Dymock Forest Rural Action – DyFRA

Welcome to newcomers to the village of the past 2 years since the last Parish Meeting.

This report is made by Chris Bligh (absent on a much needed pandemic- delayed holiday) who is the programme director of Dymock Forest Rural Action – or DyFRA – which was formed in 2012, as a network of individuals and organisations with substantial experience in conservation and sustainable actions.

The group embraces the Wild Daffodil Project, funded in 2005 thanks to a grant from the National Grid, to restore the wild daffodil verges throughout the village. Its success is manifest every March. More than 75 seed guardians have propagated and planted daffodil bulbils to expand the colonies of bulbs. The mowing regime, again managed by village volunteers (you can help!), is now instituted in the village with regular mowing in late June to support the spread of the daffs and attendant wildflower species along the footpaths. The wildflower banks, containing more than 50 species give the additional benefit of nectar source for insects, bees and butterflies. You may have noticed them on your way here today and hopefully will see the butterflies they attract on the way home…

2020 – 2021

Although a trying time for the last 2 seasons of cancelled Daffodil Events, and particularly the prohibition of volunteer working in the woodlands due to Covid Restrictions nature continues to recover. The establishment phase of the 600 trees planted by schools and local enthusiasts in 2018 at The Centenary Glade have grown very successfully. This autumn we will need help to remove some shelters for reuse. These are not timber trees, but species that support the biodiversity needs of insects and butterflies of an Ancient Woodland habitat – present here in Kempley for a thousand years.

Entrance to The Glade can be found on the path behind the picnic bench at the Queens Wood car park, beyond Woodcocks)

Publications

DyFRA newsletter has a subscriber base of more than 500 supporters. Writers produce considered and topical reflections on the solutions to the Climate and Nature Emergency, specifically as it relates to protecting our local landscape. We campaign on sustainability issues within the Golden Triangle which includes all the daffodil villages from May Hill to Ledbury, and from the Wye to the Severn.

Protect and Restore Biodiversity

The Centenary Glade Project is the most recent and tangible success story, reflecting the long legacy of our working landscape and its social history . We have negotiated a unique, formal relationship with Forestry England to create and expand community woodland and identify solutions to mitigate climate change impacts.

Throughout the pandemic we have maintained the countryside access, the route maps, and the creation of new routes – for exercise, recreation and mindful relaxation.

The natural environment may appear healthy, and indeed through 50 years of landowner, farmer and villagers voluntary care it has been the major feature bringing people to our neighbourhood.

We are all proud that conservation awareness, public recognition, and the ‘identity’ of the Golden Triangle and Daffodil Way gives us a high profile – particularly at Easter peak time BBC 1 by Countryfile’s Ellie Harrison (still available to view on iPlayer)

Her passing words ring true – “this is only here due to the volunteer efforts of the community, the legacy of woodland management by foresters, and the partnership of Forestry England in promoting a community woodland’

Our programme for 2021 was given a boost this week, by Parish Council endorsement with a resolution to actively restore the biodiversity of the parish routes. Viz:

*Promote the development and expansion of wildlife corridors connecting existing high-value nature sites within Kempley and across the bordering parishes of Dymock, Oxenhall and Linton/Gorsley, along the verges, footpath network and watercourses.*

Read our monthly current affairs pieces in the Windcross Parish Benefice magazine, and please make keep up the lobby of our MPs, the GCC and the combined parish councils of the Golden Triangle to deliver on the promise of this resolution.

Warm wishes – see you in the woods or verges with a trowel one day!

DyFRA logs and Daffodil Confetti are also available for purchase – contact Chris Bligh at [dyfradaffs@gn.apc.org](mailto:dyfradaffs@gn.apc.org).