



LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

# NEWSletter

Issue No 206

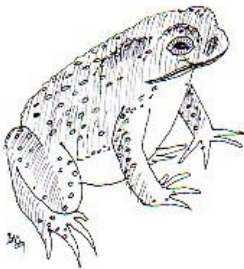
March 2023

## Hail Stopped Play!

On Wednesday February 1<sup>st</sup> Simone, Ray and I continued work on our hedge. Ray continued to cut spikes on the posts while Simone and I pruned the hedge and I removed some more of the wire fence. It was a cool day but bright if not sunny. We all packed up at 12.00. There were two fieldfares in the Orchard Meadow hedge near where we were working and during the day I saw a buzzard and some long tailed tits.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> Simone and I continued with the hedge and again Ray, Steve and I were at it on the 15<sup>th</sup> by which time we had probably managed to complete about half of what we have to do. Ray took out the myriad poplars that had invaded the hedge and I treated them so they hopefully won't return. By the 15<sup>th</sup> the blackthorn was beginning to open its flowers with little tiny flecks of white showing through the bud casings. There were several blue tits and great tits chattering in the hedge as we worked and something else which I didn't recognise was lurking in the hedgerow.

By the 22<sup>nd</sup> it was beginning to look like we would finish the hedge on time. It was a damp day but Ray and I continued to make posts and trim the hedge so it only had to be laid on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately by the end of the day we were still some fifteen stakes short of what was needed so there was no way we could finish on the forthcoming volunteer's day.



However, in a different vein, frogs and toads were on the move and there were 23 clumps of spawn in the Wetland. There was movement in the small pond in the Orchard Meadow but I could not work out what it was because I couldn't get close enough to see. All the ponds are low for the time of year being only half full when they should be up to the brim by now. Last year's drought has made it difficult for the weather to replenish the water table and we have had very little rain this winter. The weather chilled off again on the 23<sup>rd</sup> so no further spawn was seen in February.

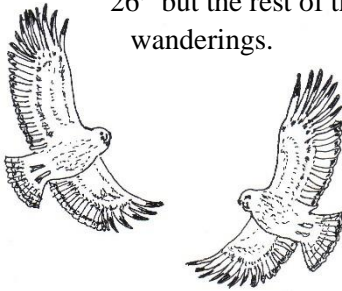
On Sunday Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>, seven volunteers arrived to finish the hedge, in spite of the thick cloud and cold, north-easterly wind that plagued our work. Paul and Mark continued laying the hedge while I removed the rest of the wire fence. Simone, both Steves and Jim started to put the previously cut brush back into the hedge to thicken it out.

So the hedge is all but complete. At the time of packing up there was another twelve feet of hedge still to lay (as above, we ran out of posts) and a corresponding amount of binding to do, and probably three - quarters of the brush to replace. All told probably just one morning's work

# FHW NEWS letter

The title says 'hail stopped play' but that is not strictly true. I called a halt when we ran out of posts. We loaded all the tools on to the various forms of wheeled transport and it was as we set off back to the car park that the Beast from the East's child whipped through, driving hail and snow into our faces and down our necks. Of course, when we reached the car park the wind blew itself out and all was calm again. There was even some sunshine later in the afternoon and the night sky was one of the clearest I have seen this year.

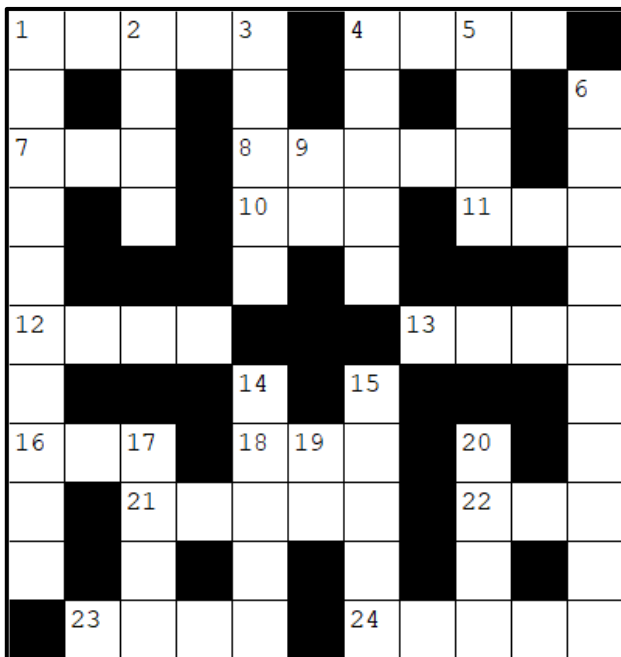
A pair of buzzards were courting on the eastern edge of the wood close to the Wetland at about noon on the 26<sup>th</sup> but the rest of the wood was very quiet although I did meet a couple of groups of walkers on my wanderings.



There is a possibility that we may need an additional work day during March for planting trees and bulbs in the reserve. It will probably be at the weekend and I will send an E-mail round for those who would like to join in. Next regular and final work day of this season will be held on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March when we will be trimming hedges for the spring, and cleaning up any bits of the reserve that need attention. Hope to see you all then.

*Peter Prince*

## FHW Crossword No 171



### Clues Across

1. Amphibians, (5). 4 & 14 down. Cleared by Peter, (4,5)
7. Newt, (3). 8. *Vipera berus*, (5). 10. Sadness, (3).
11. Epoch, (3). 12, 15 & 17 down. L.N.R. (4,5,4).
13. Bird's bite, (4). 16. Tier, (3). 18. Big Australian Bird, (3). 21. Possessor, (5). 22. N+O+ more. (3).
23. Woodworking tool, (4). 24. Amphibians, (5)

### Clues Down

1. *Turdus pilaris*, (10). 2. Cereal crop, (4). 3. Ova of amphibians, (5). 4. Oystercatcher, curlew, (5).
5. Uncommon, (4). 6. *Turdus merulae*, (10).
9. Irregular verb, (2). 14. See 4 across. 15. See 12 across.
17. See 12 .. 19. Object pronoun, (2).
20. Information, (4).

### Solutions to FHW Crossword No170

**Across** 1. Paul. 3. Twenty. 8. Nearer. 9. Rota. 10. Sap.  
11. Jenks. 14. Copse. 16. Ash. 19. Zone. 21. Isopod. 22. EV.  
23. Laying. 24. Hive

**Down** 1. Ponds. 2. Lark. 3. Three. 4. Eureka. 5. Tit. 6. Years  
12. Boleti. 13. Hazel. 15. Sting. 17. Hedge. 19. Moth.  
20. Ova.

### **Any News?**

Items for the next Issue by 9<sup>th</sup> April, please to:-

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