

Luxulyan Valley News

Winter 2018

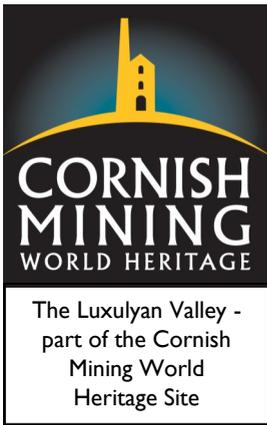


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£1.50

Issue 74



Cover photo -
Winter comes to the
Luxulyan Valley,
By Chris Tigg

Season's Greetings



SUCCESS! Wonderful news, the HLF grant application has been approved. What a perfect way to end 'The Friends' 20th anniversary year. A massive thank you must go to all involved in seeing through this application. See pages 9-11 for the full press release. As yet we don't have a schedule for all the works being undertaken, but there will inevitably be some access restrictions whilst the viaduct, paths and leat repairs take place. Please keep an eye on our website and Facebook pages for the latest information.

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year,
and many thanks for all your support.

The Eds

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We are always keen to hear the views of our members, suggestions for future events or articles for our newsletter, so please get in touch.

**Please send your copy by 5th March 2018 to Chris at
folv@btinternet.com**

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday 17 January 2018 at 7.30 pm

A change to our previously advertised talk and demonstration on Woodcarving and Turning. There will still be a short presentation on woodcarving, but in addition a potter will attend to give us a demonstration on hand pot making. Anyone who would like to make their own clay pot is welcome to have a go! If so you may want to bring an apron or wear old clothes.

Meet: Luxulyan Village Hall, PL30 5QA

Wednesday 7 March 2018 at 7.30 pm

Annual General Meeting. This will be followed by a talk from Dr John Hiscock on Cornwall's Special Marine Life.

Meet: Luxulyan Village Hall, PL30 5QA

Wednesday 18 April 2018 at 7.30 pm

A talk by Rob Evans on the Pentewan Railway and the Tea Treat Trains.

Meet: Luxulyan Village Hall, PL30 5QA

Unless otherwise stated all our events are free for members and £2 for non-members

Full up-to-date information about all our events, and much more, can be found on our website: www.luxulyanvalley.co.uk

Volunteer Dates

'The Friends', in conjunction with Cormac, try to provide opportunities for volunteers to experience some practical assistance in the management of the valley. All tools will be supplied, along with hot drinks and biscuits, but please wear old clothes and strong boots. Everyone Welcome. Stay as long as you like. Our next date is:

Saturday 3 February 2018, 10 – 3 pm

Lady Rashleigh Mine area. Clearing vegetation from this area and start clearing along the Rock Mill tramway. Meet at Pons Mill car park, SX 073 562

For more information please contact the Valley Ranger, Jenny Heskett, by either email: jheskett@cormacltd.co.uk or call 07973 813843

PLEASE NOTE:

As part of the HLF project we will need to record all the volunteering hours in the valley in future, so there will be a little bit of paperwork to fill in for each event in the form of feedback forms.

Grey Seals around Cornwall and beyond

Jim Cleare described Sue Sayer as having abundant enthusiasm and this was apparent right from the beginning of her talk. The Cornwall Seal Group is a research trust and charity that was founded by Sue herself to research and monitor wild seals, mainly the Grey Seal which is a specialty species in Cornwall. There is about 44% of the world's population of Grey Seals in Cornwall, but all of whom frequent the North Atlantic's coasts. Census returns show that there are about 270 round Cornish shores; this is not a great number to be 44% of the world's total.

Seals all have a unique fur pattern, much like our finger print and can be identified by photographing them. In addition many of them have tags, mainly from the RSPCA or Gweek Animal Sanctuary. Their fur is 1½ inches thick and they molt every year. It seems they identify each other by sniffing ears, and their sense of smell is extremely good, sensing predators and people nearby.

Grey Seals dive up to 120 meters to the sea-bed for their food, eating sand eels, cod, haddock, whiting and plaice among others. They can hold their breath for around 12 minutes and on returning to the surface they use muscles to open their nostrils to breathe. Unfortunately many boats go out with the intention of feeding the seals, and this causes problems when the seals make a nuisance of themselves, become dependent on handouts or get cut about by propellers.



