



Project Report

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) aims to protect and enhance wildlife, natural habitats and geology throughout Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull, and to encourage a greater awareness, appreciation and participation in all aspects of nature conservation and the environment. The Trust currently manages 56 nature reserves, including woods, meadows and wetlands covering over 800 hectares. The Trust helps to protect threatened places and rare species by campaigning for wildlife and the environment. Walks, talks and events run by Trust staff help to encourage people to enjoy nature. In addition, the Trust works with schools, businesses and community groups to support local environmental action.

In 2010, the Earlswood Wildlife Partnership which consists of WWT, British Waterways and local residents, was established to increase biodiversity and benefit wildlife and the residents of Earlswood and surrounding areas. Earlswood contains two of WWT's nature reserves, Earlswood Moathouse and Clowes Wood, which is a SSSI, as well as Earlswood Lakes which belong to British Waterways.

The Partnership carried out a moths and bats night as well as some guided walks in the area to boost the interest from local people, and after those successful events, a list of "Things To Do" was created. This included an installation of bat boxes, since the area was a highly active site for Soprano Pipistrelles, Common Pipistrelles, Daubenton's, and also the possible stopping point for Nathusius Pipistrelles.

In January 2011, the Partnership was delighted to receive an award of £13,808 from the Nineveh Charitable Trust to purchase survey equipment such as moth traps, butterfly nets, identification guides, bat boxes and bat detectors, materials to construct a tern raft for one of the lakes, as well as funding to enable WWT to carry out a number of workshops for local people.

Sunday 13th March 2011 Tern Raft construction

The first project was to construct a tern raft, in time for the terns to visit the lakes. On Sunday 13th March 2011, with the help from many local volunteers, we launched the tern raft into the lake.



Tern raft building day.
(Clockwise from the photo above). The raft was built in section in the garage of our volunteer, assembled in the public car park by the lakes, and carried onto the water before the gravel was put on.



Some terns did use the raft, but unfortunately Canada Geese seem to be enjoying the raft too much, despite the small fence around the raft which was to stop them getting on it!



Saturday 26th March Butterfly and Moth Survey workshop

WWT carried out a workshop on how to survey for butterflies and moths. Volunteers were given butterfly transects, and also five moth traps were built which are being given to five households with ID books on rotation. One family identified 80 macro species in their garden. The traps are still going around different people's gardens, so everyone is having a taste of moth trapping.



(Photo on the left) Some of the moths from the garden; White Ermine, Lesser swallow prominent, treble lines



Elephant hawkmoth

Saturday 2nd April Water Vole, Otter and Mink Survey workshop



Looking for signs of otters.



Otter's spraint. This confirms that there is an otter living / using the lakes.

Sunday 3rd April Installation of bat boxes



A truck & trailer full of bat boxes!!



British Waterway's Ecologist giving a talk on bat boxes and bat's ecology.



Different types of bat boxes were purchased for different purposes. We purchased three hibernation boxes, which turned out to be very heavy! We had to organise more dates to put up those hibernation boxes (using a pulley). In total 80 bat boxes were installed, thanks to all volunteers and also help from Warwickshire Bat Group.

Saturday 9th April Hedgerow and Wildflower Survey Workshop



Once all the workshops were carried out (with the exception of the bird box and survey workshop, postponed until March 2012), the local people had more opportunities to learn and enjoy their local wildlife. There was a moth night in Clowes Wood (2nd July), Bat walk (26th August), Moth & bat walk (3rd September) and autumn walk at Clowes Wood (15th October).

Tuesday 18th October Celebration Event



We asked everyone who participated in surveys to send in all records so they can be collated towards the end of summer. On 18th October all local people were invited to this celebration evening to showcase all the activities we carried out and all findings through this project. It was well attended by 30 local people, and we were able to recruit more volunteers for next year's surveys.

This project attracted more people who are interested in the biodiversity of Earlswood area and we were able to bring in a dormouse expert to Clowes Wood to hold a dormouse workshop on 25th February 2012. Fifty dormouse tubes were installed in the woods, and future survey works are scheduled for September 2012.



Saturday 24th March 2012 bird box workshop

Since we ran out of time to make and install bird boxes in 2011, we instead held a bird box day on 24th March 2012. The day was attended by ten local people and 40 bird boxes were built. People were also introduced to basic bird surveying. We have recruited three volunteers who will carry out bird surveys in the area.

Saturday 31st March 2012 bat box inspection

An ecologist from British Waterways held an inspection day for the bat boxes which were installed in 2011. Sixteen bat boxes contained bat droppings, and bats were present in five boxes (four boxes contained Soprano Pipistrelles, and one box contained five Brown long-eared bats). The ecologist thinks that those Brown long-eared bats hibernated in the boxes, and he would expect them to breed over the next few seasons. He will carry out another inspection day in the Autumn to take wing measurements of some of those Pipistrelle bats to identify whether they are Nathusius Pipistrelles.

With this success, British Waterways is keen to put some more bat boxes up over the next few years to expand the areas for bats, and also make some boxes which are designed for other bat species.

The funding from the Nineveh Trust certainly gave the Earlswood Wildlife Partnership a good kick start and opened up opportunities, and this project will run for a long time by experienced local people who are passionate about wildlife. Warwickshire Wildlife Trust will continue to support this group and the conservation work in Earlswood.

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19th April 2012