

Institute of Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION

Visit to Epping Forest for talk and guided walk Thursday 10 June 04

This visit has been organised by Graham Allbright

Epping Forest, which was 60,000 acres in area when its bounds were fixed in a "Perambulation" in 1641 but is now about 6,000 acres in extent, is all that remains of the Royal Forest of Waltham. Apart from the trees, probably the single most valuable commodity provided by the forest was the deer. These were strictly the property of the Crown and although penalties for poaching were often severe, many ended up on a commoner's table. It was almost impossible to contain the deer by fences and they certainly did a lot of damage to crops legally harvested by tenant farmers on open land rented from lords of the many manors around and within the forest.

Eventually matters came to a head and a succession of events led to the Forest being saved from further encroachment. By 1871 only 3,500 acres remained unenclosed. On May 6 1888 the forest was formally opened to the public by Queen Victoria with the words "it gives me great pleasure to dedicate this beautiful Forest to the enjoyment of my people for ever". Today Epping Forest is administered by the Corporation of London.

In the morning the present Superintendent of Epping Forest, Jeremy Wisenfeld, will talk about the many aspects of caring for the Forest. After lunch we will be taken on a guided walk through part of the forest to illustrate its flora and fauna, conservation, and diversity, etc..

Getting there.

By public transport-. Meet, by 10.30, in the forecourt of Loughton Underground Station (Epping branch of Central Line) for walk (1½ km.) to The Warren, the administrative offices of Epping Forest. Latecomers can get a taxi from the station forecourt.

By car. The main entrance to The Warren is on the right hand side of the Epping New Road (A104), 300m N. of Rangers Road (A1069). Grid Reference: TQ 409957.

Programme:

- 11.00 Talk on Epping Forest.
- 12.30 Lunch - please bring your own, tea/coffee will be provided. There are no pubs or cafés close enough, but we do pass a Sainsbury's on the way to The Warren from the station, where sandwiches, etc., may be purchased.
- 13.30 Guided walk through Epping Forest. This will mostly be on surfaced rides, but stout shoes are recommended.
- 15.00 Disperse.

There is no cost, but a suggested donation of £2.50 each is requested for the Friends of Epping Forest. This is a voluntary organisation which helps maintain the forest. Numbers will be limited to 20.