

FRIENDS *of* LONG LANE PASTURE

NEWSLETTER

No. 15 March 2010

Pasture will Re-open on 3rd April, Easter Saturday

It has been a damp and cold winter at long Lane Pasture. The land has been wetter than we can remember with new ponds and puddles appearing all over the place. Good news is that the long bank of the pond, now with its new reinforcing mesh in place, did not overflow. The main path however was underwater for a few weeks and its new surface now needs to be smoothed out in places. Major works have finished.

Work parties took place nearly every Saturday – only coming to a halt when the land was under snow! The new entrance way and path have been *landscaped*. Snowdrops are in flower here, and *more are being planted* to provide an even more impressive display for next year. A small area of bramble has been newly *cleared* and a circle, with a secretive entrance, created in the dense bramble near the railway line. This all makes for a variety of habitats for wildlife and keeps this very invasive plant under control. We have started clearing some of the *embankment* and will be putting *a seat* near the top, principally to provide a good place to bird watch. From here you will be able to get a good view of the birdfeeder, which has been well visited all winter.

Through the cold weather it has been particularly good to record *redwings* (a flock of 24 on one occasion) and a few *fieldfares*, a regular visit from a *green woodpecker*, and large flocks of *starlings*. We very much hope to see *ducks* return to the pond this spring. To entice them to do so, and encourage them to nest, a *duck island* has been made which is safe haven from foxes. *Frogspawn* has now arrived, once more the favoured spot is the ditch. But the most unexpected arrival was a *moorhen* which flew up and walked across the top of the brambles! A group of three *foxes* have been seen so we hope to have a family on the Pasture through the summer months.

New Leaflet: Can you sign up as a benefactor?

A Long Lane Pasture leaflet has been produced with generous support from the Big Lottery Breathing Places fund. Our initial grant funding is now coming to an end and we must now start raising funds to cover essential overheads (like insurance) and maintenance (fuel for mower, tools for volunteers) in order to run the community organisation which cares for and protects this precious greenspace. Our strimmer died this winter and we must replace it – this is an expensive but essential item. If you could sign up to make a regular payment by bankers order this would be enormously appreciated. But we are grateful for any donation you might be able to make. The Long Lane Pasture Trust is now registered for Gift Aid and is able to reclaim tax on sums given to us – please sign the form because it makes your gift go so much further at no extra cost to you. We have lots leaflets – if you could display these or circulate amongst friends or colleagues at work, play or home please get in touch for a supply.

Visit our website: www.longlanepasture.org

Long Lane Pasture: Programme for 2010

All events are on **Saturdays** unless otherwise stated. On these special days we not only highlight a particular aspect of the Pasture for the interest and enjoyment of our visitors but also to increase our knowledge of its wildlife. Events are not specifically for children, but they are very welcome. Checklists to record your own observations will be provided. Workdays will continue on Saturday mornings (10am – 12 noon) throughout the Spring and Summer. Just come along if you would like to lend a hand.

April 17th **Pond Life. 10am – 4pm.** A chance to dip into our ponds and discover life underwater. Nets and trays will be provided. Guaranteed to see tadpoles and newts!

May 1st **Birdwatching Day. 10am – 4pm.** Guided walk at 10am. Come and try out our new birdwatching seat overlooking the Pasture. Display, and help with identification.

May 15th **National Moth Day 10am – 1pm.** A moth trap will be on the Pasture over the night of 14th May (weather permitting). We will be identifying the moths from the trap and others observed around the site, together with any caterpillars you find.

June 19th **Wild Flower Day. 10am – 4pm.** A look at the meadow flowers and grasses which make particularly fine display in early June.

June 20th (Sunday) **Friends Open Day. From 2pm.** A special afternoon for our Friends: refreshments, display and guided walks. The Pasture will be looking its best - if you are a Friend and want to visit the Pasture on one day this year, make it this day!

July 17th **Butterfly Day. 10am – 4pm.** A focus on the butterflies of the Pasture and an opportunity to take part in recording the number and species present on this one day. Help will be on hand together with field identification charts.

All August **Blackberry Pick. Every Saturday 10am – 4pm.** Some punnets will be provided, or bring your own. There are always plenty for all. Donation requested.

August 14th **Pond Life. 10am – 4pm.** Another chance to explore the wildlife underwater. Pond nets and trays will be provided.

September 11th **Moth and Butterfly Day. 10am – 1pm** September 10th is European Moth Night so we will be running our trap to see which moths are living at the Pasture. These will be different from those seen in May.

November 27th **Tree Planting Day. 10am – 12 noon.** Planting shrubs and a few trees, and English bluebells on the embankment. Please *don't* bring your own trees – we will provide everything including spades.

If you have one, can you please send your e-mail address to Ann Brown: enquiries@longlanepasture.org so that we can send your Newsletter to you electronically. We would like to reduce the cost of printing and delivering paper copies – which detracts from funds available to look after the Pasture.