



Caring for Wildlife and Heritage
Reg. Charity No. 1084566

NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 20 May 2008

Local Nature Reserve

Cattle

The cattle that have been on the Moor this last year are of two French breeds. The white and cream are Charolais and originate from Central France. The black and brown ones are Limousin and originate from the South of France. They were all purchased at St Boswells market in Scotland and there is a mixture of heifers and bullocks.

They arrived in April 2007 and would normally have left at the end of October. However, the arrival of the Bluetongue virus in this country resulted in surveillance zones being imposed by DEFRA and the cattle had to remain. They were fed regularly by the farmer during the winter which was often mild and wet and fortunately not severely cold for long. The thick blanket of snow on Easter Sunday disappeared within a few hours of daylight! (see Website for photos.)

The continued presence of the cattle over the winter has obviously had an adverse effect upon the Moor. The City of York Council (COYC) officers and the farmer are looking at how to minimise any further impact. COYC are also looking at remedial measures to re-seed and repair damage done by the farm vehicle and the cattle. Some of this work has begun in North Lane Pasture and a stone path has been laid which will eventually be allowed to grass over. In addition, the number of cattle has recently been reduced by a third to forty.

Thistles

Clair Suddaby (COYC's Local Nature Reserves Officer) will be co-ordinating work on the thistles using chisel hoes, especially designed for the purpose. If you would like to join us on any of the following dates, meet at North Lane Pasture entrance. Please wear stout footwear and gloves.

Thursday, 8 May, 6 pm - 7 pm
Saturday, 17 May, 11 am - 1 pm
Thursday, 5 June, 6 pm - 7 pm
Saturday, 21 June, 1 pm - 3 pm

Instructions on how to use the chisel hoe will be given.

Archaeology

Friends of Hob Moor commissioned a geophysical survey to try to establish the location of a sixteenth century watermill. There is documentary evidence from 1563 for a watermill, later called Folly Mill in the north-east corner of Hob Moor. The beck and the drain in that area may be part of the water management associated with the mill.

The survey was done in an area known as the Triangle and it showed a number of underground anomalies. However, these could be explained by recent activity and it was not possible to identify features of a former mill. If the mill was stone-built then some footings might be expected to survive in situ.

John Oxley, COYC Archaeologist, thinks that the location of the streams suggest the mill was likely to be in the very corner of The Triangle, or possibly in nearby gardens. He will be visiting the site to look for any obvious topographical features that might indicate the mill's location and which would inform any decisions FOHM might take regarding further investigations.

The geophysical survey was carried out by Archaeological Services, Durham University, for On-Site Archaeology, on behalf of Friends of Hob Moor.

Railway Underpass Flooding

After heavy rain last summer, the railway underpass flooded very badly, making it impassable. Subsequently, the Friends of Hob Moor contacted Network Rail and York City Council to try and determine responsibility and to take steps to prevent repeated flooding. As progress was slow, Councillor James Alexander was asked to help. In February, after much correspondence and the involvement of The Press, it has now been clarified that the tunnel structure is the responsibility of Network Rail and the underpass is the responsibility of the Council, in an agreement going back to 1923. Work to improve on the drainage will be carried out by the Council in this current financial year.

Website

Our website continues to grow and develop. If you have access to the internet and haven't visited it recently, please do so at www.friendsofhobmoor.org.uk (or www.fohm.org.uk). In the last six months we've added sections on the birdlife; the golf course; Kelsey's Pond; ridge & furrow; plus a printable leaflet on Hob Moor; maps; aerial photos and lots more. There is also a news section where you can keep up-to-date with more recent issues like the cattle and Bluetongue, and also find out about events we have planned. We will continue to expand it, with new sections planned on the trees and flowers to be found on the Moor. Please also feel free to contact the committee via the website.

Gift of Watercolours

The family of Joan Noak, who was a member of FOHM before she died, has given us a beautiful collection of her watercolour paintings of plants and flowers she observed on the Moor, to use as we wish (for example, to make cards or use in displays, or for use on the website).

