

# Friends of Woodlands

## News & Updates

**If you have been out walking in the Woodlands Country Park over the winter months you may have noticed how still and peaceful it can be with the low winter sun casting shadows and the sunlight cutting through the bare trees and bouncing off the grasslands, but if you looked closely, you may have seen signs of the seasons to come.**

Hibernating bugs and insects will have been hidden away under log piles and leaf litter or inside the hollow stems of dead plants ready to emerge in the warmer months. Or you may have heard the yaffle of the Green Woodpecker during the day and seen the sparks of colour provided by the bright red Hawthorn berries, which provide an essential food source for birds.

Although, most of our native deciduous trees, like the Alder and Ash, lost their leaves during winter, Oak trees often hang on to theirs a little longer turning a striking golden



Credit: John Palmer



Credit: John Palmer

brown. And winter also gave us a chance to admire other characteristics about our trees that we often miss, like the papery white bark of the Silver Birch.

These winter months, November through to March, are also tree planting season, it is the best time to plant trees as it allows the roots to establish and grow through the milder winter days.

Trees are essential for people, wildlife and the environment. Planting a new tree and hedge – of the right kind in the right place – is something we can all do to grow a greener future. And this is exactly what has been keeping the Friends of Woodlands and Coachwood Green busy.

On the 3rd and 4th February, we held a hedge planting event where volunteers (pictured below) from across the community including the 4th Worksop (St John's) Scout Group came together to finish planting a native hedgerow of hawthorn and blackthorn along the boundary of the Wildlife Discovery Area. This will provide nesting sites and food for birds, insects and small mammals, whilst also acting as wildlife corridors, connecting habitats across the Woodlands Country Park.



And coming up at the end of March we will be planting over 100 saplings of Rowan, Silver birch, Wild Cherry, Sessile Oak and Grey Willow received from The Woodland Trust as part of the Queen's Green Canopy Initiative. If you would like to get involved and plant a tree as an individual, a school or a community group, please contact us to find out how you can be part of this.

We have also been chosen as a site for the Trees for Climate; a national woodland creation programme, this is in the early stages but it is an exciting opportunity for our local community to be recognised as part of this national government scheme, if you follow us on Facebook you can keep up to date about this @friendsofwoodlandsandcoachwoodgreen.

Next on our list of activities is to seek funding to plant 8 specimen native trees on the Wildlife Discovery Area along with providing information boards showing summer and winter images of the tree, its leaf and fruit, any medical, mystical, or historical details, uses for its timber, statistics, height, girth, and benefits for wildlife.

So why all this interest in Trees? they have multiple benefits from Climate, health and well-being to biodiversity. Trees and woodlands ecosystems provide clean air, store carbon, and protect from flooding whilst providing habitats to support



biodiversity and getting close to nature is good for our mental and physical well-being. And therefore, we love trees. As we move into Spring the bird nesting season will be upon us, with the woodpiles amongst the trees providing nesting sites for Blackbirds and Finches and the open grassland will attract Skylarks.

All this could not be possible without our volunteers who play a huge role in helping us look after the Country Park and the Wildlife Discovery Area. If you would like to get involved, please feel free to get in touch with any feedback or suggestions.

Email: [Infowoodlandsandcoachwoodgreen@gmail.com](mailto:Infowoodlandsandcoachwoodgreen@gmail.com) or follow us on Facebook @ [friendswoodlandsandcoachwoodgreen](https://www.facebook.com/friendswoodlandsandcoachwoodgreen)



## What's in a Name?

By Jeff

**On the western boundary of Nottinghamshire where Yorkshire and Derbyshire boundaries are met is the supposed location of the original Shire Oak, but also there, is Scratta Wood, the remnants of which are visible from the Old Hall grounds.**

Its name may originate from old Norse but a version was known in the 1500's as a "wodd called Skratta" known to contain mature oaks and birch. It may also be derived from 'Skirt Hay' which was a wood on the edge of the estate of Worksop Priory.

A third suggested derivation was that it arose from 'Old Scratch' (the Devil) and the wood had for some years a reputation for the presence of evil such as goblins. The theme was perpetuated when the only house ever built in the wood, in the 19th century, fell into decay and was believed by locals to be haunted. One old lady claimed that there were three devil rings in Scratta Wood, but others found it a place of peace and beauty, full of bluebells, and thanks to the many rabbits, short grass.

Many of the trees were felled for timber in the great war, leaving largely tangled undergrowth for many years until in the 20th century areas were cleared for agricultural use. One of these clearances in 1959 resulted in a bulldozer driver "seeing a wall" and despite the archeological damage done by the clearance dozers a few months of investigation determined that there had been a Romano-British presence with finds of a few bronze items, bits of ceramic ware and



some bone fragments.

Eventually some wall was also uncovered but its purpose couldn't be defined and subsequent digs found further fragments indicating previous Celtic or Roman presence at the site.

There has been no further investigation since none of the finds were particularly special, but intriguingly, during the preliminary clearance of the Harron homes building site, an area close to the existing houses on Shireoaks Common showed indications that a Roman villa may have existed there, but again not of strong enough evidence to halt the build of the estate.