



We celebrated in style

At the end of February we celebrated St Nick's 5th birthday – **five years since the official designation as a Local Nature Reserve**. Over 50 Friends and other supporters gathered to hear contributions about the history and role of St Nicks. Barry Potter (Chair of York Natural Environment Trust) reminisced about his 'discovery' of St Nicholas Fields in the 1980's when it was a fascinating wild space, fenced off after the tipping of waste had ceased on the site in 1974. Dave Meigh (Head of Parks & Open Spaces) talked about the role of St Nicks now as one of York's four officially designated local nature reserves and Cllr Andrew Waller (Leader of City of York Council and one of our founding 'Rotters') rounded off with praise for St Nicks wider role in promoting sustainability within the city.

After we had blown out the candles on the cake and sung a quick round of happy birthday, it was time for a guided walk around the nature reserve. We were joined on this by local resident, John Horsley (pictured below on the right), who was celebrating his own 80th

birthday and who recounted his memories of St Nicks when it was home to clay pits and brickworks back in the 1950's. We also officially launched our **new tree trail** – leaflets are now available at the Centre providing a map and information about ten of the most notable trees in the reserve. You can also find it on our website at www.stnicksfields.org.uk/maps.php or come join Judith Ward on a guided tree walk at the end of April (details in the diary at the back).

What else is ahead?

There are lots of other popular **guided walks** on offer this year - for example you could join Tony Fairburn in July on a butterfly walk. If you cannot make it, you could read the results of his last year's survey of St Nicks butterflies on our website (see www.stnicksfields.org.uk/wildlife.php#butterflies). If you haven't got access to the internet, you can come see it at the Centre.

We are also branching out into offering some **exciting day-long courses** on a number of topics. In July we are delighted to be running a very practical course on timber frame building, run by Nick Parsons from the award-winning South Yorkshire Energy Centre. Nick will also be running a second course for us in September on 'Eco-Refurbishment'. Full details of both the courses and the guided walks are in the diary section – places are limited, so please book early. There's plenty of other things going on, as you will read overleaf, and we hope you will join us!



Friends of St Nicholas Fields

♻ national 2007 Biffa Climate Conscious Award winner

♻ registered charity (no. 1068909)

♻ supported by the City of York Council

York Environment Centre, Rawdon Av, York YO10 3ST

tel./ fax: (01904) 411821 ♻ www.stnicksfields.org.uk

general enquiries: info@stnicksfields.org.uk

composting advice: rotters@stnicksfields.org.uk



Bird ringing results

The ringing was gently conducted by Paul and Ian from British Trust for Ornithology in the Centre garden. The birds never stayed in the net for very long and were released as soon as they were measured and weighed.

7th February 2009

1 Blackbird, 8 Blue Tits, 3 Dunnocks,
9 Great Tits, 1 Long Tailed Tit,
5 Robins

19th September 2008

1 Blackbird, 1 Blue Tit, 2 Dunnocks,
3 Great Tits, 2 Greenfinches, 1 Robin,
2 Willow Tits

Volunteer Co-ordinator Calling

This year has started off with a bang with volunteering at St Nicks growing and growing. We have a fantastic troop of practical conservation volunteers that have carried out work on the nature reserve in an array of challenging weather conditions. Under Ethan's (Volunteer Park Ranger) lead, volunteers have finished another path, built steps, started clearing out the beck and planted a new hedge as well as much, much more. An enthusiastic group of students from Applefields School has also been lending a hand to develop a wheelchair accessible, edible container garden outside the centre. Not to mention all the other volunteers who helped at St Nicks 5th birthday, opened the centre on Saturdays, worked in the office and recorded wildlife that can be spotted at St Nicks.

Spring has truly sprung at St Nicks and we are looking forward to a busy and active summer. If you would like to be involved we would love to hear from you, please contact me on the details below. Once again a massive thank you to everyone who has continued to support St Nicks and all the work we do!

Michelle Hawthorne, Volunteer Coordinator
volunteer@stnicksfields.org.uk
01904 411821/ 07531 009149

Upcoming Volunteering Opportunities & News

♻️ 1st – 7th June, Volunteer Week:

a great opportunity to give volunteering a go!

See our list of events for details of our Volunteer Taster morning on Tuesday 2nd June and watch out for a variety of other volunteering events across York.

♻️ We need you!

