FRIENDS OF
EARLHAM CEMETERY

The newsletter for Friends of Earlham Cemetery Issue 3

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All walks start by the Cemetery Office and gates at the Earlham Road entrance. Indoor meetings are held in the small room at the Belvedere Centre. The following dates have been arranged:

Sunday 14th December 2014 – 2pm

Saturday 31st January 2015 – 10.30am

Sunday 15th March 2015 – 2pm

Wednesday 18th February 2015 - Quiz and Chips (details inside)

Wednesday 18th March 2015 - 8.00pm Annual General Meeting

The header image in this issue is “Earth star fungus”, photographed by © Thea Nicholls. Logo design © Vanna Bartlett. Layout design and editorial Sandy Lockwood.

Please send any articles, photographs and other images for inclusion in the next newsletter to sj.lockwood@ntlworld.com Please supply photographs as 300dpi jpegs if possible.

Welcome to the last newsletter for this year. The days have grown shorter and the cemetery is settling down to its usual period of autumnal rot and winter regeneration. It’s a quieter time of year for most people but for the wildlife in the cemetery it’s a frantic dash to find enough food in order to survive the long, cold nights of winter. This is why its a good time of year to wrap up warm and go for a stroll around the Cemetery to look out for local and winter wildlife. Check out Thea’s article for a taste of some of the winter migrants you may find.

Due to the enthusiasm that many of our members have for all things trees we are starting a new feature in the newsletter. For the next few issues we will be focusing on a particular tree species that can be found in the Cemetery. We’ll cover its origins, history and biodiversity. These trees will then be added to new tree trails around the Cemetery.

Please keep checking our web site Friends of Earlham Cemetery for all the current news and events of interest.

Our AGM will be taking place in March (details inside) when the newsletter will be one of the items on the agenda. We’d like to know what you think about it. Do you like the layout? Are the articles too long? Do they cover things you are interested in? Is there anything you’d like to see included? Please come along and give us your thoughts and ideas.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed articles for this year’s newsletters it was very much appreciated. It would also be great to see some new contributors to next year’s newsletters so why not have a go. It doesn’t have to be a huge article. Just a paragraph on why the Cemetery is special to you or something interesting you saw on a walk round would be just as good.

Sandy

Heyday - *Jeremy Bartlett*

South Lodge, opposite where we meet for our walks near the Earlham Road entrance, is looking rather sad at the moment. It is boarded up and empty and I am told that it was about to be put up for sale, until a hole in the ground opened up close to the building.

South Lodge was built in 1855 and was the home of the Cemetery Superintendents for the Conformist (Church of England) sections of the Cemetery until 1883 and then the sole Cemetery Superintendent from then until 1929, when the Cemetery Superintendent and his family moved to 191 Earlham Road. In recent years the building was used as a base for Cemetery workmen, latterly from Norwich Norse.

But in the 1950s and 1960s the South Lodge was in its heyday and was the hub of Cemetery operations.

In 1954 the Council's Cemeteries Department took over the running of Rosary Cemetery. A report produced in 1956 reviewing operations tells us that there were now thirty-three staff in the Cemeteries Department.

Twenty nine of the staff were based at South Lodge. Administration work was carried out by the Cemetery Superintendent and three clerks, but the majority of the staff worked outside the office:

- A Foreman
- A Propagating Gardener
- One First Class Gardener
- Four Second Class Gardeners
- Eight Gravediggers
- Twelve Labourers
- Two Attendants.

In addition, four more labourers were employed to cut the grass.

Four staff worked at the Rosary Cemetery, where there was a small sub-office: a foreman, and three labourers who also worked as gravediggers.

The Propagating Gardener was responsible for raising plants in four heated greenhouses next to South Lodge. These were heated by solid fuel boilers, which had to be stoked regularly. There were several cold frames here as well, and a nursery garden to the south of the Jewish Burial Ground, in the area of what is now rough ground enclosed by hedges and wire fencing . In 1962, 43,150 plants were raised from seeds and cuttings at a cost of £910 per annum. In cold weather, the other gardeners would assist with propagation. The plants (mostly bedding) were planted out in the Cemetery grounds for summer displays.

