



Kingfisher

The newsletter of the
SALISBURY WILDLIFE PROJECT



Volunteers build a slow worm hibernaculum to save the legless lizards from the bulldozers. The shallow hole is topped with logs (right) and a waterproof membrane (above).



Photos WWT

Slow worms slither into new homes

Last autumn 200 slow worms were released on to the wildflower meadow at the Avon Valley local nature reserve in the heart of Salisbury.

This was part of a translocation project overseen by Haven Wildlife, an environmental consultancy acting on behalf of the construction company Barratt. The slow worms were moved because building works at Queen Alexander Road in Salisbury would inevitably destroy their habitat.

After some searching for a suitable receptor site for the slow worms it was agreed with Salisbury District Council and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust that the wildflower meadow area would meet the needs of the slow worms and they were transferred to their new home last September.

In early March this year a group of

volunteers from the Salisbury Wildlife Project, under the guidance of Brian Masterton of Haven Wildlife, built an artificial hibernaculum for the slow worms.

It consists of a shallow hole filled with layers of rubble and logs, topped with a waterproof membrane covered in leaves and earth. This will provide additional safe places for the slow worms to rest, shelter and hibernate out of harm's way.

Volunteers will continue to monitor the slow worm population and build additional hibernacula if necessary.

The low down on slow worms

- A slow worm is a type of lizard although it is often mistaken for a snake.
- A slow worm eats slugs, spiders, earthworms and insects.

- A slow worm hibernates during the winter.
- It is illegal to kill or injure a slow worm.
- Like other lizards, slow worms escape from predators by casting off their tails.
- A wild slow worm can live up to 20 years and grow to 45 cm.
- The slow worm is sometimes known as the blind worm because it has a visible eyelid (unlike a snake).
- Young slow worms are born live rather than as eggs.

Stop press

More than 100 frogs have been counted in a ditch at Avon Valley this February. Keep an eye on the spawn, which we hope will develop into healthy tadpoles and young frogs.



A sustainable future for wildlife and people

About the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust



Our vision is of a sustainable future for wildlife and people. We have over 19,000 members, look after 37 nature reserves and have over 1,000 volunteers. We work with local communities, schools, businesses and public bodies to achieve our aims. Please join us.

Please enrol me/us as member/s of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

I/we would like to join as:

- Single..... (£24)
- Joint (£30)
- Family (£36)

Name(s)

Address

Postcode

Telephone

I/we enclose a cheque for £ payable to Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

Please return to:

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
Elm Tree Court, Long Street
Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1NJ

Tel: (01380) 725670

Fax: (01380) 729017

email: info@wiltshirewildlife.org

www.wiltshirewildlife.org

Registered Charity 266202

Spring/ Summer 2008 Practical Conservation Tasks

These all take place on the second Sunday of every month, from 10am – 4pm.

All tools and training are provided. Wear suitable outdoor clothing and bring a packed lunch. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided.

It is helpful if you can book in advance by calling Nicky Warden on (01722) 792015.

April 13th: Boardwalk construction at Avon Valley Local Nature Reserve

Following on from the repair work carried out to the boardwalk last September, we are returning to complete the last stretch of construction of the boardwalk. Meet at the Salisbury Tool Store, grid ref: SU 140 310.

May 11th: Path clearance at the Devenish Reserve, Little Durnford

Come and help us keep the paths and rides open at this beautiful nature reserve. Meet for the minibus pickup or meet in the car park at the entrance to the reserve. From Salisbury take the Amesbury Road (A345) and turn left on to Stratford Road. Go through Stratford sub Castle following the signs for Little Durnford. Do not cross the river, but turn right for Durnford and Salterton, then immediately left into Phillips Lane. Reserve entrance is on the right after two miles: grid ref: SU 128 349. Wear long-sleeved tops and long trousers with sturdy outdoor footwear.

June 8th: River restoration at Crane Street/The Maltings Salisbury

Come and help us to improve and

restore the banks of the River Avon in the heart of the city. Meet at the footbridge at the back of Salisbury Library, grid ref: SU 143 301.

July 13th: Invasive plant control at Nadder Island, Salisbury

Help us to eradicate Himalayan balsam from the banks of the River Nadder near Nadder Island. Meet at the river end of Brunel Road, Churchfields Industrial Estate, Salisbury, grid ref: SU 129 298.

August 10th: Path clearance at Blackmore Copse, the Vaughan-Pickard Reserve

Help us to keep the rides and paths open at this atmospheric woodland reserve known for its butterflies. You may even see a purple emperor! Meet for the minibus pickup or meet at the entrance to the reserve. It is six miles east of Salisbury, between the A30 and the A36. Blackmore Copse is on the western side of the minor road from Winterslow to East Grimstead. The main entrance is at the junction between Livery Road and the road to Farley, grid ref: SU 234 288. Wear long sleeved tops and long trousers with sturdy outdoor footwear.

Important information for volunteers...

BOOKING A PLACE Please ring a few days before each work party as it is sometimes necessary to book a place.

TRANSPORT For work parties outside Salisbury city lift shares can be arranged. For tasks in May and August there will be a minibus pick up at the Salisbury Tool Store (next to the footbridge by the Leisure Centre in Salisbury - grid ref: SU 140 310) at 9.30am or outside Debenhams, Market Square at 10am. For those in the city meet on site at the location given in the task at 10am.

HEALTH We recommend that you have an up-to-date tetanus vaccination.

WHAT TO BRING Bring some old clothes, waterproofs, stout shoes or wellies and a packed lunch.

The Salisbury Wildlife Project

If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter on a regular basis, get involved with the Salisbury Wildlife Project or just find out more, please contact Nicky Warden.

Contact details:

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
South Wiltshire Office
Langford Lakes Nature Reserve
Duck Street, Steeple Langford
Wiltshire, SP3 4NH
Telephone: (01722) 792015
Email: nicolaw@wiltshirewildlife.org

This Wiltshire Wildlife Trust project is supported by Salisbury District Council.

