

**SHROPSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST
VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER**

Shropshire Wildlife Trust
193 Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6AH

01743 284280
dianem@shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk
www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

*Copy date for Spring Grapevine is
Tuesday 14th February 2012*

Volunteer opportunities at SWT

Nature Tots leader

Shrewsbury based Fridays 9.30am to 12.30pm. Suit student studying childcare, a parent or older person

Some experience of working with young children (pre – school) and parents needed, plus ability to act on own initiative. Training and support will be given. Contact Sara Bellis on 01743 284284 and leave a message.

Archive research

Interested in archive research? We are looking for a volunteer to do some research into our Hollies nature reserve. Contact Diane for more information. 01743 284296

Volunteer training

This year we ran a series of half—day training sessions for volunteers and they were very well received. We are currently looking at running a similar programme of courses in 2012 and are just sorting the dates and details out. Please can you let me know if you are interested in any of the following and I will notify you of dates once they are fixed.

Biological recording—recording what you see including butterflies, birds, plants invertebrates etc. This will be led by Robin Mager

Introduction to bird identification

Introduction to butterfly identification

Tool maintenance—led by Shropshire Wildlife Trust staff

Risk Assessment— Led by Shropshire Wildlife Trust staff

Wildlife protection and the law— Led by Rhona Goddard

Working with Young People—essential for anyone helping out with events— Led by People & Wildlife Team

Event support— Aimed at volunteers interested in supporting us with our events, either behind the scenes setting up, or front of house welcoming people.— Led by Diane Monether

Diane Monether 01743 284296 dianem@shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Baked spuds, marshmallows and hot chestnuts at Quarry Wood

Nikki Taylor—Müller

Fresh air, clear skies, autumn sunshine and a 14 strong group of energetic volunteers from Müller Dairy (Market Drayton), the perfect cocktail for a day in the woods!

Cue the Müller volunteers!

As part of Müller Dairy's commitment to the local environment, staff from the dairy gave up time to volunteer and help Shropshire Wildlife Trust clear overgrown rhododendron from their Quarry Wood reserve in Hinstock. The rhododendron had become so fierce and out of control that it blocked sunlight and created a natural barrier preventing wildlife entering through the hedgerows on the fringe of the wood..... cue the Müller volunteers! Armed with bow saws and loppers we split up into two teams and with a little guidance we were able to clear



four big sections of the woodland much to the delight of Diane and Carl from the Wildlife Trust.

Proper foraging

Throughout the day we were fed with potatoes baked on an open fire, marshmallows toasted over a real fire, and tea served using the trusty 'Kelly Kettle'. We even managed to

cook some chestnuts collected in the wood; proper foraging. It was hard graft, honestly..... well, in parts anyway! We also managed to fit in a tour of the wood guided by the Warden, John McGuinness. The day drew to a close with plenty of banter, large grins and satisfaction amongst us all, what a day! what a team!



Winter 2011



SHROPSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

Grapevine



Volunteer update

Our recent Branch and Volunteer Forum was well attended and provided an opportunity for all of our volunteers to meet with staff and other volunteers. The evening included lively and interesting discussions about a number of issues: It was agreed that we would produce a Branch protocol covering areas such as publicity, health & safety and events, along with an annual update on Trust plans and themes for the coming year. Other points for discussion were Wildlife Sites - terminology, event evaluation / feedback, charges for guided walks / talks, publicity, social media, SWT

ambassadors, membership recruitment and much more. If you've not seen the feedback and notes from the evening and would like to, then please contact me and I'd be happy to send them to you. The evening was a very sociable event and we will certainly make it an annual event.

Diane Monether

Appreciation for volunteers

I was so pleased that the Friends of Whitcliffe and Shropshire Wildlife Trust volunteers recently cleared the slopes north of the waterfall on Whitcliffe Common. This exposes an internationally important geological section which has drawn international attention for nearly two centuries. Thank you.

Professor Michael Rosenbaum

This was work carried out jointly by our Thursday work party and Friends of Whitcliffe in October

Don't forget our
Volunteer Christmas Social
Thursday 8th December
6pm to 8pm
Join us for a glass of mulled wine, mince pie and a chin wag with staff and volunteers

Reedmace removal at Birch Road pond

Birch Road Pond clearly suits Reedmace (*Typha latifolia*) very well, and if allowed to continue unchecked it would soon fill the remaining open water. We do not want that to happen, so, on a fine Saturday in October, a team of volunteers from

Ellesmere Branch assisted by Carl set about removing large quantities of this invasive plant. It pulls out of the mud quite easily and can then be floated across for removal and loading on to the truck. Two loads were taken to Brookfield Farm at

Babbinswood near Whittington where Mr P Jones runs a green waste recycling business. He kindly waived the normal charges for taking waste as his contribution to Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

Thank you to all our many and talented volunteers who have helped us in our work over the past 12 months. We wish you all a very happy Christmas a peaceful new year.
From all staff at
Shropshire Wildlife Trust



Alex Grant clearing Reedmace from Birch Road Pond

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

Seven Wonders walk

Sarah Gibson

More than 20 volunteers from around the county helped out at this year's Seven wonders of the Oswestry hills walk, organised by the Oswestry

Branch, ensuring that this event was even more smoothly run than last year. Volunteers helped as marshals, cake-makers, refreshment providers; they also showed people around our nature reserves and guided a group on the walk.