Head gardener, James ("Jimmy") Carter Known as "Lord James", by South Lodge. Photo supplied by Pat Meek

The Cemetery Superintendent between 1924 and 1963 was Lawrence Alan Jewell (1898 – 1973). In May 2013 Stuart and Jeremy visited his daughter, Pat Meek, who still lives in Norwich. She recalled:

"There were flowerbeds opposite the office and then there was the Catholic Chapel and then about three roads up they had a double flowerbed, one each side [of the road]. And then there was one on the right hand side as well before you got to the two churches [burial chapels]. It was just a mass of flowerbeds."

"They used to grow in those greenhouses a load of stuff for when they used to have the flower show in St. Andrew's Hall and the Cemeteries used to have a big stand there – part of Parks & Gardens – and he [the Head Gardener] always used to have this big display and that was very impressive.

They used to have lovely flowerbeds where that fountain is and by all the churches [burial chapels] and they used to grow all the flowers to have in the churches [burial chapels], as well."

However, by the 1960s the end was in sight. The greenhouses were coming to the end of their useful lives and the Council proposed reducing the number of

The Foreman, Mr. Bierton. Photo supplied by Pat Meek

plants raised to between 20,000 and 25,000, which it was thought could be done without detracting from the floral displays. It was proposed to transfer the work raising the plants to the Parks Department.

Norwich City Council maintained a presence in the Cemetery at the Cemetery Office opposite South Lodge until the late 1990s. Nowadays the Cemetery Office is staffed by Dignity plc, who own and run the Crematorium and adjacent Memorial Garden, which were sold off by Norwich City Council in October 1998. The remainder of Earlham Cemetery is still owned by Norwich City Council but work on the site is mainly carried out by Norwich Norse.

Jeremy Bartlett

I. Report No.9, 12th October 1956. S.J. Noel-Brown & Co. Ltd., Consultants to Industry and Local Government, part of ACC 1997/143, Norfolk Record Office.

II. Friends of Earlham Cemetery - Interview with Pat & Ken Meek, 29th May 2013. Unpublished

III. Council Report, 1962. Part of ACC 1997/143, Norfolk Record Office.

Special Events

Saturday 6th December 2014

4pm – 6pm. Christmas social. 38 Edinburgh Road, Norwich, NR2 3RJ.

Please bring something to drink and nibbles.

RSVP to Jeremy by Thursday 4th December if you'd like to come along.

Thanks to Dominy and Jordan for hosting this event.

Saturday 31st January 2015

10.30am. A walk looking at mosses and liverworts.

A joint meeting with Norfolk and Suffolk Bryological Group.

Please bring a hand lens if you have one.

Wednesday 18th February 2015

7pm. Quiz & Chips at the Belvedere Centre (Small Hall), Belvoir Street, Norwich, NR2 3AZ.

Admission to be confirmed but approx £8, including fish & chips or a vegetarian alternative.

RSVP to Jeremy by Wednesday 11th February if you'd like to come along.

(More details will be sent out nearer the event.)

Wednesday 18th March 2015

8pm. Annual General Meeting at the Belvedere Centre (Small Hall), Belvoir Street, Norwich, NR2 3AZ.

Please check our front page for times and dates for our regular walks meeings.

Ivy (*Hedera Helix*) - *Vanna Bartlett*

Ivy on a grave by Jeremy Bartlett

Ivy is a very divisive plant, loved by some but loathed by many – including some foresters and custodians of ruinous buildings. It has a reputation for strangling trees or smothering them and is often assumed to be parasitic, sucking the life out of its host tree. In fact, ivy has its own root system for drawing up water and nutrients from the soil, and its lush evergreen leaves contain plenty of chlorophyll to photosynthesise and produce its own food. It just uses the tree as a support to scramble up.

Ivy will certainly clothe a tree over time in an evergreen mantle which can deprive the tree's leaves of light and, on dry soils, its roots will compete with the tree for available water. Because of this, foresters will regularly hack through the thick stems of ivy enveloping trees near their base, cutting out a foot or so and then leaving the whole lot on the tree to wither and die, leaving an unsightly mess. In some instances this may well be a good thing especially if there is a lot of lush growth at the top of the tree making it top-heavy and therefore vulnerable in strong winds or heavy snowfall when the extra weight can bring branches down or even topple the tree. Ideally, however, such lush growth could be regularly cut back and kept in check.

