



Volunteer opportunities

We currently have the following vacancies for volunteers. If you are interested in any of these please contact Diane to discuss 01743 284296

Reception support

Vehicle checks

Tool maintenance

Political advocacy

Survey work on reserves – butterfly and dormice, birds etc.

General admin / Office based opportunities

- ◆ Membership recruiter support
- ◆ Image library - cataloguing / editing
- ◆ Helping with displays / presentations
- ◆ Tidying up card index system and recording on Outlook contacts
- ◆ Checking banking from shop sales – daily invoicing – monthly.
- ◆ Data input
- ◆ Monthly mail-outs
- ◆ Membership renewal notice mail-outs
- ◆ Laminating & copying leaflets
- ◆ Grant researcher
- ◆ Technical support – GIS mapping, data input and Planning support

Leading guided walks and doing talks

Education/ People & Wildlife - Admin / office support

Research – web based

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Protecting Wildlife for the future

News from Shrewsbury Wildlife Survey Group

The group have had a very successful year which was celebrated with a meal at The Coach and Horses in Shrewsbury in October. Eleven people enjoyed a very good meal with only three regulars missing. The group presented a delighted Jane Ing with an oil painting of one of the best sites we have visited, as a thank you for her work with the group.

Survey work will be resumed next April. Anyone wishing to join the group please contact Jane Ing on 01939 260100.

Greenfields Nature Reserve - 2009 Butterfly Survey Malcolm Monie

Between June and October this year eleven volunteers made 5 monthly surveys recording the butterflies at Greenfields Nature Reserve on the edge of Whitchurch. Part of the site is a south-facing grassy slope which should be good for butterflies.

After the first session we were on our own

The first session on June 12th was led by Rhona Davies, Reserves Officer with the Trust, but after that we were on our own. Fifteen different butterflies and four moths were identified and many "little brown jobs" spotted. Large Skipper, Ringlet, Gate-keeper and Speckled Wood were in turn the most abundant species as we moved through the summer.

Three target species

Meadow Browns, Painted Ladies and Commas also showed up in good numbers. Of the three "target species" for the reserve, only the Small Copper was seen. We were too late starting to have any chance of seeing the Grizzled Skipper, so next year we plan to start in April or May. The Small Heath was also looked for but there was relatively little suitable short vegetation although hopefully there may be more next year following the grazing by the Dexter cattle. Lorcan Adrian has written a report on the survey with lots of colourful charts and many photographs.



Sue, Lorcan, Ken, Anne and Carole

Many thanks to the following for taking part in the 2009 butterfly survey: Rhona, Malcolm, Anne, Philip, Jenny, Peter, Don, Lorcan, Ken, Sue, Albert and Carole.

We would like to thank Ricoh UK Products Ltd in Telford for printing this edition of Grapevine

Winter 2009–2010



John Galloway

SHROPSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

Grapevine

Volunteer update *Diane Monether*

No sooner is summer over than we seem to be preparing for Christmas. Whatever happened to autumn? We had a staff away day in October and I asked staff to think about elements of their jobs that could be done by volunteers therefore freeing them up to do other things. We came up with a pretty extensive list so if you do have time on your hands or perhaps have never volunteered with us, have a look on the back page where you'll find a list of opportunities. There are quite a few office based opportunities which are flexible and

can be fitted around other commitments.

Our youth ranger project Viva Veolia, has come to an end. It has been a steep learning curve for the Trust working with 16 to 24 year olds but one which has been very rewarding. We hope to do more with this age group in the future.

At a recent corporate volunteering event we had a couple of volunteer helpers. It's a real help having one or two extra people who know what they are doing. Anyone who is interested in helping out on future events is welcome to get in

touch. These events are generally a bit more relaxed and sociable with a fire and Kelly kettles for hot drinks.

I am currently organising basic First Aid training for our volunteers. Training will take place early next year and if you are interested please have a chat with either me, Carl or Rhona. Places are limited and will be allocated on a 'need' basis.

Don't forget, our Christmas social takes place on Tuesday 15th December here at Trust HQ from 6-pm to 8.30pm. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible

Müller on the Moss

Eighteen intrepid volunteers from Muller's IT team braved the wilds of Wem Moss recently. They cleared scrub from a large area and were so enthusiastic that even the temptations of cooking potatoes on the fire and making a brew with the Kelly kettles could not

entice them from their work. Some of the volunteers freely admitted to being slightly apprehensive about the day, whilst others got stuck in right from the start and encouraged their workmates to join them.

Special thanks to volunteers Pete McKeon and Peter Taylor for assisting Duncan and Rhona on the day.



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**** First Aid Training ***

Free one day basic course for Branches, wardens and work party volunteers. The training will take place at HQ in Shrewsbury and lunch is included. Booking essential - contact Diane on 01743 284296 before Monday 4th January to book a place.

Tuesday 26th January 2010 10am to 4pm

Saturday 6th February 2010 10am to 4pm

This course is aimed at our volunteers carrying out practical work on reserves as well as those leading walks and running events for the public.

Dirty work in Ellesmere

David Farncombe, acting Chair Ellesmere Branch

When Ellesmere Branch was awarded Lottery money in 2005, Birch Road Pond on the edge of town was completely overgrown with willow and reedmace. Restoration of the pond included removal of most of the reedmace to create open water. Vegetation soon re-clothed the muddy edges, able to thrive once the dense willow cover had been removed.

Waders and wellingtons

So it was that on a Saturday in mid September, a group of stalwart volunteers from the local Branch with able assistance from Carl Pickup, SWT Reserves Manager, set about removing some of the offending plants. Wearing waders or wellingtons, it was possible to wade out and pull up the reedmace fairly easily by hand, and then to float the plants across to the bank where they were pulled from the water, and stacked to allow any water creatures to return to the pond. The reedmace was

then loaded on to a truck and taken to Brookfield Farm at Whittington where Mr Phil Jones operates Oswestry's Green Waste Composting Site.

