

Jan 2018

# New Forest Northern Commons

## Local Newsletter



National  
Trust

### New Forest Ranger Blog

Jake White—Community Ranger



Happy New Year readers! Our work in the Forest kicks off with the start of the controlled burning season. We will aim to burn gorse and heather across our commons, weather depending, so look out for our signs when out for your regular walks.

It is at the start of this New Year that we also lose one of our beloved staff members and volunteer coordinator, **Catherine Supple**. She is off to Mauritius to establish an endangered plant nursery.

Since starting with the New Forest team in **November 2015**, Catherine has increased our volunteer work output, increased and diversified our species monitoring and her huge love and in-depth knowledge of plant life has given our whole team a new insight into the complex world of moss and lichens.

Her expertise, love of nature and amazing, kind personality will be dearly missed by everyone she came into contact with in the New Forest. Especially her devoted team of volunteers who gave her a fantastic Christmas send off.

Catherine and her volunteers on Stagbury hill. The beautiful cake Catherine is holding depicted a New Forest scene, made by Karen.



### Bramshaw Commons

Restoration work of Stagbury Hill, complex of bronze age burial mounds, has been completed, with locally cut brash (gorse, birch etc) being used to infill erosion scars. This work will now be monitored to ensure the brash stays in place and is working as desired, to try and establish vegetation growth, and soil re-establishment, within the scars.

Felling works will continue through Jan focusing on outlying pine, with clear ups expected to start in Feb. Thank you for diverting your walks away from the work, looking forward to removing timber in spring.

### Foxbury Update



Our Past, Our Future  
Working together for the New Forest

Our volunteer team have been concentrating on **Rhododendron** cutting and burning. This work to remove the non-native invasive will continue into the New Year.

We also have a few more bags of oak trees to plant in Foxbury, however our speedy volunteers will have these planted in no time!

Our **Christmas Forest School Special** (see below) was a great success, with families making natural tree decorations, potato-print wrapping paper, wooden reindeer and clay candle holders! Jenny also made waffles over the campfire.



Click the links to find out more about [Lowland Heathland](#) and why our work is focused on conserving this special habitat and its wildlife within the [New Forest](#).

## Hale Purlieu

We have some further tree work and tidy up due on the south side of the purlieu adjacent to Turf Hill and will be focusing on western areas of Pine, Birch & Gorse into February. To see our full felling maps please visit: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bw2Bh2Sg2HgIzmJCc0QxTGIrUk/view>

Our volunteers will be out Gorse cutting in January.

## Rockford and Ibsley Commons

Our volunteers will be out **gorse cutting** in January. This work is vital to ensure a diverse age of gorse thickets across our commons. The cutting promotes new growth, which eventually benefits insects, and provides cover/nesting habitats for birds and reptiles.

## Hightown Common

We have set up new **butterfly, reptile and amphibian survey transects in Hightown**, this will give us a greater knowledge of the diversity of species on the common, which in turn will help inform our future management decisions.



Beautiful frosty shot of Half Moon Common taken by our very own Dave Johnson.

## Focus on...2017 Highlights!

**January**—3000 trees planted in Foxbury by 100 volunteers, and a Great Grey Shrike overwintered became a resident on the site too.

**February**—Foxbury Forest School starts, and opens its doors to local families.

**March**—26 volunteers come out for the Great British Spring Clean, and help us litter pick our commons.

**April**—Foxbury gets its own website, and we work with NPA and HCC rangers to speak with 100's of visitors about ground nesting bird conservation.

**May**—Most successful Easter Event ever, with over 800 visitors attending, and 2 new cabins installed in Foxbury's basecamp.

**June**—Hearing Dogs Charity run a dog walking event in Foxbury. Offsetting this pressure from the open Forest.

**July**—New welcome sign installed in Foxbury. Thornden School and University of Southampton visit with 320 pupils!

**August**—Surveys show that Foxbury's Nightjar populations are at a record high—25 churring males, potential pairs.

**September**—Barbastelle bats are recorded for the first time in Foxbury and Hale Purlieu.

**October**—New finger posts installed in Foxbury. Sarum orienteering run an event in the site.

**November**—80 volunteers plant 2000 trees in Foxbury.

**December**—Stagbury Hill restoration work completes.

**Events at Foxbury** meet at Half Moon car park SO51 6AQ—Call 01794344020 to book

### Foxbury Forest School

Nature-inspired learning through play. Take part in fun activities, including den building, wild art, green woodwork skills, outdoor cookery and more.

Fortnightly on a Thursday (check dates online)  
£8 p/child, £4 p/additional sibling,  
Childminder rate—£4.50 per child  
**BUY 5 GET THE 6th FREE!**  
Ages 0–5  
10:00am–12:00pm

## Contact Information

 @NT\_NewForest

To book or enquire about events at Foxbury please call 01794344020

If you see any anti social behaviour across the commons—please call the police on 101

To write into the newsletter and all other enquiries, including volunteering please contact us on

**info.newforest@nationaltrust.org.uk or call 01425650035**