Have you always been meaning to volunteer a bit of your time but cannot volunteer regularly? We are trying to put together a list of people with particular interests or expertise upon whom we could call when an event/project/task pops up which we need some extra help with. We'd give you a ring when needed to see if you are free and fancy helping out (but you could always say no if it's not convenient). We need:

- Administration/office and computer volunteers
- Practical Volunteers (e.g. brushcutter/chainsaw licence, Woodwork, Painting, DIY skills etc.)
- Events Volunteers (staffing stalls and helping at the event)
- Flyer and poster distribution volunteers (once a month in your local area)
- Wildlife Watch, Surveying and research Volunteers
- Gardening Volunteers
- Saturday Volunteers (helping to open the centre on a Saturday 10am - 2pm)

For more details and/ or to be added to a list or two please contact Michelle. Thank you!

VOLUNTEER BBQ SOCIAL

Our summer volunteer social will be on Friday 3rd July, 7- 10pm. Socials are our way to thank our volunteers for all their hard work as well as a great excuse for a knees up! There will a BBQ, music and refreshments. Why not get yourself on the invite list by volunteering in the upcoming months?



Recycling Update

In the last financial year St Nicks recycling team collected a whopping 437 tonnes of recyclable materials. This is the equivalent of saving 22 tonnes of iron ore, 33 tonnes of bauxite (the raw material used to make aluminium) and 3,179 trees. The amount of glass collected is comprised of some 537,000 bottles and jars. All in all, not bad for five people, two peddle trikes and an electric milk float.

The team would also like to take this opportunity to say goodbye and good luck to Debz who has been a valuable full time member of the recycling team for just over a year.



York Rotters Update

Compost Awareness Week is almost here and we will be holding several events throughout York - see right for details.

Volunteering for York Rotters is not just about providing composting advice though. We know that not everyone is comfortable talking to the public but there are other ways you can help. We are on the lookout for volunteers who can help transport roadshow equipment and set up our displays at events. We don't want you to be out of pocket so we will cover your travel expenses. If you would like to help out please contact Catherine on 412861.



there is a lot of gardening going on this year. Besides Applefields School container garden, Jean is back with some help from her friends to showcase the effectiveness of square-foot gardening and the Stables project pupils are creating a permaculture edible garden (the picture above shows its classic permaculture keyhole layout using recycled bottles and willow weaving). We are also looking into redesigning our wildflower garden and providing advice on wildflower gardening in general so if you would like to get involved, let us know. We were pleased to see our frogs come back to our pond in March and you can watch their frolicks on our website www.stnicksfields.org.uk/wildlife.php or you can come see the resulting tadpoles for yourself!

COMPOST AWARENESS WEEK

Composting is a great way to slim your bin and it can be fun too! Come to one of York Rotters events to learn more.

Sunday 3rd May: 11am Annual Worm Charming competition at Rowntree's Park with a Compost Clinic 11am – 12.30pm

Tuesday 5th May: 'How To Compost' training course 7 – 8.30pm, York Environment Centre

Wednesday 6th May: 'Using your compost to grow your own vegetables' training course, 7 – 8pm at York Environment Centre

Thursday 7th May: compost clinic at Lakeland on High Ousegate 10am – 2pm

Saturday 9th May: Worm Charming competition at Creepy Crawlies 2pm with a Compost Clinic 2- 3.15pm

Places for the Worm Charming competitions are limited so it is advisable to book beforehand. For booking & more info about any of these events please contact Catherine Bamford on 01904 412861 or rotters@stnicksfields.org.uk



Environment Centre Update

We are starting to spruce up in preparation for next year's 10th anniversary of the Centre being built so

St Nick's Events April - July 2009

For all events meet at the York Environment Centre unless stated otherwise. Check our website or call us on 01904 411821 for bookings, more information and more events. Please help us spread the word.

REGULAR EVENTS

Eco-Active Days

Fancy a bit of exercise whilst doing something useful outdoors, followed by a free lunch? Join us on:

- ♻️ Wed. 22nd April, 11am-4pm - tree & hedge rescue
- ♻️ Sat. 2nd May, 10-1pm
- ♻️ Wed. 13th May, 11-4pm
- ♻️ Sat. 6th June, 10-1pm
- ♻️ Wed. 17th June, 11am-4pm
- ♻️ Sat. 4th July, 10-1pm
- ♻️ Wed. 15th July, 11am-4pm

Camera Club

Meets every first Saturday of the month 2-4pm. New members welcome. **Free admission.** Please contact Ivana at the Centre for more info.