Often ivy will climb up a dead or moribund tree, extending its wildlife habitat value beyond the life of the tree. Dead and decaying trees are of supreme wildlife importance to a variety of rare and vulnerable creatures, from beetle and moth larvae to roosting bats and nesting birds. Unfortunately, such trees often end up being felled as they can pose a threat to people and property when they eventually come down. There is also a tendency amongst some to constantly 'tidy-up' the countryside by removing 'dangerous' trees even in the middle of woods.

Ivy on walls and buildings is another bone of contention. As the ivy scrambles up any structure, it clings to it with little rootlets coming off the main stems. When these find crevices in walls, the plant will then send out proper roots into the structure and as these grow they can split the cracks open further. Often the main problem with ivy on old walls is when you try and pull it off – it clings so tenaciously that you can end up pulling off bits of wall with it. Because of this, on many old ruins it is now left in place, indeed sometimes it is the ivy that is actually holding the structure together and keeping it upright. In cemeteries ivy will cover gravestones, making them unreadable and potentially damaging some memorials so it is often removed before it puts on too much growth.

Ivy stems with rootlets by Vanna Bartlett

Ivy is, however, a very remarkable plant. It is Britain's only native self clinging climber, belonging to the family Araliaceae with about 250 species worldwide. Its close relatives include some unusual plants – *Panax quinquefolius* (ginseng, whose roots are used in herbal medicine), *Tetrapanax papyrifer* (rice paper plant, whose pith is used to make rice paper) and the shrub *Fatsia japonica*.

Fatsia japonica © Jeremy Bartlett

Fatsia japonica is widely grown in gardens, including parks and open spaces, whereas *Tetrapanax* is less often grown and some fine specimens can be seen in the Bishop's Garden by Norwich Cathedral. Neither of these two species looks much like

ivy until they too flower round about October time, when you can see that they are definitely related. *Fatsia*'s flowers look exactly like a much more robust and exuberant ivy while *Tetrapanax* produces an amazing spike of dense ivy-like flowers with a lovely honeyed scent which attracts lots of honeybees as well as bumblebees, wasps and flies. *Fatsia* has a much subtler scent but still attracts insects. *Fatsia* will produce large berries much like ivy but sadly the flowers of *Tetrapanax* get caught by the first frosts in this country so it never fruits.

Tetrapanax papyrifer © Jeremy Bartlett

As the tough stems of ivy creep along the ground, they root into the soil at intervals and produce lovely deep green leaves with three to five lobes and contrasting pale veins. These are known as shade leaves and the plant produces them as it grows over the ground and then first starts to climb up trees or walls. This growth can be very dense and will smother out other plants which is why it is often planted in gardens as a groundcover plant and especially as it happily grows in dense shade and dry conditions on poor soils. There are many garden cultivars, with different leaf shapes and colours.

Once the ivy has scrambled its way up a tree or building and is growing in full bright sunlight it will it then produce what are known as sun leaves. These are a lighter shade of green with less prominent veins and are a pointed oval in shape. It is only when the plant has put on a good growth of these leaves that it will then produce its lovely delicate flowers. An

Hoverfly feeding on ivy flowers.© Vanna Bartlett

interesting fact about ivy is that if you cut a stem of sun leaves and root it, it will grow into a self supporting free standing ivy Bush.

For wildlife, ivy is kind of a high-rise hotel, providing shelter, nesting sites and food. On woodland floors and hedge banks, a thick covering of shade leaves will conceal the entrances to mice and vole holes as well as bumblebee nests. Higher up, on old walls, wrens will nest and in dense cover on trees so will blackbirds, robins, thrushes and other birds. Ivy's dense evergreen foliage also provides ideal places for hibernating insects to securely sit out the winter. This includes butterflies like the brimstone, comma and small tortoiseshell as well as hoverflies and ladybirds. Indeed, a big clump of ivy in a sunny position is a good spot to visit in spring to look for emerging hoverflies and ladybirds as they crawl out of the dense cover to warm themselves before flying off to forage.

