

DONINGTON & ALBRIGHTON LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

Our bat and moth night last month was a huge success even though a more accurate description of it could have been bat moth and midge night.

However bats eat midges so they came out in their hoards and gave us a wonderful display of acrobatics over St Cuthbert's Pool and Donington Pool. We were able to locate them with the help of special devices which convert their echolocation ultrasound signals to audible frequencies. In practice this meant we could hear a series of clicks when the bats were near. Two species of pipistrelle bats were detected and the numbers observed was most encouraging as pipistrelles have suffered a 70% reduction of their numbers in recent years.

Not to be outdone 68 moths were captured (and released) in an hour and a half in the Meadow despite it being a bit chilly for them. The largest was a 33mm 'Old Lady', the smallest a 5mm 'Argyresthia geodartella' and 17 different species were captured in all. The most productive trap was located along our Green Path which we have created between the hedge and dry hedge on the north side of the Reserve. This delighted us as it shows our conservation efforts are bearing fruit.

As if all this wasn't enough both the calls of a barn owl and a tawny owl were heard.

A timetable has been produced for the Natural History courses mentioned in last month's article and posters can be found in lots of locations around the village. They sound fantastic. They are being held during the end of this month and next in the Methodist Church Hall on Monday and Saturday afternoons and include identification of trees, discussion of fungi, exploring insects and explaining the complicated system used for naming plants. The cost is £10/session and they are aimed at adults. Bob Watson is the person who has kindly offered his services and he is the one to contact on 01902 593879 or foxgloves@tiscali.co.uk for more information.

Talking of tree identification – you may have noticed some labels have appeared on some trees down the Green Path. We are aiming to add more as funds allow. We have chosen the labels very carefully so they do not damage the tree or appear too obvious so causing a distraction.

The removal of the willow carr from the bank of Donington Pool has had to be postponed as the winch needed for this is unavailable. We hope to remove it within the next month or two.

Our next Volunteer Days are 3rd October, 7th November and 5th December. Paul Fallon (paulfallon6@gmail.com) would love to hear from you and give you further details.