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## KNOLLS WOOD ASSOCIATION WINTER 2006/7 NEWSLETTER

### *Knolls Wood Work Party, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February, 10 a.m. until 3pm*

The Knolls Wood Association and The Greensand Trust have arranged a work party on the 4<sup>th</sup> February and we invite anyone to come and give us a helping hand under the skilled supervision of John Creasey our local GST Ranger. Tasks to be done include planting 15 native trees and 5 trees unique to Knolls Wood where space in the tree canopy allows, clearing around the rare Golden Chestnut and clearing paths around the wood. It is hoped that the Redwood being planted will be a direct descendant of the original trees in the wood.

**The day will run from 10 a.m. till about 3 p.m. Any time you can spare would be appreciated. Please meet outside 55 Redwood at 10.a.m. or later in the woods. Refreshments will be provided.**

**STOP PRESS:** The recent storms brought down 3 trees. Good News – nobody was hurt and the KWA will ensure that these are replaced by appropriate and healthy saplings.

### **KWA Donations**

The KWA Committee wish to thank all of you who gave so generously to our recent request for donations. We raised £ 1,742.20, which we will ensure is spent on initiatives supporting our Management Plan (on [www.knollswood.com](http://www.knollswood.com) ) that will improve and preserve Knolls Wood, including ‘Tree Planting’, see the item above.

### **KWA Committee Members get trained**

In conjunction with The Greensand Trust and SBDC, basic first aid courses were held in October at Stockgrove Park for all volunteer groups within the area. Two KWA committee members, Jack Owens and Carol Banks, attended and both gained the very basics of first aid and met other volunteer groups. The full course costs were met by a grant awarded to The Greensand Trust for the training of volunteers.



## Britain's Smallest Bird in Knolls Wood

At any time of year in the wood, you may see a member (almost invariably only one) of the smallest species of bird in the UK, the goldcrest. It's likely to be high in one of the



coniferous trees, flitting around, always on the move searching for insects, occasionally doing a hummingbird impersonation by hovering for a second or two, wings whirring madly. It's only 9cm long and predominantly dull green on top, dull off-white underneath, so it's not always easy to identify, but it has a distinctive black-yellow-black sequence of stripes on its head, which you can usually pick out if the light is not too bad. Its call is a high-pitched 'see-see-see', rather like a long-tailed tit (currently appearing at a nut feeder near you) and its song is distinctly tweedly.

How to distinguish a goldcrest from a wren? The wren is brown and doesn't have any stripes on its head. It also tends to skulk around in a highly suspicious manner in the undergrowth, rather than flitting high in the trees.

The goldcrest is closely related to the rare firecrest, which has white stripes on its head as well as the black and yellow, but the nearest report of firecrests I've seen is from Wilstone Reservoir, Tring, so any sightings in Knolls Wood would be very exciting. Please let us know if you have seen one.

## Could you help us improve our website?

We would like to update and improve our KWA website. It needs to be more attractive, especially for youngsters, and we already have many ideas for how it could be improved. We are looking for a knowledgeable volunteer (MS FrontPage?) who would be willing to help us. If you could help, please contact: [clive@knollswood.com](mailto:clive@knollswood.com).

## Volunteers - we need YOUR help

The woods are important to us as residents and as an environmental asset. I'm sure you'll agree that living in such a unique and beautiful setting is a real privilege.... but easy for us all to take for granted! **Could you spare two hours to spare up to three times a year on occasional Sunday mornings, between 10 a.m. and 12, to help us plant new trees and assist in clearing up the woodlands?** The more hands the better. Why not make it a family occasion, bring the children and enjoy a fresh air work out in the woods?

*Please let us know if you might be willing by emailing [volunteers@knollswood.com](mailto:volunteers@knollswood.com).*