

## COLEORTON & NEW LOUNT VOLUNTEER GROUP

### February Update

1. There are now additional work sessions for March; these are:-

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at New Lount Reserve.

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March also at New Lount Reserve.

2. Nesting Boxes.

A small number of the group's members have cleaned and re-positioned all the nesting boxes at Coleorton Wood ready for the forthcoming nesting season. The group has also added two Kestrel nesting boxes to Coleorton Wood and is hoping to add additional nesting boxes for Kestrels and Owls to New Lount.

3. Members of the group will be monitoring the birds at both sites throughout the spring and summer and would welcome any interesting observations that individuals may record during these periods:- contact the Heritage Wardens at [heritagewarden@coleorton.org.uk](mailto:heritagewarden@coleorton.org.uk)

4. Group AGM.

The group held its first Annual General Meeting on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January where its Constitution was agreed and the group formalised its name, i.e.

#### "The Coleorton & New Lount Volunteer Group"

The Management Committee for the group was agreed as follows:-

Chairman: John Macdonald

Treasurer: Jane Elson

Secretary: Brian Bartram

Operations: Mick Specht

5. Monitoring of Species at the two Sites.

A number of wildlife organisations and individuals have expressed an interest in assisting the Volunteer Group to monitor the species at both sites, and the group will be working with these groups and individuals to focus its conservation work so that suitable habitats are maintained to support existing species, and where possible, attract new species. The groups and individuals are also assisting the Volunteer Group by offering advice on their specific species groups. These groups include:-

LCC Environmental Resource Centre, Holly Hayes, Birstall, (link =

<http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/environment/naturalenvironment/hollyhayes.htm> )

Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust. (link = <http://www.lrw.org.uk/> )

Loughborough Naturalists. (link = <http://loughboroughnats.org.uk/> )

Leicestershire & Rutland Dragonfly Group (link = <http://www.lrdg.org.uk/> )

Leicestershire Fungi Study Group (link = <http://www.leicsfungi.btik.com/> )

Leicestershire & Rutland Moth Group ( link =

<http://www.rutnet.co.uk/pp/club/detail.asp?id=1096> )

## 6. Fundraising.

The group is now working on a number of ideas for raising the necessary funds which will be required to maintain the work of the group. We will post more details about these events as soon as they have been finalised, and we would welcome suggestions from other sources. Please do support the group and help to maintain our local wildlife heritage.

## 7. Progress at Coleorton Wood.

A large area, from the car park down to the pond, has been cleared and the tree crowns lifted throughout. The area around the pond has been completely cleared and the group will now need to manage the growth of shrubs as they re-grow. We are aiming to replace the fence around the pond and if we can raise sufficient funds we will produce a boardwalk around one end of the pond. It is also hoped to enlarge the pond by digging out one end; this should help to stabilise the pond, which has a tendency to dry out.

We have almost completed laying a hedge which is surrounded by woodland. Whilst this has been something of a training exercise for members of the group, it has also created an additional walk through the wood and allows visitors to access a new part of the wood.

The group has almost accomplished clearing all of the tree protectors that had not been removed from the trees since they were planted some 20 years ago. This task will significantly tidy up the woodland areas.

## 8. Progress at New Lount Reserve.

The area around the entrance of the reserve has had some clearing so the entrance is tidier and more obvious. It is planned to paint the gates and fences in this area. The large grassland area on the site has also been cleared to take out saplings and retain the short grassland habitat which contains some very rare fungal species. A large area, which is below the ponds, has also been cleared to create an open space; this space will be managed as a clearing in the surrounding woodland.

The smallest of the top three ponds has had about one third of the reeds removed to create a clear area of water. There is still more that needs to be cleared out of this pond, but it will now need to wait until the autumn to carry out this work. The group is building a boardwalk around one side of this pond, where the path is so thick with mud it is impassable in normal footwear. This will give much better access to this side of the pond. The group still has the task of removing the reeds that have been taken out of the pond; this task will also give better access to the pond.

## 9. Training.

Members of the group are being supplied with training through the VIP Scheme. This training includes strimmer and brush cutter training as well as first aid training. On site training is also being received from the LCC Country Park Rangers.

## 10. Logo Competition.

The children of Viscount Beaumont School have taken part in a competition run by the group to find a group logo. At the time of writing this report we have a winning entrant, but we need to discuss this with the school before making a public announcement. The group are very thankful for all the entrants done by all the children; the standard was very high.

## 11. Anyone wishing to either comment on the group, or indeed join the group should contact the Heritage Wardens at [heritagewarden@coleorton.org.uk](mailto:heritagewarden@coleorton.org.uk)