



# Newsletter

Bracknell Conservation Volunteers

Newsletter No. 13

22 February 2017

## What we've been doing

**21 February 2017**

**Temple Copse**

**Leader:** **Graham Coe**

**BFC ranger:** **Liz Vango-Smith**

The group coppiced hazel and used the brash to make a dead hedge. Some branches of hazel were laid for a live hedge.

Liz showed some volunteers how to layer live hazel branches with the aim of starting new root growth.

We were very glad to welcome a new volunteer having a day out from Fujitsu.

A great spotted woodpecker was drumming in the wood at various times through the day. Bluebell leaves were emerging under the trees; it was difficult to avoid stepping on them.

### ***Previous visits***

BCV visited Temple Copse on 9 August 2016. We built 2 dead hedges using hazel cut on site, and placed posts to mark off different compartments in the copse.

### ***Temple Copse***

Temple Copse is one of the Three Copses in Binfield Parish. The other copses are Tinker's Copse and Jock's Copse. Temple Copse is a fairly small area of woodland, but is a valued wildlife habitat. It is classified as ancient woodland (woodland known to have been in existence since at least ca. 1600 CE). The Three Copses are classified as Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).

The woodland is mainly oak and hazel. Noteworthy species include wild service tree (*Sorbus torminalis*), ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) and bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*).

See: <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/thethreecopses>

## **Coming up next**

**28 February 2017**

**Horseshoe Lake**

Scrub clearance

## **Christmas outing/bushcraft activities**

BCV Christmas Outing will be on 14 March 2017. Activities will include wood whittling, fire lighting, baking bread over a campfire (including lunch) and setting up tarpaulins and hammocks. The day will be spent at Hayley Green woods, which has the advantage of toilets being available at Westmorland Park.

## **What happens to plastic in the environment?**

We do a lot of litter picking. A large part of what we pick up is plastic packaging. All the plastic we use has to go somewhere. A lot of it ends up as minute pellets (nurdles) on our beaches and in the countryside. A survey of UK beaches found 73% to be contaminated with nurdles.

<http://www.fauna-flora.org/news/the-great-winter-nurdle-hunt/>

## Thames Basin Heaths Partnership

*Three wardens from the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership visited us on our task at Wildmoor Heath on 31 January 2017. Here one of the wardens, Victoria Huth, explains what the partnership does:*

The Thames Basin Heaths are 8,200 hectares of lowland heath habitat - fragments of an ancient landscape dispersed across Hampshire, Surrey and Berkshire. They are classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA) due to internationally important populations of rare ground-nesting birds, namely the Dartford warbler, nightjar and woodlark. The SPA is under pressure from increasing visitor numbers (over 5 million a year) and this is magnified by increasing housing development in the area. With over 290,000 homes built within 5km of the SPA's boundary and another 50,000 new homes planned by 2026, a strategy was needed; this is where our project comes in.

Hosted by Natural England, our project is a partnership between 26 different organisations, and funded by contributions from new housing developments. Armed with informative leaflets, friendly advice and free dog poo bags, we're chatting with visitors across the SPA to raise awareness of the sensitivity of these special places and to encourage responsible behaviour. We act as extra eyes and ears on the sites, reporting issues and visitor comments back to site managers. Our staff also monitor visitor trends and promote alternative places to visit (known as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces or 'SANGs'). These alternative greenspaces provide pleasant natural environments, and are designed to reduce recreational pressure on the SPA.

You will often find us running and attending events, and this year we are launching a new dog-walker engagement project, plus starting a school education programme that has been handed over to us from The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT).

Many of our wardens come from practical conservation backgrounds, working well with our site management partners and their volunteers, lending a hand where needed to keep the heathland in good condition.

Although many people care about these heathlands, not everyone is aware of how special and fragile they are. People and dogs can be found trampling through the heather during bird nesting season, there are incidences of fly-tipping and arson and not everyone picks up after their dog! But that's why we are here; to spread the word about this rare habitat and to try and change people's behaviour for the better.

For more information visit our website: [www.tbhpartnership.org.uk](http://www.tbhpartnership.org.uk) and join our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/thamesbasinheathspartnership](https://www.facebook.com/thamesbasinheathspartnership)

# **What's on**

## ***Berkshire Conservation Volunteers***

Holly clearance at Farley Copse

Sunday 26 February 2017

Meet at: 10:15am at the site (Grid ref: SU848695). Tippits Mead gateway entrance, off Tippits Mead, Binfield, RG42 1FH

<http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?X=484836&Y=169547&A=Y&Z=115>

## ***Warfield Environment Group***

Big Spring Clean at Larks Hill (litter picking)

Saturday 4 March 2017                    10:30 – 12:00

Meet at Larks Hill car park

## ***Bracknell Forest Society***

"The Bracknell Town Regeneration", talk by Councillor Marc Brunel-Walker, executive member for economic development and regeneration.

Bracknell Rugby Club                    Lily Hill Drive, RG12 2UG

Friday 10 March 2017                    20:00

All welcome, bar and raffle.

## ***South Hill Park***

Community Litter Pick

Thursday 23 March 2017                    10:00-11:00

Meet at courtyard in front of SHP reception, Ringmead, Bracknell RG12 7PA

## ***Contact Bracknell Conservation Volunteers***

On-site mobile phone: **07986 707 448**

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