

Newsletter No. 49 – September 2017

Ken Hoy memorial bench

At the end of July, invited guests joined the Friends for the unveiling of a memorial bench dedicated to Ken Hoy, Suntrap's founder and first Headteacher. Guests included Councillor Peter Herrington, LBWF, Councillor David Stallan, Chairman of Epping Forest District Council, Caroline Haines who sits on the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, City of London as well as many past Suntrap staff, friends, teachers and members of Ken's family. Kerry Rolison, Suntrap's current Head made a short speech in which she spoke about Ken's pivotal and inspirational role in founding Suntrap. She commended LBWF for its continuing support for the Centre at a time when many others around the country have been closed. She thanked Suntrap staff past and present for the many years of hard work teaching children in and about the forest. Kerry then reminded everyone that as each generation of children visit Suntrap, they develop a deeper understanding of the forest, helping to foster a love of this unique natural resource so close to London. She then invited Councillors Herrington and Stallan to untie the ribbon on the memorial bench.

The bench has been placed in the new wild flower meadow.



Mrs Sue Herrington, Kerry Rolison, Head of Suntrap, Cllr Peter Herrington LBWF, Cllr David Stallan EFDC.

Congratulations from Sir David Attenborough

Congratulations to the Staff of Suntrap and the London Borough of Waltham Forest on fifty years of inspiring children with a love of nature and a respect for the natural world.

Best wishes
David Attenborough

from David Attenborough

At the bench unveiling Sue McKinley, ex-member of staff and a member of the Friends of Suntrap read out a letter she had received from legendary environmentalist and broadcaster Sir David Attenborough congratulating Suntrap on its work over the past 50 years;

"Congratulations to the staff of Suntrap the London Borough of Waltham Forest on fifty years of inspiring children with a love of nature and a respect for the natural world.

Best wishes

David Attenborough"

It was a real thrill to receive this message of support.

New animals



Our animal collection has grown with the arrival of a 5 month old Ancona cockerel given to Suntrap by a family which couldn't keep him. Once he is fully grown he should help to keep the hens together in a flock which will keep them safe from the local fox population when out in the grounds.

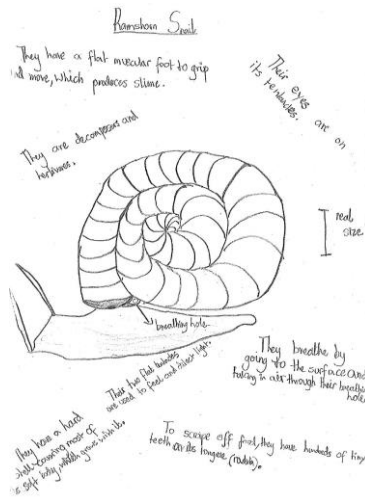
We have also acquired a new reptile to add to our collection - a Russian tortoise. Staff

worked hard to make her a lovely new enclosure ready for the new school year.



All the Suntrap animals help children and families learn to care for and respect living things when they are shown how to handle them by staff. With the range of animals we have, children can also learn about the different characteristics of each animal group, as well as animal adaptation and food chains. Don't forget you can meet all the animals at Open Day on 14th Oct 1-5pm.

A review of summer



A view of the camp field through the gate. A ramshorn snail drawn by a 10 year old pond dipper. Successfully navigating the orienteering route in the forest. Nineteen classes camped at Suntrap during summer term (and five have done so in September). The camping groups undertake a great variety of activities including pond dipping, orienteering, natural art, team challenges, bushcraft and many more. Summer is also a very busy time for day visits too with staff teaching everything from Bear Hunt to A' level ecology.



Then during the summer holidays 285 free places were offered on bushcraft and animal academy courses for teenagers from Waltham Forest thanks to the borough's free holiday activity programme. The programme also provided 13 family animal outreach sessions at schools throughout the borough.



Clockwise from above: A happy group who successfully followed a trail through the forest to find some hidden "treasure". Holding the snake on a family animal outreach session. Not everyone was brave enough to hold the spiny stick insect. These insect homes, stuffed with twigs and straw, were made by this group to put in their own gardens to provide a place for ladybirds and lacewings to hibernate.



Be Wild Forest Saturday Club

The Be Wild Club continues to meet every second Saturday of the month from 10-1pm for children aged 5-11 (under eights must be accompanied by a parent/carer).

In June the club had fun finding out about plants in the forest and then making some elder bracelets, pounded plants to make plant prints on bandanas and made plant bookmarks.

July was campfire cooking – including pancakes.

In August the group took nets out into the meadows in the forest to find out which insects live amongst the grasses and wild flowers.

Then in September they learnt how to tie knots to make a simple bivouac camp with tarpaulins, before picking apples to make a tasty stewed apple snack on small camp stoves.

The next Be Wild Club is on Saturday 11th November (no club in October as it is Suntrap's 50th anniversary open day) and there are places available. Please contact Suntrap to book your place for some forest fun.



A plant bookmark.



From left to right. Plant prints on a bandana. Leaf rubbings in the forest. Delicious pancakes cooked on the fire. Catching insects in a forest meadow. Learning the art of knot tying in true Ray Mears' style.

Suntrap Squirrels



Suntrap Squirrels Pre-school Club meet on the last Wednesday of each month, 10:00-12:30pm. The Squirrels club is for ages 2-5yrs, but younger siblings are welcome at no charge.

Based on the Forest School model, sessions take place in the Forest; weaving together structured activities and resourced free-play. While following the interests of the children, each session is designed to develop vital life skills in a fun and engaging way. Places available; please contact Suntrap to book.

The Squirrels have enjoyed: paddling, inventing & testing, building, creating, balancing, swinging and sharing.



Family Pond Dipping



Families had fun in June discovering the animals which live in our ponds.

Children had the chance to use magnifiers to see some of the smaller creatures swimming in the water.

It was such a lovely day some families brought a picnic and stayed on after the event to enjoy more time in the grounds.



Bat and moth night



On 15th September we ran our first ever bat and moth night. Lots of families came with torches to join volunteers and staff on a walk with bat detectors around the camping field pond, before heading to the lights in the camping shelter which were attracting the moths.

There was great excitement every time the detectors picked up a bat, even though they



were difficult to see in the dark. The moths however were much easier to spot, as they were drawn to the lights. The bat detectors picked up the frequencies for pipistrelles and Daubenton's. Moths seen included, square-spot rustic, brimstone, common wainscot and snout. Thanks to Martin McCleary who brought all the equipment for the moth trapping and for his great expertise which he so happily shared with the families.

Upcoming Friends of Suntrap family events

50th Anniversary Suntrap Open Day Saturday 14th October 1-5pm (drop-in)

Free entry and a small charge for some activities.

£3 for parking or free shuttle bus to and from Chingford Station (leaving Chingford Station at 12.50pm, 1.40pm & 2.25pm and leaving Suntrap at 3.15pm, 4.30pm & 5pm)

Suntrap's annual open day where you can meet the animals, pond dip, peer down microscopes, complete a map trail, have a go on low ropes course, enjoy some eco craft activities, stroll through the forest on a guided walk, look at our exhibitions or enjoy some light refreshments.

Lantern Making, Bonfire and Burgers Saturday 25th November 2017 4-7pm

BOOKING ESSENTIAL limited availability £7 per person

Make your own lantern which will light your way to the bonfire in the grounds of Suntrap. Enjoy a warm drink and burger round the fire before you finish off with toasted marshmallows.



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