

Pamber Forest Nature Reserve

Quarterly Newsletter



January 2021

The situation with volunteers has changed regularly during the last three months of the year, with work parties with limited numbers being re-instated but then being withdrawn again in November with the new lockdown coming into place. This was lifted again in early December but once again another lockdown was put in place as we were moved into tier 4 at Christmas.

The net result of this has been only 75 volunteer work days for the period (compared to 168 for the same period last year) and a total of 296 for the year (651 last year). Most of these work days have been spent coppicing in the main coupes and along the ride edges.

The Estate have done some tree felling; firstly some large ash trees were felled in areas where they may become a public health hazard due to ash die back. Then following on from that an area in Frame Green Copse was thinned, a total of 54 oak trees being felled here.

The weather has been exceptionally mild with some storms in October causing some damage to trees. One in particular was a large oak tree that blew over by the bridge over the stream at Beggars Bridge, narrowly avoiding taking out the bridge with it. This period of



Fallen oak tree narrowly missing bridge

weather also led to some unseasonal flowering; both

betony and honeysuckle were in flower in early November.

The winter migrants arrived on 16th October when redwings were seen and these were followed by fieldfares on 7th November.



Honeysuckle on 7th November

During the lockdown period I was able to spend more time surveying for moths, autumn being the time for leaf miners (small moths, the larvae of which create distinctive mines in the leaves of their food plants), and by doing this I was able to increase my list of moths species recorded on the reserve for the year to 606 (536 being my previous best) so at least there has been a kind of silver lining to the Covid cloud.

Another interesting record was of two weasels seen investigating holes in a wood bank on 8th November; it is very rare to see weasels at any time of year.

Graham Dennis

Basingstoke Area Reserves Officer

07770891126 Graham.Dennis@hiwwt.org.uk



**Basingstoke
and Deane**