

April-19



Dear Club Members,

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the 1949 Act of Parliament that established the UK national parks. In September 2016 we celebrated the direct action that had led to this moment. The Kinder Scout Mass Trespass highlighted the inequality of access to the UK countryside. You can read that letter in the archive of the club on the website.

The first UK National Park was the Peak District, located in the northern centre of England this park cover 555 square miles 1440 square km), and is within an hours drive of 20 million people. There are now 15 Parks in all areas of the UK, from the north of the Cairngorms, to the New Forest in the South, Pembrokeshire in the West to the Broads in the East. They cover the huge diversity of ecosystems found in the UK.

These parks are not areas of wilderness. All have felt the impact of man in some way, whether it be the early clearances of Neolithic farmers, oak trees felled for ships in the Napoleonic wars, or modern day mining. I've spent all of my life living on the doorstep, or inside a National Park, and many of my holidays have involved going and exploring others.

The formation of these parks was a key part of the post World War II recovery programme created by the post-war Labour government. It meshed well with the creation of the National Health Service, the welfare state, improved public housing, and improved workers rights. While the land remained in private ownership, it was no longer off limit to the general population.

As a spinner these parks are home to many of the 90 breeds of sheep found across the UK. Herdwick sheep play a key role in the maintaining for the landscape of the Lake District, and the valleys of the Yorkshire Dales are home to the Wensleydale and Teeswater. In honour of the first National Park, the Peak District I've chosen to use a breed this month that originates in the northern part of that park. The Whitefaced Woodland is considered vulnerable by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, with only 500-900 sheep left in flocks.

Happy Spinning

Katie

Further Reading-

Kinder Mass Trespass-

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_trespass_of_Kinder_Scout

<https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/nature/2017/04/mass-trespass-opened-gates-countryside>

Guide to the UK National Parks

<https://nationalparks.uk/quick-guide-to-the-uks-national-parks>

Winners in a photographic competition to celebrate 70 years of National Parks-

<https://www.cnp.org.uk/news/winner-revealed-breath-taking-photo-competition-celebrate-70th-anniversary-national-parks>

About the Whitefaced Woodland

<https://www.rbst.org.uk/whitefaced-woodland>

Fibre Content- In case your parcel is missing the label

25% Whitefaced Woodland Wool, 50% Corriedale, 20% South American Wool, 5% Viscose Tweed