

Latest news from the Group

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Upper Rother & Dudwell Farm Cluster - Newsletter

September 2020

Welcome to Autumn...

Hello from the High Weald AONB team! We've had a very busy Summer developing - and delivering - a programme of 'virtual' events instead of our usual gatherings. Everyone has adapted brilliantly to this brave new way of working, and we look forward to seeing you all more often over the next couple of months.

As always, please contact [Christine](#) or [Ross](#) if you have any queries about the items below, or if we can support you in any other way.

Upcoming events and training

Ponds for wildlife and farming, online Zoom event, 17 September: A virtual 'visit' to a typical wooded farm pond at Egypt House Farm to discuss how to evaluate a pond, maximise its wildlife habitat and avoid simple mistakes. [Find out more and book your place on the webinar.](#)

There are lots more events in the pipeline for October and beyond including Deer Management and Soil Health, so keep your eyes peeled for further updates very soon...

Help increase barn owl numbers in the High Weald



Ross is leading this project which is being facilitated by a grant of £7,500 from Sussex Lund.

Recent research has shown that creating more nesting sites is the best way to protect the species, so the aim is to have at least one Barn Owl box every 2km along the Rother and Dudwell Valley inside the Farm Cluster. The project will install more than 30 boxes with five years of ongoing surveying and training in how to manage land for this beautiful bird.

Thanks to everyone who has already signed up to take part; if you are interested in having a barn owl box installed on your land, [please contact Ross](#) asap.

New webpage on managing road verges for wildlife

Wildflower verges are part of the High Weald's natural beauty and often a refuge for wildlife that has disappeared elsewhere.

The High Weald AONB Partnership does not manage road verges but we receive many enquiries from the public about mowing regimes, so we have put together some information and guidance about different types of verges and how they should be managed; [visit the page and learn more.](#)



We are planning a future webinar for High Weald communities interested in the management of wildflower verges; [please drop us a line if this is something you would be interested in.](#)

CS Mid-tier applications for 2021

Christine and Ross have been working hard on Mid-tier endorsements for the Farm Cluster members going into Countryside Stewardship; more than in any previous year, a trend reflected across the country.

Don't forget, one of the benefits of being a Farm Cluster member is a 20% uplift on points if we endorse your application, so if you're thinking about entering Mid-tier next year and want some free advice, [please get in touch](#).

Other news

High Weald Walking Festival 2020: This year's Festival is being run as a 'self-guided' event, with [50 downloadable walk routes available on the website](#). Use the interactive map to find a walk near you, download the PDF route guide and explore this beautiful historic landscape safely, and at your own pace. Visit www.highwealdwalks.org to join in the fun!



Agricology survey: Agricology has been awarded a DEFRA ELM Test in partnership with the University of Reading to research how effective videos and podcasts are as tools to learn about farming practices. As part of this study they are conducting a survey for farmers to understand their preferences and experiences of using these tools. [All participants will be entered in to a draw to win Amazon voucher of up to £100 - complete the survey here.](#)

Niels Corfield online training courses: Learn all about soil health and regenerative farming this Autumn with [Niels Corfield's specialist training courses for farmers, growers & land managers](#). Courses focus on soil health and include specific courses for pasture, arable and horticulture as well as regenerative grazing and whole farm planning. Special offer of 15% discount for all High Weald AONB Farm Cluster members using discount code: HighWealdAONB-Aut15. Find out more and book [HERE](#).

About

The Upper Rother and Dudwell Farm Cluster helps farmers, foresters and other land managers work together to improve farm profitability and benefit soil, water, wildlife and historic features not just on their individual farms, but across the area. It has over 60 members covering over 3,500ha. [View map](#)

The Cluster is helped by the High Weald AONB Partnership with financial support from Natural England's Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund, the Environment Agency (Giant Hogweed control), and the Woodland Trust (deer management).

For more information, visit the Farm Cluster page on www.highweald.org.



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional Development Fund



Useful links

[The Upper Rother & Dudwell Farm Cluster](#)
[Farm Cluster Area & Members Map](#)
[Sussex Lund](#)
[Landscape Enhancement Initiative](#)

More about the area

[Where is it?](#)
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