



# New Forest Friends of the Earth Newsletter



May/June 2012 No.162

## The Bee Campaign

Friends of the Earth's campaign, the 'Bee Cause', took off at the 'Greener



Living' Show last month. Our stall attracted a huge amount of interest, more than ever before, with people reading our display boards on bees, examining the homemade bee hive made by a worker at the National Park Authority, and signing postcard requests to David Cameron. These postcards called on him to support FoE's 'Bee

Cause' and commit to a National Bee Action Plan to save the bees. Exactly 100 postcards were signed.

Packets of 'bee-friendly' seeds of nectar-producing flowers were given out, and nearly all the leaflets were taken. Also popular were the bright yellow 'Bee Cause' badges, especially with children, and the small posters illustrating flowering plants that bees go for in spring and summer.

Complementing the display was a panel on Grass-Verge Cutting, about our campaign to persuade the council to cut the road verges less often and allow wildflowers to flourish – again, to help bees and other insects.

A flying start to the campaign...*Ann Vasilesco*

There was also a lot of interest, cards were signed and exchange of information recently at the Transition Greener Spring Fair at Priestlands School.

OUR NEXT VENUE will be on Saturday 16th June at the Steiner Education Centre in Ringwood.

The Waldorf School's Summer Fair - from 11.00 to 4.00 p.m.

EXTRA HELP NEEDED. PLEASE CONTACT Penny Tel: (01425) 621921.

Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian scientist, in 1923, predicted that in 80 to 100 years, bees would disappear.

Steiner said: “The mechanization of beekeeping and industrialization will eventually destroy beekeeping.”

## **Bayer**

The Catastrophic demise of bee colonies could put our whole food chain in danger and billions of bees are dying, threatening our crops and food. But, if *Bayer* stops selling one group of pesticides, we could, and hopefully would save bees from extinction.

Four European countries have begun banning these poisons, and some bee populations are already recovering. But *Bayer*, the largest producer, has lobbied hard to keep them on the market.

A petition aimed to influence the Bayer shareholders before their meeting last month was sent but unfortunately they still voted to keep selling neonicotinoid pesticides. However the fight doesn't end there and once a million signatures are reached (they're nearly there so you could be the one to push it over!) The petition will be delivered to the board.

You can sign the petition [here](#) and please do forward this to anyone you feel might be interested. *June*

# Hampshire Networking Day 17th March

Ann Vasilescu and I spent an interesting day at Emsworth (nr Havant) with members of 4 other Hampshire FoE groups.

Led by Nikki Packham, South East Region Network Developer, there was so much information to be exchanged and to take in, in 5hrs, that the short lunch break was very welcome.

FOE has had a series of wins against the government's decision to reduce solar panel subsidies, and plans to step up the pressure to secure cleaner energy sourcing.

The group had an update on the Navitus project, a major wind farm off our local coast. In principle Hampshire FoE supports wind energy and will ask more local MPs to support the proposal. We believe that any issues of concern with the project can be resolved through consultation and will keep our position under review.

Turning to bees, FOE plans to join campaigners in other organisations pressing for action to reverse the potentially disastrous decline in bee populations. FoE will be working to encourage bee friendly farming by reducing insecticide and herbicide use via government directives; ensure that planning policies include bees and biodiversity; encourage domestic bee friendly planting.

Members present who were not familiar with [www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs) were given a training session. (I think this was just to encourage them to sign up, which is no commitment to anything.)

It was impressed on us that groups need good up-to-date web sites, facebook pages etc. like those of Havant FoE and the Hampshire Network [www.hantsfoenet.org.uk](http://www.hantsfoenet.org.uk) to the latter we should also submit our news. *Enid*

## Methane release after retreat of Arctic sea ice

Methane is one of the most potent greenhouse gases, far more so than carbon dioxide. Large plumes of methane were known to be released from the sea bed in the shallow seas off Siberia. But a new source has recently been discovered, this time in areas of the Arctic where the sea ice has melted or where there are cracks in it. The concern is that a feedback mechanism may

set in where rising temperature in the Arctic cause's sea ice to melt, releasing methane in the atmosphere which in turn acts as a greenhouse gas trapping the sun's heat and causing further ice melting.

