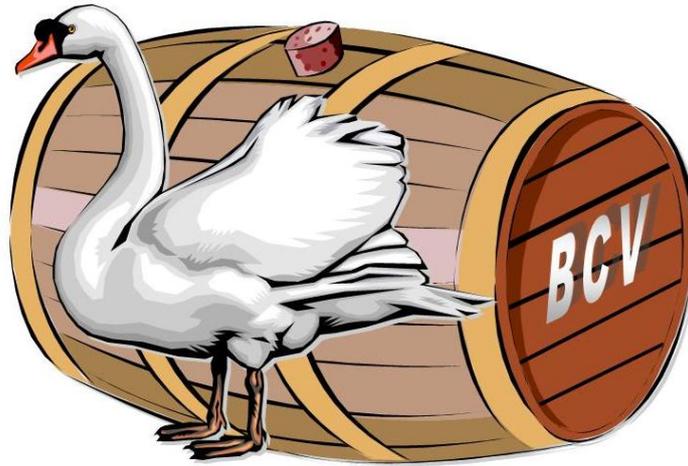


CONSERVATION

BURTON



VOLUNTEERS

www.bcv.org.uk



Burton Conservation Volunteers Annual
Report 2010

It has been a phenomenal year, partly due to having plenty of work from Staffs Wildlife Trust (SWT) over the summer when we are usually a bit quieter and also due to having a lot more young people showing an interest and assisting with work days. We carried out 668 work days by BCV plus 110 days by others including local Lichfield and Burton residents, The Kingfisher Project and local Parish Councils. These were carried out on a total of 56 different work days or tasks.

Of these, 542 task days were within the National Forest, 466 in East Staffs and 103 in the Lichfield area

As in previous years I have not counted in time for committee meetings, admin work, site surveys, and general organisation like tool collection or sorting out car share. The many hours of work on the allotment have not been included, not because it is not highly valued, but because we do not have a proper record of volunteer numbers. Nor have I included team-building socials/walks, manning displays, educational talks etc. so the basic figures do not reflect the total amount of commitment given to the group by volunteers. I did include the National Forest Walking Festival walk, as it was organised for others, but not the risk assessment walk. We have also worked with Community Punishment Order workers, Youth Offenders, Schools, East Staffs. BC Parks dept, South Derbys. DC, Lichfield DC and numerous Parish Councils. We have also provided support for local landowners like Yoxall Lodge and the vets at Alrewas other orgs. like Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England Burton and District Wildlife Group, Lichfield Gardening Group, Saxon Hill

School, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Scouts a short lived Transition Towns group and the National Society of Hedgelayers.

Other clients this year have included RSPB, British Waterways, Groundwork Trust and Broome Cider Farm nr Ross on Wye. We have been heavily involved in a big (400+trees) orchard project with Paget school in Burton and one volunteer now also works one day per week for the school as part of the project.

Thanks also go to the volunteers who help to organise walks, theatre visits, quizzes, meals website etc. help making working with BCV an enjoyable and social experience as well as a fulfilling and productive one for volunteers, clients and the environment.

Although we are not a 'carers' type group we do care and over the years a number of volunteers with learning disabilities, social or drink/drug related problems have been able to gain a lot from working with BCV and the confidence, acquired skills and improved CV they have gained from working with the group, has helped a number to find jobs and careers.

Highlights

It is difficult to pick out highlights from so many successful tasks, but again it is great to revisit many of our previous projects either for work days or on walks and to see them growing and taking effect (some will be nearly 18 years old

now). We have continued to work on the Kingfisher Trail, and it has now been declared a Local Nature Reserve, along with Branston Water Park, another of our long-term sites. With the reintroduction of grazing on the Trent Washlands in Burton, we have been carrying out a lot of work within the old Upper Mills area of the Washlands and this site is now becoming increasingly popular with the public and attracting more wildlife and it is hoped to declare this an LNR later this year.

The Paget orchard project promises to be a major asset to local wildlife and people and will hopefully encourage more of the next generation to take an interest in the natural world.

It is also good to see just how much material BCV is sourcing locally by recycling arisings as stakes, binders and withies etc. for different tasks.

The genuine welcome we received at Broome Farm in Herefordshire showed how much the group is liked as well as valued and winning the regional leg of the BTCV Green Hero Awards is yet another indication of how successful BCV is. The very revealing and unexpected personalised BCV Project Managers calendar is hanging above my desk in pride of place.

However of all the group achievements this year I think possibly the highest is the number of young people being attracted to work with BCV and sticking with the group.

Socials

We have continued the very enjoyable trips to the Globe Theatre in London plus seeing other theatre companies like Oddsocks at local venues.

The camping/walking holiday along the Samaritans Way was fascinating as well as great fun and little Shaun (not so little now) was, as always great company.

The well organised evening meals at a variety of venues have again proved to be popular and long may they continue.

It is again difficult to categorise the hedgelaying at Broome Farm, whether work or play, but everyone had a brilliant weekend camping and have enhance BCV's reputation even further afield.

We also provided a number of the models for the One World Week Fairtrade Fashion show as part of One World Week in Burton and this also gave us chance to publicise our new Fairtrade Organic hoodies and polo shirts with the BCV logo.

Training

We passed on the skills learned last year on 'new wood' management and formative pruning and the group provided training for many other volunteers with hedgelaying/willow weaving/coppice/woodland work days and Lynn and I gave a number of talks and guided walks.

Four of the group attended an 'access for all' course provided by British Waterways and this again was shared with other group members. After all the work on the River Mease I think we all know how to recognise Himalayan Balsam now.

Summary

We have continued to work on some old favourite sites and observed the effects of our work at places like, like Branston Water Park, Kingfisher Trail, Linton pond etc. whilst adding new ones like Upper Mills farm and Tower Woods. It has been a wetland work year for such dry weather, with work on Croxall Lakes, the Rivers Mease, Tame and Swarbourne, Burtons Trent Washlands a variety of lakes ponds, also the Trent & Mersey canal, plus building bridges at Badgers Hollow in S. Derbys, Newbrough and Yoxall Lodge. The BTCV award recognises the groups widening reputation for hard work to a high standard and will I am sure, ensure many busy years to come.

So thank you to everyone who has taken part in the group, making Burton Conservation Volunteers such a happy team and a successful organisation.

Lawrence Oates Chair and Project Officer 3-2-2011.

Looking forward to a successful 2011

