

SWINDON VOLUNTEER RANGERS' NEWSLETTER

Spring 2009

No. 9.

Staffing.

In the last Newsletter we reported that three Ranger posts were to be lost. The three who leave at the end of March are Mike Woodroffe, Chris Pike and Mike Newton.

Mike Woodroffe will be a new name to many volunteers. He has worked from Lydiard and Coate Water for over 20 years, starting as a Seasonal Ranger, and undertaken mainly janitorial responsibilities.

Chris Pike has been a Swindon Ranger for some 27 years. He was the first in Swindon to be called a Ranger and was one of a team which moved between sites and on patrol on motorbikes. He has not been directly linked to the volunteers but all who came in contact with him at Coate Water will remember him for his cheerful disposition, his positive attitude, and his helpful and generous support, whatever the problem.

Mike Newton joined the Ranger Team 21 years ago. Many will remember him as the lead Ranger at Lydiard Park. Those who have had the good fortune to join Mike on one of his events will be aware of his skill and enthusiasm as a teacher, particularly of the young. Testimony to this is to be found in his work with the local Young Ornithologists' Club, Lydiard Junior Rangers and Watch Groups. Over and above this is his love of, and work for, badgers. This he traces back to a conference at Lackham Agricultural College in 1989 which fired his enthusiasm and led him to join the Wiltshire Badger Group, a group of which he has been Chairman for the last ten years.

We wish them well.



Volunteer Input.

		Number of Work Sessions	Hours Worked					Number of Volunteer sessions
			Coate Water	Stanton Park	Other sites	Lone/Events	Total	
December	2007	7	84	98	0	25	207	47
	2008	5	64	49	32	19	169	44
January	2008	7	53	108	24	27	212	55
	2009	6	79	70	26	23	198	50
February	2008	6	72	73	64	55	264	69
	2009	4*	26	0	65	31	122	33

*Reduced to 3 – snow.

A warm welcome is extended to new volunteers **Martin and Lucy Avenell, Jane Gauvain** and **Alison Pike** Congratulations to **Mark Clayborough** and **Allan Cox** for passing the 60 hours mark. Congratulations also to **Nicola Rivett** who has been appointed to a post at the University of Ulster where she will work on the Countryside Survey Project.

A splendid start was made to March. At Stanton Park 12 volunteers clocked up 57.5 hours on the 3rd.

Several volunteers are involved in supporting Rangers in their survey work. Any work undertaken in support of Rangers outside the main Work Programme is defined as Lone Working and the hours devoted to it need to be recorded. If this applies to you please complete and return a lone working form at the end of each month. Forms may be obtained from Michael Lilley and/or Lead Volunteers, and should be returned to Michael.



Green Flag.

Good luck to Coate Water and to Stanton Park for which applications have been made for the prestigious Green Flag award. It is the first application for Stanton Park but for Coate Water success would mean four consecutive flags.



Ranger Responsibilities.

From this April a wider programme of Ranger responsibilities for sites will operate.

Senior Rangers

Karl Curtis

Bob Sharman

Sites

Stanton Park

Coate Water

Seven Fields

Centenary Copse

Rangers

Ian Barker

Tim Kaye

Seven Fields

Barbury Castle

The Quarry Wildlife Garden

Mouldon Hill

Town Gardens

Shaw Forest Park

Bruddel Wood

Peatmoor Copse and Lagoon

Radnor Street Cemetery Rushey Platt

Great Copse

Queen's Park

River Ray Parkway

Croft Wood

The Lawns

It is also worth noting that Michael Lilley has both "Volunteers" and "The Community" in his portfolio.

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Community Links



The Work Programme invited us to a "Pond Clearance" at Wanborough School. This was a task with a difference. We were given enthusiastic support by several parents. They helped us to move the literally dozens of frogs, for whom the pond was home, to a place of safety until the pond had been cleared.

The "Before and After" photographs were taken by Ranger Tim Kaye, whose project this was, while the "During" we have copied from the school website. This is a most impressive site and a splendid advertisement for the school. A detailed account of our task was loaded within hours of our visit. Besides carrying many pictures, including close-ups of a frog and a newt, this invited us to listen to a pod-cast compiled by pupils at the school, two of whom interviewed Tim. This project appeared to tick all of the boxes linked to the Rangers' aim to foster links with the community.

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In the Pipeline?

At Stanton Park.

A woodchip pellet burning stove is soon to be installed in the Centre. This will heat the entire building and lessen its carbon footprint.

Further news on some of the projects mentioned in our last edition.

A contract has been signed for the manufacture and installation of a Fungi Interpretation Centre with a completion date of next September. The consultation with volunteers took place, and the one we chose, albeit by a small majority, is the one that, with some modifications, will be installed.

A start has been made on the building of the pond which Tim Kaye will use in his environmental education programme.

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Requests for help

The next Goose count takes place on 29th April at 11.30am.

Stuart Searl is anxious to start butterfly surveys this April. Identification Guides will be available! Please contact him for further details.