Source: The Independent, 23.04.12, p.11

## Flatulence

From a post on: [climate change and palaeoclimatology](#)

There is a widespread belief that the enlargement of domesticated ruminant herds, mainly cattle, goats and sheep, may have had some effect on recent climate: their enteric fermentation of grass cellulose generates methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. Livestock produce an estimated 80 million metric tons of methane annually, accounting for about 28% of anthropogenic methane emissions. Livestock aren't the only methane emitting ruminants: giraffe; bison; yaks; water buffalo; deer; camels (including llamas and alpacas); and antelope. Elephants are not so efficient, but they do break wind a great deal. An adult elephant emits about half a ton of methane annually; enough to run a car 20 miles per day; on the school run for instance.



## The Native Black Honey Bee

*The Guardian 18th April 2012 with information from Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders' Association (Bibba)*

This bee, feared to have died out, in all but the remote reaches of northern Britain, has been found in North Wales, East Anglia and as far south as West Sussex. Black bees are much darker and have evolved thicker, longer hair and a

larger body than their golden-coloured, southern European cousins, in order to keep them warm in cooler climates. This makes them less susceptible to the vagaries of British weather, which is thought to be one of the reasons for a reduction in honeybee colonies by up to 30% in recent years

There is a lot of anecdotal evidence among our 300 members that the survival rate is higher for black honeybees. They are hardier and have

smaller populations going into winter, so they need less food to survive, and they also have fewer mouths to feed during a cold spring snap. "What is needed now is a large-scale queen-rearing programme on a commercial scale. Otherwise it will still be easier for beekeepers in Britain to get Italian honeybees exported from New Zealand than it is to buy native black bees. In Britain, southern European honeybees filled the void after the native honeybee was practically wiped out by a virus 100 years ago. Bibba has long argued that pure-race native bees are desirable for biodiversity, and in 1997 began a project to conserve the black bee. Yet of the 250,000 hives across the UK today, less than 1% are still likely to house black bees.

Poor weather, parasites, pesticides, disease and starvation have all been implicated in honeybee deaths. The rate of colony loss has slowed. Honeybee populations declined by 13.6% over the winter of 2010/11. Four years previously, one in three hives was wiped out.

The government has been criticised for not doing more to improve stocks of native bees. A Defra spokesperson said: "This is really promising news for the British black bee. Bees are vital to our food production and environment, so we're supporting beekeepers by providing advice and funding research on bee health. In addition, we're working with beekeeping groups on a 10-year plan to protect and improve the health of honeybees."

## **WWF's What Wood You Choose? Campaign!**

We've had fantastic support helping convince local councils to pledge to buy sustainable timber. This is great news for the world's forests and the millions of people and species that depend on them!

Since March 2011, 39 local authorities in the UK have made a pledge with us. They've promised they'll make sure the timber they use in your community doesn't support illegal logging or threaten forests, wildlife and people in countries like Indonesia and in the Congo Basin.

It's a really encouraging result –Lots of councils got in touch with us after receiving your letters about improving their timber-buying policies. They've been asking for our advice about how to make sure they're not supporting unsustainable logging. And they've been training their staff in good practices. Some councils have committed to exclusively sourcing and using FSC wood and timber products. That means they come with assurances to

show they're from well managed forests.

This proves that **councils listen to you**, their local voters, and that your action does influence the way they source wood and timber products for your community. *WWF-UK forests campaign manager*

## Rio+20

A lot is at stake as world leaders meet again in Brazil for the 'Rio+20' anniversary summit. We need them to deliver real progress towards global sustainable development.

So, as part of Stop Climate Chaos, we're organising the Rio Connection, a chance to make sure our government does the right thing at Rio+20.

You can take part in the Rio Connection.