Pupping takes place between September and December and they are fully fledged after three weeks, putting on an enormous amount of weight during that time. The pups are left on beaches whilst mothers feed and in most cases have not been abandoned; this only happens when members of the public or dogs take

Grey Seals around Cornwall and beyond (cont.)

too great an interest in a pup and the mother is frightened off. It was thought at one time that mothers went back to their birth beach to have their own pups, but it has been proven this is not necessarily the case and mothers do not always pup on the same beach.

For purpose of identification all the seals photographed have a name – some of those mentioned included Clover, Tulip, Ghost, Tick, Bilberry and Medallion Man.

Some seals have been recorded on beaches as far apart as France and Ireland, also well into the Bristol Channel and Wales. Some have been recorded as making these lengthy journeys quite regularly. There are usually more seals on the north coast of Cornwall than on the south coast, but the reason for this is not known. What is known for certain is that these seals cannot tolerate much disturbance; mostly by what they can hear, smell and see even across large distances. Unnatural sounds such as loud human voices and dog barks, even the changing sound of a boat engine as it slows down all cause stress. Canoeists and kayakers who suddenly appear low in the water look like predators; jet skis come so suddenly on seals that they are liable to panic.

Some fish farms are known to kill seals, rather than install anti-predator netting which is easy and effective; extreme weather is another hazard, along with rock falls and spillage at sea. Other hazards for seals are sea-borne litter such as plastic bottles, carrier bags, chunks of wood, fishing lines and fishing nets of all descriptions. There are many ways you can contact help for a seal that appears to be in trouble. If you have watched a lone seal pup from a good distance away and its mother does not return to it for several hours contact the National Seal Sanctuary on 01326 221361 or the British Divers Marine Life Rescue on 01825 765546. For net entanglement, injury or sickness ring either of the above numbers, or a dead seal should be reported to Cornwall Wildlife Trust's Marine Strandings hotline on 0845 2012626. At no time attempt to approach or touch the seal yourself.

Sue's talk was certainly full of enthusiasm, a lot of knowledgeable detail and amusing as well. She could probably have gone on a lot longer than the hour she took, but everyone was fascinated by the stories she told. For further information see the Cornwall Seal Group's website:

www.cornwallsealgroup.co.uk

Can you tell your Old Man's Beard from your Witches' Whiskers?

These oddly descriptive and rather cheeky names belong to some of our region's hidden woodland treasures, the lichens. Unsurprisingly not many of us could point them out on a woodland walk yet the south west's coastal and upland woods (known as Atlantic woodlands) are some of the richest places for lichens, mosses and liverworts in the British Isles. Plantlife with funding from the National Lottery and the support of regional partners wants people to know more about the woodlands on their doorstep so that we can value them more and do more for their conservation.

Over the next 12 months we will be developing the 'Building Resilience in South West Woodlands' project and we want to hear from the people who live near these woods, work in or visit the area. Let us know what you think about the woodlands of Dartmoor, Exmoor, North Devon, North Cornwall and the Quantock Hills. Tell us what activities you would like to get involved with. To do this go to www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BRCCommunities

Now back to those beards and whiskers...

On your next woodland walk have a look into the branches of hawthorn, oak, ash and birch trees to see if you can find either of these lichens. Both are nationally fairly rare but can be abundant in some of the south west's older native woodlands as they prefer to live in the clean, light and damp conditions they provide.

Witches' Whiskers (*Usnea florida*)

With its huge hairy wart-like discs, this grey-green



Lichens (cont.)

lichen can't be mistaken for any other. The discs are the fruits of the lichen and can grow up to 1cm across although they can be much smaller.

Old Man's Beard (*Usnea species*)

Sometimes sticking up on branches and sometimes dangling from them in clumps, these 'usnea' lichens are made up of thin, round, grey-green threads and are reminiscent of a tangled beard.



To hear Plantlife's Alastair Moralee talk about the project on BBC Radio Devon go to

https://twitter.com/Love_plants/status/907228502394634240

Supplied by 'Plantlife', see www.plantlife.org.uk



Otter Spotting

Next Survey 2 - 5 February 2018
Review Meeting - 12 February 2018

Please contact Ed Harradence
on 01726 851158 for details
or if you want to get involved

Cornwall AONB

The Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is currently a partner in the 'Building Resilience in South West Woodlands' project with 'Plantlife' (the Lead Partners). This project aims to build upon current and significant momentum across the south west region to ensure a resilient and sustainable future for the unique Atlantic woodland habitat and its rich but declining population of rare lichens, moss and liverworts.

