

FRIENDS *of* LONG LANE PASTURE

NEWSLETTER

No. 19 October 2011

*Pasture open weekends and bank holidays from 10am – dusk.
It may be closed due to bad weather or flooding.*

A Calendar for 2012: Our Centenary Year

Long Lane Pasture was purchased for public enjoyment and recreation by Finchley Urban District Council in 1912. In 2012 we will be *celebrating 100 years* since its acquisition by holding a number of landmark activities. These will be announced early next year in our calendar of events. In addition, we have produced a *Long Lane Pasture 2012 Calendar* featuring 13 colour photographs of Pasture life and landscape through the seasons. The Calendar costs £5 and is now for sale at the Pasture every Saturday morning, 10am-12noon. To order by post (cost £6 including post and packing) please complete the Calendar Order Form and send with payment (payable to *Long Lane Pasture Trust*) to 1 Princes Avenue, Finchley, London N3 2DA. Don't delay your order – stocks are limited!

Ducks on the Pond



Early July saw the arrival on the pond of a *family of ducks*, a mother with four ducklings. Sadly, only two ducklings were there two days later and a month later only one. 'Minnie' (*photo*) became a much appreciated resident, entertaining adults and children alike. She even joined in picking blackberries! As a full-grown duck she finally flew away in mid-October. We do hope she returns to breed next Spring.

Our Trees

A recent survey of our trees has revealed that there are, surprisingly, at least **39 different tree species** on the Pasture, including hedgerow plants and young trees planted on the embankment. There is a mixture of native and 'alien' species, not surprising in an urban area where garden and allotment escapes are common. We accept the plants and trees which have naturally colonised the Pasture and add to the richness of the site. For some, we have several different sub species, often a native and one or more alien or exotic varieties. We have native Spindle and another variety which gives more autumn colour; we have two or three Dogwoods with different coloured fruits; and both English and Holm (evergreen) oak. Our American Princeton Elm, planted in the hope of attracting the White Letter Hairstreak butterfly, is thriving. There are several plum species some with yellow and some with red fruits which enable us to make jam for sale.



This year you may have seen a number of *knopper galls* on one of our oak trees. These are deeply ridged outgrowths found on the acorns of Pedunculate or English Oak caused by the larvae of the tiny gall wasp with a long name: *Andricus quercuscalicus*. Subsequent generations develop in Turkey oak catkins, and then the cycle is then repeated in Pedunculate oak.

*If you have changed your e-mail address, now wish to receive this Newsletter electronically
or would like to volunteer, please get in touch: enquiries@longlanepasture.org*

We'd love to hear from you!

Honey Bee News

Keeping honey bees never goes 'according to the book' as the bees don't read books! Although last year's bees successfully over-wintered and the queen began to lay eggs to build up the colony, for some reason she died/disappeared. With little brood and no queen, the single colony became unviable and eventually died out. However, late last May, we acquired some new bees, comprising one full colony and two small ones known as 'nucs' or nuclei. The full colony, in spite of measures to discourage it, decided to swarm, but we managed to catch and hive the swarm and now have *four colonies on the Pasture*.

Because all the colonies were small it meant that there was no honey harvest in 2011 either, but if the bees over-winter and successfully build up their numbers next year, at least one or two of the colonies should produce honey for summer 2012. The weather plays a critical part in what happens. Last spring came very early and many of the flowers the bees use for food were over before their main season. They also had very little food stores even during the summer, and required supplemental feeding with saturated sugar solution much earlier than usual. The Pasture does have many of the plants which provide a lot of nectar and pollen for the bees and in warm autumn sunshine they were to be seen feasting on the big clump of Michaelmas Daisies. When the temperature drops below 15°C honey bees do not venture out, but form into a torpid cluster and slowly eat their honey stores, while they, and we, hope for a good spring and summer next year.

Harriet Copperman, Beekeeper

Thanks

A very **big thank you** to the following, who have generously supported us with donations during 2011:

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Akiva School | Guy & Adele Nevill |
| J E Burgess | R & M Satterthwaite |
| M Crispin | P E Smith |
| Tony & Gaynor De Christopher | Norman & Wilma Soutar |
| Maureen Delandro | Brian Stewart |
| Maud Dom | Sophie Thompson |
| Rose Goldstein | Ann Treneman & Ian Berkoff |
| S Heale | Bert Van Haesebroeck |
| J S Hillmore | Waitrose <i>Community Matters</i> |
| P A Kehala | Claire Williams |
| S D Knowles | Irene Wright |
| Rachel & Michael Leventhal | |
| Donald Lyven | |

and to everyone who put money in our collection box

COMING EVENTS

November 26th Tree Day

Saturday

10am – 12 noon

We will be planting a few new trees and shrubs, particularly on the embankment, but also making a big effort to look after those planted in previous years. Come along and do your bit for National Tree Week – and leave a lasting tribute to your efforts!

Please Note:

- The annual mow will take place in October when grass and bramble re-growth will cut back to maintain and improve the meadow flora. Volunteers are urgently needed after that to help with the hay raking!
- Contractors will be working on the Pasture in early November clearing away polluted soil and installing visitor counters.

Visit our website: www.longlanepasture.org

This Newsletter is issued by the Long Lane Pasture Trust, 1 Princes Avenue, Finchley, N3 2DA
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