Getting involved is as simple as writing to your MP or signing up to a local event with him and asking him to show his support for action on climate change by backing our Rio Declaration to fight for a clean, sustainable future for all. *Christian Aid*

## Apple Pressing

Good news. The Ashurst & Colbury Community Group were successful in their Strategic Development Fund bid for some community apple pressing kit..... The kit will comprise two presses (one large and one small) plus fruit crushers and all the paraphernalia that is needed to pick apples and then turn them into lovely fresh juice. It will be available to groups and individuals so you can start thinking about having an event etc come apple harvest time. More details as the project develops.....and many thanks to the National Park Authority for agreeing to the idea!

## Snippets

1. Shortages of a handful of rare minerals could slow the growth of the burgeoning renewable energy industries and affect countries' chances of limiting greenhouse gas emissions, business leaders were told at the World Economic Forum in Davos. These are widely used in the manufacture of wind-turbines, solar panels, electric car batteries and energy efficient light bulbs. 95% of these "rare earths" are found in China which has strict export

quotas. More sources have recently been found around Hawaii but as yet these are not being mined so the position for the next few years is critical.

2. In 2010, Member States of the European Union agreed to consult a group of experts on the development of the Union's Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) specific to marine litter, in part to consider the sorts of targets that should be set for 2020. The final report of the group has just been published.

"This report makes a strong case for setting practical marine litter reduction targets for 2020. The problem of marine litter and particularly plastic pollution in our seas is growing and is a major concern for marine wildlife, marine industries, coastal communities and human health. Member States must take this advice on board and set out ambitious marine litter reduction targets for 2020," said Chris Carroll of Seas at Risk.

Member States now have 6 months to act on this advice and set ambitious reduction targets in order to combat this growing problem.

3. The World Bank has established a partnership to double marine protected areas and rebuild fish stocks. The Global Partnership for Oceans includes governments, NGOs scientists and businesses. It is aiming to raise \$1.5bn. to do this. *The Guardian*

4. If we and the rest of the back-boned animals were to disappear overnight, the rest of the world would get on pretty well. But if the invertebrates were to disappear, the world's ecosystems would collapse. David Attenborough (*from Gill Preston*)

5. In the UK, we're consuming 3 times our fair share of the planet's natural resources. And if we don't change our lifestyles, by 2030 we will need 50% more food, 45% more energy and 30% more water than we do today.

6. The average restaurant discards 22 tonnes of food annually, according to a 2010 investigation, amounting to 600,000 tonnes per year in the UK. About a third of this amount is the food left uneaten on customer's plates, indicating that serving sizes are excessive. *Centre of Alternative Technology*  
Should diners choose their own size portions?

## *"A Corruption of Governance?"*

This report was launched in Parliament at the end of January with support from a cross-party group of MPs. The report exposes how Parliament's decisions in favour of new nuclear power have been made based on false evidence.

The report has been published by our friends at The Association for the Conservation of Energy, and Unlock Democracy. The report reveals that information presented to MPs on future electricity demand, the potential for demand reduction and the relative cost effectiveness of new nuclear generation has been absent, misused or flawed. This has resulted in a skewing of energy policy towards large centralised energy infrastructure, including nuclear, at the expense of demand reduction, the most cost effective policy option, and decentralised energy.

The conclusion of the report, and of the debate held at the Parliamentary launch, was that the issue must be reopened and the decision to support new nuclear power be reconsidered.

## **The Future of Food**

Snippets from John Vidal's article in the Guardian

### **The Problem**

By 2050 there are likely to be 2.5 billion extra hungry mouths to feed.

There is little more land that can be used for growing food.

Much of the world faces growing water shortages.

Cattle now occupy nearly ¼ of all cultivatable land and growing crops for animal feed takes up another 25%.

In the US nearly 70% of grain and cereals grown is now fed to farm animals.

### **Possible Answers:**

**Algae Farms:** Algae could feed millions of farm animals, provide fertilizers or produce algae oil to replace the present biofuels crops thus freeing up

land for growing food for humans. In farms oil could produce 22-45 thousand litres of oil compared with 1600 per acre of biofuels from maize, soya etc. Farms can be on land unsuitable for agriculture.