OTHER EVENTS

TREE WALK Thursday 30th April, 6-7:30pm

Join Judith Ward on a guided walk through the nature reserve. Please book ahead. **Cost** £2.50 adults/ £1.50 children (free to Friends of St Nicholas Fields)

BIRD WALK Saturday 2nd May, 10am

Join local ornithologist, David Campbell, on a walk through the nature reserve. Please bring binoculars if you have them, and book ahead. **Cost** £2.50 adults/ £1.50 children (free to Friends)

VOLUNTEER TASTER

Tue. 2nd June, 11am-1pm

Come find out what it takes to volunteer at St Nicks, and then enjoy a picnic and outdoor games. Whether you fancy giving volunteering a go or you volunteer already, pop along. You will meet new people, help the environment, get fit and have a great time all at once!

BAT WALK Tuesday 2nd June, 8:30-10:30pm

Join our resident bat man, Roger Curtis, for an evening walk round the nature reserve looking and

JOIN US & ENJOY FREE WALKS

If you haven't done so already, join Friends of St Nicholas Fields and you will get free entry to our guided walks. You will also be supporting York's leading organisation promoting sustainable living. Membership starts from £5 per year - please see the next page for a membership form.

listening out for bats. Bat detectors provided. Please book ahead. **Cost** £2.50 adults/ £1.50 children (free to Friends)

BIG RECYCLE DAY Sat. 13th June, 1-4pm

Join our annual recycling extravaganza! There will be the famous Junk Swap, a chance to get rid of your junk and pick up something you want, recycled arts activities, stalls and displays...

SELF BUILD WITH TIMBER course

Saturday 18th July, 9.30am-5pm

This introductory course will explain the background to Walter Segal Timber Frame building, plus the practicalities of constructing and erecting simple frames for a garden shed or summer house. Nick Parsons from the award-winning South Yorkshire Energy Centre, is the tutor. Limited places available so please book early. **Course fee:** £60 (£40 non waged).

BUTTERFLY WALK Saturday 25th July, 11am

Join local butterfly expert, Tony Fairburn, on a walk through the nature reserve. Please book ahead. **Cost** £2.50 adults/ £1.50 children (free to Friends)

MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Eco Refurbishment course

(Sat. 12th Sept., 9:30am-5pm)

This will cover ecological improvements to existing buildings, including energy efficiency, renewable energy, water re-use and conservation, healthy buildings and hazardous building materials. Limited places available so please book early. **Course fee:** £40 (£30 non waged).

Food for Free Walk (Sat. 19th Sept. 2pm), **Apple Day** (Sat. 10th Oct. 1-4pm), **Pumpkin Evening** (Wed. 28th Oct.), **Bird Walk** (Sat. 7th Nov. 10am)



Do you like WHAT WE DO?



BECOME A FRIEND of St Nicholas Fields

Be a part of York's leading organisation promoting sustainable living. Your support will help us:

⌘ **Continue improving** St Nicholas Fields which we have transformed from a rubbish tip into **24 acres of unique green space.**

⌘ **Develop the Environment Centre** as the hub of green activity in York with free advice on green issues and green products for sale.

⌘ **Develop projects and services,** such as York Rotters and our award-winning kerbside recycling service, which enable people in York and beyond to move towards a sustainable future.

All members of Friends of St Nicholas Fields receive a **regular newsletter** three times a year and **free entry to our guided walks***. Friends giving £3 or more per month will also receive a **St Nicks t-shirt**.

* We run 5 or 6 guided (butterfly, wildflower, bird etc) walks each year. The standard charge is £2.50 adults/£1.50 children per walk.

Join now and you could save over £15!

Please use block capitals and tick where appropriate.

Name/s: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel.: _____

Email: _____

I/ we want to receive newsletter by...

email (saves us paper and money) post

I/ we would like to pay annually

Please choose your level of support:

individual: £5 £10 £15 £___ (over £15)

joint/ family: £8 £18 £___ (over £18)

I/ we will give a monthly sum of...

£3 £5 £10 other £_____

Please send me a t-shirt size: S M L XXL

I am/ we are making a single donation of £_____

I am/ we are paying by...

cash cheque standing order
payable to Friends of St Nicholas Fields

Instructions to your bank/ building society

Please pay Friends of St Nicholas Fields £_____ each month/ year (please indicate). Starting on _____ until further notice.

Name of your bank: _____

Bank address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Name of account holder/s: _____

Your account number: _____

Sort code: ____ - ____ - ____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Why not make your money go further?



I am a UK taxpayer. I would like Friends of St Nicholas Fields to reclaim the tax (currently 25 pence for every £1 I give) on all my donations until further notice. I pay income tax at least equal to the tax the charity reclaims on my donation.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return the form to: York Environment Centre, Rawdon Avenue, York YO10 3ST

Data protection: Any information you give will be used by Friends of St Nicholas Fields only and not passed to any other organisation. Friends of St Nicholas Fields is a registered charity no. 1068909.