



## **Witney Woodland Volunteers** **Newsletter 1 - March 2024**

This is the first WWV Newsletter and follows on from the cessation of 'Roger's Ramblings'. It will be from the committee rather than from a personal perspective, as was seen with Roger's circulation. The intention is for the newsletter to be produced after each WWV committee meeting (every two months) to update members on items discussed, as well as providing information about on-going WWV work and items of interest.

### **WWV Committee Meeting Update (14/03/2024)**

- Nature trail installed within DPW and DPW South
- New seat located within DPW South overlooking the dip
- Penny Ponton, Tony Povey and Roger Hepworth have all now attended First Aid courses
- New committee members are needed
- Inventory of WWV tools to be undertaken
- A new approach to welcoming new members to be considered
- WWV subscriptions of £8 due on the 01/04/2024.
- Welcome three new members William Bampton, Tom Hilton and Kevin Clarke

### **Deer Park Wood (DPW) Update**

The Southern and Scottish Electricity contractors have, at long last, finished their work under the wires within DPW. There are now numerous piles of chippings to move and some brash still to cut up into habitat piles. Clearing up after the contractors has certainly kept us busy over the last few months, and the cutting down of trees has changed the feel of the east side of DPW considerably. We have however, been able to utilise the wood chippings by placing them onto the path and this has also allowed us to create many more wood and habitat piles. A quick count indicates that in excess of 500 trees have been cut down to a level of three feet or so by the contractors. Certainly the most severe cut we think we have ever seen. Hopefully in a year or two the growth from the low stumps will provide a lovely green cover to act as a barrier between the wood and the road.



Spring is now well on its way and aconites have been and gone, we have seen a lovely display of snowdrops within DPW at all the entrances to the woodland walk and now a few daffodils and crocuses have appeared. The wood is still extremely wet due to the heavy rain, so the central grass area has not seen much use, we have, however, spotted a whole array of fungi appearing throughout the wood which has kept us busy trying to identify the various different varieties spotted by our volunteers.

The animals are still appearing within DPW despite all the cutting back we have seen on both the east and west side. We have our muntjac doe, who has only one reflective eye and no tail, she has been with us now for some years, a new muntjac doe (who we think is pregnant and possibly the youngster of the one-eyed doe) and a muntjac buck, who has a missing hoof and who has been sighted around the wood for at least the last couple of years. They seem to be all together as a family and we will wait and see if a fawn appears in the near future. We have also seen a fox, which

is almost certainly one of the three cubs that we saw last year and we have had our yearly visit from a badger, who wandered through the feeding area in February. Don't forget details of all flowers, birds and animals, on a month by month basis, can be found on the WWV website under the DPW section.



DPW South has seen a new substantial path appear, giving good access from the bridleway. Very recently a new seat has been installed at the end of the path, giving a nice view over the dip for bird watching and, of course, somewhere to have a rest. A nature trail in both woods has also been created. This was all undertaken by contractors on behalf of WODC and WWV. Rachel Crooks, of WODC, has been very instrumental in the progress made within DPW South and has been a big supporter of WWV. As has been previously mentioned, she has now moved on and we thank her for all she has done in helping us to take DPW South forward and wish her well in her new job.



### **Other WWV Activity**

This year WWV have also been busy collecting litter from across Witney as this is the best time to do so, before the vegetation grows up and hides the rubbish until next winter. We have visited the Witney hospital path, Marriotts car park and all areas around the hospital, Loom Lane, the old Bathing Place and surrounding areas and of course in and around DPW and DPW South, including the bridleway. Approximately fifty large bags of rubbish were collected in all along with four shopping trolleys, pipes, and numerous other items that people didn't want, so well done to all involved, but of course it is such a shame that people drop so much litter.



Don't forget that if you have any suggestions for work activity for WWV please do let us know so that we can consider whether we can add it to the activity list.

Wishing you all well  
WWV Committee