Getting down and dirty

By mid afternoon, thanks to the efforts of those in the water and

on the banks, there was a sizeable area of open water again. There were also some very muddy volunteers. In fact it took a number of washes before the mud was cleaned from clothes, and even then the rather distinctive smell of pond mud remained for some time!

In spite of the mud (or perhaps even because of it), there was a certain satisfaction in "getting down and dirty" - and the day's achievement is there for all to see - at least until the reedmace grows back again.



To find Birch Road pond, follow signs from Ellesmere town centre to Ellesmere college. The pond can be found across the playing fields on the right just after the white Hart pub. Grid ref SJ 345 400

Too much reedmace!

Quite quickly however, the reedmace also began to re-establish itself, spreading out from the water's edge, until by this summer only a small area of open water remained.

While this suited many invertebrates living below the water, as well as Moorhens which have successfully nested among the dense cover, for other wildlife, as well as the amenity considerations, there was now definitely too much reedmace!



Viva Veolia youth volunteering project

Diane Monether

I really miss my Thursday afternoons out of the office on the Ercall now that our two year youth volunteering project has come to an end. Over the course of the project we've worked with over 200 young volunteers introducing them to the delights of volunteering in the outdoors. Much of the work has centred around building campfires, cooking food and getting the Kelly kettles going, but they've also learned about woodland skills such as coppicing, how to use tools safely and about managing places for increased biodiversity.

The funders V and Veolia Environmental Trust have been delighted with the projects achievements; not just the hard evidence on the ground such as access improvements, new safety fencing, site interpretation and graffiti removal from the quarry faces, but also the way the project has impacted on the lives of the young people: increased self esteem and confidence, team working, personal development and awareness of nature conservation. Having been very sceptical at the start, I have to admit that I've thor-

oughly enjoyed working on the project and look forward to working with this age group in the future on a new project.



Listen to the podcast on our website to hear what the young people had to say.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust staff wish to thank you for the hard work and valuable contribution you have made to the work of the Trust this year. We wish you a peaceful Christmas and very happy new year.

The mysterious straw men of Comley!

When I first met the straw men of Comley, they were quite a surprise. They were hanging out with other local 'builders' in a sheep trough - heavily disguised.

I was beside the trough watching tadpoles, and the tadpoles were watching the straw men - or rather nuzzling excitedly at little clumps of straw-like vegetation in the water.

Not being a tadpole, I thought the lumps quite ordinary - until one of them, on a rock, moved smartly sideways!

Rough straw 'darts' threaded with grassy emerald spears

I scooped it out, with the others and found rough straw 'darts' threaded with grassy emerald spears. Each had a neat tube underneath, like a hollow straw. Inert

vegetation! I left them lying, checked tadpoles, and then turned again, to see.... straw men - on the move! Those veggie clumps were clumping - moving in stately procession along the stone edge of the trough!

Gluing their home together with sticky silk

The front part of an ant-like creature poked out of each base / tube, trundling its 'house' along. Caddis Fly larvae! I put them back in the water where heads and bodies disappeared back inside the protective tubes.

The larvae don't

always appear as 'straw men'. They use different materials to build up their tubes, gluing them together with sticky silk. Their name comes from 'Caddis man', the country pedlar who carried pots and pans fixed to his jacket.

I wonder what other disguises these odd little builders adopt on other Shropshire Wildlife Trust reserves?

Stee Hancock, Warden Comley Quarry



The Caddis Fly larvae are still to be seen at this time of year. If anyone has news of other unusual disguises please let us know.

Diane

Wild about Telford

An end of summer event was held at the Green Wood Centre in Coalbrookdale to share and celebrate the achievements of the Wrekin Volunteers. During the morning over 50 Shropshire Wildlife Trust members and supporters were treated to some delightful and engaging presentations: John Morgan spoke without visual aids - no Powerpoint slideshow, no photo's just a highly interesting and animated talk on the various bats that abound - what they eat, where they sleep, where they mate, how

they look after their babies and how to find and record them; a wonderful insight into the lives of these somewhat secretive mammals. Paul Watts treated to us to an insight into moths and the incredible number that have been recorded in Telford on various night forays. Nigel Cane - Honeysett explained the complexities of recording biological data in the field but managed to make it accessible for all.

Following a substantial lunch provided by Cherry's Real Food Cafe

we were ready to burn off the calories with a walk through the woods led by John Hughes. John dragged us all up the hill and then down again pointing out various fascinating and fun fungi along the way, adding in his own inimitable style, his humorous and many anecdotes.

All in all an excellent day with lots of very positive feedback and many people asking when the next one will be.

Paul Watts, Wrekin Forest Volunteer

Will for wildlife

We'll take your money when you die! Not in a thieving way, but as a legacy. Over the past few years Shropshire Wildlife Trust has been fortunate enough to have been remembered in the wills of several people.

Regular maintenance of nature reserves

Legacies enable us to carry out work that may not be glamorous,

but is nonetheless essential. Regular maintenance of nature reserves instantly springs to mind. Or it can support experimental work that is too risky for other funders, such as habitat creation. But it all goes towards caring for Shropshire's wildlife.

Your money could end up going somewhere you'd rather it didn't!

If you've supported the Wildlife

Trust during your life, what's more natural than to continue that support after you're dead? And remember, if you die without leaving a will your estate could end up going somewhere you'd rather it didn't!

If you want any further information contact John Hughes on 01743 284287.