

The newsletter of Croydon Ecology Centre

Plant and Seedling sale Sunday May 20th from Noon

Undaunted by the Beast from the East and a sudden heatwave, your volunteers will have plenty of plants for our annual sale, to be held as usual in Heathfield House, 12-4:30 pm.

As usual the Heathfield Pantry Café will be open for lunches and light teas.

Other events are listed inside.



Blue Planet 2 at Heathfield

Following Blue Planet 2's moving look at the impact of plastic pollution on our marine and bird life last year, Anna, Mick and Bernie decided to take some action at Heathfield. We got out the litter pickers and combed the Heathfield hedgerows where loads of plastic bags, bottles, tins and other general debris was caught in the undergrowth. Pictured is Mick with one of the two bags of plastic rubbish that we collected one Sunday workday.

We were pleased have played our part in minimising the impact of plastic on our local environment.

Bernie Hamill

The future is Orange Tip?

On the last day of April the weather was so awful it should have been a Bank Holiday Monday! The first of May was a far nicer day and gave me an opportunity to do some gentle tidying by the pond in the Centre courtyard. A butterfly came into view and at first glance it looked like a Small White, but then it landed on a Garlic Mustard plant (*Alliaria petiolata*) and from the striking pattern on the underwing it revealed itself to be a female Orange Tip.

previous week. The male is quite unmistakable with alternate flashes of orange and white like no other British butterfly.

Meet up

I hoped that male and female would meet up, but although I saw both sexes flying in the courtyard, sadly it was at different times. Clearly there's no butterfly equivalent of Tinder, as Eleanor remarked.

Intent

So intent was the visitor on feeding that I could approach quite closely and take pictures with my camera and phone. To my surprise the phone's pictures turned out to be better, and one of them is shown.

At least one male Orange Tip had been fluttering over the rockery the

Garlic Mustard is very common (a weed to some, but it was once used as a culinary herb) and is one of the food plants of the Orange Tip, as well as other brassicas, including Lady's Smock, aka Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*) as supposedly its flowering occurs when the cuckoos return from Africa.

Alan Drummond



Female Orange Tip (only the male has the orange marking)

Croydon Ecology Centre Events Diary 2018

Please note that all events are free to attend and all are welcome

Saturday June 23 Wild Flower Walk at Hutchinson's Bank
Meet at **11:00** in Farleigh Dean Crescent near entrance to Hutchinson's Bank Nature Reserve. In event of bad weather, please ring 07919 652 723 before setting out.

Saturday June 30 Wild Flower Bonanza on Kenley Common
Meet at **11:00** outside entrance to Common along Hayes Lane nearest Golf Road. Do join us and bring your camera.

Sunday July 1 Celebrating Heathfield Rock garden Bee World
12:00-16:30 Take a stroll around our rock garden and see how many pollinators you can spot. Our Heathfield Pantry Café will be open for light lunches and cream teas.

Friday July 13 Bat & Glow-worm Walk on Riddlesdown
Meet at **21:30** at top end of Honister Heights, near rear entrance to Riddlesdown High School. Dress according to weather. Please note that in the event of rain, the walk will not take place.

Saturday July 21 Millers Pond Summer Fayre 12:00 - 16:30
Your Ecology Centre will have a stand at this lovely Summer Fayre. Friends of Millers Pond contact: Eric Molkenhain 020 8777 4113 emolthenkin@yahoo.com

Saturday July 28 Summer Pruning Skills Training Session
14:00 - 16:30 Meet in front of Heathfield House.
Want to know how to keep your fruit trees healthy and productive? If so, come to our special training session and gain the knowledge to prune with confidence. Bring clean, sharp secateurs with you.

Saturday August 4 Lotions and Potions for Natural Beauty
10:00 - 12:00 Meet in Heathfield House for a girly-get-together, making simple skincare products from natural ingredients, without all the added chemicals and fancy price tags! Do come, it's fun and girls young, old and in-between are welcome!



Saturday & Sunday August 18 & 19 Ploughman's lunches, cream teas and plane spotting at Heathfield 12:00 to 17:00
With our open easterly aspect, Heathfield is a good place to spot some of the aircraft flying at the Biggin Hill Festival of Flight. Bring the family and enjoy the day with us. There will be guided tours of the Ecology Centre's wildlife sanctuary and old varieties conservation orchard. Our Heathfield Pantry Café will be open for light lunches and cream teas.

