

## DONINGTON & ALBRIGHTON LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

Despite our April volunteer day being the wettest, windiest and generally most vile one we've had for some time we had a record number of local volunteers turn up (mostly women) together with the group from Severn Valley Nature Reserve and we therefore got a lot more of the general maintenance done than we expected.

Jubilee Walk has been tidied up as much as possible for the time being. More of the willow carr will be attacked in the Autumn but until then we must bear with its unsightly muddy remains. There is however a smaller pile than there was thanks to the determined efforts of one of our volunteers who managed to set fire to a sodden pile of sappy willow in horizontal sleet. Respect. Yet more brash has also been burnt so things are looking, well better than they were. And the primroses and wood anemones certainly gladdened my heart.

The fishing stands have been repaired where possible, with concrete reinforcing the tops of some slopes and wooden guard rails replaced where necessary. The wooden fencing at the bottom of The Pool, on Rectory Road, has not yet been replaced as this access will be needed again for the winch to remove the willow carr.

In the Meadow we carried out a big litter sweep, from the weir to the Fire Station. It was a pretty revolting and hazardous job and one we hope we won't have to perform again, though history tells us otherwise.

We didn't have time to widen all the paths in the Meadow but the ones we did illustrate the amount of encroachment that has taken place. Left to its own devices the Meadow would swallow up its paths and varied habitats.

We know the plastic tape and tree guards around the young trees are unsightly but when the vegetation around them grows up they are hard to spot and some saplings have fallen victim to a strimmer in the past. We will remove them when the trees are more visible and able to fend for themselves.

One of our volunteers is taking part in a butterfly survey for the Reserve which started in April and will continue through until October. This is being done in conjunction with the other Shropshire Nature Reserves and will give us an excellent indication of the ecological health of our Reserves. We will keep you informed of her progress.

Don't forget the Conservation Area is opened the first week end of every month weather permitting, and the bluebells should be at their best around 4/5<sup>th</sup> May (Bank Holiday w/end).

Our next Volunteer Day is Thursday May 16<sup>th</sup>, we hope to see even more of you then. Men can come too.