



READY FOR BONFIRE NIGHT

FoHH NEWSLETTER



Winter 2019

WORK PROGRAMME

Work on the woodland play-zone continues and we now have a wonderful story-telling chair, which will be put in before Spring.

Rangers and volunteers have been clearing scrub across the site as part of our winter habitat management work and the team has been removing any damaged or diseased trees.

The rangers have run events for Ash, Tintinull and Norton Schools as well as working with a group of home educated children.

Students from Yeovil College have been volunteering here for 6 weeks and have been a great help. A big thank you to them all.

Friends and volunteers from Ham Hill, Yeovil Country Park and Chard LNR got together at the

Windwhistle Inn at Cricket St Thomas for their Christmas Party & band

A NEW PROJECT

The Friends of Ham Hill have been successful in gaining a grant from the PRIME Foundation (a charity run by a healthcare property company) for a new project this year.

PRIME received a high volume of applications for this grant and our project scored highly with their Board of Trustees who have agreed to award the full grant applied for: **£3,500**. There are two elements to the project:

Design and print of a new Children's Activity Leaflet for Ham Hill

The use of maps, photos and illustrations will bring to life the diverse history, geology and wildlife of the unique greenspace

and encourage families to be led on adventures by their younger members.

Improvement of the Orienteering Course at Ham Hill

Expansion of the existing orienteering course so that it covers the whole of the site. This involves designing marker positions, creation of a new map and installation of new markers across the site.



This is a great result for the Park and will encourage an even wider range of people to use a greater extent of the site.

A RAINY FUNGI FORAY!

By Neil Dutton

Around 20 hardy folks braved the rain on Saturday 22nd Sept for the Ham Hill Fungi Foray, expertly guided by Michael Jordan, the internationally-renowned mycologist, writer and broadcaster.



First thing we learnt was that I've been mispronouncing all these years – it's "fun-j-eye", not "fun-guy".

As Michael wryly noted: "you can eat any fungus, though some you will only eat once" – a light-hearted way to make a serious cautionary point. Indeed, all our findings that day will be registered onto a national conservation database, so we have done our bit for the cause!

After an hour or so of productive foraging, we returned with our treasures to the Ranger Centre. There, Michael appraised us of their Latin names for the species, we'll best remember their more common and colourful names including:

Beef steak - so called as it looks rather like slab of raw meat.



King Alfred's Cakes – a black fungus resembling burnt cakes, referring to the legend of the distracted King not paying attention to his baking, a story that reputedly took place in Athelney on the Somerset Levels.



Turkey Tail with its series of circles resembling the tail of a wild turkey.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING



In September, we held a Macmillan Coffee Morning with plenty of cake, cuppa and chat to raise money for this amazing charity. We supported this cancer care charity because of Terry. He was a funny, warm and humble man who was one of our volunteers. He loved Ham Hill and working alongside him was so much fun. Terry was sadly diagnosed with oesophageal cancer in February last year and died at the end of March. The care and emotional support he and his wife, Judy, received was

amazing and Terry's family has a huge admiration for Macmillan nurses and the work that they do. Over £250.00 was raised.

'BEES NEEDS' AWARD FOR HAM HILL

Rangers from South Somerset District Council's Ham Hill Country Park have picked up a 'Bees Needs' award from Keep Britain Tidy, in conjunction with DEFRA, for the work they do to encourage the rare Shrill carder bumblebee to colonise at the site.

The Shrill carder bumblebee (*Bombus sylvarum*) is one of the UK's rarest bumblebees, with the species only present in a handful of places across Southern England and Wales.



The award was presented to Countryside Manager, Rachael Whaites and Assistant Countryside Ranger, Kat Perham in Kew Gardens (London) recently. The 'Bees Needs' award recognises the hard work undertaken to encourage the Shill carder bumblebee to colonise at Ham Hill Country Park, as part of the 'Back from the Brink' project.

HAM HILL BONFIRE 2nd NOV 2018

The Ham Hill Bonfire was an even bigger success this year with over 400 people attending. We had a wonderful torchlight procession down to the stone circle to watch the fire take light on a wonderful cold and crisp night

The bonfire was erected on the morning of the event, with wood that had been harvested and collected by the volunteers over the previous weeks, as well as pallets from local businesses.



A guy was created by Judy and Josh and dressed in the volunteer jumper of our sadly-missed friend, Terry, who passed away last year.

The ever-popular warmed spiced apple juice was donated by Michael from Tinkers Bubble as well as fabulous fudge from Radfords Fine Fudge. We also toasted marshmallows on sticks provided by SSDC. In total, approximately 750 marshmallows and 40 litres of spiced apple juice were consumed and we collected £ 257.90 in donations towards future events at Ham Hill.

NATIONAL TREE CHARTER DAY

Ham Hill played its part in the 2018 National Tree Charter Day on 24th November. Despite the rotten weather, 16 volunteers (with a contingent from the Prince of Wales) managed to plant 200 native trees in Pit Wood. The trees were donated by The Conservation Volunteers.



ORGANISATION/CLUB SHOWCASING

Are you an organisation, club or group that regularly visits Ham Hill Country Park? (e.g. runners, riders, ramblers, dog-walkers etc.). As part of our aim to promote and celebrate the park more on social media, the FOHH invite any organisation that wishes to promote, raise awareness of and attract new members to be "showcased" through our Facebook pages in 2019.

No cost is involved - it's all about making people aware of the diverse range of activities that this great park can offer. If you're an organisation, club or group that wants to be showcased, drop the Friends an email at:

hamhillfriends@gmail.com.

2020 CALENDAR COMPETITION

We are planning to produce a 2020 calendar of **YOUR** photos of Ham Hill. We'll be launching the competition in early Spring so keep an eye out at the Ranger Centre, our Facebook page and elsewhere locally for more details.

EVENTS AT HAM HILL

As usual, winter is the time to focus on habitat management. Events for Spring 2019 onwards will be in our Spring newsletter and on the SSDC Countryside website & Ham Hill Facebook page (see details in the contact section below).

CONTACT

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