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Ludwell Life

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Ludwell Valley Park



October 2021 Newsletter

Red skies in the morning! Autumn is here, and it's a busy time in the Valley. In this newsletter: planting up the pond in Butchers Field; a project to revive the old field names; news from our meeting this week with Devon Wildlife Trust; and an update on Ludwell Lane.



The Scrape

You've probably walked past the muddy, orange-hued pond (which should really be called a scrape) in Butcher's Field a few times since it was deepened last winter.

It's a success in that it has held water right through the summer, and there have been some sightings of dragonflies coming to investigate, but we want to make it a much better place for wildlife, and a much more attractive place for us humans. So we were delighted to be awarded a very generous grant from Countess Wear Village Hall. We will use this to buy a range of native aquatic plants, plus some nets for future pond dipping. The planting will be done early in November and we will involve as many people as we can.

One special plea though: if you are a dog walker and your dog is one of those who likes to paddle and swim in the scrape, it would be a great help if you could try to restrain them from doing this when it is newly planted to give the plants a chance to get established. Thank you.



The Old Field Names

Have you noticed the small letterbox size signs going up on the entrances to the fields in the Valley? They will be on every field for which we know the old name. These names are taken from a map made in 1843, the Tithe Map. Tithe Maps were made for each parish (in our case, Heavitree), not to give us an interesting historical record but to assess who owned every piece of land and how much tax ('tithe') was due! So not only do we have the map (which sadly is in terrible condition and extremely difficult to read) but also the accompanying 'apportionment' document giving the names of the owners, the person actually farming the land and even whether it was arable, pasture, meadow or woodland. If you want to see more, have a look on our website at: http://ludwelllife.org.uk/history/#Old_field_names_and_the_1843_Tithe_Map.



Conservation Working Parties



Conservation - Devon Wildlife Trust

Do you remember those good old pre-Covid days when we used to meet up for conservation work in the Valley? Well, we met with Anya Oliver and Chris Moulton from DWT this week. There's a lot going on but the main news is that conservation tasks will begin again this autumn! There is the planting up of the scrape already mentioned; we will plant three more trees in the Community Orchard; we hope to plant a Ludwell Oak in one of the fields; to make ceramic tags for the orchard trees, involving one of the local schools.

And that's not all! DWT are running a bat monitoring project this month - if you live within 150 metres of the Northbrook and are interested, get in touch with Anya at DWT. 6th November, they are running otter spotting training at Countess Wear Village Hall and then In February they will be hedge laying in the Valley. To register your interest in any of these three projects, the easiest way is to e-mail:

valleyparks@devonwildlifetrust.org



Ludwell Lane

As we reported in the last newsletter, the Council have decided to keep Ludwell Lane closed at one end permanently. As many people have commented, this has made it so much more safe and pleasant as a place to walk or cycle. It will be closed at the Pynes Hill end, which should make life easier for people living in the Lane. The price we have to pay is the need for a turning circle for the bin lorries etc. The County Council is making this where the footpath crosses from Shipping Field. It looks very sad at the minute with trees felled and undergrowth cleared and not everyone is happy. However, there will be a Devon Bank built around the circle, planted with trees, nature is very good at recovering, so it will be much less stark next year.

Postscript

If you are a member of Devon Wildlife Trust (or you know anyone else who is), look out for the autumn magazine, due out any day now, because it will include an article on Ludwell Valley. We're looking forward to reading it!

Ludwell Life is an independent community group, set up to protect and enhance Ludwell Valley Park
Our mailing address is: 50 Well Oak Park, EX2 5BB

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