



Allington Hillbillies

Hillbillies set to work

For many of us it was perhaps the first time we have ever volunteered to do some hard work on our day off. But what fun we all had.

I'm sure I am not the only one who feels that they now are a proud owner of their own little bit of hedge and will be watching with interest how it grows.

Lets keep our fingers crossed that it does grow, as it appears we may have angered a few local people who do not understand the benefits of laying a hedge. Apparently

some of those who regularly walk their dogs in Cooper's field thought it looked like vandalism.

It seems that we need a discussion on how to let people know what we are doing and what our intentions are. At our first meeting we talked about our connection with the hill and why it is important to each of us.

This news letter is a way to pass our views on to others, to inspire more people to get involved in the every day care and maintenance of this beautiful place.

So please read on, a news letter will only work if you add your ideas and photos and get involved in spreading the word.



We have friends on Face Book

Why not sign up and be a friend of Allington Hillbillies. We now have our own face book page. Why not log on and have a look.

If you would rather receive our news letter by email, then just send your email address to allingtonhill@gmail.com. You will receive a news letter with the up to date info and can contribute with your own letters and photos.

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News Articles

- *All about our hedge laying.*
- *Nature on the hill*
- *Your news and views*
- *Ways to keep in touch*

First job well done

A Big
THANK YOU

to everyone that made a
difference.

It just goes to show that many hands make light work.

Have you got all the splinters out of your hands yet? I think I was still digging them out a week later.

Have you been back to inspect your bit of hedge? It is (hopefully) going to be good

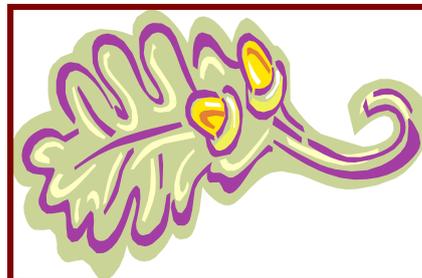
fun watching those branches spring back into life. So, get your cameras out and record the event.

A lot of people took during and after photos, did anyone take a before photo? If so can we have a copy for the news letter please.

We have now also created a good habitat for the local wildlife. Encouraging birds and insects as well as small animals.

At the hillbillies meeting on Feb 28th it was decided to work on opening up the

area along the drive. An area about 50 meters long will be coppiced. This will help let more light in and stop the path getting so muddy.



We all know about acorns, what about oak apples? Answer below.

So many opportunities

How often have you heard yourself say "if only I had the opportunity".

Well perhaps now you have.

Are we all fed up, hearing about the big society, volunteering and how it will cure the nation's ills. What does the word volunteering mean to you? Hard work, commitment, giving up your free time. Expected to do something for nothing, stress,

*Many hands
make
Light work.*

responsibility Or.....

Improving your local environment, fresh air, achievement, self esteem. Meeting like minded people. Sharing hobbies and interests. Learning new skills.

Change your mind set and join the Hillbillies. You may never have the same opportunity again.

What do you want?

Let us know what you want.

- NATURE TRAIL.
- NATURE RAMBLES
- CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES
- PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP
- WOODLAND SKILLS



What skills do you have?

Let us know the skills you can share.

- BIRD WATCHING
- PLANT AND WILDLIFE
- KEEN PHOTOGRAPHER
- TEACHING SKILLS
- ENVIROMENTAL KNOWLEDGE.

DID YOU KNOW

Bluebell shoots emerge from early January, before tree leaves block out much of the sunlight. When the flowers open in April and May, they carpet the woodland floor, making a beautiful Spring sight. Growing through Winter and flowering in Spring allows the bluebell to tolerate shade. In coniferous plantations, the all-year blocking of light chokes out even bluebells. Deciduous woodlands left in a semi-natural state or managed in ways which benefit wildlife are such good habitats for bluebells that 71% of native bluebells are found in broadleaved woodland or scrub.

