



# Newsletter

## January 2025



Our first newsletter of the New Year and we have seen *some* freezing, frosty days with glorious blue skies. The perfect time for a stroll in our wonderful nature reserve and an opportunity to take some beautiful photos – and, on that note, thank you to everyone who bought our ever-popular 2025

calendar. We have a few projects lined up for this year and the profits from our sales will go towards these so look out for updates. We will be planning our 2026 calendar in the summer and will be sending an email around then asking for entries.

### **Our conservation workdays**

Our Saturday workdays take place on the second and fourth Saturday morning of the month, whatever the weather. Led by Ian, our warden, Saturdays are normally a larger group but for those who prefer it, Ian also leads a workday every Tuesday, a smaller group with a choice of morning, afternoon or all-day sessions.



As autumn finished, so did our last section of stream clearance in Chaffinch Brook. This has been a task for both TCV and the Friends over the previous few months.

Dressed in waders to cut back overhanging branches and

clear vegetation from this final section was hard work

due to the build-up of silt in the stream. It made moving through the gloopy mud very difficult but the rewards were plenty when we could look along the length of the stream for a clear, unimpeded view of the meandering stream.



Most of our winter workdays were spent working in the blackthorn between the seasonal path and La Motes meadow.

This is an area where we brought back the traditional craft of hedge laying a couple of years

ago. To prepare the way for hedge laying, we had cut back a section of blackthorn and, as it began to grow back, we made the

amazing discovery of eggs which the Brown Hairstreak Butterfly had laid on the young blackthorn shoots. This butterfly is in decline in the UK and, having discovered that it prefers to lay its eggs on young blackthorn, Ian planned a 3-year rotational



coppicing regime of blackthorn copses along the seasonal path. This is an important conservation project to encourage an increase in the population of the Brown Hairstreak Butterfly.

### Wildlife and nature walks



In November, mycologist, Clifford Davy, led another Fungi Walk. A few weeks before, we paid Clifford to do a survey of the fungi in the nature reserve and, amazingly, his list exceeded 100 species, some of them rare. His data has also been submitted to Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) which is the capital's environmental records centre. Clifford is confident this number will increase and, indeed, we found a few more species on the walk that hadn't been visible during the survey. What about this

unusual blue fungus commonly known as Cobalt Crust (a lucky find with only three other records in Greater London).



Our Winter Bird Walk sadly fell victim to the high winds and rain of December but has been rescheduled for the end of January with first refusal having been given to those who were booked on the cancelled one. Our nature reserve is home to over 100 bird species and we spend much of our conservation work maintaining and improving habitats to both protect and encourage the species. If you would like to find out more about the history of bird species in SNCP, we have recently added a publication to our website by Dave Dack, a former warden of SNCP, entitled 'The Birds of South Norwood from Sewage Farm to Country Park 1935 – 2008.'

### Other news

Following our October newsletter, we received an email from a park user asking us what we were doing about the number of professional dog walkers in SNCP. We *have* seen an increase in professional dog walkers possibly due to neighbouring boroughs requiring licences and having by-laws limiting the number of dogs one person may be in control of. Whilst we have voiced our concern to the Council, this is beyond the remit of the FoSNCP. As always, we encourage dog owners to keep dogs out of sensitive habitats such as the lake, wetlands and meadows where there may be ground nesting birds. However, please contact the Council's Parks Department directly for any concerns over dog walking numbers.



Finally .... the Friends of South Norwood Country Park are an enthusiastic group of volunteers with one thing in common – we love our designated local nature reserve. If you would like to join in with one of our workdays and learn more about the importance of conservation, please email us on [friendsofsncp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofsncp@gmail.com)

For more information about SNCP and detailed workday reports, please visit our website [www.friendsofsncp.org.uk](http://www.friendsofsncp.org.uk)



[www.friendsofsncp.org.uk](http://www.friendsofsncp.org.uk)



[facebook.com/groups/friendsofsncp](https://facebook.com/groups/friendsofsncp)



[X.com/FriendsofSNCP](https://X.com/FriendsofSNCP)



[friendsofsncp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofsncp@gmail.com)



[Instagram.com/friendsofsncp](https://Instagram.com/friendsofsncp)



[threads.net/@friendsofsncp](https://threads.net/@friendsofsncp)