

# BNR 2019 AGM Conservation Warden's Report.

As most of you know Tina stepped down this year as trustee after 12 years but is carrying on as Conservation Warden. We see the new role as follows:

## **1. Help develop the maintenance plans & risk assessments.**

## **2. Keep the reserve safe for use by visitors and inhabitants:**

- a. Carry out repair work as necessary.
- b. Chip footpaths; repair steps and fences; develop the natural bramble barriers around the lake edge; trim back overgrowth from paths; control of occasional rubbish and general waste.

## **3. Maintain and improve the habitats:**

- a. Fencing the northern boundary to reduce deer damage to hedging plants until it is established; develop areas to increase the flower population for pollinating insects; increasing the sunlight by selective tree felling and sapling removal; remove fallen trees from water to prevent silting up of lake; weeding the SSSI to keep habitat for solitary bees who like cleared ground (the bees are numerous both in the face and the bank in front); replace/repair/renew bird boxes. Clear fallen branches into piles of dead wood for insects which enables grass cutting to take place (this replicates what grazing animals would normally do).

## **4. Organise work parties of volunteers for the general work.**

- a. Organise a work party a month from Sept to Feb, plus March if required and birds are not nesting; notify the volunteers and write the risk management document required.

The maintenance plan (see separate sheet) projects the work for the coming year. Jobs like repainting the main gate, preserving the hides; replacing notice boards only need to be done about every 5 years.

## End of Season Work Record.

Work has finished now for the season, the birds are beginning to nest and numerous flowers are blooming, especially violets, primroses, snowdrops etc. and we do not want to disturb or damage them. Last year I noticed that the primroses seem to be sparse in the centre area of the bank although they are spreading away from it, we'll see how it goes this year. Over the summer the only work that will be done, assuming no storm damage occurs, is keeping the paths and steps safe.

Over the year we have:

1. Wood chipped the paths.
2. Repaired the northern boundary fence, and erected temporary netting to help protect the hedging plants. Worcestershire Wildlife suggested we put brash around the plants to feed them as it rots away and to assist with their protection from the deer. This we have done so we will see if it works. After seeing how the plants have thrived, we will consider planting in the gaps next season.
3. Put the fallen bird boxes back up.
4. Raised the level of the footpath from Rabbit Lane, laid a drainage pipe and a created stone filled sump to filter the water before it gets into the lake. Hopefully this will ease the flooding problem.
5. In order to increase the sunlight onto the northern bank and to improve the view of the lake, we felled some of the trees near the water. This entailed clearing some of the bramble barrier to complete the work. The barriers across the gaps have been erected to discourage dogs from entering the water and disturbing the birds. The brambles will grow back over them.
6. Some of the trees that had fallen into the water have been removed in order to help keep the depth of water and assist with keeping it clear.
7. The bank on the south side has been cleared because at ground level it has the longest hours of sunlight even though it is a north facing bank as there is nothing creating shade. The latest national concern is a lack of insects and flowers which support them. We decided we would do our part and try to create a flower bank with a greater variety of species rather than brambles and general overgrowth.
8. The lake level is low at present and will only improve when any rain we have soaks into the ground to raise the water table.

Whilst we appreciate that the BNR is owned by a village, and that we do try and accommodate everyone's wishes and passions, sometimes this is not possible. The Trustees discuss and make decisions in good faith and with advice from experts. Your suggestions and questions are always welcomed.

Tina, Trustee and Conservation Warden - March 2019.