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Ludwell Life

Sharing Enhancing Enjoying Protecting...
Ludwell Valley Park



March 2024 Newsletter

It keeps on raining, the Valley is still brown and muddy, but it is at last turning green and yellow and white - spring has sprung!

In this newsletter, a report back on what you said last time; notice of a talk about the Northbrook stream; news from DWT; an update about Northbrook Park; problems with litter; and first, another of our quizzes.

Quiz

How well do you know your way around Ludwell Valley Park? See how many of these views you can recognise and say where the photos were taken. Answers at the end of the newsletter.



Your Say

In the last newsletter, we asked what are the issues you'd like addressed this year, what do you have to say about Ludwell Valley. We had only a few responses, so we must assume that everybody else is either happy with how

things are, or at least doesn't feel strongly enough to want to respond. Is that true? But the responses we did have were very thoughtful, with some good points that we will take up with DWT when next we meet.

The main points were around:

- accessibility, including more benches and improving kissing gates (news on that already - see the updates from DWT below!)
- dogs, both the idea of an enclosed dog area but also some dog-free areas (both practically quite difficult though);
- continuing to attract more wildlife; and
- maybe a forest garden (if this interest you, have a look at this website: <https://www.agroforestry.co.uk/about-agroforestry/forest-gardening/>)

There was also heartfelt praise for the Youth Rangers.



The Northbrook

As you may already have seen if you are a member of our Facebook group, Devon Wildlife Trust is giving an online talk about plans to revitalise the Northbrook stream and encourage more wildlife to return. It is at 6.30pm on 11th April, and it's free to join, using this weblink: devonwildlifetrust.org/events/2024-04-11-natural-northbrook-restoring-city-stream



Update from Devon Wildlife Trust

The wildflower fields may have already been ploughed and seeded by the time you read this; if not, it will happen in the next few days. All that is needed is for the rain to stop for a couple of days! That's all!

Good news on accessibility: there are a couple of 'Corporate Days' happening where companies and volunteers are replacing some of the kissing gates that require attention and building some new, slightly larger ones to allow easier access.

The cattle won't be introduced until the end of April or beginning of May. DWT and the farmer have agreed to be a bit more flexible this year with the grazing regime: some fields are over-grazed and others under-grazed, so they have agreed to move the cattle around more frequently than in the recent past. Signs will go up beforehand and DWT once again asks that where cattle are present, please keep all dogs to be under very close control or on leads, with no more than 3 dogs per walker.



Northbrook Park

Northbrook is really coming on! Those 3,000+ native spring bulbs - daffodils, bluebells, wild garlic and wood anemone bulbs - that we helped plant round the trees at the top of the Park are already starting to show. Another 700, (yes, 700!) native whip trees and 50 native orchard trees have been planted over the winter. And the new wildflower meadows should be looking good by early summer.

In January I wrote that now we just needed the Environment Agency to get on with their work on the sluice and reopen the path along the bottom! Frustratingly, we are still waiting. But the end must surely be near!



Litter

Sadly, Ludwell, like so many other places, is seeing more littering at the moment. What is worse, litter has changed over the years from being mostly plastic bottles, cans and wrappers more to discarded dog poo bags. We have a number of community-spirited people who regularly collect litter as they walk around the valley and we should be very grateful to them. But poo bags - no!

David went out litter picking recently on the footpath between the top of Roly-Poly hill and Ludwell Lane and you can see how much he collected from that fairly short stretch of path. So, if you can, take a plastic bag and gloves with you when you go into Ludwell and help keep it as we all want it to be.



Quiz Answers

1. Tree Field
2. Great Ridgeway - blackthorn hedge
3. Butchers Field - the scrape/pond
4. The Community Orchard
5. 3 Acres, or the Old Cherry Orchard
6. Burridge Hill, looking across to Little 3 Acres
7. The public footpath from Roly Poly Hill down to Ludwell Lane
8. Northern Ridgeway, or Roly Poly Hill

How many did you get right?

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