



Spring walk in Coldfall Wood

By Ann Bronkhorst

Some of the group were a bit short of sleep (the clocks had gone forward the night before) but an afternoon amble through Coldfall Wood was restorative. Anyway, time seemed unimportant, as we pondered Ice Age pebbles and seeds that can germinate after centuries asleep.

Naturalist David Bevan was our guide on a springtime walk beneath the still-open tree canopy. Light was flooding down into the coppiced areas of the woodland, encouraging new growth. David made the logic of coppicing clear, drawing on his long experience as a botanist and conservation officer. We learnt about tiny low plants, such as herb bennet, surviving because of gaps in the canopy, and about plants that 'lurk in the seed bank' for maybe 200 years before emerging when coppicing releases enough light.

Old and young

We spotted early dog-violets, brassy yellow marsh marigolds and even a solitary daisy. A few delicate white wood anemones were in flower, one of the 'indicator plants' for ancient woodland, David said.

Coldfall Wood is treasured as an ancient wood but it's heaving with very young life. Children were building dens, blue-tits were nesting, new willow saplings line the banks of the stream and new grass is growing in the protected patches of Lovers' Lawn. Amazingly, a frail little monkey-puzzle tree has appeared too, joining the wild service trees on the list of surprises offered by our local ancient wood.

For details of other walks and events visit www.coldfallwoods.co.uk.

A royal knees-up

Many people made the most of the extra Bank Holiday back in April and joined in the celebrations for the marriage of Kate Middleton to Prince William.

People living in Strawberry Vale joined together to create a tea party for everyone to share, (pictured right, photo by Mark Healey).

In Leicester Road, Penny Chambers, Elaine Lancaster and Maggie Law (pictured bottom right) toasted the royal couple in style. The Leicester Road street party attracted the attention of the West Australian newspaper in Perth, Australia, thanks to one of their reporters who lives in Beresford Road. The party had a setback the night before when a lorry drove down Leicester Road, tearing down all the bunting strung across the road, but the decorations were restored in time for the big day.

In Hertford Road young and old joined in the fun (pictured top left) with everyone wearing name badges to make the socialising easier. The celebrations went on into the evening with games and music in the street.

For 12 members of the 4th East Finchley Brownies it was a very special day indeed. They were among a group of 250 Brownies and Guides who were specially invited to see the wedding at first hand with a great view of the action at Admiralty Arch, near Buck-



ingham Palace (pictured left).

Lauren, aged eight, said: "My favourite bit was seeing Kate and all the teeny bridesmaids." Eva, ten, said: "I loved it all and seeing Kate and William wave in their carriage." Their leader Lisa Attfield said: "It was an incredibly special day for



Bird walk in the woods

By Nick Young

It's a Saturday morning in April and a group of about ten people have gathered for a bird walk in Coldfall Woods. Our guide, David Darrell-Lambert of Birdbrain UK, proves to be highly informative on what is a blind spot for many birdwatchers old and young: their songs. This is just as well, for with the wood in full bloom (providing lots of cover for the birds) we are much more likely to hear rather than see them.

Within ten minutes we have not seen much but have heard blackbirds, a male blackcap, a great tit, robins, chaffinches and a green woodpecker whose distinctive 'yaffle' call sounds

as though it is mocking our efforts.

Walking into the woods, we hear much but are only treated to a few fleeting glimpses. That green woodpecker continues to mock us. Eventually we reach a clearing and we are able to see birds all around: a nuthatch making its way down a tree, a ring-necked parakeet - one of London's more exotic

recent avian migrants - sunning himself on a branch; the elusive green woodpecker flying across the clearing and a blackcap. Probably not the one we heard earlier (this one's a female) but it feels good to put a face to the song.

David's website is www.birdbrainuk.com or email info@coldfallwoods.co.uk for news of other walks.

Nature sightings

The Finchley Society is starting a page for nature reports. If you have a sighting in Finchley or Friern Barnet that you would like to share with others, please send it to: web@finchleysociety.org.uk.





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