

Post 8

THE FOLLY & THE MILLENNIUM CAIRN

The name 'the Folly' was used on a map dating from 1783, and referred to a clump of seven trees. Only one of the original trees remains today, although several replacements have since been planted. The absence of trees on top of the Downs is largely because of its exposed position. Even these beech trees show the effect of the prevailing south-westerly winds by having their upper twigs growing away from the wind.



A pair of kestrels often nests in Happy Valley and can sometimes be seen hovering over this point on the Downs.



Kestrel © Stephen Slaughter

In the summer months you may hear the song of the skylark. So high up in the sky as to be sometimes invisible to the naked eye, the skylark proclaims its territory by a very long, liquid note or "chirrup". The skylark is one of the few



Skylark © Stephen Slaughter

inland birds that makes its nest in rough grassland. Please keep dogs under control to avoid disturbing these increasingly rare birds.

Continue walking along the wide grassy path and you will soon see a well trodden path on the left leading to a flint cairn. From the cairn and you can admire the views all around you. Looking north it is often possible to see the City of London on the horizon.

The cairn was constructed by volunteers during September 2000, and beneath it lies a time capsule containing items relevant to that year. Included in the contents of the container are microfilmed documents,



The millennium cairn

photographs and a selection of objects relating to Coulsdon. Hopefully these items will survive for future historians to uncover in many years to come.

Leave the cairn by following the path towards the road, follow the path on the right for approximately 150 metres until a junction with a diagonal path from the right. Cross over the road and continue down a diagonal path until you see post 9 (see map below).

NATURE TRAIL MAP