**Artificial Meat:** edible tissue grown from stem cells is now being developed in Europe but research is still in its early stages.

**New crops:** eg 'green super rice' has been developed in China – it had more seeds per head, is resistant to droughts, salty water, disease and insects. Much money has gone into GM research but it has not lived up to its promises.

**Desert greening:** Research is being done in seawater greenhouses which operate on a similar system to the water cycle - heated seawater evaporates into clouds which condense as rain. These greenhouses have been shown to work and this year a large-scale pilot project backed by Norway is being built in Jordan. Other projects are also being mooted including the Great Green Wall of a tree belt 15km wide right across Africa to stop the desert spreading and creating a micro climate..

**Insects:** Not only are many bugs rich in protein, low in fat and cholesterol and high in calcium and iron. The creatures are far better at converting biomass into 'meat' than any of our present livestock. They emit fewer greenhouse gases and can thrive on paper, algae and industrial waste. Farms can exist on arid land.

## Plastics

According to PlasticsEurope, the European Trade Association for plastics manufacturers 265 million tonnes of plastic are produced globally each year. In the UK about 2/3 of this is for packaging; globally this would translate to 170 million tonnes of plastics created to be disposed of after one use. Even at the EU's recycling rate of 33% more than 113 million tonnes would end up in landfill, being burned or cluttering up the environment.

Japan in 2010 recycled 77% of plastics waste as more and more plastics articles can be recycled. Households now, since 1997, have to separate plastic waste.

When considering how to deal with plastic waste we have to consider the alternatives and they are not unfortunately all positive. An Austria based environmental consultancy has calculated that replacing plastic with paper, card, tin or glass would increase the mass of packaging 3.6times, it would take double the energy to make and produce 2.7 times more greenhouse gases. Food would also deteriorate faster if not wrapped in plastic. A surprising point made by FoE is that plastic buried in landfill is a way of sequestering carbon!

**What then is the way forward?**

## **Waste**

Making everything we buy and use is putting the earth under dangerous strain - from using up natural resources like water and minerals to causing toxic pollution.

FoE is currently on the lookout for products and companies that profit at the planet's expense.

Can you think of stuff that:

Seems to be built to break, Uses more materials than its rivals, is rumoured to have big behind-the-scenes costs e.g. is linked to pollution or using up too much land or water to produce.

You will have heard that parts of the country are still in a state of drought. This highlights how important it is to be careful in our use of natural resources like **water**. Your ideas will help our work to make sure the things we buy don't come at the expense of the people or environment.

Please send in your ideas to FoE Head Office.

### **NEEDED**

\*MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

\*TREASURER

\*NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Do consider whether this is where you could invest your time.

We will soon be planning for the **New Forest Show**. Would you like to be part of the team on our stand and have a free entry to the Show?

## Diary Dates

### PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING EVENTS

at Brockenhurst Village Hall 7.30 p.m.

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> June** talk on **wild bees and how to favour them** by Jonathan Oakley

**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> October** at the Brockenhurst Village Hall 7.30 p.m.  
Amy Dale from the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust will be our public speaker, talking about 'Marine Conservation in the Solent'. The Trust has been involved as stakeholders in the process of setting up the new Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) through the new Marine & Coastal Access Act over the last couple of years and instrumental in getting the Act put into place initially. Some very significant decisions will have been made at government level by October. Amy will provide an update on the new marine conservation legislation and how it is being adhered to. However, her discussion will focus on the Marine Conservation Zones.

There will also be information from Marinet, the voluntary network of FOE Local Groups tasked with managing marine conservation issues for national FOE. NFFOE group is a member of Marinet, but individuals and non-FOE organisations are welcomed. [www.marinet.org.uk](http://www.marinet.org.uk)

Monday June 11<sup>th</sup> Next meeting at 4, Daniells Close, Lymington 2.30-4.30pm

Environmental talks Wednesdays in June and July at CET's Out Of Town Centre, Beaulieu at 7.30 - cost £4 (£3 for members) See CET's website for details.

24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> July New Forest Show

## COMMITTEE

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