

Easton Village Newsletter

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NATURE NOTES 75

Brian Davis



Ash Dieback Disease is the current environmental scare and some facts may be of interest. These notes are drawn from a detailed and scathing article to the Wildlife Trust by an eminent tree specialist, Oliver Rackham. The disease is caused by a cup-fungus, *Chalara fraxinea* (*Fraxinus* being the scientific name for ash) which has been rampaging through Europe since it was first noticed in Latvia around 1990. It lives on the leaves and shoots of ash trees and puffs out spores – several million from each leaf - which float around and infect shoots on other trees, mainly in the late summer. Unlike the toadstools I have described in previous notes, the individual cups are only 3 mm across, so one can only recognise the disease from the symptoms. When the fungus kills a twig, the tree responds by making replacement shoots which are infected in turn, giving rise to bunches of foliage, like little witches' brooms. Some infections spread into branches and the trunk, producing lesions and eventually killing the tree. However, not all trees are killed and it is not true that 90% of the trees in Denmark are

dead, as has been reported, so there is probably some natural resistance. Many reported outbreaks in various countries are linked with the nursery trade and Britain imports huge numbers of trees from the Continent. As Dr Rackham says, there is little that can realistically be done now: "*Chalara* is here and no human action will make it go away. Now that the leaves have fallen, it is almost impossible to detect further infections, so the full extent of the disease will not be known till the late spring. There seems to be little point in sanitation felling ... that stage has already been passed. ... Exhorting people to wash boots, children and dogs after visiting a wood is a counsel of despair – unless they also wash the deer!" He goes on to say that "globalisation of pathogens has been described as a 'fundamental flaw' in international trade," and he quotes many examples of tree diseases threatening the world's trees and forests. In Easton, we have already lost most of our largest elm trees through Dutch elm disease, and three large horse chestnuts from Bleeding canker. Ash is now the most significant tree we have, largely through planting over the last 40 years, and nationally it constitutes nearly a third of our wooded landscape so even a 50% loss would be devastating. We should therefore look out for and report possible cases of Ash Disease (plant.health.info@fera.gsi.gov.uk or 08459 33 55 77) – and not include ash in future planting schemes in Easton, at least until further advice is available.

RBL POPPY APPEAL

Charles Nixon would like to thank everyone who supported the Poppy Appeal last November and gave so generously. The final total raised was £123.30.

SERVICES DURING JANUARY

6 th January	-	Epiphany Service
13 th January	-	Christingle Service
20 th January	-	Eucharist
27 th January	-	No service in Easton. Nearest services are 9.30 a.m. (Spaldwick) or 11.00 a.m. (Ellington)

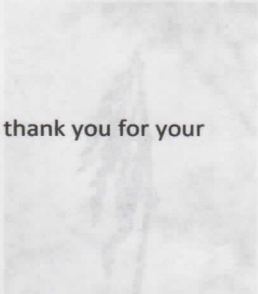
EASTON BIG BREAKFAST

Kathy Yates and the Big Breakfast Team

We have now been running the Big Breakfast for 2 years. It takes place in St Peter's Church every 2 months on either the 2nd or 3rd Saturday depending on which other events are running. The profit is specifically targeted to go towards repaying the interest free loan of £10,000 made by the Historic Churches Trust to the village to assist in the provision of the community room, lavatory and kitchen facilities. Both the Parochial Church Council and the Easton Fund and Social Committee also organise other fund raising events, but the Big Breakfast is by the far the most significant in the terms of sums raised to repay the loan.

During the 2 years of Big Breakfasts we have made a profit of **£2,253.47**. The total of all fund-raising so far is **£7,852.45** and the sum still outstanding is **£2,471**.

(cont. overleaf)



Brian Davis

Asiatic Disease is the current environmental state and some facts may be of interest. These notes are drawn from a detailed and exciting article in the Wildlife Trust by an eminent tree specialist, Oliver Rackham. The disease is caused by a cup-fungus, *Crochotia* (possibly being the scientific name for oak) which has been spreading through Europe since the 19th century. Unlike the ash dieback I have described in previous notes, the individual trees are only slowly affected by the disease. When the fungus kills a tree, the tree responds by making replacement wood, which is infected in turn, giving rise to branches of fungus. The tree is still alive but the fungus is spreading to other trees in the wood. The fungus is a very slow growing organism and it is estimated that it will take 100 years to spread across a wood.

On behalf of everyone involved in cooking, serving and clearing up after the event I would like to thank you for your support and hope that you will continue to support us in the New Year.

The next breakfast is scheduled for **Saturday 19th January 2013.**

ANNUAL QUIZ NIGHT

The 14th **Annual Quiz Night** will take place on **Saturday, 9th February 2013** in Spaldwick School Hall at 7.30 p.m. for a prompt start at 8 o'clock. Ticket prices remain at £5 per head and you can order a fish and chip supper on the night. Please bring your own drinks!

PROPOSED YOUTH ADVISORY GROUP

Cambridgeshire Police are looking to develop a fresh and exciting opportunity for young people between the age of 14 and 20 to form a Youth Advisory Group in Huntingdon. The group will meet at various locations in Huntingdon and work towards achieving:

- Increased confidence of young people in the police;
- A reduction in crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour;
- Improved and increased engagement between police and young people.

The Group will also act as a sounding-board for any ideas concerning young people that the police might have, as well as serving as a pro-active group taking forward the members' own ideas.

For further information and an application form please contact Inspector Mark Greenhalgh by email: mark.greenhalgh@cambs.pnn.police.uk or PCSO Clare Darbyshire on clare.darbyshire@cambs.pnn.police.uk. All application forms must be returned no later than 16:00hrs on Friday 25 January 2013.