Seventy-six walkers took part in the event, which was not favoured by fine weather and also had to compete with a Rugby World Cup England match.



Top of the Moelydd

The Reaves family

Everyone who came along told us how much they enjoyed it. £573 was raised through entry fees, which has been donated to Shropshire Wildlife Trust's Butterfly Appeal.



Local Access Forum— volunteer representative needed

I have been a member of the LAF since November 2004 and in July 2010 found myself elected chairman. There are four meetings a year at Shirehall held during the morning followed by lunch, and an away day out and about to see access work being done. I think I have missed just two meetings in all that time. The Local Access Forum was set up by law as a result of the CROW (Countryside and Rights of Way) Act. There has to be a balanced

membership with representation from the following fields of interest: walking including Walking for Health and disabled provisions, riding, carriage driving, cycling, motorised vehicle use, conservation and wildlife, tourism, landowners and farmers, Natural England plus two local councillors. Members of the public are also welcome as observers. I represent Shropshire Wildlife Trust and keep a watching brief on conservation issues. As a keen walker I have

access interests too. I have enjoyed the LAF but feel that it is time to stand down and so we are appealing for a volunteer with interests in access to take my place. Meetings are in October, January, April and July. For more information you can contact me, Jane Ing 01939 260100 or Jan McKelvey at Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

Jane Ing

Whitchurch Branch mini beast madness!

I just wanted to pass on my thanks for the efforts of Helen Trotman at our Mini Beast Madness event. A wonderful afternoon was had by all the children, parents and volunteers.

enthusiasm and panache. She manages to carry out her duties with grace, decorum and an element of gravitas, which earns the respect of all she meets!

Baz Fewster

Once again Helen was a true ambassador for the Trust, conducting herself with utter professionalism,

Pete McKeon and Helen Trotman



Happy birthday to us!

John Hughes

How old does Shropshire Wildlife Trust look? Go on, take a guess. Well, we're actually 50 next year and that's cause for a celebration. In fact it's a double celebration because the Wildlife Trust movement is 100 in 2012. Back in 1912 our founding father Charles Rothschild (of banking fame) identified several hundred sites worthy of preservation and so was born the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves. Gradually, over the 20th century, individual counties established local trusts. The early 1960s saw the establishment of numerous trusts, Shropshire being one.

We owe a huge debt to our founders. These far-sighted people recognised the pressure

wildlife was under and did something about it. Fifty years on the pressure hasn't relented, but volunteers, staff, members and supporters mean that we truly make a difference.

A bit of a do

So, to celebrate our half century we're planning a year of fun and festivities. First there's a book, *Wild Shropshire* – a photographic celebration of our wildlife by award-winning Newport photographer Mark Sisson – an ideal Christmas present. A special Darwin Festival will follow in February. There will be summer garden parties and even a celebratory beer. Throughout the year look out for wildlife spectacular events around the

county. A milestone anniversary is a time to reflect. Our achievements have themselves been spectacular and against the odds. The future with the ills of recession and climate change looks bleak, but we have a strong vision and you to help realise it. I'm sure we'll be able to look back with pride in fifty years time when we celebrate our centenary.

Wild Shropshire is available to buy online at www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/wildshropshire for £25 (FREE post & packing). It can also be purchased directly from our shop and from bookshops around the county.

Scrumping at Dudmaston

Caroline Pond

This year Dudmaston Hall very kindly offered us the chance to collect apples for our Apple Day. Mike and I set off with the garden volunteers on a glorious day in October with clear blue sky and fantastic autumnal hues. We met Mike Annis, Groundsman and the head gardener who led us to their main orchard. We felt very welcome and were given free reign to pick from their heavily laden trees and ended up with a selection of seven different apple varieties. A

very pleasant morning was spent within the peaceful, secluded setting of this wonderful walled garden with Dudmaston Hall as the backdrop. We picked to our heart's content and felt very privileged to have the garden to ourselves. As we reluctantly let ourselves out of the walled garden with our truck laden with apples, it did indeed feel that we had been scrumping from this beloved National Trust property!



Howard and Avril scrumping!

We have a new yard!

Diane Monether

Many of you will be aware that we have a new yard and volunteer base at Old Coleham, just two minutes walk from Trust HQ. Facilities at the base include storage space, workshop, 'Dunc's Den', a small kitchen, toilet and meeting place / office. The base is for use of volunteers and we would like to encourage the work party volunteers to take ownership of it. The base will be open from 8.30am on a Wednesday and Thursday and you'll be welcome to come and make a coffee or tea and to wait in the warm while the

vehicles are being loaded. There will be noticeboards with maps and information on the management of the reserves, space for putting up newspaper clippings, photographs and information of interest. Please bring along your own mug so that the kitchen remains manageable and if you have any ideas or thoughts on how to make the space more volunteer friendly then please let me know. It is your space so it would be nice to get some input and make it welcoming to everyone. We'd like to say a big thank

you to Jewsons who provided timber, Mark Ecclestone who has made the most beautiful table for us and to Peter Moss who has done amazing things with scrap wood, plasterboard and other bits and pieces to make the space useful and cosy.

We are looking for a small shed to put in the yard for tool storage so if anyone has one they want to get rid of we'd be happy to take it off your hands. Please contact Diane.