

Wilder
HEREFORD

AGM 2020 – 2021 December 7, 2021

Chair's Report

The 'Constituted' City Branch

Early in 2020 a small group who had been coordinating HWT activity in the City were advised that by constituting ourselves as an official HWT Branch we could qualify to independently apply for grants and funding for events and activities that supported the objectives of the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust.



We began the process of adopting a constitution and setting up a bank account. Along came Covid 19, and lockdown. We forged ahead, got our constitution approved and successfully – through a long, painful process – set up a bank account. And now we are here, having our first ever AGM.



Who We Are

- Acting Chair: Anne Cottringer
- Acting Treasurer: Emil Morfett
- Acting Secretary: Mo Burns
- Committee Members: Nicky Geeson, Nic Howes, Maggie Setterfield

Membership

Membership is you! If you are a member of the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust, and live in the City membership area, you are automatically a member of a Hereford City Branch. At the moment there are 575 HWT members living in the Hereford City Branch area.

You don't have to apply to be a City Branch member. You should receive our newsletter (irregular) and you can visit our webpage Wilder Hereford: <https://www.herefordshirewt.org/wilderhereford>

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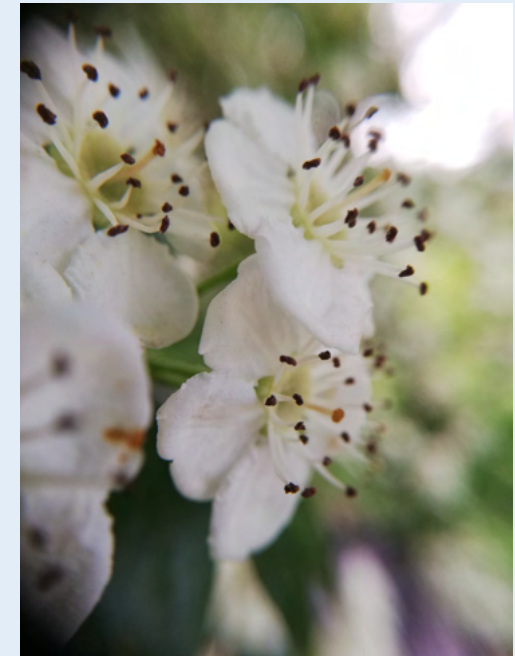
<https://www.herefordshirewt.org/wilderhereford>



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Aims of the City Branch

- to support HWT's vision for a Herefordshire richer and more diverse in wildlife, bringing its people closer to nature
- to work in partnership with groups and organisations to create a joined up nature network to ensure nature's recovery work in the City



Funding News

- For the winter of 2020 -21 funding was secured from Hereford City Council for volunteer training and for equipment hire for the works programme on the Yazor Brook which runs through the City
- Volunteers Nic Howes and Emil Morfett wrote and presented a successful bid for just under £3000 to Hereford City Council's Community Grant fund; this will purchase 2 Husqvarna electric brush cutters, harnesses, batteries and chargers and operator training for 5 volunteers from HYBRP - and local residents keen to get involved.
- Senior Conservation Officer Andrew Nixon wrote a successful bid to the Environment Agency for more than £8000 for the HYBRP to fund HWT staff supervision and meeting time, volunteer training, equipment purchase, and hire and engagement activities.

Hereford Yazor Brook Restoration Project

The HYBRP is our major project. During the winter of 2020-21, following Covid guidelines, a small but enthusiastic group was able to carry out a programme of works along the Eign Brook and Widemarsh Brook sections of the Yazor.



Clearing the Brook



How the Light Gets In - clearing branches, brambles, undergrowth to promote aquatic populations



Some of the stuff pulled out from one blockage by hospital

Riverfly Sampling



Kick Sampling



Examining Sample



Some of the invertebrates found in the sample

Otter Holt

In the Spring of 2021, with a small grant from the Environment Agency, we invested in some additional materials to supplement the in situ wood and logs to construct an otter holt. With our otter holt expert, Richard Fishbourne, a small team spent a day making a cosy home for these elusive creatures. Watch this space.



