



### **Saving Worcestershire's Heathlands**

It's been a while now since I came and spoke to you all about the Saving Worcestershire's Heathlands project and our grand plans on and off the new Dropping Well Farm nature reserve, so it's definitely time for an update!

I suppose the first update is that our project team has expanded and I am now joining forces with Joe, who some of you may know as our volunteer development officer, and Mary, one of our school sessional tutors and Kidderminster local. Joe is leading work on the reserve with our local young people, Mary is supporting Joe and leading outreach sessions in local schools whilst I am focusing my time in the communities bordering the heathland reserves. There has been a lot happening since I last saw you so I will focus this update on the last few months.

**On the reserve.** Joe has been busy hosting youth groups, schools and colleges with Kidderminster Youth Group (KDYT) visiting every other week during summer and Birchen Coppice School visiting every other week in term time.

Alongside that he has restarted the volunteer work parties, which are happening on the third Friday of every month. Recently, we have made some new connections with the Wyre Forest School and the Princes Trust team programme and we will be continuing to host Bewdley School's community service days this academic year.

**In our local schools.** Mary worked with Active Youth Outreach Services (AYOS) over the summer to deliver sessions to Stourport Primary, St. Mary's Primary and Birchen Coppice schools where they made heathland clay creatures covered in wildflower seeds to take home for their gardens. In term time, Mary will be visiting King Charles school every half-term to help them make their formal rose garden more wildlife-friendly, starting with their formal pond where animals often get stuck in and drown as there is no escape route.

In future we hope to deliver after-school and in-school sessions with more schools, including Birchen Coppice School, to reach the students who don't have the opportunity to come to the reserve.

**In the community.** I have been attending local events and setting up listening stations. Most recently, I've been able to facilitate actions for nature in the community around the reserves such as litter picking outside Birchen Coppice School, building a wildlife pond at St. Peters Church, judging a local wildlife gardening competition and supporting the creation of a community garden at the asylum seeker's hotel. We are also looking at several areas of land on the edge of the heathland reserves that provide important stepping stones/corridors for wildlife but which are currently being used for fly-tipping and/or lacking in biodiversity; we will be working with community housing, local residents and the Natural Networks team to restore the land for people and wildlife.

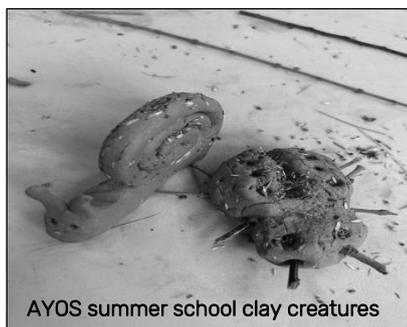
We've got lots more plans in the pipeline so if you want to find out more, we've been working hard to maintain our digital presence too through our blogs [www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/blog/heathland-heroes](http://www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/blog/heathland-heroes), social posts and project update newsletter. Please do check out our blogs for regular updates on the project and sign up for my newsletter to hear about upcoming community events. You can email me at [beccy@worcestershirowildlifetrust.org](mailto:beccy@worcestershirowildlifetrust.org) to be added to the list.

*Beccy Somers*

Saving Worcestershire's Heathlands Engagement Officer



Building bird boxes with KDYC



AYOS summer school clay creatures

*Thank you Beccy very much for this really interesting article.*

*You are all certainly working very hard to motivate and inspire the local community.*

*Ruth*

## Indoor Meetings

Everyone is welcome to all meetings  
Holy Innocents Community Hall at 7.30 p.m.  
Admission £2.50



Thursday December 7<sup>th</sup> 2023  
Christmas Social A.G.M.

A good way to start the Christmas  
celebrations

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Gordon Forrest  
Upton Warren

A lovely way to start the New Year!  
Gordon is an excellent speaker and he will be  
telling us all about The Christopher Cadbury  
Wetland Reserve at Upton Warren.

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Mike Lane

A Lane in the Heart of England

Mike is a full time photographer who specialises in  
birds and mammals. His four main interests:  
wildlife, photography, travel and computers will  
combine very well in this interesting talk.

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Paul Wilkinson

Water mammals

Paul is a senior ecologist working for the Canal and  
River Trust. He has vast experience about wetland  
habitats and wildlife.

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Rosemary Winnall

Between the Tides

Making a very welcome return to our group  
Rosemary will entertain and inform us with another  
of her lovely talks.

For further information about the group please  
contact Joan Kearton -Jones joan.kj@sky.com

Would you like to suggest a walk or lead one that is  
special to you? If so please contact Glyn Walters  
01562 637556

Newsletter editor: Ruth Howell

## Walks to enjoy in 2023/4

All start 10 a.m. Donations to Trust funds.

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December

A Wander around Astley Burf with Rich Jeynes

A circular walk of approx. four miles with four stiles. It  
goes through some of Worcestershire's most beautiful  
countryside, passing through river meadows, woodland

**Meet:** Car park of Hampstall Inn, Astley Burf  
S0812678 / DY13 0RZ

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

A stroll along the Smestow brook with Glyn Walters

A walk on undulating paths alongside the historic  
Smestow Brook. Good views of both Worcestershire and  
Staffordshire. Approximately 3.5 miles. Perhaps enjoy a  
look round the nursery after the walk.

**Meet:** Ashwood Nursery car park. Lower Lane, Kinver  
S0863878 / DY6 0AE

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2024

A Trek from Cookley with Roy Hall

This is an interesting walk of approx. three miles with  
no stiles. There will be about 30 steps. The walk will  
include the old Lea Castle estate and canal at Cookley,

**Meet:** Car park, Cookley playing fields, Lea Lane  
S0840800 / DY10 3RH

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Wandering around Wolverley  
with Chris Morris and Roma Bubb

A circular walk through some of rural Wolverley's  
countryside taking in canal tow paths, fields and woods.  
The walk is approx. three miles with two stiles.

**Meet:** The Lock car park, Wolverley S0830791 / DY10 3RN

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Enjoying the bluebells of Shrawley Woods  
with Rich Jeynes and Joan Kearton-Jones

A circular walk in the lovely woods at Shrawley when  
we should be able to admire the wonderful show of  
bluebells. A leisurely walk of about three miles of easy  
level walking with no stiles.

**Meet:** Hampstall Inn car park S0813678 /DY13 0RY