

The Friends of  
The Forgotten  
Woodland Garden of Lewtrenchard



**Newsletter No. 19**

**Spring 2019**

**Bluebells in the wood—spot the Pixie!**



## Chairman's Update:

Welcome to the Spring newsletter.

The Forgotten Garden is a tranquil place where little changes from day-to-day, but not from season-to-season. The Spring flowers are emerging and the birds are well ahead of last year, as they prepare nests and sing in the trees by the meadow. I believe they get an extra lift to their song when they achieve an echo in the clearings.

The **Bluebell Event** will be on **Saturday 11th May 2019** and all are welcome. **Cream teas** are available and if required, **guides**. As last year we expect our **Lewtrenchard Pixies** may need finding so any children with a keen eye will be welcome to search them out and report their positions.

As the bluebells flower we would like to get some more pictures together for our 2020 calendar, which sold in great numbers over the Autumn. The money raised is already being put towards the lime kiln roof to allow us to build a quiet visitor shelter where people can learn about the locality. **Mr and Mrs Copper at the Lewdown shop deserve a special thanks** from us for their help in this achievement.

**Donations** towards the roof during the next few months would be very welcomed.

**Notepads, Notebooks and Cards** are still available if you would like a local theme as a gift or for your own memos. These will be available at the Bluebell Event and at two events in June - **7.00pm on Monday 24th June at our Annual General Meeting at the Victory Hall**



View of limekiln before reroofing

**Lewdown** with local speaker Simon Dell talking about *Devon—Coast to Coast* and at **7.00pm on Monday 17th June at our Bar Quiz at the Blue Lion Inn.** During August we intend to have a **Barbecue** at the Garden (date to be arranged so check the our website or the Lewdown Newslink to keep updated).

We also thank the Maynard family at Portgate for their gift of a new bench for the lime kiln area.

I should point out that Brian our Project Manager was recently spotlighted in the OkeLinks magazine, which is part of the Dartmoor Links organisation and gave a review of our garden ([www.dartmoorlinks.co.uk](http://www.dartmoorlinks.co.uk)).

Brian is a stalwart of our garden and has strong views on our local habitat, but as someone who has lived in the industrial Midlands for 30years I believe that West Devon is an area that is less spoilt than much of our countryside, in large part, because of the natural awareness that our local farmers have for our landscape.



Limekiln reroofing with Lewtrenchard slates

### **The Woodland:**

Brian and Tony's hard work clearing undergrowth during the Autumn and Winter should mean that bluebells will be in good condition.

### **Project Managers Viewpoint:**

The following is part of a letter which I sent to the WMN in August 2017 expressing my concern for the apparent loss of wildlife in the countryside and the possible causes.

After publication there was an immediate response from an East Devon farmer saying that I was talking non-

sense! The following day a lady in Cornwall said that it was an excellent letter and I'd "Hit the nail on the head".

Recent news items seem to reinforce my views that flora and fauna in the countryside is in serious decline mainly caused by a break in the food chain. *Quote....*

Having spent most of my life in rural West Devon, and always being a keen observer of natural history, it saddens me to see a tremendous decline in wildlife. During my childhood (early 60's) in late spring days cuckoos could be heard often three or four at a time calling across wooded valleys, the air would be full of swallows, martins and occasionally swifts, now there are almost none and the cuckoo is confined to the moors. Streams and rivers abounded in fish, mainly small brown trout, now there are hardly any.

The reason is not climate change, or birds being netted in southern Europe, but the simple fact that the food chain has been broken in that there are next to no insects and insect eating birds (and fish) have starved, I can remember a time when long grass in summer would "sing" with grasshoppers – I saw one last year and none so far this year, butterflies, moths, ladybirds, wasps etc. etc. have declined to a point where they are almost non-existent, just take a look in your garden.

The reason for this must I feel be due to a change in farming methods, chemical warfare in the form of herbicides, insecticides and mono-crop fields and possibly air pollution as D.J. Widge suggests. Even the laudable stewardship scheme does not seem to be making any difference. Of course we must be fed as efficiently as possible but wildlife is paying a very high price for our cheap food.....*unquote*

I like to think of the Forgotten Garden as a small conservation area rather than a garden where wildlife can flourish albeit in a limited way. The recent warm weather has encouraged the birds to start singing and hopefully nesting with woodpeckers being particularly in evidence. Another year with no sign of frog spawn in the pond – don't understand why. Looks as if there will be a good display of bluebells this year thanks to Tony clearing the brambles in the wood.



## Membership

New members are always welcome to join and support this historic local amenity woodland. Please contact the Secretary for more information.

*Subscriptions: Individual £10 Joint £15*

Please contact the Treasurer or any committee member. Payment may be made by standing order.

Donations towards our conservation and development work are always gratefully received. A regularly emptied collection box can be found at the Forgotten Garden on the top bridge past the Holy Well.

## Friends Committee

Patron: Merriol Almond  
Chairman: Graham Yeo 01566 783511 (GYeo@aol.com)  
Secretary: Frances Girling (Frances@middleraddon.co.uk)  
Treasurer: Sue Butland (the2relics@gmail.com)  
Project Manager: Brian Wilkinson 01566 783466 (wilkibg@gmail.com)  
Woodland: Peter Webb 01837 52926 (peter.webb60@btinternet.com)  
Committee Members: June Chapman, Monica Horn, Ann Mennell, Fernley Harding

**Website:** Always remember that a good source of up-to-date information if you have the Internet is our website - <http://www.forgottengarden.co.uk/>

Kindly maintained by Rees Kenyon Design

## Location and outline plan of the Forgotten Woodland Garden