Wetland Park Project

It might look like a patch of scrubby land on the City side of Hereford's link road, but we have our sights set on turning it into a Wetland Park which would act as a giant sponge to mitigate against flooding and provide a haven for wildlife and humans. We have started to audit the flora and fauna of the site, revealing a relatively rich biodiversity which would be enhanced by thoughtful planting which will also sequester some of the carbon produced by the City.



Citizen Science – Water Testing

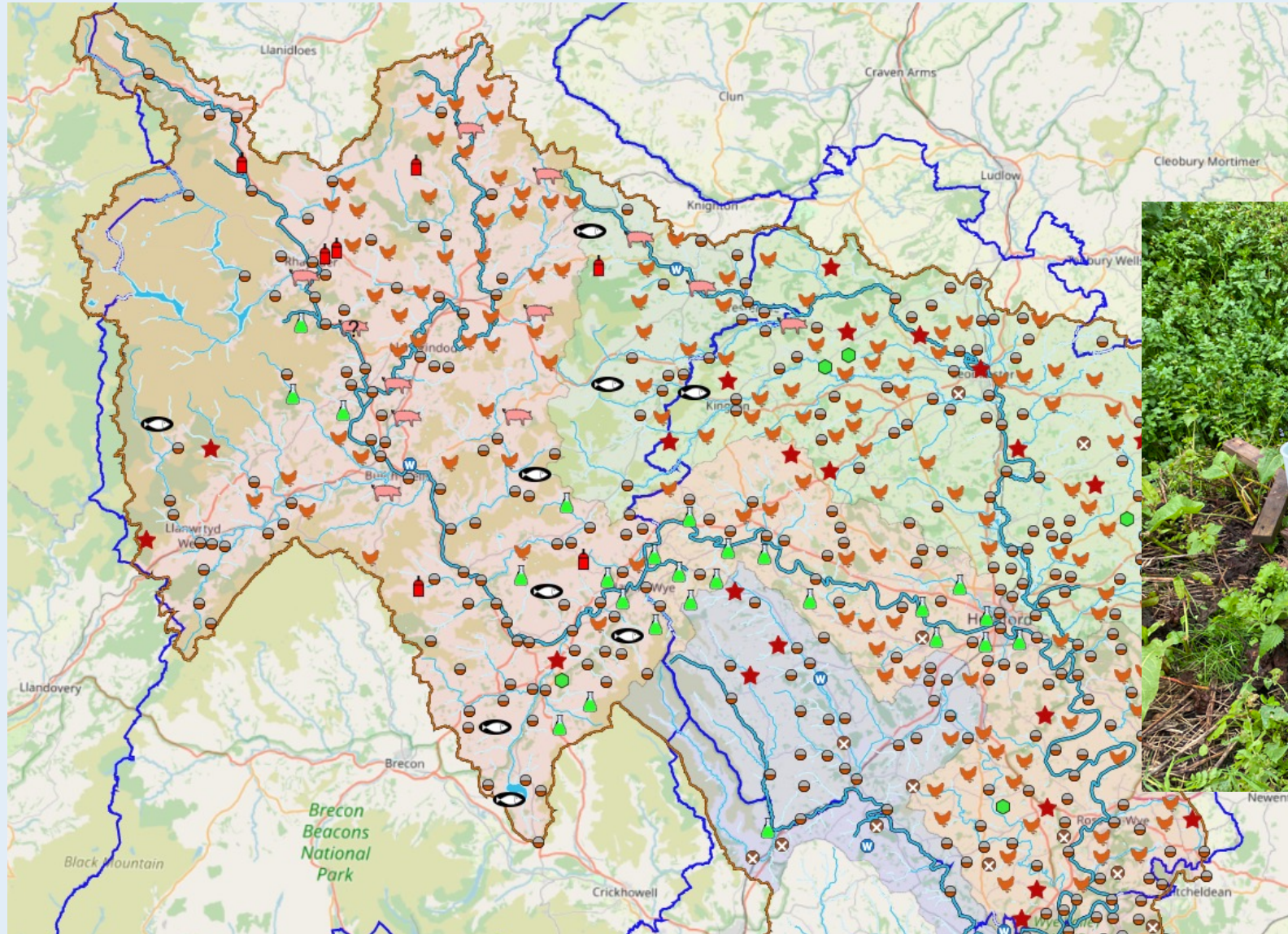
In July some of us were trained to test the water of Yazor Brook for potential pollutants as part of the Friends of the Upper Wye Citizen Science project, which is supported by HWT. See details of the project here: <https://www.fouw.org.uk/>

