

Kemerton Clippings

Volume I, Issue I

January 2008

Appeals for Help!

In addition to setting up the Volunteer Working Party Group, the Trust is specifically looking for volunteer help in the following areas;

- An experienced gardener who can commit to a couple of hours a week to assist our Conservation Advisor, John Clarke, with the wildflower seed nursery.
- Assistance with moulding & engraving the clay discs used to label the orchard trees.
- Assistance with preparing wooden stakes for the labelling of the arboretum (involves screwing small metal discs to the stake).
- A graphic designer to help re-design the posters at the Lake Reserve

Any locals able to assist in letter drops around the villages of Kemerton, Bredon, Westmancote & Kinsham.

Any help is always gratefully received. The Trust is dependent upon the goodwill and assistance it receives from its volunteers to continue its important work in the local area, so please do let us know if you can give up any time to assist in any way.

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Open Day is Huge Success!

On Saturday 3rd November, KCT hosted an Open Day event at Kemerton Lake Nature Reserve. Turnout was very good and with several of the Trust's own Governors and volunteer experts on hand to discuss the management of the reserve and answer any questions. The day was beautiful and crisp and the reserve was looking particularly eye-catching with all the autumnal colour of the arboretum on display.

Two sessions were held, involving a walk around the lake reserve and through a large section of the arboretum. As the event was organised and volunteers were on hand to assist, it was possible to allow visitors to walk through wildlife areas not normally open to the public and see sites of specific interest, such as the mining bee colony. For those who joined us on the afternoon session, the event ended with the spectacular sight of several thousand starlings coming in to roost among the reed beds.

All in all, the event was a real success and hopefully helped to spread the word about the Trust's work in the area. More Open Days are planned for 2008, so if you were unable to join us this time, there will be lots of future opportunities!



Chairman Adrian Darby leading walk in Arboretum



Lillans Orchard to Go Organic

The Trust is now marketing fruit from The Lillans Orchard and the Walled Garden to a local vegetable box scheme, Slipstream Organics.



In addition, the farm, which assists the Trust with the day-to-day management of the Orchards, has now applied to the Soil Association for organic status for The Lillans, the Walled Garden, Grange Orchard and Upstones Orchard. Grange Orchard has been planted up with young trees and with careful management they should be cropping well within five years and the fruit will also be bought by the vegetable-box company.

Kemerton Conservation Trust Launches 'Friends of KCT' Scheme

KCT is pleased to announce that following on from a very successful Open Day, they launched the new 'Friends of KCT' scheme at the slide show held on 30th November at Kemerton Village Hall.

With the continued efforts of the trust team and all our wonderful volunteers, and with the addition of our new Support Coordinator, it is hoped that 2008 will be a very exciting year for the Trust, with the 'Friends' scheme playing a large part in involving the local community in more aspects of the Trust's work.

The new scheme is aimed at volunteers and supporters and will hopefully entice more locals to get

involved in conservation work. No matter how big or small your contribution, all trust helpers will become part of the scheme; receiving our 6-monthly newsletter and receiving invitations to 'Friends-only' events. We hope to issue membership cards in the next few weeks to everyone already involved in helping KCT.



One of the major new aspects of the scheme is the setup of a Volunteer Working Party Group to assist in the wildlife site management. Our new Support Coordinator, Kate Aubury, will be organising working parties monthly throughout the year, with the first working party meeting on **Sunday 27th January at 12.00 am**. Anyone interested in attending should contact Kate on 07765 334 776 or alternatively by email on kate@aubury.co.uk. All relevant tools and safety equipment will be provided and no experience is necessary.

News in Brief

John Clarke has met the manager of the nursery at Pershore College and has agreed that the Trust will supply them with apple tree grafting material as they wish to extend their range of apple varieties and prefer to use a local source.

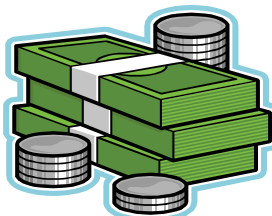
Thanks to the help of several local volunteers, more bird boxes have been made and will be sited and monitored throughout 2008. We are indebted to Rob Prudden for his regular bird monitoring, which is vital to the Trust. All reports are sent to the Worcestershire Biological Records Centre.

The Trust is hoping to launch a new bat box scheme this year as well. We are hoping to be able to offer a 'sponsor a bat box' option for those interested – we will keep you posted!

'The trust is hoping to launch a new bat box scheme this year'

Funding Update

The Trust has obtained a 2007 grant from the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund (ALSF) through Natural England to open up more of the Arboretum to the public. Work has already begun and hopefully the new access rides will be completed by the end of spring. The Trust is grateful to Natural England for ALSF grant monies received over the last four



years. Sadly, this year's grant is likely to be our last through them, so we are urgently seeking additional funds, both through alternative grant sources and the general public/local businesses.

We will be launching an appeal for contributions in the New Year.

We are thrilled to announce we have already received several contributions from generous village donors. Thank you to all who have supported us!

Kemerton Cuttings

Biological Records Report from John Clarke (April—Sept 07)

Kemerton Lake

After reporting in the last issue that it was now more than four years since the lake filled to capacity, the summer weather saw the lake overflow and indeed, the surrounding areas all subjected to major flooding.

Both Snipe and Jack Snipe were seen in April – the snipe record on 15th May being particularly late.

