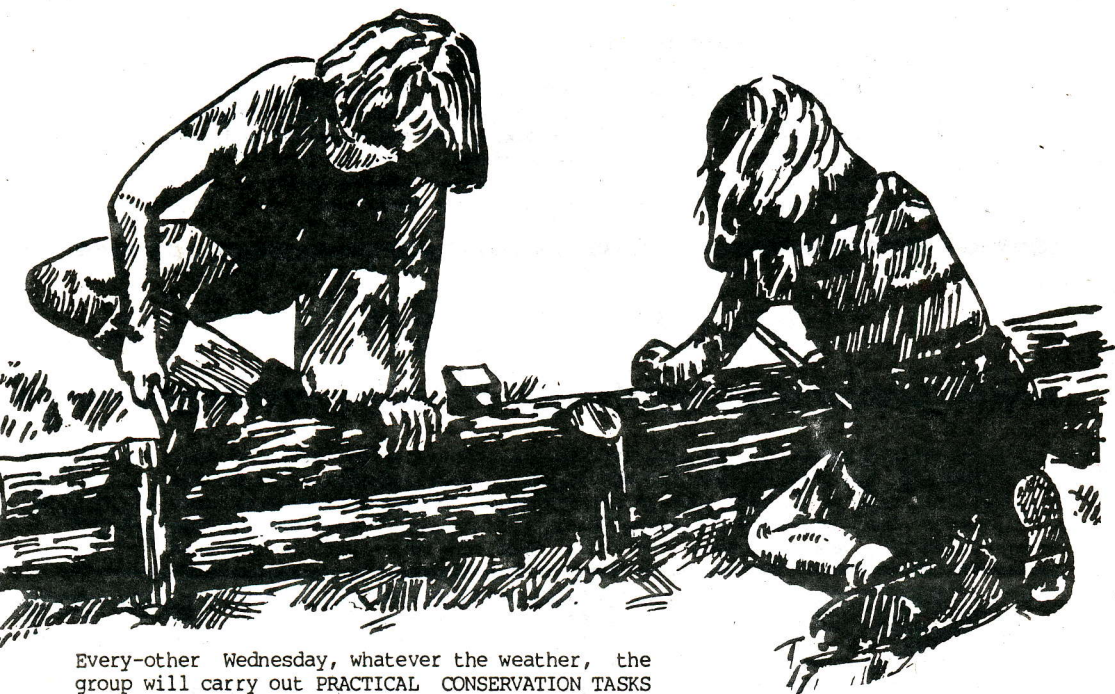


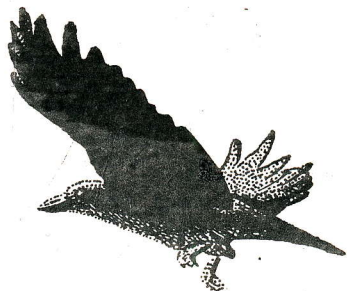
C.R.O.W.

Conserve Reading on Wednesdays NEWSLETTER



Every-other Wednesday, whatever the weather, the group will carry out PRACTICAL CONSERVATION TASKS in and around the Reading area. There will be two pick-ups from the short-term car park at Reading Railway Station; one at 10.00am and the second at 1.30pm so that if you can only come for half a day - no problem! (Look out for a grey minibus with 'Berkshire Conservation Volunteers' stickers on the side.) The type of work that we'll be carrying out will be:- Rhododendron bashing, Footpath work, Pond work, Fencing etc.

...CONTINUED
OVER....



WORK PROGRAMME

7th MAY - HURLEY CHALK PIT

21st MAY - UFTON COURT

4th JUNE - CALIFORNIA COUNTRY PARK

18th JUNE - UFTON COURT

2nd JULY - CALIFORNIA COUNTRY PARK

Anyone between the ages of 16 and 70 is welcome, and no special skills are required - just a willingness to learn. (You don't even need bulging muscles !) All tools and transport will be provided, as will refreshments during the tasks. All you need bring are old clothes, strong boots/wellies, waterproofs (to keep the rain away !) and, if you will be staying all day, some sandwiches. The minibus will be returning, to drop people off at the station, at about 1.15pm and 5.15 pm (after which, we usually go for a drink and a chat in a local pub).

