



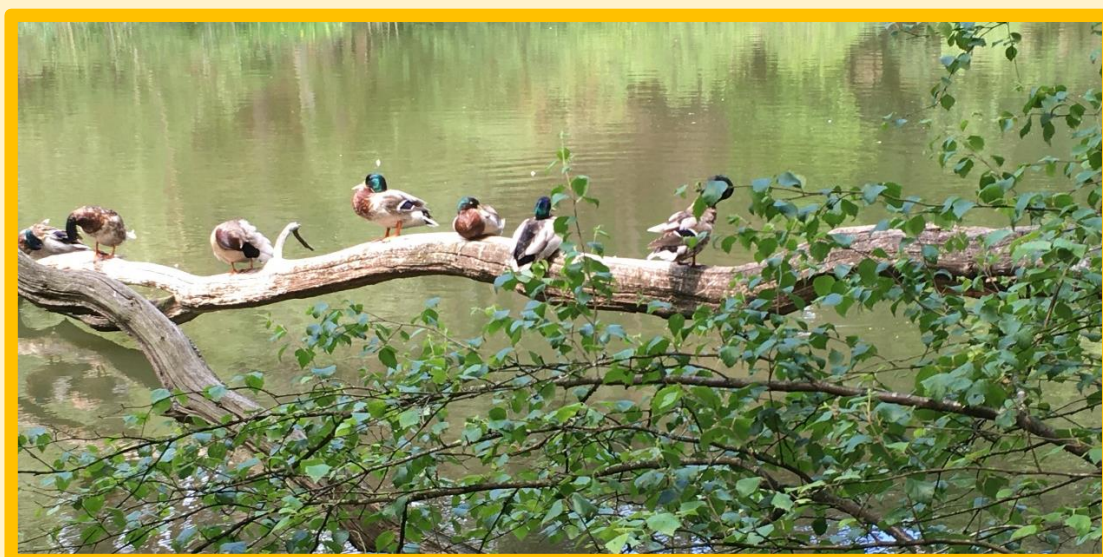
Western Volunteers Newsletter No.51 Summer 2021

Hello Vols

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Western Volunteers newsletter featuring the photographic journal of all we have been doing since the last edition. As we have all been back volunteering now there will be some photographs of the Wednesday group tasks and not just Tuesday's tasks.

In this Edition:

Bakers Wood Gates; New Shire Oak Heath Restoration; Heron Valley Vehicle Gate; New Pedestrian Gate at Rushmere Visitor Centre; New Shire Oak Heath Restoration 2; Pipe, Trough and Wire Day; Stockgrove Tool and Tidy-up day; Cuff Lane Meadow.



Stockgrove Ducks are branching out!

Bakers Wood Gates

On Tuesday 25th May the Tuesday Vols were tasked with creating gated access to the special interest areas that are fenced off in Bakers Wood. The purpose of this exercise was to allow small education groups into the areas. The photographs show the team adding gates at just two of the areas. Notice that a Ranger did try to help!



New Shire Oak Heath Restoration

On Wednesday 26th May the volunteers were back on the New Shire Oak Heath for yet more birch and bramble pulling. The regrowth on this site is quite stunning, especially the Broom. It makes the effort the vols have put in, in this area, so worthwhile.



The Foxglove photo taken a couple weeks later (16th June).

Heron Valley Vehicle Gate

Tuesday June 8th saw the Tuesday volunteers repairing the vehicle gate access to the northeast end of Heron Valley SSI area by replacing the posts on which the gate hangs. Yes! That is Paul with the drill and not Alan.



Gate Post repairs (Out and In) – Bakers Wood 1st June



New Pedestrian Gate at the Visitors Centre at Rushmere

On Tuesday 15th June, the Tuesday Volunteers were given various tidy up tasks around the Visitors Centre, of which, the installation of a new pedestrian gate adjacent to the main vehicle gate was the main priority. This gate was to allow access to the bin compound by the centre's staff without having to unlock (sometimes) and open the vehicle gate. Another task was to break up some old picnic tables.



No Fishing in Stockgrove lake – just try stopping me!

New Shire Oak Heath Restoration 2 (or was it 3 or 4 or..)

On Wednesday 16th June, the volunteers were back again on the New Shire Oak Heath for yet more birch and bramble pulling. A very hot day and the yellow blossom of the broom had gone. A large turn out and some new volunteers.





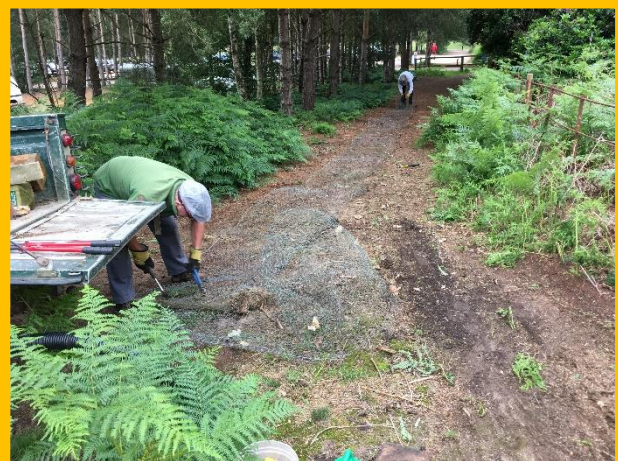
It's in here somewhere!



Its not in here either!

Pipe,Trough and Wire Day

Tuesday 29th June removing water trough and old wire fencing.



Graham re-enacting the boy, finger and dyke story



Everybody's got to take a break sometime!

Stockgrove Tool and Tidy-up Day

Wednesday 30th June was the annual tool inspection, clean and tidy day which also involved the cleaning of the barriers, signs and tables (painting) along with some edge grass strimming and cutting. We were led to believe by John that every other Ranger had disappeared for the day and left him in charge – but he survived so long as he had his cup of coffee!



The day ended with some excitement as most of the volunteers had gone when the swans and their cygnets appeared out of nowhere and had to be shooed out of the car park.



Now the swans are back where they should be – but sadly there now only 7 cygnets (5th July)



Cuff Lane and Oak Wood top plateau paths

On Wednesday 7th July the volunteers were sent to the furthest reaches of the country park to rake Cuff Lane meadow which had been cut the previous day. Two volunteers took over absentee Alan's usual task of

trimming back the sides of the main paths on the Oak Wood plateau using the flail (Come back Alan its all yours).



The top two photographs show some of the volunteers working on the meadow and were taken by Ranger Bob. In the middle but left and right are examples of the path edges cut by the flail; the rest were taken a day later, of the meadow, by the editor. The next two photographs illustrate what you should not do with the flail – go mud dipping!



Fortunately, Stuart and Paul were trimming back path overhangs and were on hand to help lift and pull the flail out of the mud after Keith and yours truly gave up (I'm not saying who was actually driving the monster machine).

End Piece



Cute Chicks (Sorry - Coot Chicks).