

The Upper Rother & Dudwell Farm Cluster



NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2017

New name for the Group.

We are now a FARM CLUSTER

For a while we have all been struggling with the term Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund, I think you will agree it is a bit of a tongue twister. Recently we found that other groups around the country have started to call themselves Farm Clusters. We feel this is a good idea as it makes it much easier to say in general conversation. This does not affect your agreement, it just helps our communication.

Recent Events:

Sadly, we had to cancel the trip to the Millennium Seed Bank to explore the value of historic seed sources as there was not enough interest to run it.



We also had to cancel the Deer Impact Workshop due to horrible weather but we will be running it on the 10th January at 8:30 am at Darwell Wood. Please get in touch and book on if you are interested, more details at the end of the newsletter.

Countryside Stewardship things to think about:

- Requests for paper applications for Mid Tier can be made from 15 January. The final date to request a paper application form is 31 May 2018. All paper applications must be received by 31 July 2018.
- There is a new form for options designed to reduce the risk of runoff and soil erosion from fields and should be included in any new applications for Countryside Stewardship (CS).
- Also, for those of you applying for Mid Tier CS, there are some new options for **very low input grasslands** that have been moved from High Tier.
- Don't forget we are here to help you with your CS applications.

Sussex LUND 2018 opens on 19th February and closes 15th April.

If you would like to know more about this great scheme give us a call ASAP in the New Year. Remember that you will need to have quotes ready for an application, so start planning now.

More info at:

www.highweald.org//look-after/sussex-lund.html



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Sub-cluster Farm Visits:

Over the next few months Ross will be getting in touch to set up sub-cluster visits. This is a chance for 3-5 neighbouring properties to talk about environmental assets and how these can be enhanced together. These visits will aim to put you in a better position to tap into agri-environment schemes post-Brexit. Ross will be bringing site specific maps, detailing historic land use, and other recorded site information. So please keep an eye out for contact from him.



Natural Flood Management:

Ross recently went to a workshop run by the South East Rivers Trust. From this meeting it was clear that there is a big push to put more woody debris in rivers and streams, and to increase the “roughness” of the ground within the river catchments. The idea is that this will slow down the water getting to the rivers to reduce the chance of flooding.



Figure 2.28. An in-stream structure, viewed with a wooden stake, in the Polking Burn catchment, North Yorkshire (© Farm2 Research).



Figure 2.33. A washland in the Belford Burn catchment, Northumberland (© Newcastle University).

Images taken from Natural Flood Management Handbook by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency

So, if you are interested in know what you could be doing on your land, get in touch and we can help.

Dark Skies:

The High Weald AONB Unit is encouraging light pollution monitoring in the area. If you are interested in helping out and doing a very quick survey please contact Sam Nicholas on 01424 723011.

Finally we would like to wish everyone a **MERRY CHRISTMAS** and **HAPPY NEW YEAR**.

Ross Wingfield: Tel. 01424 725604
ross.wingfield@highweald.org

Christine Meadows: Tel. 01424 723009
christine.meadows@highweald.org

Events to watch out for:

To book call Sam Nicholas 01424 723011

- **Deer Impact Workshop**
Darwell Woods
Thursday 10th Dec 8:30am
- **Dark Skies - Gathering the evidence.**
Thursday 1st February 6:30pm
- **Best Practice in Hedge Management**
NT Scotney Castle.
Thursday 8th March 10:00am

The Upper Rother and Dudwell Landowner's Group brings farmers, foresters and other land managers together to improve the natural environment of the Upper Rother at a landscape scale. The Group is assisted by the High Weald AONB Partnership with financial support from the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund.

