



Pyramidal orchids at Gillotts Field spotted by Susan and next door Alison's close up of those little black and yellow chaps we have to leave something for ie the cinnabar moth.

This Lopper is turning into the bugs and creepies edition!



Alison's pics of the before and after at Peppard Common....

....strangely enough the bracken came up with a pleasant and easy squish... another GG sound to savour

More on Kingwood Common from our observant reporter emphasising the aim of clearing scrub, letting in light and allowing heather to grow...'the area was as usual completely overgrown and quite a challenge. But nothing fazes the Green Gym and we set to work with a will. There were several trees to be removed but although they were eyed hopefully it was decided the removal of brambles, bracken and broken timber was the priority. the larger trees were left for another day. by the end of the session an amazingly large area was clear but there was still more to be tackled. All we have to do now is to hope there are dormant heather seeds waiting to grow.'



Delighted to squeeze in Julia's take on her new shopping trolley....whoops.. I mean our new catering trolley all part of the grand make over, cakes, mugs, Don't say Green Gym does not move with the times!



The June session at Hurst Water meadows found us by the bridge where the River Thames flows into the Thames. It was hot and sunny as we set about clearing vegetation from around the tree saplings we had planted on a rainy day in November 2015. At first it was hunt-the-saplings in the shoulder-high undergrowth, but we gradually uncovered them all, working alongside ever friendly Hurst volunteers. The before and after photos are taken from the same spot.

Badgemore Primary School

Our first quarter 3 session meant a return to the school after several years. one task involved installing additional stakes, one for each tree, in their new orchard area, and retying the trees to screwed on cross members. The second was a very necessary revamp of the fire pit area, dismantling the old seating. The last used five tree rings on each of the four sides with two planks nailed to the top. Other work included pulling weeds in designated area and topping up with mulch among which we discovered several slow worms

We also had Beth and Katie as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award and they were more than up to all the tasks asked of them.

Tony



Look what we found at Ewelme-it's either a slumbering monster of some kind or some sort of soon -to-be-flying creature.



Well spotted, I think it was Alison, and reminds me again of what fun it would be to have a museum of found artefacts all neatly labelled with date, identity and provenance. ie site found and by whom. of course Coke cans, old beer bottles, crushed cans and the like would have to be excluded unless they were very special

At the beginning of September we completed the removal of rose bay willow-herb below the bridge at Ewelme. We had got to it just in time before the seeds had set. Willow-herb spreads not only with clouds of seed but also horizontally by its thick, woody roots, so we worked at pulling them out from between the watercress stems. We forked the arisings to the bank, trying not to lose boots in the sticky mud.

Surprisingly rose bay willow herb *epilobium angustifolium* was regarded as a rare plant in this country until the mid-19th century. The building of railways caused it to spring up everywhere as it likes cleared ground. 1st World War woodland felling and 2nd World War bombing created empty sites for rose bay to proliferate – hence it is also known as bombweed, fireweed and ranting widow.

You can brew tea from the leaves of the rose bay willow-herb and it is popular in Russia under the name of Kaporie Tea. Think I'll stick to my usual cuppa.

Julia

Note from hon. ed

I'm always amazed at what is out there that can be picked, dried and then brewed into a drinkable concoction. Probably we are drinking these products in the propriety beverages that are cleverly marketed as refreshing tonics. nettle tea well known of course, On one of my National Trust volunteer stints we tried brewing up lime flowers but it hardly tasted of anything. A mixer perhaps?



Enormous stands of rhododendron awaited us on our July visit to the new site of Home Farm Wood in Binfield Heath. We put our saws to work with a will, for despite the hot weather it was cool in the wood. From time to time we paused while sets of magnificent polo ponies were led out past us from the farm buildings along the tracks to the polo ground beyond. Clearly this wood will give us work for many sessions to come.

Julia

There were bee orchids growing in the field next to Hill Farm at Aston Rowant, where for our June session we were clearing thick vegetation from the fence leading away from the entrance gate. The bee orchid *Ophrys apifera* gets its name unsurprisingly from its main pollinator - the bee - which is thought to have driven the evolution of the flowers. To attract the pollinating bees, the plant has evolved bee-like flowers.

Sadly, the right species of bee doesn't occur in the UK, so Bee Orchids are self-pollinated here.

The shrub we are uprooting at Ewelme flowers from June to September so we are collecting it whilst it is easily recognisable. The lance like leaves

are arranged spirally up its stem

If it's Saturday it must be Ewelme the task on this occasion was to uproot the pervasive Rose Bay Willowherb. Tom pointed out patches to us but after a bit we did not need guiding. Luckily this plant came up very easily being shallow rooted but it also came away with a great deal of heavy watery mud.

The picture shows a cleared area appearing as a slurry pool. Heavy wet work but fun in the sun. The other shot shows an area of weed with the blueish pink flowers of the herb showing through the mass of green weed still showing through.



and someone else.....absolutely loving it!



Looks like someone is getting stuck into the task!

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"THE LOPPER"

full of little cuttings.

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We didn't quite make the last issue but here is Julia's pic of Diane accepting her long-service-cake-maker-award at Joyce Grove...Robin our Secretary presiding. Julia Reports

When Diane stepped down from being our coffee bringer/cake baker/rota organiser par excellence after more than 19 years it was difficult to find a way to thank her. In the earliest days of SCGG she declared "biscuits aren't enough" and thereafter brought along wonderful home-made cakes which became a signature of our Green Gym's success. During coffee break at Joyce Grove in May we presented Diane (and David, her able barista) with a voucher for champagne high tea at a country house hotel, which they took up in the summer and greatly enjoyed.

How have we been faring for refreshments since then? Jill Kendal now brings the hot drinks on Saturdays and I bring them on Thursdays, with Alison organising a rota for those all-important cakes. Shop-bought cakes are fine (SCGG will reimburse expenses), with home-bakes always welcome.

SCGG has grown since those early days so 2 or even 3 cakes are needed, to say nothing of up to 5 thermoses, which is why I acquired a wheeled cart to carry our canteen. It can't cope with rough terrain, so Tony has now designed and built a trolley for the cart using wheelbarrow wheels. Brm, brm!



From the Desk with a View

Well who would be seen striding across the meadow to Parsons Wood but Chris Ash. Welcome back Chris good to see you, and Shelagh as well of course. Though we didn't actually see her in person.....well maybe next time.

Opinions vary as to the Summer we have had. For my part I think we have had a reasonable scorcher and especially welcome when we have been working in or near water, Temple Island on a warm Saturday morning or likewise at watery babbling Ewelme.

Hon Ed has been in absentia and ex officio and infra dig owing to a short period comparing (for research purposes) the Portuguese Health Service with the NHS. Well.....mmmm. Now happily back in the editorial chair and at your service. No chance of course to take a few unusual photos. But many thanks to those who sent in pics and text, anything not in this issue my apologies, next time hopefully.

Well what do you know, the wanderer returns-Chris Ash that is and discovers this little beauty resting on a holly trunk in Parsons Wood. Susan suggests a Black Arches moth, size 20-25mm, woodland habitat, deciduous and coniferous. Flight July to September

Thanks both, fantastic markings. What does it remind you of? a TV screen that needs re-tuning? I like the 'furry' legs! An old V-Bomber?

