

Feldon Wildlife Group Meeting: 27th February 2024

Present: Ann Holland, Chris and Keri Carr, Milly Blake, Ally Blake, Jane Upson, Sue Rodger, Sue Williams, John Pym, Peter Stoddart, Harriet Granville, Amanda Holden, Ian Beaumont, Nick Holmes

Apologies: Annie Lewis, Paul Marriott, Barbara Babbage, Jo Thompson

Minutes:

Wildflowers: Jane approached the Parish Council for funding for wildflowers at February 19th meeting and they agreed to donate £100.

£50 kindly donated anonymously to the Feldon Wildlife Group towards wildflower area. Parish Council happy with proposals for new wildflower strip in front of the Blake's wall; churchyard area and maintenance of Stourton patch. All agreed need to maintain wildflower areas later in season.

Jo Barker has asked to speak to Paul M about his knowledge of wildflowers but that's not feasible with his current ill health.

1st project part of churchyard on the left hand side as you walk into the churchyard and then along the stone wall in front of Myrtle's house possibly next year.

Jo Barker has an annual fund that can be allocated throughout the year which we can apply for if the Parish Council turns down our application. She has confirmed she would be happy to support our funding request next year. Need to apply by November 2024.

£50 set aside to offer free wildflower seeds to families who need it and agreed to deliver packs to homes with children over Easter weekend. £2 Seed bombs from Poundland to be tested by the group before giving them out.

Proposed giving out flyers advertising hedgerow survey with the wildflower seeds. Verity Richardson, Shipston, Bumblebee Conservation Trust worth contacting about wildflower seeds they recommend. Jane has contact details.

Need to map out in the churchyard where the wildflowers are.

ACTION POINT: Chris will stake out the areas where the flowers already are to ensure Lawns to Mow don't mow them down

Need to clarify where at the Village Hall the wildflower meadow should be.

ACTION POINT: Chris agreed to assess area whilst at gardening group Feb 28th.

10th February hedge coppicing by the playing field a huge success.

Sue W researched mobile notice boards on Amazon. Cost implication £100. Hobbycraft have cork boards which could be hinged on the edges and cost £5.50 each. As a group felt we should go for professional board. Agreed to pay for boards out of subscription fees. Have sufficient funds to pay for boards.

ACTION POINT: Sue and Chris agreed to source boards for next meeting.

£10 subscription due at next meeting please 26th March.

Hedgerow Survey: Sunday 7th April 10.30am. Milly will create poster to advertise the event in The Link, on the Village website and Facebook. Homemade cookies promised as enticement.

ACTION POINT: Ally to email flyer promoting event to Di Marriot and Christine Dudfield
Cheringtonandstourtonvillage@gmail.com Di Marriot dianeanddavid@btinternet.com

River bank picnic: Harriet happy for villagers to picnic in her paddock and Barbara happy for villagers to also visit Cherington Mill to view her wildlife projects. Sunday 8th September proposed. Public liability insurance checked by Barbara Babbage.

ACTION POINT: Harriet to check her insurance will cover the event.

Village Hall Plan has been approved by trustees and has been submitted and the hedge coppicing began 10th February. Wildlife group thanked for their support on the morning. Playing Field development now on hold because fence no longer going around the playground.

New fence erected to secure the playground for children alongside the road.

Village Hall need to seek funds to plant trees as per the plan now agreed. Peter has researched where funding can be obtained from. Villagers may be willing to donate trees to the project. Peter happy to lead in this respect. petercstoddart@gmail.com Might be worth applying to the National Lottery Community fund.

Heart of England provided trees for free in Shipston.

Peter shared details of his contacts so far and their suggestions.

ACTION POINT: Peter agreed to further research what meets our requirements in liaison with Chris and David Sewell.

RSPB Bird Watch: 13 houses involved, 25 species identified and more birds spotted this year than ever. Group queried: What has happened to all the thrushes? Notice: Blackbirds born last year, their beaks are now turning yellow. Update from Nick

Water Testing of the River Stour:

The village now has a testing kit. Cherington currently has the highest phosphate levels of all areas being tested.

23rd February meeting at the Village Hall between Barbara, Severn Trent Water. Those involved with the river testing attended but felt those at meeting not senior enough to reply to queries raised by the village.

Following volunteers offered to support the weekly weekend testing in pairs: Amanda, Nick, Ian, Sue R, Sue L, Trevor and Annie, Chris and Keri.

ACTION POINT: Milly to contact volunteers and begin to schedule testing. Milly agreed to write guide to go with testing kit and she is happy to support volunteers on their initial testing.

Milly contacted Luke McCusker from Senior River Ranger from Severn Trent Water who has offered the following: we would like to meet you and the group, can show you what kinds of

things our teams do, what and how we sample, and run an outfall safari. We can also look at walking you through a treatment works, and process, explain that too.

Currently we are inundated with Flooding work which will be until April 1st, if you let me know some available dates – Mid April time onwards, we can get that booked in for you?

ACTION POINT: Date needs to be agreed by group at next meeting.

Stretton Wildlife group visiting Blackwell Farm to see how it has been rewilded. Can arrange a separate walk for Feldons and WASPS around the farm in May and June. At March, April meeting need determine how many may want to visit.

Professor of Ecology at Oxford Uni Owen Lewis (owen.lewis@biology.ox.ac.uk) agreed that He would be happy to leave moth traps in gardens overnight and then the following morning return and talk with the group about what has been trapped. He suggested one weekend late May, June, July.

ACTION POINT: Sue R to contact Owen to see if July 6th, 7th work for him. Ask him where he may want to site his nets and how many.

Should we reimburse him for his time, petrol?

ACTION POINT: Amanda to contact David Passingham to find out what may be expected.

AOB:

John is hoping to attend The Healing of Power of Plants talk in Long Compton March 27th, as advertised in this month's Link. He hopes to ask the speaker Timothy Walker if he would be interested in speaking to us about mushrooms.

Chris updated the group about the distilleries wetlands ecological treatment system. Plants treating effluent from whiskey distillery.

ACTION POINT: Contact distillery to have a tour of this area if possible. Maybe one summer evening? Could be a social event for the group?

Friday February 16th Frogs on the road on route to the Lakes outside Toddtenham. Frogs also sighted on road by Sarah Scotter's house. Sue W contacted Sarah and asked her to put out the frog signs. Sadly no-one saw the signs out. Nick updated group on Website: frog life which records where the frogs cross roads across the country and they will advise how to go out and protect the frogs crossing. Need high vis vests if we go out to scoop up the frogs next year.

No Mow May: Sue W happy to lead on attending Parish Council meeting to ask for permission to leave areas of village greens not mown for May. Issue last year was Parish Council failed to minute what their views were and who was going to action speaking to the grass cutters. Need to ensure Parish Council agree to follow up what is discussed and that it is correctly minuted.

Date of next meeting: 26th March