'Plantlife' are currently undertaking a period of consultation for which your assistance would be very much appreciated, it would be most helpful if you could spare the time to complete one or the other of the surveys listed below.

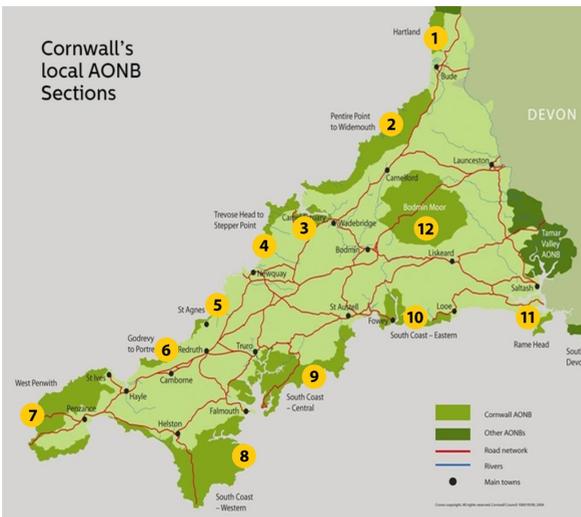
www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BRCommunities (for anyone living in, working in or visiting the project area)

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FutureScientists (for schools, outdoor centres, forest schools etc)

Please forward this to anyone who may be interested in providing their comments. 'Plantlife' are able to supply introductory emails or short articles for newsletters and there is more information on their webpage www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/our-work/conservation-projects/woodland/building-resilience-in-south-west-woodlands under the section 'Want to get involved or find out more?'

Thank you for your support. Jane Davies, Development Officer

Cornwall AONB Partnership



1. Hartland
2. Pentire Point to Widemouth
3. The Camel Estuary
4. Carnewas to Stepper Point
5. St Agnes
6. Godrevy to Portreath
7. West Penwith
8. South Coast Western
9. South Coast Central
10. South Coast Eastern
11. Rame Head
12. Bodmin Moor

Heritage Lottery Grant Success

Treffry Viaduct and Luxulyan Valley set for major conservation works following a £3.6M National Lottery boost.

Spectacular 19th century viaduct to generate power through a new hydroelectric turbine.

The Luxulyan Valley is set to benefit from a £3.6 million National Lottery funding injection to restore and conserve the valley's physical and natural environment for future generations to enjoy. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant was awarded to Cornwall Council, in partnership with Cornwall Heritage Trust after years of work to secure the funds.

Luxulyan Valley has industrial history and is part of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site. It has a complex system of leats (artificial water channels) which connected central Cornwall's tin and copper mines with the harbours in Par and Charlestown. The National Lottery funding will be used to repair two of the leats so that the Valley's spectacular 19th Century Treffry Viaduct can be restored to working order.

Cornwall Council will fund a separate hydro-electric turbine at Pons Mill using water from the restored leat system. The electricity generated from the turbine will be sold to the national grid and fund the ongoing conservation of the Valley.

The viaduct is an imposing granite structure which carries the Carmears leat and tramway high above the valley floor. At 27metres high, over 200 metres long, with 10 equal span arches, it is an amazing feat of engineering and the most spectacular surviving monument to the horse drawn tramway era for which the valley is renowned.

The funding will also help nature conservation by implementing a Woodland Management Plan to improve biodiversity across the site. Volunteers will help by removing invasive plant species, whilst installing bird and bat boxes. Footpaths will also be improved to make the valley more accessible for all visitors.

To promote Luxulyan Valley there will be a permanent exhibition at Wheal Martyn China Clay Museum, walking guides and information available online to inform visitors to the valleys fascinating history.

The Friends of Luxulyan Valley have been helping to develop an activity

Heritage Lottery Grant Success (cont.)

programme, which includes engaging with new audiences, training and volunteering opportunities.

Cornwall Council has been working with the Friends on the programme and to ensure the restoration proposals fit with local aspirations.

In total, more than £5 million will be invested in the valley providing a boost to the local economy and creating new jobs and learning opportunities. Chairman of Cornwall Heritage Trust, Lieutenant Colonel Philip Hills, said: ***“We are delighted that the unique Treffry viaduct will be restored to its former working glory and saved for future generations, thanks to the opportunity given to us by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Trust is looking forward to working in partnership with Cornwall Council and the Friends of the Luxulyan Valley to enhance this World Heritage Site and conserve its important industrial heritage.”***

Cornwall Councillor Sue James and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Public Protection said: ***“This funding will help restore of one of the finest examples of industrial heritage in the area. We hope this will help bring the valley back to life, with the restoration bringing in more visitors,***



Photo by Rob Bristol

Heritage Lottery Grant Success (cont.)

