



Things are Happening at Bushy Ruff

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No doubt members will be familiar with the string of parks and open spaces in the Kearsney area: Cretaceous Park (née Coxhill Mount), Kearsney Abbey, Russell Gardens, and perhaps the quietest of these, Bushy Ruff. For many, these are places to take the children, feed the ducks or maybe have a picnic. Bushy Ruff is more than a lake. There is a whole hillside of woodland to explore with many points of interest. Come and discover an overgrown Victorian walled garden, a woodland of yew trees and the special plants that live under them or feel the peace and quiet of this attractive wood.

The White Cliffs Countryside Project have been working closely with Dover District Council to help manage the woodland area of the park in the way such woods were always managed, by coppicing.

Until very recently, most woods throughout lowland Britain were coppiced periodically. This involved cutting down most of the trees in a portion of the wood. The trees grew back the next spring. It was a means of harvesting wood from the trees and shrubs without damaging their health and vigour. Coppicing provided wood for firewood, charcoal, brooms, fencing hurdles, tool handles, furniture, shoes, bowls, spoons, hedgerow stakes - the list was almost endless.

One of the benefits of coppicing woodlands, is that it encourages wildflowers, such as bluebells, and butterflies, who flourish in glades and not deep shade.

Parts of Bushy Ruff are now being coppiced. One thing the visitor will notice is a series of glades, each one with little shoots of hazel growing back from old stumps. As time goes on, these will return to the large, dense bushes they were before. But that will be eight years away. Meanwhile there is a treat of wildflowers such as Dog's Mercury, Primroses and Stinking Iris.

The coppicing is an important part of future work at Bushy Ruff. A woodland trail will be in use later this year, especially for use with schools, and there will be green wood working days, bringing back old crafts such as bodging, hurdle making and the like. For those who like the place as it is, fear not, the work at the Ruff will not bring any changes to the wild feel of the place.

Summer Walks 1995

Just a reminder that our free summer programme of over 400 guided walks will be published in early April and will be available from Tourist Information Centres or local libraries. Make sure of a copy by joining our Country Club. Not only do you get our summer walks programme, but you get our new Green Adventures leaflet, Green Gang, Countryside News in fact all our publications for a whole year. All that for just £3. Send a cheque payable to the White Cliffs Countryside Project, 6 Cambridge Terrace, Dover, CT16 1JT, or phone (01304) 241806.