We were asked to test regularly for phosphates, nitrates, electrical conductivity, temperature etc. All the data is fed into a database being analysed at Cardiff University. The reliability of the phosphate strips is being investigated by the project – we have not always been convinced by the accuracy of the testing strips. We have invested in our own hand held phosphate meter for use at some sites.

We are able to say though, that at times, there have been high levels of phosphates in the Brook. We are looking forward to receiving the results of data crunching and any conclusions that might be drawn from them.

Citizen Science – Water Testing

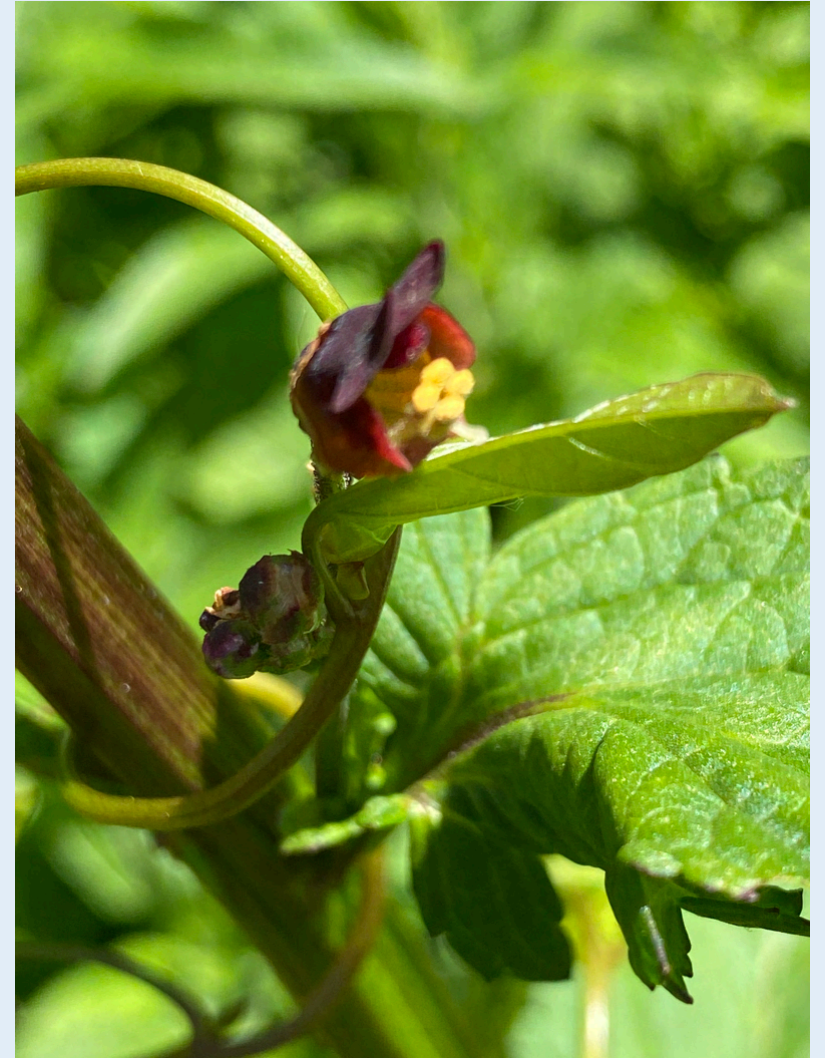
Mapping Potential Pollution Sources and Monitoring Sites



