

**Green Gym**<sup>®</sup>

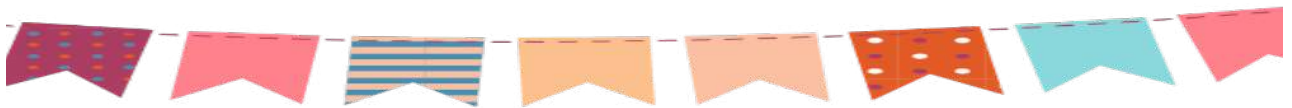


**Sonning Common**

# "THE LOPPER"

**full of little cuttings.**

Lockdown Issue 8



## **Sonning Common Green Gym re-opens!**

It's been a funny old year so far hasn't it? I think we've all missed the regular exercise we get from working in the local countryside. And I hope the countryside has missed us! So the officers have had a meeting via Zoom and we've agreed that we should restart in early September. But it's not going to be quite the same as before because of the Covid-19 regulations and I hope everyone will cope with the new arrangements. The main difference will be limiting the numbers to six and the need to say beforehand if you are intending to come. And to make sure the same people don't get disappointed the record of attendances will be scrutinised regularly.



It may well be that the national regulations change before September in which case our arrangements will change too. Rest assured we'll be keeping a close eye on things and we'll be in touch as soon as anything changes. In the meantime, stay well and keep fit and we'll see you in September!

--John--

## **Striding Edge**

Alfred Wainwright was an avid lover of the Lakes and would venture out on a bus every weekend to go for a walk and record his adventures now published in a book called Wainwright's Walks. The walk up Helvellyn from Glenridding enables one to access the top (949m) via Striding Edge. Look closely at the ridge..

--Tony--



### Let's get back to work.....here.....and

On a recent visit ( for recreation of course) we noticed that the watercress beds at Ewelme were looking slightly unkempt. Nothing to worry about. A couple of Saturdays and Mike M will have it all cleared ( with some help, just one or two GGers should do it). All those forkfuls of slimy mud and weed busting your back to lift it. All those tinkling streams and watchful ducks looking for what you might dislodge. All those spectators asking the obvious questions. Great fun.



Mmm..... maybe by September it would be fun to see if all that stuff comes over the bridge parapet and onto the road. We saw a few prowling helicopters from Benson with water containers. Maybe a fire practice in this heat. I suppose we could ask them to let us abseil down into this mass of growth and hack our way out. See what I mean?



.....even Here!

I took a quick look at Tony's hedge at Toker's Green. This time growing well and where we want it. Strange that the top is still clear. Could you bear to look at this without rushing to grab the shears for a spot of side trimming, so tempting.



I have been reading ' A Natural History of the Hedgerow and ditches , dykes and dry stone walls' by John Wright (2017). He quotes from Sir Anthony Fitzherbert's Boke of Husbandry written in about 1534. This work covers many and varied aspects of farming life and countryside maintenance and he is especially detailed on hedge -laying:

'To plasse or pleche a Hedge

'If the hedge be of x or xii years growing scythe it was first set, thane take a sharpe hatchet,

or a handbyll, and cutte the settes in a playne place, nyghe unto the erthe, the more halve a sonder, and bende it down towards th erte, and wrappe and wynde heym together'

Now we know where Tony learned to do it!

--Mike Saunders--

## Temple Island SSSI



On yet another of my rambles around to try and prevent complete fusion of the muscles we had a very pleasant stroll down by the riverside. Lots of birds, rowers and , on the other bank, people. We walked down the side the Green Gym used to use to get to the SSSI. I haven't been down there for ages so I was agog to see the bridge about which there was so much trouble.

Yes it is very nice and I can't see Bucks county Council doing anything about it in the near future. Not so good was the nearer crossing as there is some rotting wood making the hand rail somewhat dodgy.

Remember someone losing a hat on this crossing?

What was good to see how well the SSSI site has been maintained . No sign of all those willows that were everywhere, just a number of neat clumps of trees. This has meant the site has been mown just as Tony Austin had hoped, and where it has been left, lots of flowers were blooming. The fence we helped to erect by the water's edge is now part of the landscape.

So, I hope what was hoped for for the site has been achieved.

Is Tony Austin still responsible for it?

**Jill – having left the blue kneelers at home.**

## FLOWERCROFT WOOD

If you are within reach of Flowercroft Wood I recommend taking your constitutional through the wood up to the open grassy bank. The south-west facing slope has a great variety of wildflowers, including pyramidal orchids, now in bloom, and the site is alive with butterflies and other insects. Over the years we have put a lot of work into cutting down invasive scrub to maintain this chalk downland habitat, and it is so rewarding to see that our efforts are paying off.



Andrew Hawkins, the owner, reports "The most abundant butterflies on the grassy bank now are Marbled Whites (top photo). The White Admirals (lower left) are also flying. Their food plant is honeysuckle which seems very abundant in the wood this year. We saw them recently near the large beech tree in the valley along the footpath and at the top crossroads where the rides meet from the main gate.

We haven't seen any silver-washed fritillaries (lower right) yet."

**--Julia--**

More Wonderful Photos from Tony



left to right ; top to bottom

Swallow-tailed Moth : Diurnal (Daytime) Forester Moth : Wall Brown  
Cinnabar Moth : Gatekeeper : Speckled Wood



**LIMERICK CORNER**

*Our tool-shed feels sad and neglected.  
No leaders turn up as expected.  
Each Thursday and Sat  
There's no tool-list or chat.  
Are lock-down and lock-up connected?*

--Julia--

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