



13 January 2006

HELP TO PROTECT YOUR LOCAL WILDLIFE

In the coming weeks, Stroud Valleys Project is running a series of events that will give people the chance to learn and protect their local wildlife.

People will be able to learn how to identify birds and make bird boxes. As part of our local heritage SVP will be launching its new Wildlife Warden Scheme

Ever wondered what to do on gloomy January days? Well, there are your garden birds that need extra attention in the cold and frosty weather. This Saturday, you have an opportunity to help them. You may be feeding them already and wondering which birds are coming into your garden. Stroud Valleys Project is running a course in Slimbridge on the 21 January where you can improve your bird identification skills. From 10am to 12:30 pm people will be able to brush up their bird identification skills with the help of the county's bird recorder while observing birds from a bird hide.

Being able to know what birds you have in your garden will help to create a better picture of the state of birds in Gloucestershire. The course is thought to be a kick-start for the RSPB's Big Garden Bird Survey 2006 that is scheduled for the 28th and 29th January. Stroud Valleys Project is supporting this year's survey and has produced a leaflet that explains how to take part.

By supporting the RSPB's Big Garden Bird Survey 2006 people can make a real contribution to Britain's biggest bird survey and to finding out which birds are the most abundant ones in our gardens and which ones may be declining in numbers.

A second course on Saturday will teach people how to make a bird box for their garden. For many birds good nesting places have become rare. We can help by providing an artificial nesting site they can use. From 1:30pm to 3pm people can make their own bird box under guidance from SVP staff. Materials will be provided for this course and no previous knowledge is necessary.

On the 4th February Stroud Valleys Project will be launching a new Wildlife Warden Scheme in Cam and surrounding parishes in the Severn Vale with the help of the Local Heritage Initiative.

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Help To Protect Your Local Wildlifecont.

The Local Heritage Initiative is a national grant scheme that helps local groups to investigate, explain and care for their local landscape, landmarks, traditions and culture. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) provides the grant but the scheme is a partnership, administered by the Countryside Agency with additional funding from Nationwide Building Society"

Wildlife wardens can play a crucial role in helping to protect the wildlife by helping to discover what wildlife there is, if it's breeding and if there are any places that can be made into good wildlife habitat. Wildlife Wardens are basically passionate about their local wildlife!

Anybody with an interest in wildlife can become a warden and help to improve local habitats and biodiversity in our gardens, parishes and in our countryside as a whole. The aim is to involve local people in finding out about and recording the natural heritage of their local area. From Cam along the river Severn to Arlingham people who are interested in wildflowers, birds, butterflies trees or ponds can join in for a day training on wildlife issues. As a charity Stroud Valleys Project welcomes the help of volunteers in the parishes.

The wardens can either be species-wardens or site- wardens looking after a particular rare habitat in their parish. In Cam there are two sites that are of special interest, one old traditional orchard with local fruit varieties and a remnant of neutral grassland, the latter being one of 11 sites of neutral grassland left in Gloucestershire.

Site wardens will be trained in the uniqueness of the habitat they are looking after. Species wardens will be trained and have detailed knowledge about a certain species or a certain aspect of nature conservation, such as birds, butterflies, trees or ponds.

Nadine Smykatz-Kloss, Severn Vale Biodiversity Project Officer, says:

"We carried out a pond survey in Cam not long ago and lots of people replied. A pond warden would be able to give these people advice on what plants are best for their ponds and how to make them wildlife friendly. He or she would also be able to tell people what type of newt they have in their pond and know about insects and dragonflies that will come and visit the pond. Garden ponds are very important for wildlife as the number of natural ponds have declined in recent years."

The wardens will receive training in natural history, legal issues and will get continuous advice and support from Stroud Valleys Project.

The wildlife warden course will be held at St. Bartholomew's Hall in Cam on Saturday, 4th February from 10am to 3pm. The course is free, but booking a place beforehand is essential.

If you would like to book a place on either of the three courses or receive a free leaflet about upcoming courses and the RSPB Garden Bird Survey , please telephone Richard or Nadine at Stroud Valleys Project on 01453-753358.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Richard Lewis or Nadine Smykatz-Kloss
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Email: info@StroudValleysProject.org
Website: www.stroudvalleysproject.org/severnvalebiodiversityproject.htm

PHOTOCALL: Photographers are welcome to take during the two workshops on the 21.1 in Slimbridge. The courses will be held at Ryall's Cottage, Ryall's Lane, Slimbridge. Please make yourself known to Richard or Nadine when you arrive.

Jan 06
Notes to Editors:

1. Following publication of the draft Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill in February, English Nature, the Rural Development Service and the Countryside Agency's Landscape, Access and Recreation division are working towards integration as a single body: Natural England. For more information visit: www.countryside.gov.uk
2. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) enables communities to celebrate, look after and learn more about our diverse heritage. From our great museums and historic buildings to local parks and beauty spots or recording and celebrating traditions, customs and history, HLF grants open up our nation's heritage for everyone to enjoy. Since 1994 we have supported more than 18,000 projects, allocating over £3.3 billion across the UK. For more information and consultation details see: www.hlf.org.uk
3. Nationwide, the world's largest building society, provides additional sponsorship support to the Local Heritage Initiative. The society has over 10 million customers and it is estimated around one in three households in the UK has a financial relationship with it. Through sponsorship, fundraising and other activities, Nationwide has supported hundreds of events and initiatives across the country.
4. LHI is still looking to fund good quality community heritage projects, so there is still time to submit an application. It may be able to offer advice and help with technical issues or community involvement so early contact with a Countryside Agency regional office is advised. The Countryside Agency will continue to make grant aid payments to honour any new and existing grant offers made. Any projects expected to continue after formal closure of the programme will have their grants paid directly by HLF.

Cam Wildlife Group



BECOME A NATURAL HERITAGE WARDEN SATURDAY 4TH FEBRUARY

At

St. Bartholomew's Church Hall, Cam
10.00 am – 3.00 pm

The Cam Wildlife Group are looking for people who already have a specific interest in nature, such as birds, butterflies, ponds, wildflowers or trees, or who would like to learn more about Cam's traditional orchard or it's neutral grassland site.

Natural Heritage Wardens can play a crucial role in helping to protect local wildlife. The training day will include talks from Gloucestershire Constabulary's Wildlife Enforcement Officer and Gloucestershire's Rights of Way Officer.

Please call Nadine or Richard at the Stroud Valleys Project on 01453 753358 to book a place on the course.

Supported by:

A project funded by:



The Natural Heritage Warden Scheme is being supported by the Local Heritage Initiative, a national grant scheme that helps local groups to investigate, explain and care for the local landscape, landmarks, traditions and culture.