

HUDSWELL & DISTRICT MESSENGER



Don't forget, you can find us on

facebook

Editor: Claire Swainston, Parish Clerk
Thank you for all your contributions; the information contained is only as good as that supplied so please keep it coming! Deadline for the next issue is 1st March 2021.

HUDSWELL SCHOOL CHARITY (No.529602)

Are you over 18 and intending to
go to university or college for the first time?

YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR A GRANT

If you are over 16 and are starting an apprenticeship

YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR A GRANT

For further details please contact Don Farrar, tel. 824514.

This Newsletter is published by:

HUDSWELL & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: John Dixon Tel: 01748 824631

Councillors: Paul Chapman Tel: 01748 823909
Jaj Mankelow Tel: 01748 826882
Beverley Phillips Tel: 01748 824038
Richard Phillips Tel: 01748 824038
Heather Swettenham Tel: 01748 519604

Parish Clerk: Claire Swainston Tel: 01748 826989
claire.swainston@btinternet.com

Minutes of meetings can be found displayed on the main parish notice board (in Hudswell), the parish information folder in the library at the *George and Dragon* and on the following website:

www.richmondshire.gov.uk

under *Council and Democracy*, then *Parish/Town Councils*

HUDSWELL ALERT

If you would like to be added to the **Hudswell Alert** list, providing residents with local information, then please email the parish clerk.

(Over 60 email addresses have already signed up.)

THE LITTLE SHOP, HUDSWELL

Probably the smallest community shop in Britain

Open: 9.00am – 12 noon and 4.30pm – 6.00pm Monday to Saturday

HUDSWELL ALLOTMENTS AND COMMUNITY ORCHARD

If you are interested in an allotment please contact John Walton (Tel: 850884).

TRANSFER OF LAND FROM MOD TO DOWNHOLME

A copy of the registered title and the original transfer documents are now held by Hudswell & District Parish Council.

HUDSWELL LANE ROADSIDE VERGES

At a recent Parish Council meeting it was decided by the Parish Council that the maintenance of the road verges on Hudswell Lane would become the Parish Council responsibility and be arranged by them at times to ensure safety and the improvement of the verges wildflowers. Particularly narrow parts of the lane will be trimmed back to ensure safety and other areas will have a narrow cut thus maintaining as much wildflower areas as possible.

If anyone would like to make contact regarding this matter please speak to Richard Phillips or e-mail [rhp1511@outlook.com].

WILDFLOWER PLANTING: Update

The seeded areas have been raked and prepared again and more seed applied. Some plug plants will be planted soon.

Due to Covid the planned activity of seeding verges in the village has been reduced. Some small areas by the village signs at the top and bottom of the village will be prepared and seeded. These will be marked so everyone knows where they are situated.



THE WEDDING OF THE YEAR!

Many congratulations to Martin and Anna.



THE MYSTERY OF THE TAB END PILE

Ian was at a loss to know why piles of cigarette butts should appear on the lawn at the front of Windy Ridge. It was early during the COVID 19 “Lockdown” and he was outside the front of the house to cut the grass and was surprised to find a scattering of tab ends. “Strange” he thought, “the pub is closed so it’s unlikely that a group of smokers would linger long enough at this spot to then deposit their spent ciggies here”. He cleared them up and finished mowing. However, the next morning, on leaving the house, there again was a scattering of tab ends on his pristine lawns! What was going on?

The mystery was solved a couple of days later whilst he was volunteering in the Little Shop.



A Blue Tit was seen exiting from the cigarette ash box which is fixed to the wall outside the George and Dragon pub. The bird flew across the road towards Windy Ridge and, like a military bomber, released from its beak a tab end. The little bird repeated this act several times until, we suppose, it was satisfied that the ash box was sufficiently nicotine free. Yes, low and behold, there on the Windy Ridge lawn was a new pile of the foul-smelling dog ends!

Over the course of the next week the industrious blue tit was observed bringing into the ash-box a selection of moss, sheep’s wool and feathers.

The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) tells us that Blue Tits start searching in February for a safe, warm site to start building their nest. The location is important as they require a clear flight path to the nest's entrance hole and the site must be relatively inaccessible to predators. The pub’s ash box must have been a good fit to this requirement.

It is the female Blue Tit which builds the nest alone with little or no help from the male. She takes moss from garden lawns and forms it into a cup. The nest is complete when it is lined with soft feathers, fur or wool. Blue Tits can build a nest in a few days, but generally it takes them between one and two weeks.



In early May the female lays one egg a day, usually first thing in the morning. Blue Tits have one of the largest clutch sizes of all birds - up to 16 eggs! However, most clutches contain 8-12 eggs. We wonder how many young our bird was able to raise in the pub’s ash box?