Flora and Fauna Audit

We know that biodiversity is declining in many places, but what is the situation along the Yazor Brook? To answer that we first have to list the species present now. We have started with walks along different sections at different times of the year, noting what we see. This will be repeated annually, to gradually build up a more comprehensive picture.

We would like to extend these audits to other areas and would welcome any volunteers who would like to undertake their own audit.



Flora and Fauna Audit



Water Plantain



Anyone know what creature made these tracks?



Red tailed Dragonfly

Pollution Incident on Eign Brook

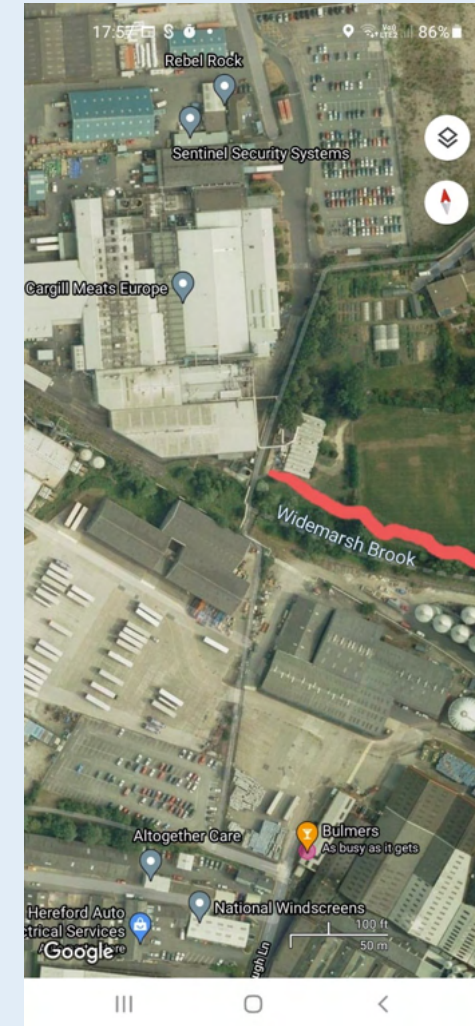
On August 16, Nic Howes noticed that Eign Brook had turned reddy brown. It turned out to be fine silt, Dumped into the brook by Centrica, working on a ground source heat pump project at the County Hospital.

<https://www.herefordshirewt.org/blog/nic-howes/eign-brook-pollution-incident-mid-august-2021>



