

The Valley Voice

Newsletter of The Friends of Braidburn Valley Park

www.braidburnvalleypark.org.uk



Summer 2012 Issue 25



Iconic View to Pentland Hills

Scouts are Busy Bees

On Saturday 12th May, the Friends teamed up with Greenbank Scouts to carry out activities for their Community Week in Braidburn Valley Park. Scout Community Week has replaced Bob a Job Week and the Greenbank Scouts were particularly keen to give service to the local community and wildlife, using funds from Waitrose.

The Scouts focused on Bumblebees. They learnt about the loss of habitat that has resulted in the species declining by 98% in recent years. The Scouts made their own brand of bee nest boxes which should be a home for up to 40 bumblebees at a time. They dug holes for the nests and positioned these next to the new bee wildflower meadow on the east side of the Park. This new meadow has been created in partnership with the Edinburgh Community Bee Project. The success of the bee nest boxes is eagerly awaited. *(See the right hand article for more details.)*

New Wildflower Meadow for Bees

In March, a team of volunteers stripped off turf from an area close to the base of the banking below Comiston Road, in preparation for the creation of a new area of wildflower planting, which will be aimed at attracting bees. The area was subsequently seeded with a nectar rich mix of wildflower seed; full details of the seed mix can be seen at <http://www.scotiaseeds.co.uk/GetNectar-richQuick.php>. Plug plants will be added further up the bank later this year. We are grateful to Waitrose in Morning-side for donating the funds to the Community Bee Project, which has enabled the purchase of seed and plants for this meadow.



Worker bumblebee

Afternoon Tea in the Park 2012 Braidburn Valley Park Fun Day Sat 1st September, 2 - 4.30pm

World famous duck race, bouncy castles, magician, ceilidh band, storytellers, arts and crafts, games, raft race, refreshments, bar, face painting, and much more

Birds Foot Trefoil (above) flourishes in our established wildflower meadow. Spot the little furry ginger bee, a female worker of one species of bumblebee. Her larger queen will already be in an established nest, and concentrating on egg laying.

In 2011 Fairmilehead Guides also made and buried bumblebee nests. Hopefully our new nest boxes will produce a number of queens who will overwinter locally in readiness for spring 2013.

Celebrating the Queen's Jubilee

Last December all 83 Primary Seven leavers from South Morningside Primary School prepared for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee some six months early by each planting a small sapling in Braidburn Valley Park. These native whips were some of 420 young trees gifted to the Park by the Woodland Trust's Jubilee Woods project, an initiative to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee by planting six million trees nationwide.

South Morningside Primary has close links with Braidburn Valley Park including various year round wildlife activities organised by the Friends. Karen Young, Committee Chair, said the tree planting was a legacy for the school leavers to the Park. The event included a presentation about the species of the trees, crab apples, elder, dog rose, blackthorn (sloe) and hazel, as well as the wildlife and traditional uses linked with them.



Legacy Tree Planting

Butterbur—the Battle Continues

Japanese Butterbur is another invasive species now spreading along the burnside. Little light green heads in spring eventually produce leaves rather like giant rhubarb which choke out native plants. Originally an exotic Asian introduction to British gardens Japanese Butterbur is now thriving and expanding like the Giant Hogweed or the Himalayan Balsam. It spreads freely underground as well as by seeds carried by wind or water. The most effective way to control it is to dig out and destroy the vigorous rhizomes. Volunteers continue to remove it at community clean up days, plus special attacks by Q2 Greenbank Youth groups, and sterling efforts by the Duke of Edinburgh boys who completed their Gold Awards in 2012.



Wild Meadow

New Trees to Enhance our Park

The City of Edinburgh Council recently planted 10 new specimen trees in the Park. The Friends Group were consulted on the species and the planting locations. Most are native species such as birch, aspen and oak. There are also a few ornamental species such as an exotic hawthorn and a Sweet Gum. The latter, also known as Liquidamber, is from North America and is similar in appearance to a maple. It comes into its own in autumn when the leaves turn a fiery orange red. Considerable care has been taken to place the trees away from walking (and sledging!) routes with particular attention to maintaining the views to the hills both from the Park and surrounding housing. We hope the trees will thrive and enhance the Park landscape as they grow. The full list of species planted is :Aspen, Downy Birch, Sessile Oak, Black Poplar, Sweet Gum (Liquidamber),Small leaved Lime, Hawthorn.

Why not see if you can find them all?

For the Attention of Everyone

At our **AGM** on 11 March, two of our Committee members retired. To keep up our sterling work we ask **YOU** the reader, if you can assist us in any way. Would you consider joining us on the Committee and/or be interested in **STOCK CONTROL** of our wide range of equipment? Contact our Chair below.

For further information about the Friends and Park see
www.braidburnvalleypark.org.uk
or email **info@braidburnvalleypark.org.uk**

Look out for up to date details on posters before **Tea in the Park** and other events. If you supply an email address you can also be sent details by email.

Charity registered in Scotland (SC040192)

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