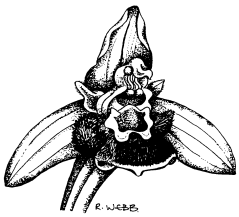
Friends of Portsdown Hill Newsletter



Dec 2020

Welcome back to Winter on Portsdown. We can't offer any walks or talks for while but as soon as we can the events programme will be resume. In the meantime here is an update from the hill.

During the spring lockdown the open spaces of the hill were a great resource for those close enough to get here. A walk in the unusually warm and consistent spring sunshine among re-awaking flowers and insect life, with the reduced road noise, was a great antidote to the news. Regular litter pickers were known to take their exercise allocation on the hill by mopping up the rubbish dropped by extra visitors.

In the months since the last newsletter, the regular management of the hill has continued in these irregular times. The seasonal grazing was carried out, bewildering amounts of litter was cleared and the wildlife monitored. The hill is an important place its health has to be maintained. All this and more will be illustrated in the first talk.



Cheers for that! Litter left by people enjoying the view



New cutting edge technology Making use of the new battery-powered chainsaw and scrub-cutter bought by the FoPH with Waitrose grants this year. The shape of the future.



Old cutting edge technology Intriguingly the hill is littered with ancient fragments of flint workings from the Neolithic. We walk over the earliest tools whilst using the newest.

The unusually mild weather (so far this winter) is becoming more normal and the wildlife is responding to it. Early autumn fungi were still fruiting at the end of November and lizards were active, whilst spring flowers are appearing. Insects are still visiting flowers.

With this in mind the contribution to climate change that attends site management has to be considered. Engines contribute to the problem, grazing animals do as well. In conserving biodiversity the wider environmental costs need to be measured. *continued over...*



Basking lizard in late autumn.

www.portsdown.org.uk
The FoPH website.

www.havantnature.net/Portsdown.htm
Wildlife information on Portsdown and further afield.

www. portsdown-tunnels.org.uk
Portsdown's underground history.

Web sites

Friends of Portsdown Hill
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Events

The normal talks programme at the Church of the Resurrection Hall, Drayton is currently suspended but will resume as soon as they are permitted.

The next talk — Date to be confirmed

A catch up of the events of recent months and some socially distanced insects - the solitary bees.

...continued from overleaf

The best answer available is to ensure that the minimal of resources are used to achieve the desired biodiversity outcome and be mindful of the impact of what you do.



Flowery grassland this summer - attractive accessible and full of biodiversity. It holds lots of carbon in the soil. It may hold more carbon if allowed to return to scrub and trees but it would likely be burnt through arson and thus release the carbon. It requires grazing (methane production) and scrub control (fossil fuel). An informed balance has to be struck.

There are no guided walks at the moment but the network of paths, many lined with seasonal foliage, are available to enjoy



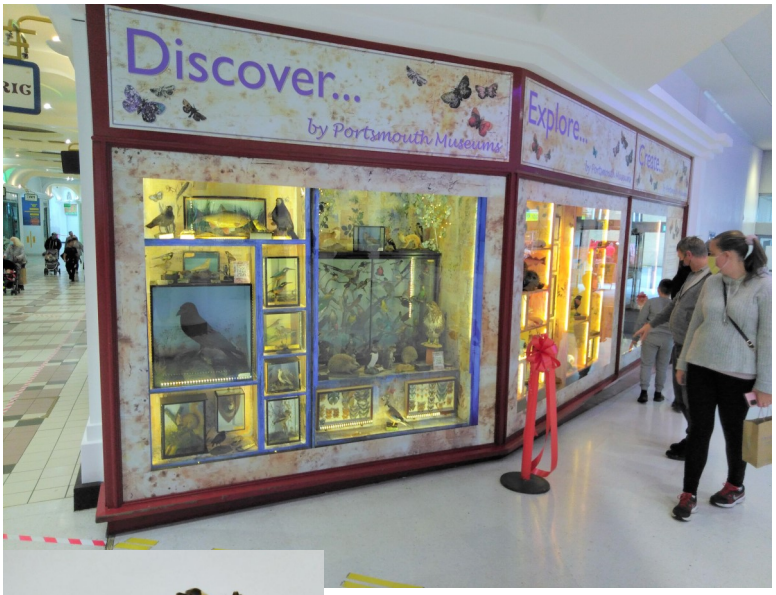
From Bob Bennett
Treasurer: FRIENDS OF PORTSDOWN HILL
PLEA FOR FUNDS

A large part of the Income into the Friends Bank Account comes from the Subscriptions (£5) and Donations given at our Annual General Meeting every year in April.

As this event did not happen this year, we have received little income in the Friends Bank account. Many thanks to those who have sent their renewals.

In order to get around this problem I am asking, for those willing to do it, to pay their Subscriptions (£5) and Donations as a direct transfer from their Bank Account straight into the Friends Account, the details of which are as follows :-
FRIENDS OF PORTSDOWN HILL
Lloyds Bank
SORT CODE 77-25-18
ACCOUNT No 87587260

Many thanks





If you fancy a distraction from a shopping trip take a look at the Worlds of Wonder display in a shop front in the Cascades shopping centre, Portsmouth. A selection of the City Museum's Natural History specimens have been artistically arranged.



Any time studying the past distribution and abundance of species reveals that most wildlife is now rarer than it was when such historic collections were made.