In Brief

- Fifteen gorse bushes have been planted in the vicinity of the existing ones by York Cares – volunteers from local businesses.
- A horse chestnut tree on Little Hob Moor, blown down in high winds, has been replaced with funding from York Pride. This followed a plea from two Dringhouses children after the loss of their favourite tree. They helped to plant the new one.

- An information board has now been installed on Little Hob Moor at the Tadcaster Road entrance and is attracting lots of visitors.
- A new gazebo has been purchased for use at summer events, where we shall have new displays.
- Aerial photographs of Hob Moor will be on sale at the Hob Moor Day and at West Bank Park Summer Fair on Sunday, 22 June.
- Litter picking takes place on the first Sunday morning of the month. Anyone is welcome to join us.
- The Council has produced a new five-year Management Plan (2008 - 2013) for the Local Nature Reserve, with input from the Friends.
- The British Trust for Ornithology would like to encourage volunteers to make a weekly note of the birds seen in a particular area. This will enable them to compile a Bird Atlas 2007-2011. Anyone interested in volunteering please ring David McCloy on 788018.
- Is there anyone with relevant knowledge interested in doing a survey of flowers and butterflies?
- Dringhouses Local History Group is having a public Heritage Event on Saturday, 21 June, 10-12.30, in St Edward's Church Hall, Dringhouses. Items representing 2000 years of history, from the Romans to the recent past will be on display.

Don't forget
HOB MOOR DAY

Saturday, 31 May
2.00pm-4.30pm

Falconry Display - Fun Dog Show - Music
Crafts - Refreshments

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS ETC.

To report damage etc. urgently on Hob Moor (24 hours)	625751
To report motor cyclists riding on Hob Moor, contact Police	0845 6060247
For removal of fly-tipped debris, litter, graffiti etc.- York Pride	551551
Emergencies regarding health and safety of cattle	01423 869502
Don't forget to contact us with your comments and suggestions about Hob Moor, Little Hob Moor and our Group	784616
- or you can contact us by email at friendsofhobmoor@yahoo.com	
Our website is www.friendsofhobmoor.org.uk or www.fohm.org.uk	



Events on Hob Moor in 2008

Sunday 18th May

10.00am – 11.30am

Meet at Edmund Wilson Baths car park

Wild Birds on Hob Moor

How lucky we are to have skylarks on our doorstep! Join this enjoyable and informative stroll to listen for their rare and beautiful song and look out for the many other birds that live on and around Hob Moor.

FoHM

Saturday 31st May

2.00 - 4.30pm

Behind Edmund Wilson Baths

Hob Moor Local Nature Reserve Day

A great afternoon out, with lots of activities for all the family: a falconry display; fun dog show; willow weaving; face painting; story telling; refreshments; stalls and more.

CoYC

Sunday 15th June

2.00pm – 4.00pm

Meet at North Lane access to Hob Moor (Chase Side Court)

Summer Nature Walk

There are more flowers, plants, butterflies and creepy-crawlies on Hob Moor than you might ever imagine! Come and meet a few face-to-face, and find out more about them.

FoHM

Wednesday 16th July

7.30pm – 9.30pm

Meet at Edmund Wilson Baths car park

Landscape History on Hob Moor

Coinciding with National Archaeology Week, this fascinating walk will open your eyes to the rich history of Hob Moor and how, even today, you can spot traces of it for yourself.

FoHM

Saturday 23rd August

7.30pm – 9.00pm

Meet at Edmund Wilson Baths car park

Bat Night

Discover the secrets of the moor at dusk! Come and spot the bats that come out just when you thought there was nothing to see on the moor. You'll need a torch, suitable footwear and warm clothes.

CoYC

Please book onto this event through Clair Suddaby:
07769 963127 or clair.suddaby@york.gov.uk

Please note that walks will not take place if it is raining heavily.

For events organised by FoHM there will be small charge of 50p for non-members. Membership is £2.

Website: www.friendsofhobmoor.org.uk Email: friendsofhobmoor@yahoo.com

For removal of fly-tipped debris, contact York Pride on 551551.