

Friends of Valley Gardens

July 2022 No 37

Work Parties

Sunday 10th July

Sunday 31st July

Meet under the bridge at 10am.

We had two work sessions last month. In the first we finally got the shade border cleared of wild garlic. The plants we put in last Autumn are growing well and I have a number of plants that should be ready to go in later this year. These include fortune saxifrage, pink cranesbill, hart's tongue fern and hellebores. Thanks to Hazel Chapman, who has been adding hosta plants to the border on her regular trips to Scarborough. In the second session we attacked the shrub borders near the Crescent. Two wheelbarrow loads of weeds later and the area looked considerably better. In fact the senecio, osteospermums and penstemons are looking particularly good. We discovered, as we were tidying up, that someone had dumped great lumps of ferns in the corner of the beds. They have such large rootballs on them that I think we should be able to transfer some of them to more suitable places within the park in the next work session.

Armed Forces Day

We set up a stall near the Vernon Road Roundabout on Armed Forces Day. Not only were we trying to raise the profile of the Friends, but we also wanted to canvass views on what people thought of the park and how they would like to see it develop in the future.

It was a useful day. We spoke to lots of people, both visitors and locals, persuaded a number of people to fill in questionnaires and added a number of new names to our newsletter mailing list.



Above – A well earned rest from weeding

Below – The Fountain with HMS Westminster in the bay





Photographs – from the top
The shrub border
Rhododendron and Laburnum
Chimney Sweeper Moth

The Park in June and July

I presume that the Parks Department were involved in tidying up the bits of Scarborough that would be visible to the hordes of visitors arriving for Armed Forces Day. Certainly the bits of Valley Gardens visible from the road had been tidied up in the week preceding Armed Forces Day, including the rockery between the ponds. The rest of the park was looking a bit overgrown and untidy, but to their credit, the gardeners have been in and tidied up these areas in the last week. I was very impressed with whoever strimmed the banks near the Crescent entrance and managed to leave the orchid still standing. Unfortunately it then stood out and someone has now kicked the flower head off it.

In fact the orchids are spreading further through the park each year as the parks department have reduced the amount of spraying they do. There are quite a lot this year on the Ramshill side of the park. We have two types, the Pyramidal orchid and the Common Spotted orchid. The Pyramidal Orchid has the pinker flowers and a very definite compact pyramid shaped flower head.

Other flowers to look out for include the daisy like feverfew. The flowers are small but each plant produces a lot of flowers and on mass, the overall effect can be stunning. Last year I spotted one or two ox-eye daisies, this year there are a lot more, mainly confined to the area where we sowed the wild flower seeds. There is also a single Martock Lily on the slope above the leaf bins.

If you are passing Londesborough Lodge, look over the fence to see the giant Echium flower heads.

The variety and number of butterflies and moths increases each year. Recently I spotted a small black moth and this is the Chimney Sweeper. The caterpillars feed on pignuts, which looks a bit like cow parsley only a lot smaller. The pignuts are a swelling from the stem just below the surface of the soil. Obviously pigs love them, but they are also edible to humans, apparently having a taste similar to hazelnuts. Before you go foraging remember that the poisonous Hemlock and Fools Parsley belong to the same family.

Other butterflies spotted in the park over the last week include the Speckled Wood, Red Admiral, Peacock, Tortoiseshell, and the Ringlet.

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