



# Friends of Rising Sun Country Park



## NEWSLETTER — MARCH 2023



The Park is starting to bloom and the Blackthorn is everywhere and looking spectacular. February ended up being the driest for many years then March ends up the wettest in 40 years in many areas. The clocks have changed and it is lovely having the lighter evenings. In the woods the Primroses are out and, in the



Quarry in the Centre Grounds, some Bluebells are appearing. Some of you may have noticed a lot of activity in the field next to the Waggonway where the horses used to be. NT Council have arranged, after taking over the Rising Sun Farm, to have the trees replanted that were put in many months ago. Sadly that job was not well done and so ATW, Tree and Landscaping Services are replanting over

6000 trees made up of

eight native species-wow!

We found frogspawn in the Lily Rose Pond in the Wildlife Garden—Hurray! Then the Mallard landed-Boo! Probably nibbled it all!!



### VOLUNTEERING

March has been another busy month around the Park with a range of Volunteer activities. The display screen has been replaced in the information board on the Waggonway. This amazing ink drawing by Mark Rasen shows George Stephenson testing one of his engines on the Waggonway. The last sign was broken so fingers crossed for this one.

Another enjoyable job was the building of a 'Wigloo' in the Wildlife Garden at the Centre. The Friends purchased the kit from funds raised and a group of volunteers put it together. I am sure you will agree it looks great. We had a great morning and found the instructions really clear. We need to keep it watered and March has helped in that respect! Even after a few weeks new growth is appearing so let's hope the children (and grown ups) enjoy it as it thickens up. This replaces the old willow structure that was old and very wild!







March has been Willow Month, not only did we build the Wigloo but the company EE helped cut down some of the willow on the café terrace then the volunteers replanted some of the new growth to thicken up the hedge. Big thanks to EE who also did a number of gardening jobs around the Centre grounds.



March was also the month of the Litterpick! On 25th March a number of groups and individuals helped around the Park as part of the Great British Spring Clean. We had help from McDonald's McCrew team, Asda Benton Community Champions

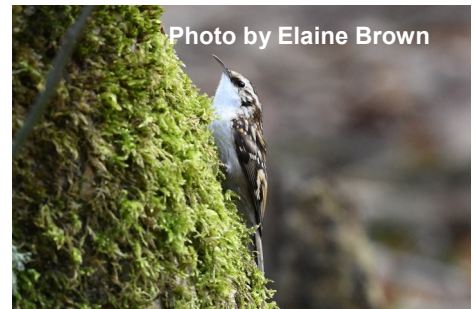


and the 1st Rising Sun Brownies plus lots of others. A massive thank you to all who came along and collected a whopping 60 black bags of rubbish!!! Then on the 27th the Friends monthly litterpick was joined again by a group from Living to Learn from

North Shields. What a lovely group who all had a good time out and about finding yet another eight bags of rubbish! The Friends next Litterpick will be Monday 24th April, meet at the Centre Café at 10.30am. All equipment will be provided but bring your own gloves if you can. **Don't forget, the Volunteers meet every Thursday morning in the Centre Grounds—everyone welcome.**

### AROUND THE PARK

As we move into Spring we look forward to the summer visitors. Our regular watchers have seen Sand Martins and a Swallow up at Scaffold Hill Farm. The Friends organized their first Birdwatch on the 30th which was free. A hardy group braved the rain and were treated to eight Whooper Swans on Swallow Pond, these are on their way back to Iceland to breed. We also saw Skylark which hopefully will nest in the Park. **What a great place!**

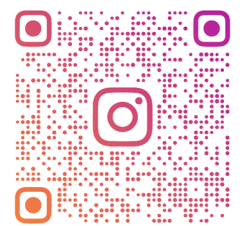


Treecreeper 6th



Photo by Linda Souter

Whooper Swans 30th



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**The Friends Group meets the second Friday of each month at 12 noon in the Rising Sun Centre everyone is welcome, nice to see some new faces. In the meantime why not follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsRSCP> or Email [friendsrscp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsrscp@gmail.com)**