Saturday & Sunday September 15 & 16 Green Heritage Fair at Heathfield 11:00 - 17:00 on both days.
Pantry Café is open for lunches and afternoon cream teas. Large number of stands showcasing the work of local nature conservation groups, traditional crafts, animal welfare organisations and fine art exhibitions by local artists. Tours of Heathfield Garden's Tree Trail and of our Wildlife Sanctuary and Old Varieties Orchard. Come and enjoy!

Sunday October 7 Heathfield Apple Day 11:00 - 16:00
Heathfield Pantry Café will be serving teas, coffee, juice and delicious strudel and other apple fancies. Your chance to buy some of our superb organic heritage varieties apples.

Saturday October 20 Autumn Tints Woodland Walk
Meet outside Heathfield House at 11:00
Join us on this beautiful woodland walk to see the glorious colours of Autumn.

Sunday December 2 Heathfield Grand Christmas Bazaar in Heathfield House from 12:00 to 16:30
With plenty to choose from on our stalls, this bazaar comes at just the right time to help with your Christmas shopping. Our Pantry Café will be open serving hot homemade soups and buttered rolls at lunchtime, followed by traditional English cream teas in the Afternoon.

If you require further information about any of these events, please contact our warden, Lorraine Chatfield, on 07919 652723.

Croydon Ecology Centre contacts

Write to The Old Orchard, Heathfield, Coombe Lane, Croydon CR0 5RH.
Warden, Lorraine Chatfield: 07919 652723 heathfielddec@heathfielddec.plus.com
Secretary, Eleanor Cunningham: secretary@croydon-ecology.org.uk
Membership secretary, Bernie Hamill: membership@croydon-ecology.org.uk

Report of the Management Committee 2017

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to Croydon Ecology Centre's 20th Annual General Meeting, thank you all for coming. I also would like to apologise for the delay in holding our AGM because of the snow and urgent repairs to the House due to flood damage. As always I would like to thank Tony Newman, Leader of Croydon Council and Jo Negrini, Chief Executive of Croydon Council for the use of Heathfield House for our House-based events throughout the year. We also wish to thank Shelley Williams and Colin Stone for facilitating all our Heathfield House events and for all the help and encouragement they have given us over the past year. This is very much appreciated. This partnership benefits both the Ecology Centre and Croydon Council as it gives security and well being to Heathfield for all of us now and for future generations.

At the end of May, our very dear president, Jean Riesco, celebrated her birthday. This May Jean will be an amazing 103 years old. Sadly, she cannot be with us tonight but sends her love. Jean hopes to come up to Heathfield when the weather is better.

Our move from Heathfield House basement to Old Stable is now complete. Although the storage area

in Old Stable is much smaller, it is drier than the basement, it is more accessible and we have been assured that we will never have to vacate Old Stable. I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved with this move as it was massive undertaking.

We have had another busy year at your Ecology Centre, starting with our annual Bluebell Walk last April. The bluebells in Kingswood were the best been have been for many years and were truly breath-taking. You will see from your programme of events for this year that this walk will be taking place in two weeks' time and we hope that many of you will join us on this popular walk. Our Plant and Seedling Sale in May was very well attended by lots of members and the general public and we all had a very enjoyable day. We were extremely lucky to have TERABAC with us on the May Bank Holiday performing a great interpretation of the insect wildlife in our gardens. The costumes, all hand-made, were fabulous and the acting and singing amazing. I think I speak for everyone when I say, I had a lovely afternoon sitting on the veranda of the Heathfield House in the sun enjoying this play. Vanessa Hammick, who played the house fly in TERABAC, then kindly bought 'The Croydon Bicycle Theatre' to our Green Fair in September which was greatly enjoyed by all. In June, the Wild Orchid

and Wildflower Ramble on Hutchinson's bank was very interesting. July saw our Wild Flower Bonanza on Kenley Common and our Bat and Glow-worm Walk on Riddlesdown. At the end of July, Lorraine ran her Summer Pruning Skills workshop, assisted by Keith, who showed folk how to sharpen and care for their secateurs. In early August we held our annual Potions and Lotions Morning – a firm favourite with all us gurlies, where we all came out far more beautiful than when we went in. Later in August, our Ploughman's Lunches, Cream Teas and Plane Spotting Weekend was set to coincide with Biggin Hill's Festival of Flight. Our lunches and Lorraine's famous scones were enjoyed by all, as well as the planes. This event proved very popular drawing a large crowd on both days. Our flagship event of the year, the Heathfield Green Heritage Fair, was extremely successful and much enjoyed by all. We had our usual Apple Day in October with freshly pressed apple juice, apple pies and strudel and a chance for people to purchase some of our wonderful heritage varieties fruit from the orchard. Mick's now famous guided orchard tours, made the day even more interesting for our many visitors. As with all our Heathfield events, all money raised through the café is used to support wildlife throughout the year.