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more jobs and more training. More natural environments for animals and being able to generate renewable energy are additional bonuses.”

Colonel Edward Bolitho (Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall), President of Cornwall Heritage Trust commented: ***“This Heritage Lottery Fund grant means that the Treffry Viaduct, a marvel of Cornish engineering, can now be fully restored within the beautiful Luxulyan valley. The success of the bid has been due to an enormous amount of hard work by many people, who deserve an enormous amount of thanks. This is a really good day for Cornwall.”***

Julian German, Chairman of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site Partnership, added: ***“We are delighted that Heritage Lottery Funding will be used to protect Luxulyan Valley’s valuable heritage assets. The award will also contribute to reducing CO² emissions by restoring the leat system which will feed into the new Hydro Electric Turbine at Pontois Mills. This is a great example of partnership working for local communities.”***

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the Heritage Lottery Fund, said: ***“Luxulyan Valley is a beautiful and historic part of the UK. Thanks to National Lottery players, part of Cornwall’s industrial heritage will now not only be conserved and protected but will also continue to play a part in the lives of local people through training and volunteering whilst contributing to the local economy.”***

Cornwall Council and Cornwall Heritage Trust will now develop further detailed plans so the scheme can start in January 2018 and be delivered over the next three years.

Luxulyan Valley is situated just outside the village of Luxulyan, approximately three miles from the Eden Project and is a key component of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site. The valley contains a complex system of leats and industrial structures constructed between 1839 – 1842 to connect the tin and copper mines of central Cornwall with the harbours of Par and Charlestown. Today, the valley is steeped in natural beauty and loved for its tranquillity, however, the heritage assets needed substantial repairs to continue functioning.

Bee Keeping

The November meeting was on bees and beekeeping, our speaker was Henry Kendall from the Bodmin Bee Keepers Group. Henry has been keeping bees all his life, as did his father and grandfather.

He started by telling us of the three groups of bees, the solitary bee (masonry bee), the semi-social bee, which includes bumblebees, wasps and hornets. They have nests which they build every year and lay between 200 to 2000 eggs. Wasps and hornets build theirs out of wood which they chew and turn onto paper, at the end of autumn only the Queen's survives and repeats the process in spring. Then there's the honey bee which live in groups of 10,000 to 50,000 in the height of summer.

Henry brought with him some of his bee keeping equipment, one being a hive which had been cut in half so that we could see how the bees live with a brood box at the bottom and 'supers' - which hold the honey and pollen. He also went through the bee keepers' year which starts in autumn, showed us the protective clothing and how he catches swarms which is the natural way bees expand their species. Henry bought along some of his honey showing that what bees feed on affects the colour of the honey.

Henry explained how the bees huddle together to preserve heat in the winter, and each takes it turn on the inside and outside. It was also important that there was a plentiful supply of food left in the hive to ensure their survival over winter.

He finished by saying how passionately he felt about not spraying with pesticides, especially neonicotinoids, on any crops. He hoped that the audience enjoyed his talk and had some insight to keeping bees and the hard work it takes the bees to produce a pound of honey!

We thanked Henry for his interesting talk and for stepping in at the last moment for Suzan Malcolm who was unable to make it.

Keith Burt

Neonicotinoids and Bee Friendly Gardening

Following Henry's talk, I read that the University of Sussex has shown extremely high levels of neonicotinoids and fungicides in "bee friendly" plants in garden centres, such as heather, lavender, bergamot and honeysuckle. Because neonicotinoids are systemic, they could have been present in the seed or the compost, and from there, permeate every part of the plant

Bee Keeping (cont.)

including the pollen. High levels of neonicotinoids are also found in wild flowers adjoining arable fields. This is despite a partial EU moratorium in place since 2013.

Neonicotinoids impair bee navigation, affect their short term memory, reduce egg laying and sperm viability, and reduce the number of queens hatched. (Traces are also found in the honey, although don't stop eating it for that reason, because there will also be traces in many other foodstuffs.)

Britain has been slow to act, blocking a total ban by the EU, but in November, Michael Gove finally acknowledged the danger to bees. However, restrictions on pesticides used on non-flowering and non-edible plants are less rigorous, and it is alarming that these ornamental plants are marketed as bee friendly, and actively promoted on TV and in the press.

