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## Junior rangers trip to Techniquest

On the 20th April, the annual Junior Rangers trip took place, this time to Techniquest, Glyndwr, Wrexham.

Techniquest is a science discovery centre based in the grounds of Glyndwr



University. It consists of 5 rooms full of experiments and science discovery stations covering a wide variety of topics from cyclones to

body parts to shadows.

The group took a minibus over to the venue and had a chance to

explore all 5 of the rooms inside . After lunch they attended a talk called 'Che-mystery!' where they were shown a lot of different chemical reactions including different coloured flames and disappearing objects.

The rangers really enjoyed the day, particularly the talk and the mirror maze.



And of course the shop was very popular too!!

We still have a few spaces left in Junior Rangers so if you know of any keen wildlife enthusiasts who are aged between 8 and 11 years old, please contact the office for more details.



### Special Points of Interest:

- There are lots of nesting birds currently at Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve.
- By the end of May, approximately 300 children, and students will have visited Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve as part of the education programme!! And those are just the bookings we know of at the time of print!
- Over 50 people turned up to the Trefnant Eco-fun day in April.



## Advanced Amphibian Course

This years Advanced Amphibian course proved to be another success. This year we decided to change the format a little and visit a different site– Glascoed in St Asaph, for the evening survey. The participants looked at a variety of topic and issues surrounding British amphibians including how to identify them, how to survey for them and a new topic this

year– global amphibian declines.

The first day was very much theory based mainly in the classroom, with the odd practical session such as setting bottle traps. The second day was more workshop based, getting our participants to put everything they have learnt into context with various scenarios that were set.

Overall the feedback was very positive and it was another successful course. We run this course once a year and it often books up very fast. If you would like to attend the next course contact the office to register your interest for next year.



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## Rangers Roundup– Karl Martin

Floristically it's been a lovely spring. The grasslands are scattered with cowslips and the woodlands are carpeted with Bluebells, and the smell of wild garlic is everywhere. The bluebells and the other plants on Broadoak Wood near the badger sett are looking rather battered which is a good indication that there are badger cubs playing out at night.

The fox appears to be doing well at Rhydymwyn. Sightings have them hunting near the culvert were made during a recent bird walk and this week a lovely, chocolate brown cub was seen near the office! Also doing well

At Rhydymwyn is Herb Paris. This rare plant was found here last year. This year about 50 plants were seen at the original site and over 200 were located nearby!

Sightings of butterflies are increasing with lots of sightings of peacock, orange tip, comma, small and green veined white



*Small Copper Butterfly  
@Karl Martin*

and a few sightings of dingy skipper.

Lots of birds are nesting and the boxes at Broadoak Wood seem to contain lots of great and blue tits. Great spotted woodpeckers have been drumming frequently but I cannot find where they are nesting.

The warm weather has helped bring the common lizards and the grass snakes out of hibernation. I was fortunate enough to



*A young Grass Snake*

come across a mating ball of wriggling, writhing, slithering grass snakes. At least ten animals were seen but it was hard to count them! If anyone is interested in learning more about reptiles then why not join us on one of our reptile rambles? Contact the office for more information.

## Wildlife Gardening event

On the 9th April NEWWildlife hosted a Wildlife Gardening Fair at Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve as a celebration of the arrival of Spring. The weather was perfect for the event and there was plenty to see and do. There were many stands from local groups and



*NEWWildlife Trustees Stephen and Bob with Councillor Thomas at the start of the event.*

organisations, with tips and information about how to make your own garden wildlife friendly, there were games such as Giant snakes and ladders and colouring activities. COFNOD, RECORD and the Count Me In staff led minibeast hunts and had a treasure hunt set up for

the children. NEWW staff led a series of guided walks for approximately 75 people around the reserve and there were a number of talks from organisations such as the North Wales Wildlife Trust and Butterfly Conservation.

There was a steady flow of people throughout the event

and everybody seemed to have a good time.

As with many of the other fairs we have run before, we would not have been able to run such an event without the help and support of all the volunteers who not only attended the event but also helped to set it up beforehand and pack it away the following week. We are also very grateful for the great support we have received once again from all of the stallholders who came along and made the event a success.

Look out for details of more events in the future.

### BECOME A VOLUNTEER IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN

HELPING NEWW OUT AND HAVE SOME



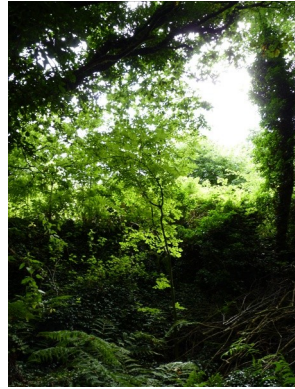
FREE TIME THEN CONTACT THE VOLUNTEERS OFFICER TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT VOLUNTEERING, FROM HABITAT CONSERVATION TO SPECIES MONITORING TO ASSISTING AT EVENTS THERE IS A WIDE RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE WITH NEWW.

CONTACT: INFO@NEWWILDLIFE.ORG.UK OR 01352 742115. KEEP AN EYE ON THE WEBSITE FOR UP TO DATE REPORTS ON VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES AND UPCOMING EVENTS.

## Lane End Update– Remani Jones

I took over post of Lane End Reserves Officer in April, following Mandy Cartwright's departure from NEWWildlife. Lane End and Knowle Hill are interesting sites and over the next year there will be new habitat creations being undertaken such as grassland and pond creations. There are opportunities for volunteers to get involved so get in touch if you are interested.

There are also open days and public events planned



on Knowle Hill this year. Next month on June 11<sup>th</sup> during Wales Biodiversity Week there is an open Nature Day event taking place at the reserve. There will be wildlife, environmental and local

produce stands held by a number of different groups and walks into the reserve. Keith Offord, a brilliant ornithologist will be leading bird walks into the reserve that can be booked in advance as well as on the day.

