



# RIDGE WOOD MATTERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF RIDGE WOOD

[www.ridge-wood.org.uk](http://www.ridge-wood.org.uk) 

SPRING 2017

Welcome to the newsletter of the Friends of Ridge Wood. We are volunteers who look after the Wood and help to improve it for all who visit. Working with South Gloucestershire Council and the site owners Hanson Aggregates, the Friends undertake practical conservation work within the woodland. We also organise a number of events each year to encourage people to explore the beauty of nature in this great local nature reserve. The Wood has a fascinating history and some mysterious old features, and best of all – it is on your doorstep!

## REVIEW OF 2016

The past year has been a busy one in Ridge Wood! In May, local naturalist Ed Drewitt (whom you may recognise from the BBC's Springwatch) again led a fascinating Evening Chorus walk through the woodland acquainting attendees with the sounds, and occasionally the sights(!), of our local bird population.



'Forest Fun Time', our fantastic family event in August, was very well attended again with over 100 people exploring the woods, following the family quiz trail through the trees and then getting the chance to try out some woodland crafts with the bravest following a blindfold rope walk! We are grateful to Hanson Aggregates and Waitrose for the generous financial support they provided.

Summer heralded our photography competition, encouraging participants of all ages to see what they could find in the woodland and we had some fantastic entries. Prizes were awarded in three different age categories – you can see the winning photographs on our website and Facebook page.



Finally, we held a Bat Walk in September as part of South Gloucestershire Council's Discover festival. Stuart Rowden from the Avon Bat Group led the walk, and after a brief introduction to the bat detectors, attendees were able to identify plenty of pipistrelle bats feeding on insects and moths, as well as enjoying an entertaining and informative talk by Stuart.

While these events are both enjoyable and important in encouraging people to explore the reserve, our primary purpose is in running our regular woodland work mornings throughout the year. So far this season we have undertaken some coppicing in the central section of the woodland, cleared brambles and blackthorn to allow wildflowers and other smaller plants to flourish and planted a number of new hedgerow trees along the main path, as well as general tidying and litter picking to keep the woodland looking at its best. It's not too late to get involved though – further work mornings are taking place in March and April, including more coppicing and native British bluebell conservation work. There is no need to book, just turn up and lend a hand!



## ? DID YOU KNOW ?

Ridge Wood has a long and interesting history, and many clues to their past can be found if you look. Did you know...

- The quality of limestone at The Ridge has encouraged extraction here for at least the last 200 years and probably many more.
- A mansion house known as Ridge House and surrounded by terraced pleasure gardens once occupied the site of the existing Hanson offices.
- Remnants of the gardens and other historic features can be seen in and around the woodland including the haha, standing stone, parkland trees and the old limekiln, as well as the Lodge, a beautiful timbered building that stands opposite the Ridgewood Centre.



# WHAT'S ON IN 2017



We have lots of great activities planned for 2017 for all the family!

There have already been several work days so far this winter and more are planned – see below for dates. If you want to get involved in your local community, learn more about woodland management, get fit, and have fun then please do come along!



## Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March – Woodland Work Morning

10:00am – 12.00, meet at the Melrose Close entrance.

No experience is necessary and tools and gloves are provided.



## Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April – Woodland Work Morning

10:00am – 12.00, meet at the Melrose Close entrance.

Learn how to identify native British bluebells and help conserve this vulnerable flower in Ridge Wood.



## Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May – Wildflower Walk

Time tbc.

Join us for a walk through the woodland led by Rupert Higgins to find out about some of the wildflowers growing in Ridge Wood.

Suggested donation: £2 adults, £1 children.

## Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May – Informal Meeting and AGM

19:30, Community Meeting Room, First Floor, Tesco Extra, Yate.

All welcome.

## Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September – Owl Prowl

Further details will be available on our website later in the year.

We are also hoping to hold a **Fungus Foray** in October. Watch this space for more details!

For updates on all our work days and events, as well as other information about Ridge Wood, please check the website ([www.ridge-wood.org.uk](http://www.ridge-wood.org.uk)), the woodland notice boards or visit our [Facebook page](#)!

## GET INVOLVED!

Please join us! Woodlands are diminishing, and as a consequence, a wide variety of plant and animal species also. It is therefore vitally important to protect this Wood, so that it continues to thrive. Become a Friend of Ridge Wood and help manage Ridge Wood! It's free and it's fun! There is no regular commitment, just give us your support or an hour or two of your time, when you can!

Name: .....

Tel.No:.....

Address:.....

Email:.....

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How would you like us to contact you in the future?

.....

Email / Post (please circle)

How did you hear about us?.....

Please email the above details to [info.forw@gmail.com](mailto:info.forw@gmail.com), message us via Facebook or alternatively complete the form and post to:

**Friends of Ridge Wood, c/o Yate Town Council, Poole Court, Poole Court Drive, Yate BS37 5PP**