

Notes from the Nature Reserve

Green Gym Conservation Volunteers at East Ham Nature Reserve January 2016

Dates for Saturday sessions are 27th February and 26th March 10am-1pm. Please come along if you can make it. Date for your diary - we are going to have an Open Day on Saturday 9th April.



According to tradition, especially in Sussex, Valentine's Day is the day that birds choose their mates and is known as the Birds' Wedding Day. Thank you Pat for reminding me.

Animal of the month

Wren - *Troglodytes troglodytes*

You are more likely to hear wrens than see them. They have very loud voices for such small birds and sing all year round.

They are hard to spot, often looking like brown mice running through the undergrowth.

They are probably the commonest bird that breeds in the UK.

Their main food is insects and spiders.

Wrens are the third smallest British bird after Goldcrest and Firecrest.

The male may build up to 6 nests as it is courting females.

Wrens may use communal roosts in the winter to keep warm.



Work on the hedge is progressing. Some TCV volunteers will be coming to the session on 27th February for a training day. We hope we will be able to finish laying the hedge then. Come along if you want to have a go.



In a normal year we would have until the end of March to finish before growth really gets going and birds start nesting, but this year the hazel and hawthorn are already getting their leaves, so we need to get on with it.

To prove how warm it is, this little shield bug was active at the Saturday session in January.

Plant of the month

Daffodil - *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*

The native wild daffodil is now only found in a few places in the country. It would be nice to plant some at the Nature Reserve. These were the “Host of golden daffodils” that Wordsworth saw.

They are also called Lent Lily and normally flower in March, but this year all the daffodils are flowering early because of the warm winter. Snowdrops flowered at the right time so are probably sensitive to day length rather than temperature.

Daffodils are poisonous in all their parts, so do not mistake the bulbs for onions.



Just to remind you what winter should be like.



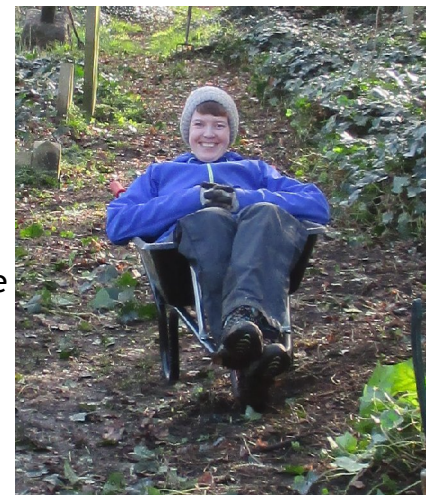
4 Feb 2009. Do you recognise the path we were working on recently?



18 Dec 2010.



Most of the Saturday group work, so can't do Wednesdays, although some of us do both. Some get stuck in. Christine used a billhook to point lots of hazel sticks and start to lay the hedge. Others take it easy. (Tracey had done a morning's work path clearing before she took to the wheelbarrow.)



Please contact us if you have any suggestions of things to put in the newsletter or on the website. Email newhamgg@gmail.com Phone Judi 020 8470 7680 or Frances 078 4597 3156. Check out the website www.newhamgreengym.org for more information about Green Gym, East Ham Nature Reserve Conservation Volunteers.