The event starts at 11am and will go on to 2pm and stands will be on the lawn to the rear of the Cross Keys Pub in Buckley (on the A549). For more information or to book onto one of the bird walks please contact Remani on 01352 742115/[ro@newwildlife.org.uk](mailto:ro@newwildlife.org.uk)

## Volunteer Education

### Officer update– Sadie Smith

It has been a busy few weeks for me with lots of school visits. After re-writing the education worksheets they were finally put to the test with a visit of year 3 and 4 pupils from Mynydd Isa Junior School. Approximately 130 pupils came over 2 days to look at minibeasts, food chains and to go on a nature walk around the reserve. On the nature walks, without disturbing the birds, we were able to show the children where a family of

## Volunteer Reserves Officer update

Hi, Veronica (VRO) here reporting on all the activities I've been doing over the month of April and what a varied month it has been! Starting with two fabulous days on the Advanced Amphibian course here at Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve and Glascoed at St Asaph with good sightings of all three newts at the latter. Very exciting course having never taken part in a torch survey before.

Now that the good weather has been with us for a while, work around the Rhydymwyn site has involved Woodland Trail step work, attaching wire to stop slipiness under foot when the wet weather returns.

The squirrels were busy making the bird hide their own so some housekeeping was in order, making an altogether more pleasant



©Dave Hill

place to sit and watch the wildlife.

All hands were on deck to finish the outdoor music instruments which have included a xylophone incorporating slate and bamboo and shells to create the different sound effects and will shortly be installed at Northop School.

The bat cams are now up and running and what excitement to see them getting busy. There's also great hope for the bird cam which I observed Karl moving out of the wind of the front of the Field Studies building to the rear, now located in a tree. Come on

swallows is nesting in building 59. The children were delighted to see the parents who were sweeping in and out of the building and some even thought they heard the chicks calling to the adults. All the children seemed to like the activities and we were all exhausted by the time we finally waved the bus off! I also helped on the Junior Rangers end of year trip to Techniquet in Wrexham. Much fun was had by all particularly in the shop which they were keen to spend the most time in! Future plans include helping out at Woodfest. Hopefully see you there!



all you little feathered friends!

I have been busy with training courses such as the Moss I.D. held at Loggerheads Country Park and PA1 and PA6 pesticides tests and basic chainsaw at Northop College, which will hopefully enable me to put those vital new found skills into practice as and when required in the future.

Joe Philips and I went out around the base and did a floral survey which I found very informative (and of greatest interest to me), at Rhydymwyn and found a variety of interesting plants from horseradish to Herb paris observed by Karl and myself on the Woodland Trail which has apparently increased.

Lets see what May brings!

## Upcoming events



**Reptile Ramble**, Tuesday 24th May , 9.30am-12.30pm, Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve, Led by Mick Brummage, County Recorder for Reptiles. FREE, **FULLY BOOKED**.

**Knowle Hill Eco- Day**, Saturday 11th June , 12pm-3pm, Cross Keys Pub, Buckley/ Knowle Hill Nature Reserve, Buckley. FREE. No booking required.



**For all bookings on essential events please contact the office on 01352 742115 or [admin@newwildlife.org.uk](mailto:admin@newwildlife.org.uk)**

**Membership Update:** We currently have 40 Family, 55 Individual and 2 Honorary Memberships. The next members walk will take place on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. It will start in Llanarmon-yn-Ial. Meet on the RHS after passing the Raven and shop. Please contact the leader Barbara Collings if you would like to join the walk on 07719 611 790 or 01352 840 725.

We hope you can come along and see us at Woodfest this year, I will be on hand to speak to members and answer any queries you may have on the Sunday and Monday of the weekend.

## Rhydymwyn Visitors– Cat Lucas

May certainly has been a busy month for school visits to Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve. We have so far had 2 schools: Mynydd Isa Junior school and Mountain Lane School visiting the reserve and we are now preparing for Broughton School to come along at the end of the month.

We have been covering a wide variety of topics with the students from Minibeast sweeping with the years 3 and 4 form Mynydd Isa to tying ourselves up in knots whilst looking at food webs with year 6 students from Mountain Lane!

On top of these visits we are also looking forward to some upcoming visits from Llysfasi College students who will be coming to the reserve to learn survey techniques such as the capture mark recapture technique which we demonstrate

on the banded snails that live on the reserve. The students have also been asked to design their own survey for invertebrates at the reserve so we are looking forward to seeing what they come up with.



*Last years Llysfasi College students counting snails.*

We have also recently had a few walking groups joining us at the reserve including the Troedio Clwyd Walking Groups and the North Wales Bird Forum who have come to see different aspects of the wildlife onsite.

And to top off a busy couple of months we also ran an Intermediate Bird course with the BTO. This course was a natural progression on the Beginners Bird course we ran earlier this year and gave participants a great chance to practice their skills.

Over the next couple of months we will be expecting more students to visit the reserve we will be running our Butterfly Course and a reptile ramble. We are also planning to run a wildflower course and a moth ID at some point this summer, as well as running or attending a number of events. Look out for future adverts. And they say wildlife work is supposed to quieten down over the summer months!!!



## A final note– Cat Lucas

I will be leaving NEWWildlife at the end of May to start a years voyage around the world. I have learned a lot whilst at NEWWildlife and hope the charity carries on doing such a good job for many more years to come. I have enjoyed creating this new look wildlife matters over the past 5 editions and hope that whoever takes it over from me enjoys it just as much. I look forward to receiving my very own copy in the post from now on!