By Mid-May the clutch is complete, and the female will sit on the eggs to incubate them for about two weeks until they are ready to hatch. During this time, if she made a good choice



of mate, the male will bring her some food, although she will still need to leave the box regularly during the day to feed.

The chicks had hatched by the end of May and the adult birds were observed flitting in and out of the ash box bringing food to the chicks and removing the chicks faecal sacks to keep the nest clean. The BTO again tells us that each chick can eat 100 caterpillars a day, so to feed a brood of ten, adults need to find as many as 1,000 caterpillars a day.

Unfortunately, we do not have an answer to the question of chick numbers in the pubs ash box nest. No-one actually observed the fledging event which, if successful, probably took place mid to end of June, (18 – 21 days after hatching).

Nevertheless - what a busy spring and summer these beautiful little birds have had!

MY BIRD LOVING LIFE

I started my life in the middle of a large city in the north of England, and apart from visits to a local park, I saw very few fields and trees in my early life. Yearly holidays provided an escape to the countryside, and at the age of about 6, I can vividly remember delightedly gazing out of a train window, onto fields of glowing golden grain, on the way to the seaside.

When I was about 8 years old, I moved with my parents to a small village in Cheshire, until the age of 11. I wandered the nearby hills and woods with friends – in those days we were allowed to take a picnic and go out for the day, so long as we came back by tea time, and told our parents where we were going, it was fine! It was around this time that I received for my 10th birthday present, a book entitled “Nature’s playground” by Cordelia E. Leigh. It was a children’s book, quite a substantial volume with black and white photographs. It enthralled me and instilled a passion for the natural world. I still have the book now!

At the age of 11, I moved to Chester-Le-Street, and with friends, explored the countryside around the town, enjoying trips to Weardale and Teesdale. As an adult, I continued to enjoy walking in the countryside, and observing nature, and when I moved to Hudswell, I wrote a nature diary, aided by my two children.

Certain events have stood out over the years I have lived in my present house. The first, was watching a young bird of prey circling around uncertainly, after the adult had done the same. A ‘flying lesson’ perhaps?

Another time I was with my son in the woods when we came across a deer in the process of cleaning her newly born fawn. A marvellous sight, and what a privilege it was to see it.

One of the recordings, in the diary of 1990, notes a very bad fire on Leyburn Moor, in mid April. It took more than two days to extinguish. An entry records the day as Friday the 13th - definitely an unlucky day! I also recorded then, that the Curlews had been present, their *bubbling* cries heard for about a month.

The current Coronavirus pandemic and restrictions have inspired me to record my observations again, in and around Hudswell. This year I recorded the first Curlew on the 6th March, and the first butterfly (Peacock) on the 4th March, near the play park. Bluebells were out fully this year by the 20th April, along with Ramsons, Wood Anemones, slightly earlier than in 1990, perhaps due to the hot weather we had at the time.

One visitor to our garden that has been putting in an appearance for over 30 years has been the Greater Spotted Woodpecker species (Woody, as we call it). The hierarchy of birds was mentioned on 'Springwatch' this year, with the Woodpecker being a definite *leader*. It is definitely in charge of the action, with the Nuthatch a close second, and it is interesting to see.

Over the years, we have seen a lot of Woodpecker families raised, with one particular time standing out. I was in the garden working near a tree, where there were three youngsters. (I was closer than the two metres!) Meanwhile the adult was fairly close by, calling out an insistent "chip, chip, chip" continuously, to encourage them to get out of the garden! The youngsters were taking no notice at all, but were behaving like errant teenagers! (Whatever!)

One very frequent sound heard this year, has been that of the Chiffchaff, a tiny little bird that sings its own name. There have been some interesting and sometimes unusual sightings this year mentioned by other people, but also in my own garden. One unusual visitor to my garden has been a Stonechat, I have observed them on the nearby moors, but never in my garden before. It has been brilliant to observe and record nature this year, and it has made life just a little bit sweeter. My son has reported his own sightings e.g. a Kingfisher by the river, as I have passed on my love of nature to him, and in turn, he is passing it on to his family. *La Dolce Vita*, indeed.

HUDSWELL WATERFALL

Did you know Hudswell had its very own waterfall?

(Taken in Hudswell Woods!)



A GARDENER'S LAMENT

Aphids on the cabbages,
Greenfly on the sprouts,
A rabbit's causing ravages,
Going mad-I have my doubts!

The fennel's all been nibbled,
The slugs have had my peas,
And turnips have been nobbled
By beetles that are fleas.

The weeds are growing madly,
The grass would make a crop,
Spuds are doing badly
And swedes are nowt but top.