But it is ivy's profusion of flowers that is perhaps its greatest asset to wildlife. They are quite delicate, a pale yellow-green in colour and grow in small dense umbels. They are produced in September and will carry on flowering through October and well into November. It is probably our latest flowering native plant and is an extremely important source of nectar, especially for honeybees. Ivy flower honey is a bit of a speciality with some beekeepers and has a very distinctive taste. On a sunny autumn day ivy flowers will be covered in honeybees, so much so that you can actually hear the hum of their wings. The scent of flowers is very noticeable too – a kind of musty honey smell, quite heady. If you search amongst the honeybees you will hopefully find some hoverflies,

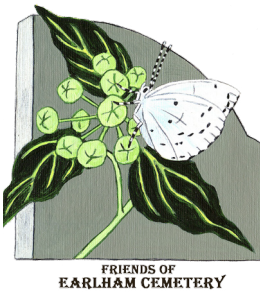
usually *Eristalis* species (drone flies) which mimic the honeybee in colouration but also sometimes something a bit more exotic like *Volucella zonaria*, a very large migrant hoverfly that is a perfect hornet mimic.

Ivy flowers are also a magnet for wasps and you can often find numerous males feeding on them. Male wasps are fairly easily distinguished from females as they

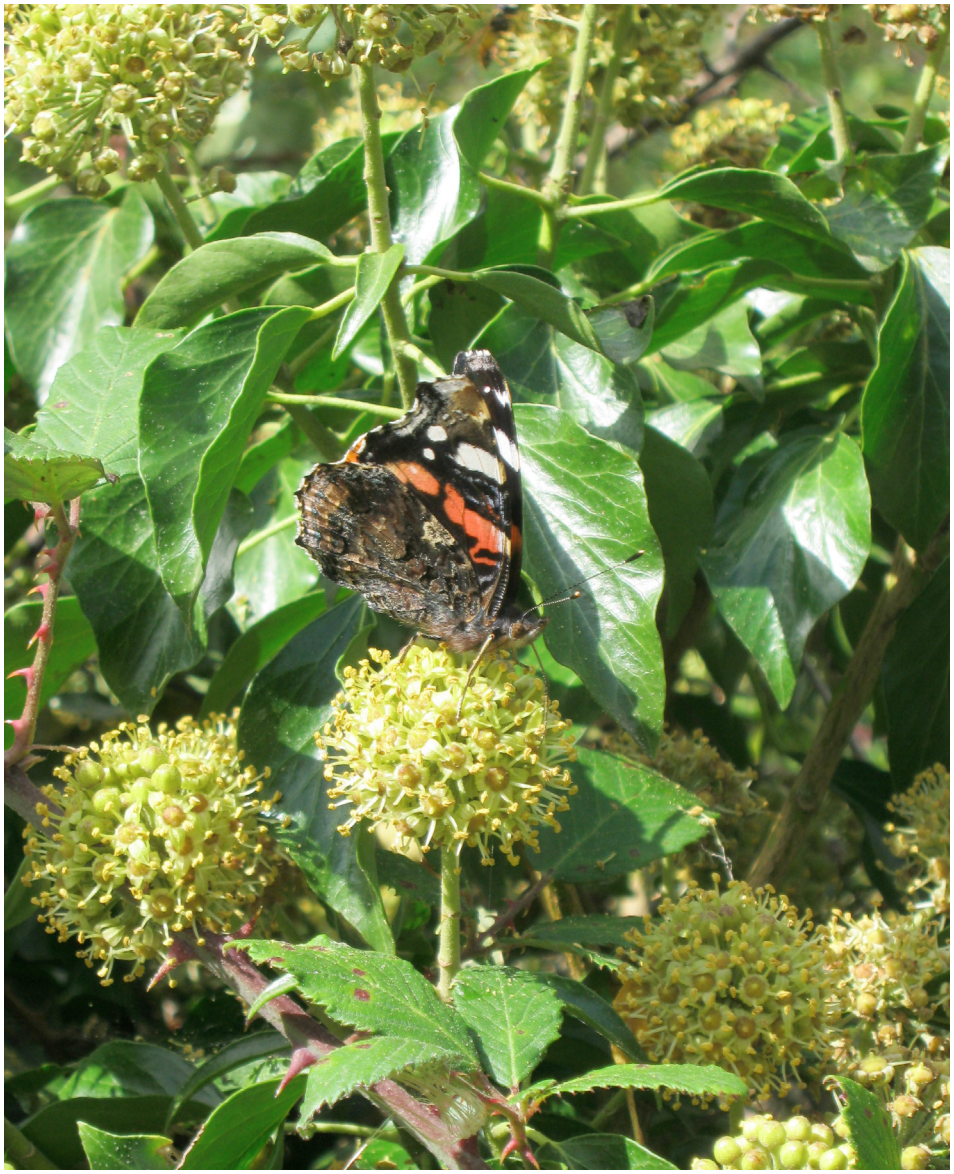
Common wasp © Thea Nicholls

have much longer antennae. Sadly, and rather alarmingly, wasp numbers have plummeted in the last few years and I have had little luck in finding good numbers of wasps at ivy flowers in the last couple of autumns. Wasps are sadly maligned by one and all. Yes they do sting, often unprovoked, but usually because they are drunk having feasted on fermenting autumn fruits. But they are important pollinators and are also perfect pest controllers, collecting and killing numerous caterpillars, whitefly and other nuisances to the kitchen gardener.

Another beneficiary of the rich nectar is the red admiral butterfly which can often be found feasting on the flowers. In milder winters the butterfly may well hibernate in the dense leaves but they can be killed off by heavy frosts and long cold spells.



Ivy, Holly blue butterfly and gravestone, as featured on our logo © Vanna Bartlett



Red admiral feeding on ivy flowers. Note the sun leaves © Vanna Bartlett

Holly blue butterfly © Thea Nicholls

Holly blue butterflies lay their eggs on the infant buds of the ivy, their caterpillars feeding on them as they develop. Once the flowers are pollinated, the small green berries start to swell, turning brown and then ripening to a lovely deep blue-black. These will persist right through the winter, surviving frosts and snow. They are beloved of wood pigeons and are a saviour to blackbirds and thrushes as well as overwintering blackcaps.

