

COVE BROOK GREENWAY GROUP NEWSLETTER



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EVENTS UPDATE

Our Wildlife Day was enjoyed by some of the local children, most of whom spent the whole day with us, making bird boxes, bug hotels, and plastic bag kites as well as bug hunting and brook dipping. We were lucky with the weather, which is more than could be said for some of our work party days; one of them had to be cancelled. However, the sun eventually shined on us and we had a very successful day grass cutting at Birchbrook Reserve.

Among other things, three of our members have been on a Pond Management Course, there has been another tour of TAG Airport and we are delighted to have an article explaining the environmental work being carried out on the site. Altogether a productive few months.

Note: *If we have enough interest we will be organising another tour of TAG. If you would like to see for yourself, e-mail us on hebbert.genis@btinternet.com or call 01252 512634.*

Halloween Quiz Night



Tuesday 28th October
7.30 pm
Blunden Hall
Blunden Rd, Cove



HALLOWEEN QUIZ NIGHT



Come and join us for a General Knowledge Quiz Night, on Tuesday 28th October, at Blunden Hall, starting at 7.30 pm. All are welcome.

You don't need to be Brain of Britain: just come along and have fun. Come with friends or on your own, and join others to make up teams of four. There will be a raffle and entry is a mere £2 per person, including refreshments. Great value and a fun evening. Don't miss it! It's got to be better than staying at home watching Television.

Please e-mail or call to book if possible, on hebbert.genis@btinternet.com or call 01252 512634, or take a chance and just turn up on the night.

GREEN & GLOBAL DAY

With the recent credit crunch it's always good to find something free and there's something at Green & Global for all the family.



Visit the Princes Hall in Aldershot on Sat 5th October between 11 am and 4.30 pm and find out more about local wildlife from BBC's One Show presenter Ellie Harrison, save money (*and the planet*) at the Energy Zone or try the craft activities.

For more information try the following website: <http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk> and click on the Green & Global frog.

PROTECTING COVE BROOK

By Miles H Thomas, Environment Manager, TAG Farnborough Airport Ltd



The Cove Brook rises from within Eelmoor Marsh and enters the TAG Farnborough Airport site from the adjacent QinetiQ site, on the north western boundary of the airfield. From this location it flows through the site, for a length of approximately 1km, to the most northern boundary.



Historically the Cove Brook was directed through a pipe for much of the airport site. However, when TAG took over the development, it was decided that, for increased flood capacity and improved ecology, the brook should be opened up into a specifically designed culvert. To maintain a more natural ecosystem, only indigenous flora was established along the banks of the brook with minimal maintenance, allowing for a more natural development to occur.

Due to the “controlled water” status of the Cove Brook and the requirement to discharge surface water runoff from the airport site, a total of six Discharge Consents were applied for by TAG and granted by the Environment Agency. In essence these consents state that all discharges to the Cove Brook must be from surface water drainage only and must be free of polluting substances.

To ensure that the surface drainage (storm water) is free from pollutants there are a number of systems in place at Farnborough Airport. Installed across the site are a total of twenty oil interceptor/separator units (one of which serves a foul water drain). Apron, taxi-way, runway and car park drainage is directed through the network of interceptors which, through a system of pipes, filters and chambers, remove hydrocarbon type pollutants from the drainage waters before discharge in to the Brook. Interceptors are serviced regularly with any collected pollutants removed, by tanker, for treatment at an appropriate registered waste depot.

The twentieth interceptor is located in the compound on the north side of Elles Road. Cove Brook exits Farnborough Airport via this compound and, through the use of two control valves, can be steered to flow directly through this large scale interceptor as a final level of protection.

To meet contingency requirements, the entire site drainage network, which is segmented by valves, is divided in to a number of discrete zones, each with its own individual actions that are to be taken should a spill occur in a given area. These actions are promulgated to all staff on site and provide details of the specific valves that should be closed in the event of a spill. In high risk areas there are also underground containment tanks installed, into which contaminated drainage can be directed for safe storage before removal by tanker to a registered treatment facility.

Of course, the best way to protect against pollutants reaching the brook is to stop them from reaching the drainage system in the first place. To ensure this initial action can be implemented, members of staff who work on the apron and other airside areas are provided with specialised spill equipment that can be used to make an early “first aid” response to any spill or leakage. TAG has also invested in a spill-vac which can clean up oil and fuel spills quickly and therefore greatly reduce risk to surface drains.

De-icer (glycol), required for ensuring runway and taxiway surfaces meet safety requirements in snow or icy conditions,



also requires regulation and specific action during its use, as it can pollute natural water systems. To deal with de-icer, TAG has installed two vertical reed bed filtration systems on site, one each to serve the eastern and western ends of the site respectively.

Drainage lines from the runways and taxiways can be halted at the site of the reed beds using the valve network, with all waters being held in adjacent balancing ponds.

The reeds, *Phragmites australis* (pictured left) create a highly oxygenated environment within the root system (rhizosphere). This results in an increased level of micro-organism activity which, in turn, accelerates the breakdown of the de-icer fluid. Once dissolved oxygen levels have returned to an appropriate level (as directed by the Environment Agency), the water is released for discharge. All applications of de-icer are notified to the Environment Agency.