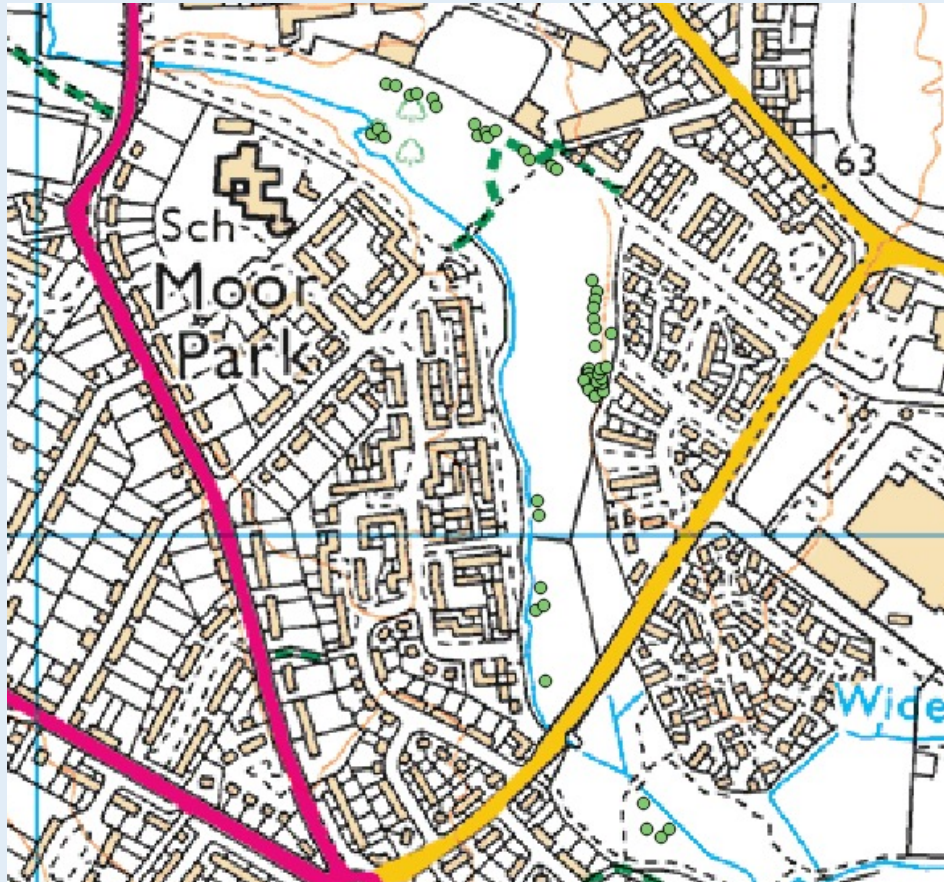
Pollution Incident on Widemarsh Brook

October 13 - Sewage Fungus was discovered when volunteers were carrying out a Riverfly survey – reported to the Environment Agency and investigations with Avara and Welsh Water are ongoing.



Tree Planting

Partnerships with Tree Wardens, Hereford in Bloom, and Hereford College of Art resulted in a busy winter of tree planting. Central Avenue, the Rose Garden on Ledbury Road, Moor Park, and Folly Lane are a few of the sites where we contributed to the greening of the City.



Mapping of Moor Park
proposed tree planting

Black poplar planting near
The Brook downstream of
Yazor Road

Talks 2020 - 2021

Due to Covid, our events calendar was mostly restricted to zoom talks. Our winter programme began in November 2020 and ran through to the Spring 2021.



Friends of Bartonsham Meadow Presentation



Verging on the Wild Presentation

Thanks to all who tuned in and for all your donations which went went to the HWT and to the works towards their vision for a greener county.



Talk	Date	No. of bookings	Donations received	Costs
Conserving Herefordshire's Ice Age Ponds	19/10/21	29	£20.00	
Coppicing at Queenswood	26/11/20	61	£61.00	
Friends of Bartonsham Meadow	21/01/21	91	£141.00	
Verging on Wild	17/02/21	152	£293.00	£40
Putting Herefordshire's Wildlife into Recovery	17/03/21	126	243.00	£40

Live Events

Butterfly Walks



Risbury Farm Visit



Hampton Park Road Reserve Visit



HWT City Branch at Walking With the Wye Event



HCC Climate and Biodiversity Committee



The City Branch has been approached by Diana Toynbee, Chair of the HCC Climate and Biodiversity Committee. A City Branch sub-committee met with Diana and colleagues in October to discuss ideas, and HWT Hereford City Branch input.

Partnerships - FOBM

The events and activities outlined above have often been in partnership with other organisations eg tree planting, zoom talks, and Hereford City Council.

One of the most vital projects in the City is the Friends of Bartonsham Meadows project with which we have a close relationship.

After witnessing, with horror, the damage done to the floodplain meadows by the floods of 2020 due to the destructive farming practices that had recently been put into play, a group of residents decided to act.