So ivy has its fans and its detractors and both have valid arguments. There is so much pressure on what countryside we have left, that much of it is very heavily managed. Ivy is like a lot of garden plants in that you have to keep it in check a little bit. Turn your back on it and it will be everywhere but it is of such good wildlife value that it's worth trying to accommodate it. Give it some room but don't let it get too unruly, then you can appreciate its benefits and still enjoy the other trees and shrubs that give it its support.

Vanna Bartlett.

Winter Migrants - *Thea Nicholls*

With its variety of trees and shrubs and open grassy areas, the Cemetery is an ideal place for many migrating passerines (birds which perch). While the summer migrants are long gone, winter migrants are arriving and making the most of the food and shelter that the Cemetery has to offer.

Probably the most common winter migrants in the Cemetery are blackbirds. I always used to think the reason there were so many blackbirds around in winter was because they'd had a successful breeding season. It took me years to work out it was actually due to the extra birds arriving from the Continent. Groups of blackbirds can be found all round the Cemetery as they hunt for invertebrates under fallen leaves and gorge themselves on berries.

Redwing © Sandy Lockwood

Female blackbird feeding on rowan berries © Sandy Lockwood

Another type of winter-visiting thrush - redwings - can often be found feeding with the blackbirds. Redwings are more obviously thrushes with a brown back and a speckled breast. However, they can be told apart from the resident song thrushes by the very obvious pale cream stripe above their eyes and the splash of bright russet red under their wings and down their sides. Although a few pairs breed in the north of Britain it is likely that any birds in the Cemetery will have come from the Continent or Scandinavia.

Two other thrushes that can turn up in the graveyard at this time of year are mistle thrushes and fieldfares. Mistle thrushes are the more well known as it is the thrush that everyone muddles up with the song thrush. Mistle thrushes, however, are bigger, their backs are a greyish brown and the speckles on their breast are darker and spottier while those of a song thrush are brown and shaped like arrow heads. During the winter months, mistle thrushes really like to eat berries and will aggressively defend any it finds against all-comers. In fact, the second part of its scientific name, *Turdus viscivorus*, is taken from the Latin viscum - mistletoe and vorare - to devour.

