

## FRIENDS *of* LONG LANE PASTURE

# NEWSLETTER

No. 24. June 2013

*The Pasture is open every day: 10am - dusk*

### New 'Vista Sign' Ready for Reception on 30<sup>th</sup> June



At the small gate entrance we have now installed a new panoramic sign etched to show Finchley's landmarks to be seen from this fine local view point. Clearly visible are Pentland Lakeside, Finchley Methodist Church, the Arts Depot at Tally Ho and Finchley Memorial Hospital. The sign was paid for with a grant from Awards for All (The Big Lottery).

The sign will be officially unveiled at our annual Reception on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June. All Friends are invited to come along to celebrate Summer at the Pasture between 5pm and 7 pm. on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June.

### About Our Birds



*Broken song thrush eggs found on path*



*A young blackbird foraging in the ivy*



*One of four moorhen chicks with parent*

Despite a long, cold Spring, birdlife at the Pasture is thriving: breeding birds this year have included blackbird, dunnoek, greenfinch, robin, song thrush, wren, long-tailed tits and moorhens on the big pond (the nest is hard to spot hidden in the reed bed). Sadly, no waterbirds have taken up home on our floating island (which we built as a safe haven from cats and foxes) but where yellow flag irises are now making a fine display. So far, there has been no sign of our whitethroats returning. In the past they have nested in the brambles. In some years we have also recorded the rarer lesser whitethroats but they too have failed to turn up in 2013. We put up a nest box for tits in a large ash tree and this was occupied for a time, until it unfortunately blew down in a gale. With the box now reinstated, we are hoping for a second brood. And not breeding on the site but seen flying overhead are cormorants, parakeets and swifts.

### Can You Help?

If so, please get in touch or come along on any Saturday morning from 10am – 12 noon. You would be very welcome. Our small band of regular volunteers urgently needs more support. We would particularly like to thank the lads from University College School who have recently been putting in a lot of hard work as part of their Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

*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](mailto:enquiries@longlanepasture.org)*

*We'd love to hear from you.*

## Manorside School

On 4<sup>th</sup> June, on a rare sunny morning, the Pasture welcomed a class of 25 ten year olds from nearby Manorside Primary School. The children were very enthusiastic and managed to see and identify, amongst the pond weed, tadpoles, newts and great pond snails. A pretty orange-tip butterfly caught their attention as did the many busy bees enthusiastically visiting the flowers. Many of these flowers in the Butterfly Border are specifically planted to attract bees and butterflies. Some children made drawings; others pressed flowers. In stark contrast, questions about the 'oily pond' highlighted the perils of pollution, raising environmental issues very much on school's syllabus today. The pupils' interest and knowledge were a credit to the School. We welcome them back for a further visit and hope other schools will be taking similar advantage of this precious wildlife habitat as a great learning experience.

### About our Bees



There has been much in the news lately about the record number of honey bee colonies which have died out because of the poor weather last year and long winter. However, the honey bee colonies on the Pasture all came through the winter and some are making honey. How much we are eventually able to harvest, will depend mainly on the weather prior to mid-August.

Whilst the bees are generally well behaved, there are reasons why their temper may not be so good, and we would remind visitors to approach the area quietly and with caution and to stand well to the right side of the apiary entrance if you want to linger. Stay out of their flight path – they make a 'bee-line' approach to their hives and if you are in the way they generally will avoid you, but may regard you as a threat.”

## PASTURE EVENTS 2013

**July 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Saturday**

**10am – 4pm**

### Butterfly Day

This is a special event focusing on the Pasture's butterflies. We will be taking part the national Big Butterfly Count. We may have caterpillars and moths to show you too! There will be help on hand to help with identification and forms to record what you see which will help to build up our sightings list.

**August 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Saturday**

### Blackberry Pick Begins

The Pasture will be open for harvesting blackberries from now until early September. There will be punnets of blackberries and jams for sale. We ask for a donation in return for any blackberries you pick yourself. Please bring your own container.

**September 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Saturday**

**10am – 12 noon**

### Spiders, Bees and Bugs

The Pasture is by now alive with grasshoppers, spiders and other creatures. This is a chance to discover more about these small creatures, to observe the beautiful wasp spiders and find out how our resident bees are getting on.

**November 30<sup>th</sup>**

**Saturday**

**10am-12noon**

### Tree Day

We will be planting, weeding and tending our trees during National Tree Week. Everything provided, but we need volunteers to make it all happen. No trees please.

**Visit our website: [www.longlanepasture.org](http://www.longlanepasture.org)**

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