



# FOREST NEWS

Editor: Ronnie Walker

Forest of Dean  
Group



## NEW MEMBERS

*A very warm welcome is extended to new members who have joined the Group since the last Forest News.*

*Membership is now 190. (We gained 4 members)*

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**The Forest of Dean Ramblers' walks are currently suspended again – since 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**

**Keep an eye on the website, there is a weekly update.**

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

The AGM 2020 was held on line. All officers remained in place.

We will need willing volunteers for posts for 2021/22, so if you have a talent give us a shout.

## Can you help us?

Footpaths (Public Right of Ways - PROWS) enable us to do what we love; explore our countryside.

Local Authorities are responsible for making sure these are properly recorded on what is known as the definitive map and access is maintained. Ramblers help out by having volunteers look out for issues and problems relating to PROWs, some of which may be dealt with by Ramblers whilst others need to be reported to the local authority for action.

John Baker has been our footpaths officer for several years now and has done a great job, however he is not able to continue beyond this year. We are therefore looking for a new Footpaths Officer to take on this role from November. There is time for anyone interested in this role to work alongside John for a supported hand over.

So, what does a Footpaths Officer do? Well first of all they don't need to do it all themselves as there are plenty of members willing to help out however the role provides a focal point for footpath issues. It will be up to the new person as to how they want

to do things and what help and support they would like to have.

The main responsibilities are,

1. Review planning applications that may have an impact of footpaths received via the Coleford District Council planning portal
2. Review of footpath modification orders received via email from Gloucestershire County Council
3. Report footpath issues via Gloucester County Council Public Right of Way web portal 'Report a Problem'
4. Footpath issues may require site visiting site and interaction with public
5. Create monthly footpath reports for Forest of Dean Group and Area
6. Attend FOD group and Area footpath meetings
7. Hold regular meetings 'Monthly' with Gloucestershire Public Rights of Way officer to discuss footpath issues

If you want more information about this contact either John at [jhnbkr327@gmail.com](mailto:jhnbkr327@gmail.com) or Jackie at [secretary@fodramblers.org.uk](mailto:secretary@fodramblers.org.uk). They would be pleased to hear from you.

## Lost Ways

### Boxbush near Hopeboork Farm to Yartleton Farm.

There is a path at Boxbush (SO671208) from the A40 road in the parish of Longhope, near the Gloucestershire/Herefordshire boundary, which goes in a north easterly direction, for approx. one mile (Grid ref SO679216), but when you get to about one hundred yards from Barrel Lane you can't get to it. You are at a point where the only way out, is to get over a stile into Herefordshire and end up at the "LEA" on the A40 road to Ross. There is a private gravel track, which goes to Barrel Lane, by way of "Luxtree Farm". This is not a public right of way. Then turn right along the lane to the county boundary and then follow the path along the Gloucestershire side of the lane on your left hand side, take the path (Signposted) to get you to "Yartleton Farm".

Looking at the maps, you have to go back to the 1923 versions to find this path which crosses straight to Barrel Lane staying on the Gloucestershire side of the county boundary all the way. This has been reported as a lost way.

Reported by Roger Cox

The editor's remark is...

It would be good to have a Public Right of Way from SO679216 to SO680217. Yes all of one field in length. However the A40 needs to be walked along for at least 335 feet according to google, to make good use of the new path.

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### Sad News

Fred Gray died on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2020 aged 86, a fellow Rambler of the Forest of Dean Group.

I first met Fred Gray in late May '97. Indeed on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 97 on Les Caton's epic Llanthony Priory ramble I followed him around the 12 mile route. I spent a lot of the time at the back and he did not mind at all. I managed to get on the Tintagel holiday that October. It was organised by Fred and Sheila Gray, and was well attended and expertly led by Fred. He went down to Cornwall prior to the holiday and recce a lot of the walks on that holiday. He went above and beyond the call of duty in his support of Forest of Dean rambles. It was the first of many holidays and rambles spent in his amiable company.

I learnt a lot from Fred's leadership. He was an accomplished walk leader and Chairman/Secretary for a very long time. Fred was one of the corner stones that the Forest of Dean Rambler's group was built upon. We shall continue the excellent work that he did to encourage the next generation of Rambler's to organise walks, rambles and other social events. He has gone however he will not be forgotten by me. And I believe quite a few others too.

Ronnie Walker  
Editor

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### Gallery



**This photo of the sunset was taken on Christmas Day 2020 from my back garden.**

**Here's looking forward to a brighter tomorrow.**



### Hair Ice.

**In some forests on humid nights, peculiar ice crystals form on rotting wood. The ice looks like a hairy cloud, and sometimes a bit like candy floss. It is neither. These hair-like wisps appear at night and melt when the sun comes up. Hair ice only grows on humid winter nights when the temperature is just below freezing point. It is very hard to spot and not at all common.**

**Scientists have now discovered exactly what gives "hair ice" its strange shape. It's caused by fungus called Exidiopsis effuse. The action of the fungus is to enable the ice to form thin hairs – with a diameter of about 0.01mm – and to keep this shape over many hours at freezing temperature.**

**John and Carol Baker spotted this example of Hair Ice on a recent exercise walk.**

Also:-



The roots of a tree have been exposed and:-



The new cattle snapped at Woorgreen enclosure.  
(I hope they are doing a good job.)

Our membership secretary Ann Linden snapped  
these two pictures on her walking during  
December 2020.

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### Nature corner: Wild Boar



This Forest of Dean wild boar eating acorns was  
photographed on 14/11/2020 at Soudley Village  
Hall.

Wild boar live in a family party that has territory of 10 –  
20 sq km but in the autumn, family groups come  
together to form herds of up to 50 females and  
youngsters.

Order: Artiodactyla

Family: Suidae

Species *Sus scrofa*

Habitat: Broad-leaved woodland & wild grassland areas.

Description: Pale grey to brown or black in colour, thick  
hide with sparse bristles and some finer hairs. Tusks are  
enlarged canine teeth and larger in the male.

Size: Length of body and head 36 – 72 inches, length of  
tail 12 to 16 inches, Weight 110 to 440lbs.

Life-span: 15-20 years.

Food: Roots, fruits, nuts, fungi, insects, amphibians,  
reptiles, small mammals, birds, carrion.

Ronnie Walker

Editor

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### **GO Outdoors: Extra Discount**

GO Outdoors are offering members of Ramblers a  
further 10% discount off the 10% discount card. That  
means a minimum of 10% off the RRP with the discount  
card plus another 10% off for members of "Ramblers".  
All you need to do is show your Ramblers membership  
card as proof of membership at the payment desk in  
store.

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### **EDITORIAL CONTACT DETAILS**

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*Late News:-*

*15/02/2021 Lockdown has not yet lifted.*

*Footnote:-*

*\*\*\* What is the longest word in the dictionary?*

*Well it is 'smiles' of course as there is a mile from  
one "s" to the other. \*\*\**

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