



# Newsletter

Bracknell Conservation Volunteers

Newsletter No. 3

7 December 2016

## What we've been doing

**6 December 2016**

**Northerams Wood**

**Leader: Jon Munday**

**BFC ranger: Marie-Anne Phillips**

We started off coppicing hazel in the woodland near the pond and burning the cleared material on a bonfire. Some of us then moved on to digging out yellow flag iris from the bed of the pond with forks. This was a very difficult job. Further work with a larger number of people would be needed to make significant impact on the flag iris.

10 volunteers were present.

### *Previous visits*

BCV last visited Northerams Wood on 1 March 2016. We cleared a ditch, cleared an overgrown path and cut down laurel. We also made safe some trees overhanging paths. BFC Ranger was Alison.

### *Northerams Wood*

A 400-year old woodland, which was originally run as a Nature Reserve by BBOWT but has now been taken over by Bracknell Town Council. Recent work has included hazel coppicing and building all-weather paths. There is a pond and wild flower meadow. Bluebells flower in season. Other wild flowers include grass vetchling, early purple orchid, common spotted orchid, wood anemones, cowslips and betony. The park has been designated a Local Wildlife Site because of its important wildlife.

The remains of a railway track can still be seen in part of the wood. This may have been built to transport ammunition during the last war.

## Coming up next

**13 December**

**The Greenway/Snaprails**

Tree planting and bramble clearance

## News

The project to construct a bridge, path and steps at the Newt Reserve in Warfield has been completed. A picture is in the Winter 2016 edition of Bracknell Forest Council's Town and Country (page 15):

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/town-and-country-winter-2016.pdf>

BCV were there working on this project on two successive weeks:

**5 April 2016**

**12 April 2016**

with BFC Ranger Liz Vango-Smith.

## From the archives - A day to remember

On 3 January 2012, BCV started coppicing at Whitegrove Copse in a high wind. The task had to be called off after a tree fell without warning. Fortunately nobody was hurt.

The group moved on to Garth Meadows, but the task was called off at lunchtime because of torrential rain and a high wind.

The leader was Don Petford, ranger Marie-Anne Phillips.

Current volunteers present on the day were: Richard Elsbury, Jon Munday, Graham Coe, Mick Norton.

## Toads in trouble

The common toad (*Bufo bufo*) is a creature of habit. When they are ready to breed, toads often return to the pond in which they grew up. Unfortunately, this can include crossing roads. Volunteers who run toad patrols to help the toads reach their breeding grounds safely have reported an average 68% decline in toad numbers in the UK. A similar pattern has been seen in Switzerland.

<http://www.froglife.org/what-we-do/toads-on-roads/>

## What's On

### ***Eco Christmas trees***

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) offer Scots Pine Christmas Trees at Wildmoor Heath. This not only helps to clear invasive species from heathland, but Scots Pine doesn't drop its needles. Recipients are asked to make a suitable donation. All proceeds go to BBOWT.

Saturday/Sunday 10/11 December 2016

11.00 - 15.00

Edgbarrow Woods Car Park/Wildmoor Heath RG45 7PP

<http://www.bbowt.org.uk/events/2016/12/10/wildmoor-heath-christmas-tree-sale>

### ***Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) –Big Garden Birdwatch***

Every year, the RSPB asks people to take part in the Big Garden Birdwatch. You are asked to record the birds in your garden for a period of 1 hour on 28-30 January 2017. This gives valuable data on garden bird numbers. From 14 December you can register for a free Big Garden Birdwatch pack.

<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch>

### ***Bracknell Forest Parks and Countryside***

Orchard Pruning at Larks Hill

Saturday December 17

10.30 – 13.30

Meet at Larks Hill Car Park, Harvest Ride RG42 2QD

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/pc-events-prog-nov-2016-to-april-2017.pdf>

### ***Berkshire Conservation Volunteers***

Coppicing and dead hedging

Jock's Copse, Bracknell

Sunday 18 December 2016

Meet at 10.15 at the site, see website for details:

[http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/neil67733/BeC/BeCnewwebsite/BeC\\_files/BeCtasklist.htm](http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/neil67733/BeC/BeCnewwebsite/BeC_files/BeCtasklist.htm)

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