

Hello Volunteers

Welcome to the Summer edition....

Well we have had the sunshine, and some might say the summer, but as I start to put this edition together, having returned from a glorious week in Cornwall, the rain has come and gone and might still come again before more of that sunshine returns. Still waiting for some rain though.

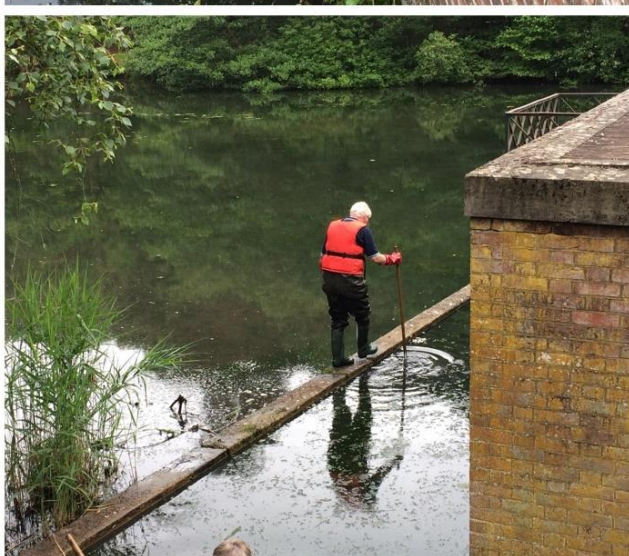
In this issue: Clearing rubbish from the lake at Stockgrove & Fence repair; Planting the new etched seats 1 & 2; Salcey Forest Visit; Moving the Bug; Tunnelling; Pipelines and Sunshine on Rannamere!

I feel that I must apologise to the bulk of the Wednesday volunteers - that most of the photographs depict the Tuesday group. The reason is that I have more time during a Tuesday session to snap away and the group is normally working closer together. On a Wednesday you all scatter and hide, sorry no that's not right, work in small groups!

Congratulations to Ranger Gary Peach, Niki and Welcome to the little peach pip – Edward

Stockgrove Lake

On the 12th June, the Tuesday group task was to clear out various bits of rubbish from around the boat house in Stockgrove Lake. The rubbish consisted of branches and twigs fallen from the trees or thrown in by bored visitors; various bits of wood that once formed a fence adjacent to the viewing platform; pond weed and other assorted rubbish.



Paul reveals how Stuart performed his walking on water photograph (see Newsletter No.35).



All cleaned up now and now it's time to repair the adjacent fence ...



Original fence wood recovered from the lake, nails removed, and the salvaged pieces used for the new fence!

Jurassic Park comes to Rushmere



Moving the Bug



29th May 2018 - The story is - a polite request was made that the wood sculpture of a beetle, adjacent to the path along side the Dower House in Oak Wood, be moved away from their fence line. The creature it seems attracted visitors (as it is supposed to do) and disturbed the residents (Editor: Probably those dogs!). So, the Tuesday group under guidance from Ranger Bob Hook and after some head scratching and ideas' refinement, came up with a plan to strap the bug to some pallets and tow or drag it to a new location some 50 metres back along the path nearer to the Stockgrove/Rushmere corner of Oak Wood. The photographs tell the story!

Carved and Etched Tree Trunk Seats or Benches



On the same day (we are so very busy on a Tuesday) having recovered from moving the bug, Bob then said we had to move the first 3 seats or benches (whatever you want to call them). These huge tree trunks had had a flat surface cut on one side and then etched with a pattern. The first 3 depicted a moth, a fern leaf and a snake. Following the example of the ancient Greeks or was it the Egyptians? We utilized some small logs and towing straps, to roll one of the trunks on to the trailer, drive it to its new location, plant it (levelling the ground so it sat correctly) and then repeat the process for the other two. Some of the benches were anchored using a stake driven into the ground at either end and screwed to the log.



On the 26th June 2018, the Tuesday group placed the second lot of 3 benches or seats (still can't make my mind up) about Oak Wood at Rushmere. The etching on these three depicted Bluebells, Beetles and Flies (I think) – you need to find them and decide for yourself!

So, then you ask where are they all?

By the path just past the sewage works; off the main path in the valley through the middle of Oak Wood; near Black Pond; near the crossroads on the far side of Oakwood and the path to the fishing lakes; by the path along the edge of Oak Wood and Rushmere before the Jurassic Park creature; right next door to the moved Bug!



Salcey Forest

OS Grid Reference SP795514 Postcode NN7 2HX

The Forestry Commission's Salcey Forest is an oasis of nature and history only 7 miles from the centre of Northampton. Wildlife and history are in abundance at this ancient semi-natural woodland.

It is a fragment of a former medieval hunting forest east of the village of Hartwell, between Northampton and Newport Pagnell. It has a Tree Top Way that rises to 15 metres above the woodland floor, with a crow's nest platform at 20 metres reached by steps. The structure offers stunning views across Salcey Forest and the adjoining woodlands of Yardley Chase. Unfortunately, it is closed now following a safety inspection that indicates a need to review a number of maintenance options.

There are extensive trails to help you explore the forest, with three walking trails, two of which are surfaced easy-access paths. There is a 5 mile family cycle route and a 5 mile horse riding trail with a car park for horse boxes to use.

By the main car park, you'll find a [cafe](#), toilets, children's play area, information point and picnic areas. It is also the starting point for the waymarked walking trails.

On Wednesday 26th June 2018 some of the Western Greensand Trust Volunteers visited the forest in the company of Ranger Bob Hook and were led on a walk around some of the trails by ex-Greensand Trust Senior Development Officer and Sandpit Project Officer - Alex Rose and her 2 dogs in her new role as the Visitor Centre Manager.





Some photographs of the assembly at the start and picnic over half way around. I think my butterfly snaps are just as good as Bob's. I guess they are a Large White and a Speckled Wood – any corrections?

Clearing out the tunnel and stream bed

On the 3rd July 2018, the Tuesday group were tasked with some muck racking and true to the task we all got down and dirty - even Bob lent a hand. You may or not know that the overflow from Stockgrove Lake runs through the Discovery Area and downhill under the main path connecting Rushmere - Stockgrove path to Heath and Reach via the edges of Bakers Wood and Shire Oak Heath (new and old) and eventually runs into Heron Lake. This fact only becomes apparent when there is some water unlikely at the moment (or you study a detailed map of the area).



Joining the dots – no! sorry! the pipeline!

On Tuesday 10th July 2018, Bob Holland had us scratching away at the dirt again. The water supply to the Visitor Centre at Rushmere suffers when there is a heavy demand – weekends, nice weather and school holidays; and so, an additional water supply was laid by contractors from Stockgrove to the Visitor Centre. I'm told that this was better as it created a greater "head of water" than the existing supply. The contractors only laid the pipeline in 100 metre lengths leaving them un-joined and the ends sticking out of the ground. You may have tripped over them on your rambles! Our task was to join those ends using a stop value. Once joined, the pipe was buried again, but with a tube hatch so that the valve could be accessed and shut if necessary. We also laid an extension piece on the Rushmere end to get the supply nearer the building – the supply is still awaiting to be connected both ends!



Sheltering from the Blazing Sunshine



Wednesday Group (11th July 2018) take it easy in the shade, on a very hot day on Rannamere Heath after pulling the 3 B's in both Bragenham Wood and here on the heath as shown on the banner photograph.

End Piece



Bob will be pleased – a unknown species of giant woodpecker has settled in Oak Wood!