

BARN HILL CONSERVATION GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1085476

'Keeping in Touch'

Issue 48 – August 2010

Roe Green Walled Garden

During the hot summer we have been very active keeping the garden attractive to our many visitors, and we have been surprised at the number of compliments we have received. .

We have achieved the Green Pennant for the sixth year running and the good news is that Fryent Country Park has been awarded the Green Flag for the first time.

Unfortunately Peter Gallop, a long standing member, passed away this year. We had a tea in the garden to celebrate his long and interesting life and his family and friends were able to see his bike now on display with 'Arthur'.

The newt club has continued to meet. We have had some interesting sessions especially on dragon flies and moths and our thanks go to Debbie and Anna for the way they conveyed their knowledge on these subjects to the children.

Finally, at the walled garden we can be very proud of the water lilies that have been on display this summer. They have been magnificent this year. Unfortunately they and their leaves absorb water like a sponge and have left the pond bereft of water after the hot summer. Dennis has already been in the pond with his waders to thin them out ready for next year. *Kim*



Water lilies at Roe Walled Garden

Some interesting wildlife sightings – April/July 2010

Debbie's Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers put in an appearance on one of my bird count walks in April. I heard a brief snatch of drumming, then the pair appeared, clearly investigating possible nest sites. No signs of actual breeding, though. On 22 July, Debbie saw 2 bats flying around her back garden. Using her bat detector, she was able to get a clear reading at 55 kHz (Soprano Pipistrelle), rather than the 45 kHz used by the Common Pipistrelle. On 30 June, I found a Small Tortoiseshell feeding by the side of Meade Pond. This used to be a very common butterfly in our area, but numbers have crashed in recent years. On 4 July, at the start of a Sunday project, Michael Berthoud noticed a small dark butterfly with a prominent white fringe to its wings. This turned out to be a Ringlet (its name comes from the distinctive eye-spots on the underwings), a species which is recolonising suburban areas, after an

absence probably due to pollution. On 20 July, Kim and others working in the Walled Garden were treated to the sight of a Purple Hairstreak, which caught their attention because of the flashes of purple on the upper surface of the wings. This species spends most of its time in the canopy of oak trees, feeding on honeydew and laying its eggs at the base of leaf-buds. Fishpond is a good place to find dragonflies, and, on 5 July, I had my first FCP record for Black-tailed Skimmer (its blue abdomen has a black tip). This species likes perching on bare ground on the edge of ponds to scan its territory – plenty of that around this pond!

John Barrington

First sighting of a Welsh Wave moth in Fryent Country Park

Following on from John's report above, we have learned that a Welsh Wave moth which Debbie recorded in her garden using her moth trap, has generated some interest from the Natural History Museum. They have confirmed that it is a Welsh Wave moth and have accepted it as the first ever record of this moth in Middlesex, as the South East is out of its range.

The Natural History Museum has asked for the specimen to be donated to them.

Bernard

Blackthorn Blossom in Fryent Country Park

The display of blossom on the trees in Fryent Country Park was outstanding this year, following the long winter and sudden onset of spring. But there was something special about the blackthorn blossom on one particular week in April. The white blossom of the blackthorn set against its dark branches gave a distinct impression of hoar frost covering the trees over the whole of the Park. I realized that this display was quite extraordinary when later in the week a Nature Correspondent of 'The Independent' newspaper devoted his article to the beauty of the blackthorn blossom which he witnessed in field after field when he was travelling through Sussex.

He was prompted to investigate what caused the shimmering white display of the blossom, and discovered that, unusually, the flowers on blackthorn appear before the leaves, giving an appearance of bare black branches that seem to have been sprayed with white.

Well, we have plenty of blackthorn in the Park. Do look out for the blossom next year

Bernard

Slideshow of Fryent Country Park on YouTube

A slideshow featuring shots of Fryent Country Park has been set up on YouTube by one of our supporters. It can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LoP6v3RttwQ>

We are open at the garden Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 am to 2pm. Sundays we are out in Fryent Country Park carrying out conservation project work. Please see the web site below for the programme of projects at Fryent Country Park or telephone the garden. Feel free to join us in our conservation projects at Fryent Country Park.

We are now collecting old pottery garden pots and would appreciate any you no longer want.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

General Committee Meeting	4th September 10.30 am at Roe Green Walled Garden
Countryside Day at Fryent Country Park	19th September 11am to 4 pm. Please help on Saturday 18 th and on the day itself

Contact numbers: Garden 0208 206 0492 (answerphone if nobody there)
 John (Chairman) 0208 205 2040

Also at our website: www.bhcg.uk.com and at www.brent.gov.uk/parks