The FOBM are focussed on creating regenerative land-management practices, returning the land to a flood plain meadow rich in biodiversity which produces food sustainably. They are working with local bodies to try and make this possible. We share these aims and introduced their work to a wider audience through their inclusion in our zoom talk programme as well as participating in their August Bio Blitz event. With overlapping personnel, we continue to see them as important partners.



FOBM Bio Blitz Event – August 2021

Zoom Talks Programme 2021-2022

- Wild Plants in Urban Environments
Zoom Talk by Dr Mark Spencer
- The Life of a Hedgerow
Zoom talk by Tim Kaye
- Sarah King HWT Community Engagement
Officer
Introduces herself and talks about her work



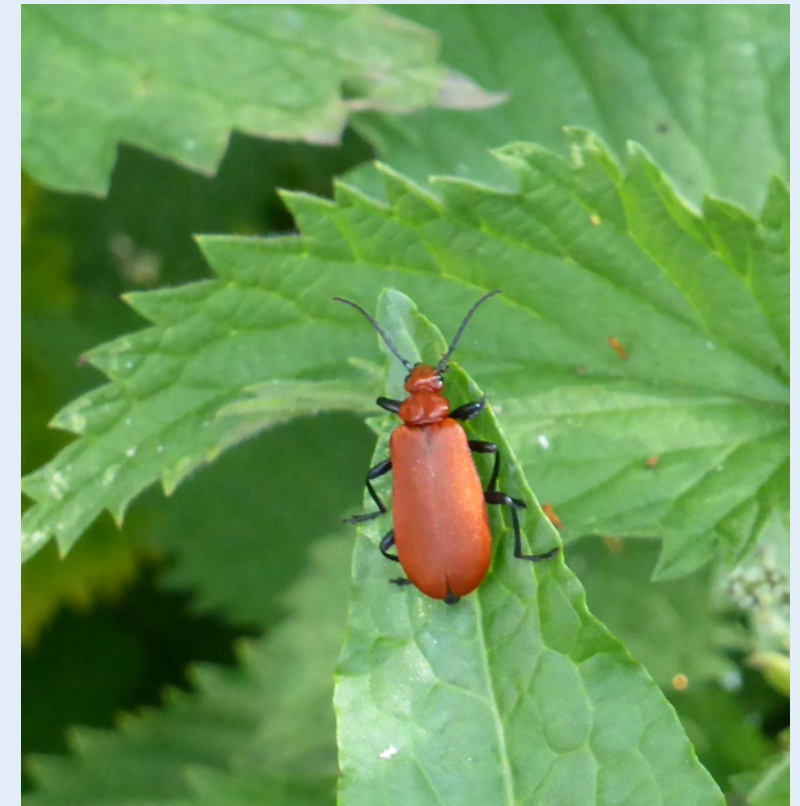
City Walks

We walk, stroll, and run down our city streets, most often without noticing the wealth of wildlife beneath our noses. Some of our members have been planning and constructing various guided walks in the city to point out plants and ‘weeds’ that on second glance, turn out to wildlife gems – or just a joy to discover.



Round-leaved Stork's Bill

You can check out some of those walks on our Wilder Hereford webpage and keep your eyes peeled for further walks appearing on our webpage in the Spring. Or if you have a favourite City walk where you would to highlight the wild flora and fauna, let us know.



Cardinal Beetle

Our Web Pages



Love your River - the Herefordshire Yazor Brooks Restoration Project

The Herefordshire Yazor Brooks Restoration Project is creating a wildlife corridor through the heart of Hereford City.



BLOG

News from Lugg Meadow and Hampton Meadow

Meadow Makers project to begin this autumn plus after dark bat action!



NEWS

Wetland Reserve Proposal for Hereford City

A new nature reserve in the heart of Hereford City?