This article is by no means an exhaustive account of all the measures that are in place to protect the Cove Brook as there is much environmental legislation that governs other issues concerning control of pollution to controlled waters, however, it serves as an insight into TAG's level of commitment to minimising the effect of airport operations on the surrounding environment and some of the installations that form a part of mitigation management.

MISTLE OR SONG THRUSH — THAT IS THE QUESTION

by Franc Hall

An amateurish guide on how to distinguish between our two, similar, resident thrushes.

The Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*) – its name derived from its habit of eating Mistletoe berries, is the tallest European Thrush at 27cm (10½”). The upper parts, and slightly longer tail, are greyish brown in colour, whilst its under parts are a more creamy white with random wedge-shaped black spots. In flight it appears slightly larger than the Song Thrush and can be distinguished by its brilliant white under wings. Open fields and parkland, usually surrounded by tall trees is where you will find this bird. Feeding upon insects, worms and berries (in winter) plucking them from the trees and bushes, in competition with its occasional winter visiting cousins the Fieldfare and Redwing. Its gait is more upright and it hops rather than runs. It has a loud chattering alarm call, similar to but less harsh than the Jay, . It is the “town crier” of song birds, with a loud, but short repetitive song with flute like qualities, similar to the Blackbird, often uttered from the tallest tree, even during a gale – hence its nickname of “Storm Cock”.



Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*) is a slightly smaller bird at 23cm (9”) and more equal in appearance. It is more olive brown in colour over its upper body with underparts of more regular, dark brown, V-shaped spots on a whiter background. The flight pattern is more direct than the Mistle thrush and displays orange-buff patches on its under wings. Whilst it frequents similar habitats to the Mistle, its preference is for less open garden areas. Prior to its recent decline, it was a regular visitor at the bird table. A much shyer bird, it feeds mainly on insects and worms, specializing in snails, which it smashes against a stone in order to remove the shell as well as berries from the ground in winter. It can be recognised by its running gait, stopping frequently with its head on one side to spot (or maybe hear) its next victim. Its alarm call, to my ear, sounds like “stip stip” or “tu tu”. An accomplished singer with an exuberant repetitive style, including a few harsh notes, this bird has a talent for mimicking the cries of other song birds and can be heard singing throughout the year, mostly early morning or late evening.



I hope my attempts at clarification are helpful - happy twitching.



Cove Brook

GREENWAY



Hi,
I'm
Pi

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PI'S PERSPECTIVE

Hi, I'm Pi the new dog on the Brook. After lots of time in my own place I now share my life with two humans in Cove.

Walking by the brook is great, there are lots of dogs about. We race round and round, find interesting smells, paddle in the brook and get lots of mud all over us. Lovely! But, when we get home, either Mum or Dad wash it all off!

My humans keep counting feathery floating things in the water that make quacking noises and I heard them say "18, that's amazing". I'm not allowed to chase the things that fly over the brook; just as well I suppose, I can't catch them anyway.

Aren't squirrels weird. One moment I'm right behind them, the next they've gone and there's a tree in my way. We're getting up in the dark now so I have something new to investigate in the mornings. Mum tells me it's a fox, it certainly smells different.

One fine day recently we went over the brook at Houseman Road and heard a loud cracking noise; it made me jump. Mum went over to a big tree and looked up. She stood there for a while listening and then ran away from the tree fast, I gave chase, there was a crash and the tree was falling on my head! Luckily neither of us was hurt.

When we're out for a walk we find lots of bits on the ground, one of which cut my paw. Now Mum stamps on any others and takes them home to put in the big blue box that I can't get into. One thing really puzzles me, though; every time I do a poo they are right behind me picking it up, very strange

Sorry, must rush – dinner's waiting, but I'll be back to tell you all about what my humans and I find in and around the brook in the next Newsletter.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

All volunteers welcome at Work Parties. Children **MUST** be accompanied by a responsible adult.

EVENTS		
Date	Time	Subject
Sun 5 th Oct	11.00 am to 4.30 pm	GREEN & GLOBAL FUN DAY A fun packed day of green themed activities and entertainment Princes Hall, Aldershot ENTRY FREE!
Tues 28 th Oct	7.30 pm	HALLOWEEN QUIZ NIGHT Have some fun and test your knowledge at our Quiz Night. Refreshment and Raffle Entry £2,00 per person All Welcome
WORK PARTIES		
Sat 11 th Oct	10.00 am	LITTER PICK AND RUBBISH CLEARANCE Gloves, black bags and litter pickers provided Meet at: Footbridge to Cheyne Way, off Anglesey Ave & Mayfield
Sat 8 th Nov	10.00 am	LITTER PICK AND RUBBISH CLEARANCE Gloves, black bags and litter pickers provided Meet at: Mayfield Road Bridge
Sat 13 th Dec	10.00 am	CHRISTMAS SPARKLE LITTER PICK The last push of the year to get the Brook looking really good. Don't miss the hot drinks and mince pies. Meet at: Houseman Rd footbridge, off Giffard Drive