



## Upper Rother & Dudwell Farm Cluster - Newsletter

October 2018

### Welcome to your Farm Cluster Newsletter

Here's what we've been up to over the last few months - if you have any questions about the stories in this newsletter or suggestions for future articles, please contact [Ross Wingfield](#) or [Christine Meadows](#).

#### Deer management - where are we?

*Deer management was identified as a high priority by the Cluster when it was set up in 2016. Deer have a huge impact on timber, crops and wildlife and effective control is dependent on landowners working together at a landscape-scale.*

**So far:** An evening presentation by Jamie Cordery of the Deer Initiative, and a follow up deer impact assessment day at Dallington, were well attended by Cluster members.



In May we ran a workshop for deer stalkers, with many expressing an interest in being part of a larger deer stalking network to increase the effectiveness of deer control across the area.

**Currently:** We are helping Cluster members introduce management in areas where deer numbers are particularly high, assisted by Matt Moss of High Weald Deer Management. His role is to help co-ordination with neighbours and other stalkers, using best practice from other deer management groups.

**How to get involved:** We are planning repeat introductory and deer impact assessment events. If you would like to be a pilot for joining up deer management with your neighbours, please contact Christine.

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## Member news

Welcome to new members: Lee Maitland of Strawberry Hill Farm (who has already hosted an event!); Lorna Rowney-Smith of The Oast, Huggett's Furnace; Ben Foy of Brickhouse Estate; Robert Gorwyn of Buttons Farm.

Two members had their mid-tier Countryside Stewardship applications endorsed by Ross; options chosen focused on herbal leys (GS4), and arable options (AB9), and hedge management and restoration (BE3 & BN11).

Five 'lead' members Edwina, Jane, Michael, Chris and John have been working with us to review the Cluster's work over the last two years. We are extremely grateful for their help with streamlining the objectives around specific topics.

## Events

**Feedback - Fungi ID day** Though it was very dry and many of the expected fungi were not out, Martin Allison, our local expert, found 10 different species for the 14 participants. We have pencilled in a date for another walk next year (November this time, in case it's dry again).

### **Coming up - *Managing Blackgrass - An integrated approach***

**Wednesday 21 November - Alma Arms, Uckfield**

Dr Stephen Moss, ex-Rothamsted researcher, will advise on approaches to dealing with this persistent weed. A FREE catchment sensitive farming event. More info: <http://bit.ly/blackgrassUckfield>.

## I-Spy this month

### **Waxcap (right) and Spindle fungi:**

These internationally rare species are great indicators of undisturbed, often species-rich grassland, and are under-recorded. If you see them please let us know - pictures would be great! [Download the Waxcap Information Sheet](#) to learn more.



## 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 42 members covering over 3,500ha. [View map](#)

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

For more information, visit our [website](#).