Blackbird and mistle thrush © Thea Nicholls

Fieldfares are roughly the same size as mistle thrushes and may be the most handsome of our winter thrush quartet. With a slate-grey head and rump, chestnut brown back, white underparts and black tips to its wings and tail, the fieldfare is very dapper indeed. They are very sociable and can form flocks of up to a couple of hundred birds although it's unlikely that there'd be that many in the Cemetery in one go.

The siskin is a small finch roughly the size of a house sparrow. At first glance they can be mistaken for greenfinches as their plumage has the same greens and yellows in it with black edges to their wings. However, the easiest way to tell siskins from greenfinches is to look at the yellow wing bar. In siskins it goes across the wing while in greenfinches it goes down the wing. The male siskin is very pretty with a black cap, face

Female siskin © Sandy Lockwood

and bib.The female is duller with a streakier breast. Siskins breed in Scotland and it is possible that some actually breed in Norfolk. Some of these British birds may be the ones that appear in the Cemetery but it is likely that their numbers are added to by Scandinavian birds. Siskins will happily come to bird tables and I have read that they are particularly attracted to red feeders for some reason.

Some of the migrants that turn up at this time of year can often be found in flocks of other birds such as finches and tits. One such bird is the blackcap. These shy warblers are more familiar to us from our summer walks when the males can be heard singing from deep within a bush or tree. However, they can also be found during the winter as part of the mixed

Male siskin © Sandy Lockwood

groups of blue, great, coal and long-tailed tits that roam around the trees looking for invertebrates. These small greyish warblers are named after the black cap of the male although the female's cap is chestnut brown. It is possible that blackcaps seen at this time of year are summer visitors that have stayed on but recent studies suggest it is more likely that they have flown here from central Europe. They are primarily insectivorous but, at this time of year, will also eat berries and visit bird tables.

A rarer visitor but a stunning one is the firecrest. This bird is tiny - along with the goldcrest (which, although a UK breeding bird can also be a winter migrant) - it is our smallest UK bird weighing in at 5-6g. Like goldcrests, firecrests can often be found joining the resident tit flocks when it can sometimes be seen hovering in front of clumps of leaves as it searches for food. The firecrest is named after its orangey red cap which has a black brim around the front and sides. Its most obvious feature though is its 'bandit mask' which goes through its eyes and above its bill. The goldcrest, which is very similar, has a more yellow cap and 'spectacles' in the form of pale circles round its eyes instead of the bandit mask.

Goldcrests are also resident breeders in the Cemetery although it is some years since firecrests bred here. Goldcrests are sometimes referred to as 'woodcock pilots' because they both migrate at the same time. It used to be a common belief that goldcrests sat on the heads of migrating woodcock to steer them in the right direction.

This brings me to the woodcock itself. Despite being a member of the scolopacidae family (snipe-like waders) their main habitat is damp woodland and heath. Overwintering woodcock do turn up in the Cemetery although they are rarely seen thanks to their superb camouflage. Usually, it is only when they are disturbed and take flight that there is any hint that they are about. Even then it is only a quick glimpse of a red-brown rump zig-zagging low over the grass before it drops down to disappear from view again.

Some of our over-wintering birds, such as blackbirds, may be so common that we barely look at them while others, like the firecrest, bring a touch of exoticism to our surroundings. However, all these birds could have flown long distances to get to the Cemetery - which is truly amazing when you think about it and one of the reasons the Cemetery is such a special place for wildlife.

Thea Nicholls

Visit to Rosary Cemetery - *Jeremy Bartlett*

On Sunday 26th October 2014 we had our first group 'away' visit, to the Rosary Cemetery, just off Rosary Road in Norwich.

We were met at the Cemetery chapel by Nick, Robin and Irene from the Friends of the Rosary, a more established 'Friends' group than Friends of Earlham Cemetery, with around a hundred members. Nick and Robin showed us around and Nick told us about some of the people buried there. Irene made the tea for us at the end of our visit.

Ann Drummond's grave, beneath a massive yew tree © Jeremy Bartlett

John Barker's grave. He was accidentally killed in 1897 at Norwich cattle market when he was trapped between two wagons while setting up his steam roundabout for the forthcoming fair. © Jeremy Bartlett

The Rosary Cemetery predates Earlham Cemetery by nearly forty years and was established in 1819 by Thomas Drummond (1765-1852), a retired Unitarian minister, on a former market garden known as the Rosary.

