



Newsletter

Bracknell Conservation Volunteers

Newsletter No. 44

19 October 2017

What we've been doing

17 October 2017

Savernake Park

Leader: Jon Munday
Ranger: Liz Vango-Smith

We cleared shrubs including hazel, dogwood and pyracantha to improve the view across the pond. Some volunteers created a low dead hedge to close the gap exposed by clearing vegetation around the existing iron fence. Excess brash was cleared into the trailer. The weather was overcast, quite chilly in the morning. Eleven volunteers attended.

Previous visits

We last visited this site on 15 August 2017, when we cleared vegetation in the car park area and created a knee-high dead hedge using coppiced hazel. The aim was to create a spiral pattern; this has now been completed and has been planted with heathers.

Savernake Park

This is a 6.5ha (16.1acre) public open space. There is a balancing pond, a play area and mixed woodland. Noctule bats are resident.

Savernake Park takes its name from Savernake Forest in Wiltshire. The site probably used to be part of the Great Windsor Forest. In the 1990s Savernake Park was adopted by Bracknell Forest Council who now manage the site for recreation and wildlife.

See: <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/parks-and-countryside/parks-visit/savernake-park>

Coming up next

24 October 2017

Beedon Drive

Coppicing hazel and boundary trees.

Floating pennywort

Another invasive species is causing problems. Floating pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*) is originally from North America, and was introduced as a throw-out from aquaria. It can severely clog watercourses and hinder navigation

This species is now well established in parts of the River Thames near Sonning and has been seen in the River Kennet.

<http://www.getreading.co.uk/news/reading-berkshire-news/river-thames-wildlife-risk-devastating-13750597>

Floating pennywort is closely related to the native marsh pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*) which is an attractive (and harmless) creeping plant of marshland.

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/factsheet/factsheet.cfm?speciesId=1766>

Doing us good

We all knew that our weekly dose of conservation work in the fresh air does us good. Now it's been confirmed by a study carried out by the University of Essex for the Wildlife Trusts:

<https://www.essex.ac.uk/news/2017/10/02/volunteering-outside-help-improve-mental-health>

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/living-landscape/nature-health-and-wild-wellbeing>

Local flowers at the Lexicon

Bas-reliefs showing local plants have been installed in the paving in the new Lexicon area in Bracknell Town Centre. Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*) is near the information point in Union Square, near where the bandstand used to be. Just in front of the entrance to Princess Square is a relief showing what appears to be the lady's slipper orchid (*Cypripedium calceolus*), which is Britain's rarest flowering plant, and as far as I know is not found locally. Perhaps it is meant to be a somewhat stylised representation of a local helleborine (*Epipactis* sp.) . You do get some odd looks if you walk round peering at the floor.

What's On

Savernake Park

Thursday 26 October 2017

Additional volunteer session organised by BFC Ranger Liz Vango-Smith to continue dead hedging and coppicing work carried out at previous sessions by BFCV and other groups

Please give your name and details to Marie-Anne Phillips at the task on 24 October, or e-mail:

Liz.Vango@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Bracknell Forest Parks and Countryside

All Parks and Countryside events are listed at:

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/parks-and-countryside/events>

Berkshire Conservation Volunteers

Circle Hill, Crowthorne, task tba

Sunday 22 October 2017

Meet at: 10:15am at the site.

See Berkshire Conservation Volunteers task list at:

<http://www.berkshire-conservation-volunteers.org.uk/>

Contact Bracknell Conservation Volunteers

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