In November we were treated to a talk by Paul Sowan on the History of

Croham Hurst, a Site of Special Scientific Interest. This was very interesting and eye opening and was much enjoyed by all who attended.

Ben and Sam

Our boys, Sam and Ben, have had a good year. Sam has benefited greatly from his new arthritis treatment which is less aggressive than the last one as this is a very natural treatment. Ben is now officially an adult sheep, but in many ways he is still very much a lamb and loves his spring bouncing and leaping high into the air making us all laugh.

School visits last year were, as always, fully booked, which we are thrilled about as it introduces our younger generation to the importance of our wildlife and nature. Eleanor and Mick take the children around the orchard and the Heathfield grounds and introduce them to the wonderful world of nature and how important it is for them to care for their natural environment. Work in the Orchard continues with the invaluable help of our volunteers and Trinity boys all led by Mick, Nick, Jeff, Eleanor, Alan and Bernie. Our volunteers work very hard indeed in maintaining the orchard and the rock garden Bee World and without their help none of this would be possible. Thank you all so much for all your hard work and friendship, we truly value your loyalty. Among our volunteers are the lovely ladies from Croydon Friends of the Earth, who join

Officers and committee 2017-18

Honorary Life President:

Jean Riesco

Chairman:

Amanda Vale

Vice-Chairman:

Nicholas Pilgrim

Secretary:

Eleanor Cunningham

Treasurer:

Alex Woodman

Warden:

Lorraine Chatfield

Deputy Warden:

Roger D White

Centre Manager:

Michael Hewish

Membership Secretary:

Bernadette Hamill

Website Manager:

Andy Ellis

Management Committee members:

Alan Drummond, Jeff Rose,
Leanne Vale

us once a month and more often in the Summer, to maintain our joint venture of providing habitat for bees and pollinators to forage and survive and thrive at Heathfield. I also wanted to mention our much valued connection between the Ecology Centre and Trinity School and the sterling work the Lower 6th form do for us every year over the Winter and Spring Terms for the past 17 years. In addition to this, pupils aged 12-15 years come once a term for a field trip, so important to see young people engaging with nature conservation and my personal perspective is with all the bad press about our young people at the moment all this good work goes on quietly without any press or fuss. We were awarded an 'Ambitious for Croydon's Parks' grant by London Borough of Croydon of £4000 for the restoration of our much loved rock garden. The project deadline is at the end of June this year, so we are very eager to hear from anyone who would like to be involved in the massive task! I would like, on behalf of the Management Committee and the members say a huge thank you to Lorraine for all her work to achieve this.

Memorial trees

Over the past year have been planted a number of memorial trees in the

orchard:

Sally Hennessy and her delightful family planted a tree in memory of her dad;

Helen and Marcus Buckley and their dad planted a tree for their mother;

Sean Daws planted a tree for his great grandmother;

Joy Knight, her children and grandchildren planted a tree for Mike Knight, who was a past chairman of the Ecology Centre;

Nick Pilgrim, our Vice-Chairman planted a tree for his mother and father;

Jim Clugston, a dear friend and committee member, died early in 2017. His daughter Roxanne, son-in-law and their three beautiful daughters planted a lovely crab apple tree in Great Orchard.

Sad news

I have some very sad news for those who are unaware, we lost Keith Chatfield in February this year very suddenly. Keith was a very strong supporter of The Ecology Centre since it started. He has done lots of work using his skills as a surveyor and we

**Work days at Heathfield
Every first and third Sunday
Every Tuesday and Friday - from 10:30**

will be forever grateful for this. His greatest love was Sam and Ben and all the other sheep we have had over the years. He adored looking after them, visiting them every evening, checking they were fine and feeding them and I can say they loved him too. We will miss Keith always and our heartfelt sympathies go out to Lorraine and Stephen and we thank them for being here tonight.

As part of the restoration of the Rock Garden, Keith and Roger had discussed and the planned work of refurbishing the pump to the

waterfall. They had worked together on this pump before several years ago and were looking forward to getting it working again. Roger has said he will continue with this job and dedicate it to Keith and we would like to say a big thank you to Roger for this undertaking. I think I've gone on long enough, but would like to thank you all for your continued support, cakes made, attending our events, donations and everything else you do for the Ecology Centre. Without you there wouldn't be an Ecology Centre! Please enjoy the rest of your evening.

**The report of the Management committee was given by the
Chairman, Amanda Vale, at the AGM on 14 April 2018**

**Newsletter edited and produced for Croydon Ecology Centre by
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