As the first non-denominational cemetery in England, people were free to be buried there with the religious service of their choice, or even no religious service at all. The first burial was Thomas Drummond's own wife, Ann, in November 1821. Her body was reinterred from the Octagon Chapel where she had been buried two years earlier.

The Rosary Cemetery occupies thirteen acres, with an older section close to Rosary Road and a newer section near Telegraph Lane East. The older section is wonderfully atmospheric and home to some fine trees and wild flowers. The Cemetery was run by a private trust until 1954, when ownership was transferred to Norwich Cemeteries Department.

You can read more about the Rosary cemetery online at http://tinyurl.com/l6wgbuz.

Thanks to Nick, Robin and Irene for welcoming us and making our visit enjoyable and interesting.

You can see more photographs on our facebook page (even if you don't have a facebook account) at http://tinyurl.com/lq5jtdl.

Jeremy Bartlett

Spindle (*Euonymous europaeus*) - *Jeremy Bartlett*

In the summer Earlham Cemetery is a mass of greenery, a cool and tranquil place to escape from the hot summer sunshine. But as autumn approaches and leaves of deciduous trees and shrubs change colour, some species stand out from the rest.

One of these is the spindle, *Euonymous europaeus*, one of the most beautiful autumn shrubs.

Earlier in the year spindle is easy to miss and its flowers are subtle rather than spectacular, tiny, greenish-yellow and borne in clusters in late spring. The flowers are attractive to many insects, including the St. Mark's Fly, *Bibio marci*, a black fly that appears in swarms at the end of April. Black, with dangling legs, the fly looks a bit sinister but is entirely harmless. (See a larger than life photo of a St. Mark's Fly on spindle flowers here.)

By autumn, however, the spindle's leaves change colour from green to yellow or bright pink before they fall. At the same time the berries turn the same shade of pink and split open to reveal orange seeds.

Although spindle looks like it must be an exotic species, it is actually a British native. In Earlham Cemetery it has been planted but it can be found growing in hedges, scrub and open woodland, mostly in the southern parts of the British Isles (see map). It particularly likes alkaline soils over chalk and limestone.

Spindle is a member of the family Celastraceae, whose members are mainly tropical.

Spindle makes an attractive, large garden shrub for sunny or partly shaded sites, provided the soil is well-drained and not acidic. It will cope with heavy soils if they are well drained and it eventually grows to about 2.5 metres in height and spread. It is possible to grow spindle from seed but the seeds need a period of warmth followed by cold to germinate. There is a cultivated variety called "Red Cascade".

Although the berries are very attractive to look at, all parts of the plant have a 'loathsome smell and bitter taste', which is just as well, as spindle contains toxic glycosides. All parts of the plant are poisonous. Symptoms occur eight to sixteen hours after eating and include vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea. In severe cases symptoms can include drowsiness, convulsions and loss of consciousness.

The spindle might be more popular if it wasn't one of the winter hosts of the Black Bean Aphid, *Aphis fabae*. The aphids overwinter as eggs and hatch in spring and subsequent generations live on the tops of broad bean plants, as well as on other crops and wild plants. (Whether or not you have spindle growing nearby, it is a good idea to remove the tops of any broad bean plants you are growing in late spring so that the aphids are unable to damage the plant. The tops can be steamed as a side vegetable.)

Spindle wood is fine grained and very hard. It has been used to make spindles, skewers, knitting needles and fine quality artists' charcoal. In France, spindle is called 'le fusain' and a charcoal sketch is a 'dessin au fusain'. Other uses for the plant, including the extraction of a volatile oil from the whole plant used in soap making and a bright yellow dye from the fruit and seed.

The name spindle was first used by William Turner in his 16th Century 'A New Herball'. He couldn't find an existing English name, so he translated the Dutch word 'spilboom' to give spindle.

Jeremy Bartlett

There are several spindles in Earlham Cemetery. One of the best specimens is a little way south (towards Earlham Road) off the tarred road that leads towards Winter Road from South Lodge.