Some plants sold as bluebells are hybrid varieties, crossed with the Spanish bluebell, which have a far less rich colour and are less graceful in habit. Hybrid bluebells are apt to escape into the wild, and, being partly fertile, may interbreed with native bluebells. This is much to be regretted as the native bluebell is more abundant in England than anywhere else in the world. Plants found on road verges and waste places away from woods are more likely to be the hybrid than the native bluebell.

Native bluebells are protected against sale by law. This means it's illegal to dig up the bulbs from the wild in order to sell them. In fact if you don't own the land it is illegal to dig up the bulbs for any purpose

However In England and Wales it is possible to pick the leaves, flowers or seeds for your own use. But the flowers are unlikely to survive long enough for you to take home and put in water, so advice is leave them where they are so everyone can enjoy them.

FACT

- Estimates suggest the UK has up to half of the world's total bluebell population
- Despite their name, bluebells can be white. If you see pink ones they are probably Spanish bluebells
- Tennyson speaks of bluebell juice being used to cure snake-bite. The romantic poets of the 19th century, such as Keats and Tennyson, believed that the bluebell symbolised solitude and regret

SPRING IS ON IT'S WAY

Why not help us record nature on the hill.

Send in details of your first sightings and take photos. It is a great way of recording an event.

Pass the details on to
Allingtonhill@gmail.com



The first elderflower buds also opened in late Feb. Known by the Romans as "poor mans grape"

This year the first lesser celandine in flower was recorded on the 19th of Feb. Also the first dandelion flower.



Colly Warren reports:
Good news the nut hatches are back and the honey bees have survived the winter.



OAK BEFORE THE ASH

We all love a good old country saying.

Then along came the scientist to tell us that there is no truth in our folk law.

It seems that it is all down to the warmer springs, which the Oak benefit from more than the Ash. Ash rarely comes before the Oak.

"Oak before ash, in for a splash
Ash before oak, in for a soak"



Oak Apples are actually caused by a gall wasp injecting chemicals into the tree. Look out for them on the hill.



HILLBILLIES CONTACT DETAILS

To receive a news letter
Send an email to
allingtonhill@gmail.com

*Facebook
Allington Hillbillies*

Dates for your Diary

NEXT MEETING

To be arranged. All Hillbillie
members will receive an email of
forth coming events.

VOLUNTEERING DAY

SUNDAY 27TH, 11AM

SPRING WATCH

A walk around the hill surveying
the joys of spring.

Contact: allingtonhill@gmail.com

DAWN CHORUS

Meet on the hill to enjoy the
magic of the dawn chorus.

Contact: allingtonhill@gmail.com

Your News and Views

PIXIES ON ALLINGTON HILL ?

A Hillbilly who wishes to remain anonymous, remembers this rhyme being handed down from generation to generation, beside the firesides of North Allington :

**Were there pixies up Allington Hill ?
Perhaps they're living there still -
But should you pass by 'em
You never will spy 'em,
Cos the buggers they vanish at will !**

I have tried to arrange an interview with Pixie George, (the leader of the Allington Pixie clan). A spokesperson (Pixie) says, "he was not available for an interview at the moment, due to the huge amount of Pixie dust that needs to be sprinkled on the bluebells, to make them dance in the breeze, at this time of year". That sounds like hard work. Keep up the good work George.

DOG POO

We would like some ideas to encourage dog walkers to flick the poo into the undergrowth, rather than leaving it on the path. I have received a couple of rhymes and would like a few more. So get pen to paper and send me your rhyme ready to be published in the next news letter.

*If your pet has made a mess,
Don't act as you can't care less.
Find a stick,
Give it a flick.
No-one now needs step in poo,
So from all of us. Thank you.*

By: Jon Burgess

PICK UP A STICK AND HAVE A LAUGH,
FLICK THE DOG POO AWAY FROM THE PATH.

By: Victoria Brook



Remember this? Thank you to Christine Toombs for sending in this great winter picture. It brought back some lovely memories of those snowy days before Christmas.

Don't shoe the poo



Shoo the poo.



By: Cathy Harvey

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