

Holmedale Nature Network Newsletter

Issue 5, Autumn 2025



Welcome to our Autumn 2025 Newsletter. The fruits in our gardens and hedgerows are forming early this year. On a recent walk we spotted blackberries, sloes, hips, haws, acorns and other seeds, all within a few metres of hedgerow. In the first part of this year, there was exceptionally low rainfall; February to July was the fourth driest since records began in 1871. The hedgerow though has remained productive. Hedgerows are an example of how we can work with nature to protect our environment. Trees and hedgerows provide habitat, stability to the landscape and moderate water levels. Read on to find some of the ideas raised by participants at a recent interactive evening.

Thanks are due to North Yorkshire Council for a grant of £400 from the Locality Budget of Councillor Angus Thompson. HNN will use the grant to help fund educational activities, hedgerow and tree planting as well as develop a dedicated HNN website. Many thanks to **all** our volunteers who have helped in different ways.

Greetings from the HNN Talks and Events Committee.

We are very grateful to all our speakers, volunteers and organisations for making 2025 a year (so far) packed with talks, projects and events that have been inspirational, encouraging and a means of creating new friendships and contacts with Holmedale and further afield.

Family Fun Session with the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust

In July, we hosted a nature event at Dalton & Gayles Village Hall led by Catherine Mason, Education and Engagement Officer, at the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust. The hall was full of chatter and activity with 15 children aged 8 or less, their mums, grandmas and friends. Catherine obtained a sample of invertebrates from the nearby Dalton Beck and had a microscope and magnifying glass available, so people were able to get

a good look at the freshwater creatures found. Craft activities and games were also on offer, including ‘feed the otter’ and ‘what belongs in a river’. We then headed out through the village to Dalton Mill for a nature discovery walk and found much to look at and learn about. We passed many beautiful gardens on the way with a variety of plants that support wildlife. Unfortunately, some much needed rain descended on us early in the walk, so we didn’t see many butterflies or other flying insects. Comments from the attendees: “Fun, friendly, educational, well-organised, wonderful people leading it”, “good idea to inspire children to care for nature”, “nature has a lot to offer, and we need to look after it”.

Our exciting and upcoming event for Autumn is our **All-Age Fun Day on Sunday 12th October, 10.30am – 2pm**. There will be opportunities (for children with adult supervision and adults) to make **Hedgehog Houses** in time for when hedgehogs hibernate for the winter season. Guidance and help will be given in the making of the houses. The hedgehogs will often use these houses after hibernation for nesting purposes.

Different fun and creative activities will be available including:

Splat the Rat

How Apples are juiced and being invited to sample the juice

Seasonal mobiles

Leaf ID

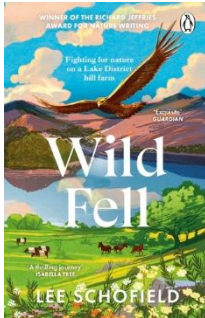
Fun All Age Quiz & Raffle

We will have a Fungi Display and information display board on hedgehogs. There will be merchandise for sale to help support Pepperfields Hedgehog Sanctuary. We hope you are able to join us. The doors open at 10:30 am until 2 pm. The event is taking place at Newsham Village Hall. You are free to come along anytime during the session. You will need to book for food which includes sausages, meatballs, vegetarian option, rice and pasta AND to make a sturdy Hedgehog House (£8). To book for food and/or a Hedgehog House please contact bakers4hnn@gmail.com or call 07712-043416

The other event that is taking place in the Autumn is the Book Club. The meeting will take place on Monday 3rd November and the book we will be discussing is *Wild Fell* by *Lee Schofield*.

For further information please contact: bakers4hnn@gmail.com

We hope you have a lovely Autumn.



Animals, Vegetables, Minerals, Nature – Newsham, September 8th

This interactive presentation on ecosystem structure and the importance of interconnectivity and interactions between species stimulated an interesting discussion, where all attendees were able to contribute and bring forward ideas for how to conserve ecosystems within and beyond Holmedale.

Suggestions included:

- Planting native trees, hedges to create habitat corridors and plants to support pollinators
- Creation of meadows
- Leaving areas for wildlife (e.g. long grass)
- Removal of invasive species
- Protection of watercourses
- Reducing chemical pollution and runoff
- Careful management and disposal of waste and sewage
- Reducing use of plastic and wasting less

The discussion showcased attendees' positive outlook, willingness and enthusiasm to proactively enhance the environment and protect nature in our local area.

Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust

HNN has been liaising with YDRT to assess the health of the watercourses in Holmedale. This has shown a variation in condition with five distinct fish species detected. There is concern for sections of watercourse where there is little or no tree or shrub cover on the banks. This exposes the soil and leads to erosion and silt in the stream which is challenging for aquatic life. A further threat was also found in invasive signal crayfish. These have spread throughout much of the UK after they were introduced as a food source in the 1970s and escaped into the wild. The signal crayfish outcompetes native species and consumes invertebrates and any aquatic food source it can reach. It is also an excellent burrower able to excavate up to two metres into the banks which leads to further erosion and more silt in the water. It is clear that our local watercourses, and the species that live in these habitats, are under threat especially from invasive species.



For further information on Holmedale Network please visit <https://www.whashtonparish.co.uk/holmedale> or drop an email to holmedalenaturenetwork@gmail.com

If you want to make a Hedgehog House or have food on 12th October please contact bakers4hnn@gmail.com/07712-043416