

Sun Rising News

The twice yearly newsletter of
Sun Rising Natural Burial Ground and Nature Reserve

Spring/Summer 2017



Open Day On Saturday 17 June, 11am – 3pm, we shall have our annual Open Day. This is an opportunity to talk to staff about any and every aspect of Sun Rising, such as ethical, affordable, individual funerals, the nature reserve or long term security. Pop along on the day, or tell your friends.

The Roll of Remembrance will take place after the Open Day, 3 – 5 pm. At this event, the name of every individual laid to rest at Sun Rising, or remembered with a plaque or tree, is read aloud. It's a beautiful event, full of respect, memories and support. All 750+ names will be read in alphabetical order - you're welcome to come for as long as you wish. There will be refreshments available all day with proceeds going to The Friends.

Nature Watch Days This year, we shall be holding two Nature Watch days: on Saturday 20 May and Sunday 16 July, 11 am – 4 pm. On these days we aim to list every single species we can find onsite, out in the grassland, in the burial areas, even down in the ditches. Everyone is welcome, expert or amateur – do come along, share your knowledge, or learn more about nature and the nature reserve.

Moth Night On Sunday 27 August there is an opportunity to come and see some of the 250 or so species of moth found at Sun Rising. The event starts at 8 pm and can go on until the early hours - you're welcome to stay for just an hour or two, or as long as you wish. Let us know you're coming, and bring sturdy shoes, a torch and sunglasses (the traps are very bright!).

Dying Matters 2017 Awareness Week this year is 8 – 14 May. Creating valuable opportunities to talk about dying, death and

bereavement, this year's Awareness Week focuses on 'What Can We Do'. It aims to encourage people to be more active in planning for dying and death, and in helping support others through times of grief.

Emma is giving an open talk at The Shakespeare Hospice (Stratford) on Tuesday 9 May. Get in touch for details. At Sun Rising, there'll be a couple of informal events: on Thursday 11 May, 10.30 -12.30, and Saturday 13 May, 10.30 -12.30. Come and have a chat, ask questions or introduce a friend to Sun Rising.

The Friends of Sun Rising | AGM All are welcome to our AGM, on Saturday 9 September, 2 – 5 pm. As well as an update on the work of the Friends, there'll be a presentation by Paul Leadbeater of the Stour Valley Wildlife Action Group, on barn owls. **RSVP** if you'd like to come.

Hedgehogs Although last summer's surveys didn't produce clear evidence of hedgehogs, they may be here. These prickly little mammals are heading for extinction unless we can do more to protect them. The nature reserve is an ideal habitat, but we can't accept rescued hedgehogs until we know that hedgehogs are already present. We'll continue to survey, but do let us know if you see one!

Moles Visitors will see a fair number of mole hills now at Sun Rising. Although the little heaps can look messy, their presence is an excellent sign, showing that the soil is



becoming healthier. And don't worry, their tunnels are seldom deeper than 6" to a foot.

The New Wildflower Meadow This summer we are aiming to create a new area of wildflower meadow down to the pond. To make the first areas of wildflowers we ploughed, harrowed and sowed a specialist seedmix for clay soil. For this new meadow, we are aiming to use seed from a local nature reserve. This means chain-harrowing the area to expose the soil, then spreading freshly-cut green hay. It's a time-sensitive process, but we expect it to happen in July. If you'd like to help spread the hay, let us know.

It may take longer to establish a rich wildflower meadow this way, but the plants that will come through will be wholly native to this landscape.

A Sun Rising Calendar for 2018 This year we are hoping to create a calendar of Sun Rising photographs for sale in aid of The Friends. We're keen to include your photos: submission **deadline is 31 March!**

We expect the price will be about £12. Let us know now if you're interested in placing an order. We'll only print the calendar if we have enough advance orders.

Cremation and Scattering of Ashes Although ashes can be interred at Sun Rising, the scattering of ashes is absolutely prohibited. It kills the wildflowers and promotes the growth of wasteland plants - such as stinging nettles. Ashes have the same effect as adding large quantities of artificial fertiliser, but the majority of wildflowers only thrive or survive where the soil is low in fertility.

If you see anyone doing this, please stop them, and tell them why, or at least let us know. We will have to remove the ashes and dispose of them.

Dogs at Sun Rising Occasionally you may see a dog at the nature reserve. A couple of dogs do have permits to visit specific graves, but walking a dog is not permitted. If you see someone with a dog, do feel free to ask if they have a permit. The only other dog allowed is Molly, the

gravedigger's dog. If you find what you think may be dog mess and are concerned, please let us know. It may just be foxes ...

Habitat Interpretation Boards This year we are placing new interpretation boards around the site. These will provide information about each different habitat and how we manage it. Until the end of April, the boards are temporary laminated designs. Let us have feedback about the idea, the locations, or the content - so far the response has been positive all round.

The permanent boards will go up over the summer. They'll be similar in quality to the interpretation board on the main path to the roundhouse. Our hope is that these will contribute to the value of the nature reserve as a source of both education and wonder.

Sowing and Planting on Graves It is possible for you to plant or sow seeds on graves, but only if what you put in are on our *Acceptable Plants* list. Everything else will be removed. Remember, we have packs of specially selected wildflower seeds both for woodland and meadow graves.

Do also remember that it can take many months for a grave to settle, during which time up to eight more barrows of earth may be put onto the grave! This may well bury anything put on too soon.

Feedback We are always very keen to hear from individuals and families who are connected with Sun Rising. If you have feedback that will help us improve our service and the site, please let us know.

Busy Times We know how frustrating it can be to arrive at Sun Rising only to find the car park is full. If you're aiming to visit on a particular day, feel free to call - we can let you know if a large funeral or memorial is taking place, or if the day will be quiet.

Mailing List If you'd like to receive this newsletter and other updates but are not on our mailing list, get in touch. To save paper, we prefer to send it out by email, but will do so by post for those who are not online. You're always free to print it if you'd like to.