Of 10 Barnacle Goose reported 2nd April 7 had darvic rings – traced to a ringing programme in East Anglia (ringed 24/7/05). A Peregrine was hunting there on the same date (far fewer records this year).

Very few Yellow Wagtail reported on passage. In late March/early April a pair of Red-crested Pochard were seen mating but did not stay to breed.

A pair of Oystercatcher reported on 6th April stayed and bred successfully at second attempt.

More than 40 Toad were rescued from a sluice on 18th.

A first summer Iceland Gull seen 21st April (with another sighting 17th May), a Cuckoo was calling on 22nd, 6 Swift, a male Wheatear and 3 Common Sandpiper on 23rd. By this date the first Lapwing clutches had been laid with up to 5 pairs attempting to breed but all failed due to predation by corvids and gulls.

In May a pair of Shelduck attempted to breed but were harassed by gulls. A brood of 9 Pochard ducklings were predated by gulls within 24 hours. The gull problem increased with up to 500 birds resting/bathing at times.

Other birds recorded on passage – a Whimbrel on 18th May, 2 Dunlin on 19th, a Turnstone on 23rd.

Highest counts of - Sedge Warbler 5 singing males, Reed Warbler 27

singing males and Reed Bunting 3 territories.

A Snipe is believed to have summered – only rarer sightings of Redshank with no breeding attempt this year.

A pair of Great-crested Grebe fledged one – then two young. A post-fledging flock of c150 Lapwing in mid-July may have included birds from farther afield (although a part count found 20 pairs in the Carrant Catchment Area.

6 Ruddy Shelduck were seen on 12 August.

Hobby was a common visitor throughout the summer (final record 14th September) and Raven was reported regularly from the area.

10 Snipe arrived 4th Sept and as the month progressed other sightings included 6 Meadow Pipit, 5 Shoveler, Pochard, Wigeon and Teal. A late Reed Warbler was seen on 20th, when a Chiffchaff was calling. On 24th 5 juvenile Ruff dropped in briefly. Coot numbers rose rapidly in September, peaking at around 175.

Elsewhere around Kemerton

There were several sightings of Slow Worm and numerous reports of Grass Snake this year.

The first Swallow arrived in territory 6th April (see also late breeding). A Cuckoo was calling at Bredons Norton Meadows on 21st.

On 8th May a pair of Water Shrew were watched as they collected nest material in Kemerton.

On 12th a pair of Grey Wagtail were feeding 3 fledged young in Kemerton with a possible second pair in the area. Also in May, a Cetti's Warbler was reported singing near Kemerton. During wider

surveys of farmland birds in the area, Whitethroat,

Linnet and Yellowhammer were very common. So too were Skylark (occasionally in high density) and Meadow Pipit. A pair of Wheatear bred successfully.

A Barn Owl chick was seen at one site 29th June.

A local volunteer carried out a trial survey of Glow-worm on Bredon Hill.

Late breeders - A song Thrush was feeding a young fledgling 21st

August, a brood of 3 Swallows fledged 17th September and stayed around the nest area until 25th.

On 28th August a Red Kite was watched for some time as it drifted over farmland between Kemerton and the Lake. A dead Water Shrew was found near the Lake 22nd September.

Kemerton Conservation Trust is particularly grateful for the

records provided by contributors to the recording scheme.



John Clarke at our Open Day

**John Clarke,
Conservation Advisor**

Kemerton Clippings & Cuttings Jan 08

Edited by Kate Aubury
Contact email: kate@aubury.co.uk

This newsletter is published 6-monthly. Next edition will be issued in July 08.

For more information on the work of KCT, please visit our website;
www.kemerton.org

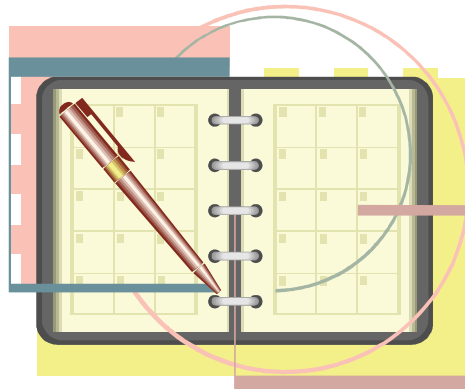


Fungus specimen from Arboretum

Save the Date!

27th January 2008 - Working Party at Kemerton
Lake Nature Reserve (12 noon start)

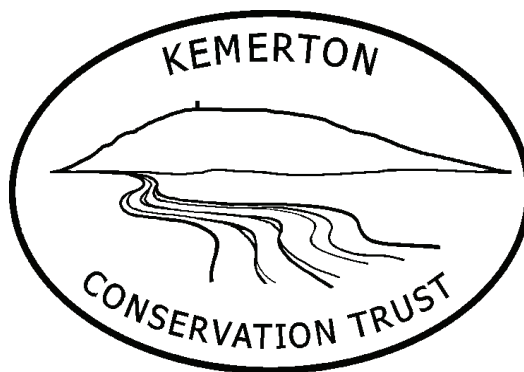
23rd February 2008 - Working party- reserve to be
confirmed (10am start)



KEMERTON COURT
TEWKESBURY
GLOUCESTERSHIRE
GL20 7HY
Tel: 01386 725 254

Registered Charity No. 702488

www.kemerton.org



GOVERNORS:

A. M. G. DARBY, O.B.E. (Chairman)

C. M. CONNOR

M. G. DARBY

P. S. DOBLE

LORD HOWICK OF GLENDALE

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