A BRIEF RESUMÉ FROM AN ABSOLUTE BEGINNER

We were a group of nine, setting out on a conservation task. I'd been meaning to come on one for months, and I realised that this was the first time I'd been out in the Berkshire countryside for a purpose other than to admire the view. We arrived at Moor Copse, just outside Tilehurst, and unloaded the tools. Then, the short walk to the site where we would get our hands dirty. The tall, thin bare trees swayed like stalks of corn in the strong wind. Somebody, armed with a camera, took the 'before' photograph. We were here to do some 'Coppicing', the reasons for which I needed to have explained, but soon we were out among the trees, chopping down selected species to allow others to grow. As the afternoon wore on, the sun appeared more and more often, and soon it was time for the most necessary part of the afternoon - the tea-break. Malcolm did remember to bring the milk this time !

Fifteen minutes later it was back to the axes and saws, the bonfire and the hard work, but it was work at your own pace. There was no deadline to meet with 'X' amount of work to be completed. You just take your time and enjoy it all, the sun, the scene, the people and the activity.

Eventually, it was time to take the 'after' photograph. The tools were collected up and it was back to the minibus for a much needed trip to the Rising Sun (Pub) for some liquid refreshment of a different sort.

Pete Young

"The Story So Far..."



On 12th March 1986, CROW held its first task at Curtis Wood, Calcot. The site is an area of very old woodland, owned by Calcot Park Golf Club, which has been saved from the developers by local residents who formed a group; 'the Friends of Curtis Wood'. The task involved the removal of scrub, and tree thinning so as to let more light in, thus encouraging the ground flora (Bluebells, Primulas, Foxgloves, etc.) and remaining trees to thrive. In all, 9 volunteers turned up, from all walks of life:- a member of the 'Friends', 2 'Experts' from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (for advice, tools and transport!), a part-time worker and a couple of unemployed people - a real mix. Everyone enjoyed the bright March sunshine especially during the tea brake which was used as an ideal opportunity to get to know each other better. The task ended at about 4.45pm, and the minibus returned those who wanted a lift, to Reading Station. I have to admit to being amazed and pleased with the response to this new venture, and that everyone seems to get on so well.

Since that time the group have now, successfully completed a further 3 tasks at:- Bucklebury Common- Clearing Heathland; Moor Copse, Tidmarsh (a SSSI)- Coppicing; and California Country Park, Nr. Finchampstead-Rhododendron Clearing. So far, it has only rained on us once (and that was very fine drizzle!) and each time, at least one new volunteer has joined us (a couple of students and a self-employed person) so the diversity is still growing. BUT - we still want more volunteers. If you are even only slightly interested, please give one of us a call.

Malcolm Chandler



Please let us know if you want to come along to a task by ringing one of the contacts (preferably by the Monday BEFORE the task) to help us organise enough tools, and transport. If you can't though, don't worry, just turn up at the pick-up point on the day.

HEY PEOPLE!! FORGET CLUB 18-30!! TAKE A LOOK AT THIS...!!

The C.R.O.W. "One-Day Countryside Package Holiday" includes:

FREE TRIPS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE !!

FREE TEA, COFFEE AND BISCUITS !!

PLUS FREE TRIP TO THE PUB AFTERWARDS !!!

BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH!

BRING A FRIEND!

BRING TWO!!

**SOMETHING
TO CROW
ABOUT !!**



FORTHCOMING TASKS...

Hurley Chalkpit.

Is at grid reference 814 820. The site is managed by BBONT and a variety of tasks have already been carried out. We will be erecting a length of fencing.

Ufton Court.

This site is located at grid ref. 667 627. Owned by Berkshire County Council Education Dept., our task will be helping with preparatory work to create a wild flower nursery.

We will be returning to this site to help finish the nursery and, to repair various fences.

California Country Park.

The Park is owned by Wokingham District Council. It has a large pond and wetland area as well as woodland and heathland. We have been asked to help with the clearance of Rhododendron, which is starting to dominate areas of the woodland. (Grid Ref. 786 647.)

We shall be returning to carry out more of the same later.

* * * * *

P.S. We tend to be returning to sites at the moment for two reasons, the first, is that work is limited at this time of year as we don't wish to disturb too much wildlife, and the second, is simply a lack of site contacts - these, we will be able to build-up as we become more established.

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If you can't get to any of these tasks but are interested, or would like to help in some other way, please contact us anyway.

CONTACT No's

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Steve Marshall : Rdg. 424725 Pete Young: Rdg. 589570