



FRIENDS OF BRAMCOTE RIDGE

This newsletter is coming to you almost four months since the last one. This is a planned adjustment to the dates newsletters are issued so that we don't have to do the winter newsletter at the same time as the Green Flag application. Future issues should now be on a regular quarterly basis.

Thank you to our chairman, Norman, for this first item on the heather seed.

HEATHER

About seven years ago one of our meetings at The Rose Grower was interrupted by a gentleman carrying a large sack. It was not Father Christmas but Norman Lewis from the Sherwood Forest Trust. He had brought a bag of heather seed for a trial area on the Markham Road site. Although soil tests had suggested the land was unsuitable for heather germination it was decided to give it a go. The seed was duly scattered and surprisingly several years later plants began to appear.

Since then of course the old hedge has been layered and the grassland fully restored. Chris Riley, of Broxtowe Borough Council, suggested that further heather brash could now be added. Contact was again made with Norman Lewis and on Wednesday March 18th our Norman joined that Norman to collect the brash from the Hollinwell Golf Course near Mansfield. On arrival they were dismayed to find the brash, instead of being dry and light, was in fact rather like a heap of rotting manure! It was wet and very heavy as it had been harvested well over a year ago. With much effort two large builder's bags were a quarter filled and brought back to Jasmine Close.

John was waiting there with tools and, fortunately, a wheelbarrow and with some difficulty the "brash" was deposited on the site. At one stage John disappeared, having been accused by a local resident of dumping rubbish. When he explained what was happening he then had to justify the work on the whole of the grassland site as we were accused of ruining the area. Just to make his morning the two Normans suggested he had been shirking work!

Well don't hold your breath folks but in several years' time the left side of the grassland could be a blaze of purple.....or not!



SUMMER WALKS

We are grateful to Enid for once again agreeing to arrange two walks for us. One will be in the afternoon and the other in the evening. The first will be on Thursday July 9th, start 1.30pm and the second will be on Tuesday July 14th, start 6.00pm. Details of venues etc will be issued to you nearer the date but you may want to make a note in your diaries now.

WORKING SESSIONS REPORT: JANUARY to APRIL 2015

An excellent turnout of 16 members gave us a good start in January when we always do a major litter/rubbish collection. This year was much better than previous years but we still filled several large bags plus finding larger items including a manhole cover, plastic scooter, wire trellis and concrete post sections. The Council collected all this promptly for us on the Monday as promised. On this session we also had to deal with a number of trees that had collapsed onto pathways following the heavy snow which fell so quickly on Boxing Day. The bridle path was again cleared. In February we planted another 50 hawthorn whips within the restored hedgerow where there were dead sections and in March we cleared an area of brambles and broom to enable bluebells to establish. We also pruned back the hedges planted several years ago to help these thicken out. April saw us raking the wildflower area and sowing seed and also planting 100 plug plants of buttercups and harebells in the restored grassland to increase its diversity. The heather brash was also raked out into the section we hope it will establish. All sessions included litter picking on both reserves.

Next working sessions are on May 3rd, June 7th, July 5th and August 2nd.

MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPHS

Starting with this issue I intend to print one member's photograph taken on the ridge. So I hope this first one will inspire you! Please send your photos to me as an email attachment to jrappleton@aol.com

We start with this super, and very atmospheric, photograph taken by Michael Chamberlain just after we had finished our January session. Thank you Mike for this great photo.