But now I think I've seen the light,
No more is this a tale of woe,
The pests I douse, the weeds I smite
With lethal spray and trusty hoe.

It all looks good, this patch of mine,
Viewed from in my garden seat,
In my hand, a glass of wine
And best of all, I'm not yet beat!

JLS

AUTUMN LEAVES

By Rambling Rose

The leaves are blowing in the air
Landing here and there and everywhere
Floating down on to the grass
Crowding the corners in a huge mass
Spinning down rivers like tiny wee boats
Covering the grass with rich brown coats
The trees look so bleak with the leaves all gone
While we kick rustling leaves about – having fun.

National Trust Yorkshire Dales

NEWS FROM THE WOODS – AUTUMN 2020

Well a lot of metaphorical water has gone under the bridge since I last wrote News from the Woods. The Pandemic has turned many things upside down. I have been fortunate to continue working throughout, although we have largely been restricted to tasks considered essential such as security of buildings, maintaining safe access (stiles and gates) making safe hazardous windblown trees and dealing where possible with anti-social behaviour, especially the resulting litter and scourge of disposable BBQs. Despite witnessing some unpleasant behaviour it has however been great to see so many people out exploring their local countryside, taking rarely used footpaths and discovering new walks. We are so lucky to have this resource on our doorstep.

Nature has continued quite happily through the lockdown and in many instances it has benefitted from the enforced slowing of human activity. It's been refreshing to hear from so many sources (both on a local and national level) that during lockdown people have noticed nature more and have placed increasing value on our green spaces and interactions with wildlife. It is increasingly well evidenced that the natural world is good for both our mental and physical wellbeing. I must say as someone keen on birds the silence of the first week of lockdown was magical. Studies have shown how birds have evolved to sing louder to make themselves heard above the background noise of human activity, especially traffic. Suddenly without this need to compete, the world seemed alive with bird song; it was a glimpse of the past, and hopefully if enough people want to make it happen, the future.

Weather-wise we've had a mixed bag and this variability through the spring and early summer influences food availability and breeding success for many species. Many birds enjoyed the explosion of invertebrates once the dry spring gave way to a little rain. Pied flycatchers in Hag Wood did well and there seemed to be an increase in garden warblers locally. It has also been a good year for tawny owls and kestrels, an indication that there are plenty of small mammals to eat. Unfortunately, I found two well-fed tawny chicks dead at the base of the tree in which they were being reared. It's unclear what led to their demise and although this was a disappointing find it's always fascinating to see up close, even on a downy chick, the powerful taloned feet of this marvellous woodland predator. Other interesting sightings in Hudswell village also include an impressive horn tail or wood wasp and, in the last few weeks, several elephant hawk moth caterpillars. Growing to the size of a large thumb these impressive caterpillars don't move far and I have been watching one over a few weeks now feeding on rosebay willow herb in my front garden, slowly getting bigger by the day. It'll overwinter as a pupa deep in leaf litter and emerge next May as a beautifully marked moth, patterned in pastel shades of pink and brown. Let's hope that by the time the moth emerges things will have improved for us all!

As always, please contact me if you have any questions about our work in the woods, or if you have any suggestions or interesting observations. You can also follow our work across the Dales using Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/YorkshireDalesNT>

Seb Mankelow

Ranger, National Trust Yorkshire Dales

seb.mankelow@nationaltrust.org.uk | mobile 07876 138354 | Office 01729 830416

LOCAL SERVICES

Fionagh Bennet:

Freelance musician (organist/pianist), composer, music tutor, www.fionagh-bennet-music.co.uk Tel: 07802 442551

Get discount on your shopping and household bills, save money/make money
www.utilitywarehouse.org.uk/B49719 Tel: 07802 442551

Richmond Sash Windows:

Sash Window Renovation Specialist. Restoration, refurbishment, upgrading and draught proofing of traditional timber sliding sash windows. For free advice or to request a survey, call Bill on 01748 821466 or 07778 218735.
www.richmondsash.co.uk, email: info@richmondsash.co.uk

Travel Agent:

Designer Travel by Tracy Charlton - Local, award winning, self-employed Independent Travel Agent, with over 30 years experience with full ABTA & ATOL protection for peace of mind. Contact me to help you plan and book your next holiday on 01748 822540/07795 522429 or email me:
tracy@designertravel.co.uk, follow me on Facebook: tracy at Designer Travel

To place an advert in the next issue of the Hudswell & District Messenger please contact the Editor. Your support will help with printing costs, a copy is delivered to each house in Brokes, Downholme, Hudswell, Stainton and Walburn (200 copies in all).

- *“Local Services” adverts cost £5 per annum (2 editions).*
- *Inside Front/Back Cover Full Page: £30 for Black & White / £50 for Colour.*

