also help us with other groups, lending volunteering support to the Trust and supporting groups where higher levels of supervisory care are needed.

Having discovered what is probably an ancient 'child' of the famous Fairmead Oak, the Team set about clearing the dense vegetation around it while leaving a potentially fine, open-grown, third generation oak nearby to continue the lineage. Following the completion of this task, they moved on to the area to the east of Loughton Camp. Dense vegetation had begun to shade out the marginal vegetation along the sides of the main Green Ride down to Bellingers' Hollow and the steep slope where the Clay Road drops down to form the Baldwin's Hill dam.

As the Team only use hand tools, they can be sensitive in the way that they operate. In this latest task they had to exercise special care. The two rides are probably some of the busiest in the Forest and they were always taking extra care when felling trees, and when one landed across a ride the Team descended on it like a swarm of locusts to ensure that the route was opened up as quickly as possible. Rather than create wide swathes they only made scallops at intervals along the rides at

places where heather and other sunlight demanding species were found to be surviving. In a year where growth has been so spectacular it has been pleasing to see the vegetation responding so well with butterflies, and other insects and animals taking advantage of the flood of light and warmth. They even 'discovered' and opened around a previously unrecorded pond.

New members are always welcome to join this friendly Team. Peter Adams, Volunteer Green Team Leader



Andy Froud Ecologist, Geoff Sinclair Head of Operations and Peter Adams discuss the works ahead

## A Good Summer for Butterflies?

After a cold spring, July and August have seen glorious warmth and sunshine, so can we expect our butterflies to have been restored to rude health after a succession of poor summers?

If only it was that simple! We have about 23 species resident in the Forest. Five of these (Brimstone, Comma, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell and Red Admiral) over-winter in the adult stage and so will have struggled this spring, along with the spring-loving Orange-tip.

Others have two or more broods. The early broods of Small White, Green-veined White, Common Blue, Small Heath, Speckled Wood and the scarce Small Copper will have suffered. Small Heath has been increasing over the last few years and had a better second brood and the double-brooded Small Tortoiseshell did particularly well. The three common Skippers (Large, Essex and Small) emerge in June and will have benefitted from a delayed emergence in to the warmer days of July, but numbers have been depressed since 2007.

It is the late emergers which have done really well; Ringlet, Meadow Brown and Gatekeeper. Of special interest this year has been the return of one of our more beautiful butterflies, the White Admiral, especially in the Bury Wood area. There have also been four sightings of Silver-washed Fritillary in the Forest and reports of Green Hairstreak from Wanstead Flats. The most common Hairstreak in the Forest is the Purple Hairstreak, which seems to have had an average year despite the good weather. There have been no reports of White-letter Hairstreak and only one of Brown Argus.

What this means for next year is difficult to tell, unless you're willing to predict next spring's weather! However, the sunshine will have meant that butterflies on the wing since July should have had good mating and egg-laying conditions. The single brooded Orange-tip may have suffered most from the poor spring weather.

Apart from the weather, the other major factor influencing butterfly populations in the Forest is the management and the opening up of the rides and Forest (thinning and renewed pollarding).

Amongst the volunteer groups working in the Forest are those working with the Epping Forest Centenary Trust, with the Happy Loppers working in Bury Wood between the Cuckoo Pits and Three Planks Ride, the Scout Project opening up the Forest alongside Jubilee Ride and the



**Large Skipper**

weekly Green Team working along Green Ride and Clay Road in the Forest northwest of Loughton. This work is likely to have most benefit for the Speckled Wood, Ringlet and White Admiral. Certainly the latter's food plant, Honey-suckle, has had a prolific year. Opening up the rides also improves the structure of the habitat and gives light-demanding flowers a chance to proliferate, some of which are an important nectar sources for butterflies, moths and other insects.

And have you ever considered looking out for the day-flying moths which are generally less conspicuous amongst our more familiar butterflies? This doesn't apply to the black/red Cinnabar and Six-spot Burnet moths of course, but does for the more subtly coloured Burnet Companion, Mother Shipton, Latticed Heath, Common Heath and the fast-flying Emperor Moth? Well, if you've got a moment or many next summer, why not keep a look out for all of these and pass your sightings on to the Forest offices. You might even see a Purple Emperor butterfly, of which the Forest is now thought to host a small population.

I'd like to thank Andy Froud, Ecologist, from the Corporation of London for sharing his knowledge of the Forest's butterflies with me, and register my appreciation of the volunteers who monitor the butterflies in the Forest by maintaining three transects, visiting each 26 weeks a year. That's commitment!

David Miller, Conservation Officer, Epping Forest Centenary Trust

## Happy Loppers

Thanks to Bradley's tea hut for supplying our food for our last session before the summer break. We are now hard at work again, with 13 of us on the team. We are finishing shortly at Bury Wood, Cuckoo Pits and looking forward to a new challenge on another site!

## About us



### Little Heath

Little Heath School's Sixth Form for those with special needs comes to the Forest most Tuesdays. Whilst the benefits to the Forest are to be seen, the skills they are developing are perhaps more significant. Whilst some have improved their walking skills through negotiating the uneven paths in the Forest, others have developed better communication and team working skills.

The staff there are very convinced of the educational benefits, gained through 'working' in Epping Forest. Learning outside the classroom really works. This is great news for the students, our staff and the Forest. We are hoping that some of them will be able to undertake the John Muir Award, which worked so well with the Happy Loppers.

With three groups coming each year, it provides a real opportunity to get more people into, enjoying and benefiting from the Forest.

### Scout Project 2013– its 25th year

Our staff and volunteers organised and led a number of the task days at this year's Scout Project. More work was done along Jubilee Ride, at Long Running and at Bulrush Pond in Walthamstow, which now has more water. With the City of London, they undertook a range of tasks at Gifford Wood to open up and improve access. Again the benefits to participants extend way beyond their contribution to the Forest's conservation; from learning about leading teams, completing tasks through team

working, as well as social skills developed during the week. We are looking forward to 2014!

### Looking ahead

As you will know during the past year or so, the Trust has been reviewing its operation and in particular reaching agreement on our future aspirations.

Whilst the work to date has been fantastic, there are new challenges now. We want to continue to develop our work with those with special needs, along with an increase in volunteering and outreach and potentially to support the development of a resource base for the Forest.

However to do this, we will need to invest more of our endowment in developing future services, including project development, grant aid applications and fundraising. We want a long term future and we cannot continually use our capital resources.

It also means we need to further extend and develop our Board, and attract those who have time to devote their skills to advancing the Trust. With such a small staff team, there is an insufficient resource to do this without active participation from Board members.

We are working with the City of London and other learning providers in the Forest to ensure there is a good strategic fit between our services. To assist with this, we are taking a lead role in developing the vision and strategy for learning in the Forest, as recommended by the learning consultants.

If you or someone you know might be able to contribute to these areas of work; notably fundraising, marketing, experience of working with special needs or establishing a resource centre, do get in touch/ suggest they contact us.

Judy Adams, taking on the mantle from Terence, relishes the challenge and is convinced that by securing additional resource in terms of Directors' time, increasing volunteer support and attracting funding, we can continue to survive and grow. With her commitment to enabling people to enjoy and value the Forest, appropriate support and 'hard work' by members of the team, she hopes we will see some of these programmes come to fruition in the next year.

### Epping Forest Centenary Trust

The Warren Lodge, Loughton, Essex, IG10 4RN

Tel: 020 8508 9061 Fax: 020 8508 9061 Email: [efct@btinternet.com](mailto:efct@btinternet.com) Website: [www.efct.info](http://www.efct.info)

Charity No: 275076 Company No: 01339783