Thanks to the Professional Gardeners Guild Newsletter for this information. More information can be found on www.gardenorganic.org.uk .

Joan Farmer

The Valley of the Gods

Down in the valley, designed by the gods,
Home to all birds, and small arthropods,
Leats, made for water, continued to drain,
Due to a shortage, of seasonal rain.

Carrying moisture, to nourish the ground,
Complete with small locks, to move it around,
Panic set in, as the levels were low,
Making it harder, to maintain a flow.

Flowers were wilting, in sight of the sun,
Bees found it harder, to get their job done,
Obtaining fresh nectar, became such a chore,
As the sweet little petals, could open no more.

The animal kingdom, was starting to wane,
Creatures, the valley, may not see again,
Forced from their homes, by a terrible drought,
Nothing it seemed, could lessen the rout.

All appeared lost, when late in the night,
The valley awoke, to a colossus of light,
Rumbles of thunder, brought oceans of rain,
Ensuring the leats, were flowing again.

Early next morning, the valley was rife,
Home once again, to animal life,
Some say the Gods, had offered a hand,
Ensuring the beauty, remained with our land.....

Changes to Membership Rates

Following notification provided with our last Newsletter, it was unanimously agreed at the General Meeting held on 18 October, that the proposed changes to our annual membership rates would be adopted with all renewals due at the beginning of April 2018.

The changes are as follows:

- Individual Membership £8 (up from the current £6)
- Joint Membership £10 (up from the current £8)
- Family Membership £12 (up from the current £10)

All other categories (Life, Corporate and Junior membership rates) shall remain unchanged.

Our membership rates have remained unchanged for well over 10 years. Sadly increases in costs over these years have finally caught up with us. We hope that despite these small increases, you feel that membership still represents very good value for money. See back cover for more details on the benefits of membership.

Trustee Vacancies

Sadly our deputy chairman, Sara Kettle has had to resign from the Board of Trustees following a move away from the area. We thank her for her efforts and wish her well.



In addition our long standing treasurer, John Wright has decided to retire from this position next year at our AGM.

If you feel you would like to join our Board of Trustees, and in particular step into either of the above pair of shoes we would love to hear from you. If you are not sure what is entailed and simply want to know more, then please contact John Wright in regard to the role of Treasurer, or any of the committee, details of whom are on the back cover.

Volunteering Hero's

Back in October a valiant group of volunteers cleared some of the vegetation along the Velvet Path. They also cleared some of the drainage ditches to the side to try and keep some of the water off the path, and so prevent it turning into a quagmire.



On Friday 24 November nine volunteers including one from Gunnislake along with Jenny, our Valley Ranger, have reopened the stunning view over St Austell Bay to Gribbin Head, from the bench at the top of Carmears Wood path.

They also cleared a winter view round the corner from the bench, so at least until the oaks come back into leaf, you can now see across the Valley to the woods above the Trevanney Clay Dries.



The Friends of Luxulyan Valley Membership

If you are not already a member of the Friends of Luxulyan Valley, then why not join us?

If you are a member, thank you, but have you ever considered giving a gift of a years Membership to a relative or friend?

Membership runs from April to March and allows you to attend most activities free of charge (there may be a charge for those activities which require an entrance fee, or incur some other cost), and provides you with a quarterly newsletter. In addition, it will give you the satisfaction of participating in the preservation of our beautiful valley.

Application forms are available on our website, or contact our Membership Secretary:

Ms Harriet Nott, 75 Stannary Road, Stenalees, St. Austell, Cornwall, PL26 8SW.

Telephone: 01726 850735

Email: harri@ygorow.plus.com

Full details about all our events, and much more, can be found on our website:

www.luxulyanvalley.co.uk

We're now on facebook



Friends of Luxulyan Valley

We want to hear from you

Please supply your articles, letters and/or photographs by 5 March 2018 to

Chris at: folv@btinternet.com

Committee Contacts

Jim Cleare, <i>Chairman</i> -	01726 850553
<i>Deputy Chair</i> -	Position Vacant
John Wright, <i>Treasurer</i> -	01726 852436
Joan Farmer, <i>Secretary</i> -	01726 852603
Harriet Nott, <i>Membership Secretary</i> -	01726 850735
Tracy Elliot, <i>Events Secretary</i> -	01208 831961
<i>Sales</i> -	01726 850553