

## **MONTHLY GET TOGETHERS**

**Meet at the car park in Mill Road at 10am**

### **NEXT DATES**

**18th November**

**16th December**

**(Christmas meeting with sherry and mince pies)**

**20th January**

**17th February**

**17th March**

**Details also on our website: <http://folr.wordpress.com>  
and our Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/friendslancingring>.**

### **Useful contacts:**

**Henry Heath (Chairman) 07776 144 053**

**Sue Crowhurst (Membership Secretary) 01903 368978**

**Adrienne Stevenson (Secretary) 01903 753977**

**To receive the newsletter by email from now on, please  
email me at [AdrienneStevenson@gmail.com](mailto:AdrienneStevenson@gmail.com)**



## **AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2018**

Where has this year gone? It is hard to believe that we have reached the last newsletter of the year. However, if you visit the Reserve at the moment, there are plenty of signs of late autumn. From golden brown leaves and ruby red berries to the diamond dew drops that glisten on the gossamer cobweb threads nestling amongst the grass, there is plenty to remind us that the year has turned and winter is not so far away. A few hardy flowers such as the knapweed, achillea and scabious are still holding on and continuing to bloom and a surprising number of trees have retained their green leaves, but generally things are now starting to die back. For many, this time of year means time to step back and slow down, but that is certainly not the case on the Reserve, where the winter is a busy time and most of the maintenance work will soon begin in earnest.

Probably the biggest and most important winter job is the mowing. This takes place after the flowers have had a chance to set seed and is important in managing the long grass and allowing next year's flowers room to grow unhindered. This in turn provides a variety of flowers to support other wildlife such as bees, butterflies, insects and birds.

### **BUTTERFLY SURVEY**

Talking of butterflies – have you heard of the Butterfly Conservation Trust? They are a charity devoted to saving butterflies and moths and their habitat. This year volunteers from the local branch have been walking and recording their findings on the Reserve. They surveyed weekly from April to the end of September and all butterflies seen were counted and the results sent to the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme. We asked Lindsay Morris from the Sussex Branch to give us a sneak preview of some of the findings. He pointed out that this is the first season and early days yet, but 33 butterfly species have been seen. Generally this has been a poor year for Small Tortoiseshell and

Comma butterflies, but most species have benefited from the hot, dry summer. Wall brown butterflies have done particularly well in our area. The survey will hopefully take place again next year and we are keen to work with the group to make our patch as butterfly friendly as possible. They certainly need our help as butterfly numbers have declined alarmingly over the last half century.

### **ELM TREE SAPLINGS**

Continuing the butterfly theme, we are pleased that the saplings planted in February to help the White-letter hairstreak butterflies have come through pretty well. They had a very challenging start to life as they had to deal with the hot, dry summer, but, so far, although one is looking as if it may have died, the others are fine.

### **SUNDAY MORNING TASK DAYS**

Our monthly Sunday morning task days continue all year. Some members come regularly, whilst others come when they can and we are very grateful for any help. Don't forget that the December task day is our Christmas get together, so, if you fancy a mince pie and a glass of mulled wine or sherry come and meet us by Joe Barrow's seat which is across from the car park near the track.

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

A big thank you to all who have renewed. Please consider doing so if you haven't. It is important to keep our numbers up and at £3 per person, £5 for families or 50p juniors the cost is not too much. You can renew at: **Lancing Pet Shop**, Culver Road; **Bowness Avenue newsagents**, 21 The Street, Lancing or by contacting Sue Crowhurst, 31 Sedbury Road, Sompting, NB Fircroft News no longer takes renewal envelopes.

Have a safe and warm winter and thank you all for your support.