



**Work parties are usually on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month**

All welcome, and no experience necessary

For more information please contact us (see front page for details)



Weather, new needs etc sometimes means we change plans at short notice.  
Check our website or Facebook for the most up to date information

The Moreton Hall Wildlife Group

## WOODLAND WAYS NEWS

April 2020

### Welcome to spring

**Spring is usually a good time for our woods - the birds are singing like mad, flowers are popping up everywhere, and people feel good.**

**But it might not be a surprise to you that the coronavirus has caused us to halt our work programmes and other activities for now. We'll let you know when we resume.**

Read how wildlife might be affected, inside.

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Date	Activity	Notes
<b>Sunday 12th January</b> 10.00-12.00	<b>Natterer's Wood</b> Tree planting	Fifty trees planted successfully
<b>Sunday 9th February</b> 10.00-12.00	<b>Natterer's Wood</b> Hedge maintenance	Cancelled due to Storm Ceira, wind of over 40mph was recorded in Natterer's Wood
<b>Sunday 8th March</b> 10.00-12.00	<b>Natterer's Wood</b>	We coppiced small trees and let more light into the footpath to dry it out
<b>Sunday 19th April (3rd Sunday)</b> 10.00-12.00	<b>Tool store maintenance</b>	Cancelled
<b>Sunday 10th May</b> 10.00-12.00	<b>Cherry Trees Wood</b> <i>Provisional - check beforehand</i> Woodland maintenance	Await further information
<b>Sunday 14th June</b> 10.00 - 12.00	<b>Wild flower identification</b> Fun learning	Await further information
<b>Sunday 12th July</b> 10.00 - 12.00	<b>AGM followed by Woodland Ways Pond</b> hay rake / Pond Covert orchard hay rake	Await further information
<b>Sunday 9th August</b> 10.00 - 12.00	<b>Natterer's Wood</b> Hay rake	Await further information
<b>Sunday 13 September</b> 10.00 - 12.00	<b>Natterer's Wood</b> Hedge maintenance	Await further information
<b>Sunday 11th October</b> 10.00 - 12.00	<b>Pond Covert</b> Box hedging	Await further information
<b>Sunday 15 November (3rd Sunday)</b> 10.00 - 12.00	<b>Home Covert</b> Path maintenance	Await further information
<b>Sunday 13 December</b> 10.00 - 12.00	<b>Pond Covert</b> Path maintenance	Await further information



## How will Coronavirus affect our wildlife?

There's good evidence that air pollution is significantly down across the world due to flights almost halting, and car use significantly down. That might make a difference to wildlife, but in the long term we're likely to get our air polluted again after the crisis ends. Venice is said to have cleaner water now that the myriad of tourist and other boats have stopped stirring up the silt, with more fish than ever.

In Moreton Hall, birds are less disturbed in our green spaces, and they can feed on the streets and grass verges more than ever before. If you can get the supplies to carry on feeding them as you always have done, you might well see more than ever. The chance of seeing a sparrowhawk is therefore higher because there is more sparrowhawk food flying around. As hedgehogs, frogs, toads, bats and badgers come out of hibernation they will find the streets with fewer cars, so fewer might get killed. Keep an eye out for roadkill in all the usual places eg the steep downhill part of Mount Road next to Natterer's Wood - you might struggle to find some.

### Natterer's Wood

In Natterer's Wood, the first big management problem might be that in August, if the situation hasn't changed, we are unlikely to be able to rake the hay meadow. If the Council cut it but leave the cuttings, they will leave a layer of dead cuttings which will cover wild flowers and cause harm. It will be able to cope with a year out of the cutting rotation so it'll be best just to leave it. Our June wildflower identification may or may not be on.

### Pond and Home Covert

We don't do a great deal in these woods in the spring and summer. The Pond Covert orchard is cut for hay in July by our chair using our brushcutter, and it's small enough that one or two people could rake the hay keeping distant from each other. By next winter, when it's time for the path maintenance in both woods we expect to be back to the now normal by then. If not, people may get muddy shoes or have to walk round.



### Woodland Ways Pond

The July work party at Woodland Ways Pond, raking the hay cut previously by our chair, might well be cancelled. Again, it might be possible for one or two people to rake it by keeping distant for each other or by raking at different times. It takes 10 people about 20 minutes to do it, which is one person for 200 minutes, nearly 3.5 hours! At the time we can think about how we can manage some time-sharing raking if we still are doing social distancing by then.

### Cherry Trees Wood

We would normally have weeded around the planted trees this spring, but hopefully most will survive without weeding by now.

## Annual General Meeting

If we can't meet for the AGM, we will have to work out other ways of doing it. If there is a prospect at that time of being able to get back to normal, we will simply postpone. Some of our members are more web-savvy than others, but not all will be able to join a Skype meeting or webinar, so at present it looks like we won't do a web-based AGM. Charity Commission is currently being understanding, so we are very unlikely to get into regulatory trouble with a delayed AGM.

## What happens in the meantime?

If you are in one of our woods and something needs doing, consider if you can do it! Individual volunteering won't be a formal Woodland Ways activity, but you could make a difference. For example, if a bramble grows over a path, taking a few seconds to bend it out of the way can make it easier for the next person.

Look out for updates on our website, Facebook page, or contact us for more information.