<https://www.herefordshirewt.org/wilderhereford>

City Branch Wildside Spread

Summer 2021

More info about our work



ross Hereford City, ngs are getting tle wilder. Our eford City branch, ng with other munity groups, ages and individuals hard at work and ting a real difference our green spaces urban wildlife. Here snapshot of some of projects...

CITY WALKS

As the year unfolds some City Branch members have begun planning and constructing various illustrated guided walks in the city to point out wildlife gems that may normally go unnoticed. It is surprising what you may see if you stop to look closely at a hedge, or a wall, or even a pavement. Sometimes plants lumped together as 'weeds' can turn out to be rather unusual.

Check out our walks around Breinton and Huntington hamlet (Available on our Wilder Hereford webpage: www.herefordshirewt.org/wilderhereford). Further walks are planned from Kings Acre Express, along the Eign at Meadow Bank and by the Rose Garden.

If you have a favourite City walk where you would like to highlight the wild flora and fauna, let us know by emailing: hfdcitybranch@herefordshirewt.co.uk ANNE COTTRINGER



TREE PLANTING

Despite Covid restrictions, a socially distanced 'collective' of Hereford branch's Yazor Brooks' group, city tree wardens and Hereford in Bloom volunteers, have had their busiest winter yet planting trees across the city to help increase the city's green corridors - especially in built up areas where wildlife needs all the connective help it can get!

Trees planted to replenish Central Avenue and adjacent streets' gaps included ornamental pear, sorbus, malus, small-leaved lime and ginkgos, with six more pear (*Pyrus Chanticleer*) make excellent small street trees) for St Thomas school on Coningsby Street.

The Ledbury Road Rose Garden received five trees from the Council's popular recent 'free tree' offer - and one very special Indian bean memorial tree -



Newly planted black poplars

planted by Hereford in Bloom volunteers as part of their co-management of these public gardens with Balfour Beatty.

Park St is earning its name as it now has a mini apple orchard of twelve delicious varieties, and a mixed species hedge in what will become a mini wildflower meadow in time. This project was developed by the local community and the city council's youth council, with support from Verging on Wild.

Away from the town centre, ten black poplar truncheons are looking quietly perky along the Wye (part of a county-wide tree warden initiative to increase the black poplar population) despite the droughty April. The Yazor Brooks' group have also planted black poplar, sweet birch and four Acer and Sorbus on Moor Park, west of Yazor road, as precursors to up to 50 more, plus a second plantation of mixed native trees east of Yazor Road, next winter.

Keeping all these new trees watered is hard work at times, but it's rewarding to meet willing neighbours, pleased to lend a hand and bond with their trees - and amazing where one can find outdoor taps tucked away down the side of businesses when one is desperate!

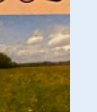
Along with the council's excellent '500 free trees' offer for residents, and its impressive new trees in planters within the city centre, there is much to celebrate in truly collective efforts this year to 'green the city'.

MO BURNS

CITY RE

LUGG MEAD

Designation: S
Size: 46.5 hecta
Habitat: Unimp
river and bank-s
Address: Ledbu
Herefordshire, H
Grid Reference:
Parking: Parking
to the entrance:
Wildlife to spot:
martin, curlew, sk
damselfly, meado
frillillary, narrow-le
meadow cranesb



HAMPTON ME

Designation: SSSI
Size: 25 hectares (6
Habitat: Lammas r
pasture

Address: Hampton
Reserve, Tidnor Lan
Herefordshire HR1 4

Grid Reference: SO
Parking: At Hampt

Wildlife to spot: na
drowport, winter wh
white-legged damse
damselfly.



WYVALE WOOD

Size: 4 hectares (10 a
Habitat: Secondary v
Address: Wyevale W
Breinton, Herefordsh
Grid Reference: SO-4

Parking: Limited park
Green Lane. Please no
vehicle access down t

Wildlife to spot: broa
bluebell, ladies smock
spotted woodpecker,



Wilder
HEREFORD

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