



# Newsletter

## April 2024



Welcome to our very first quarterly newsletter for updates about our beautiful local nature reserve and what conservation work we've been doing over the first three months of 2024.

### **Our workdays**

Spring has sprung and in January, we prepared for the emergence of our first spring flowers by clearing brambles from around the small woodland area near the bottom of the mound. The leaves of the primrose are appearing earlier and earlier so this task may need to be tackled in December this year!

Last year we brought back the ancient craft of hedge laying to SNCP and blossom can now be seen on that first section and the young blackthorn behind. A wonderful and significant discovery was made last summer with the eggs of the Brown Hairstreak butterfly on that young blackthorn. This butterfly is in decline in the UK but we will be encouraging its population increase in SNCP with careful habitat maintenance. As they lay their eggs on young blackthorn shoots, this will involve cutting back mature sections on a 3-5 year rotation to encourage the new growth.



We continued our hedge laying, together with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV), along the seasonal path under the expert tuition of Rob from TCV. Hedgerows are an important source of food and refuge for our wildlife and provide safe corridors for them to move around the nature reserve. This is particularly important in an area with such a high footfall as ours.

Protecting and creating biodiverse habitats is the basis of our conservation work. Check out our website for detailed workday reports and information on why we protect sensitive habitats by building dead hedges around them (as seen in this photo).





## A new warden in South Norwood Country Park!

A nature reserve the size of SNCP needs a warden but we have been without one for the last three years. In the meantime, volunteers have been doing their best to maintain vital habitats. In the case of the

Friends of SNCP, we have been lucky enough to have been expertly guided by Ian Glover (*in the check shirt*) who has the essential conservation knowledge to ensure our work benefits the nature reserve and does not harm it. We are extremely happy that Ian has now been appointed as the new Countryside Warden for SNCP. Many of you already know Ian and remember when he previously worked as an assistant warden prior to Croydon Council going into administration at the end of 2020.

Ian's appointment is the start of a more positive future for SNCP including plans and projects to improve those habitats which have seen a decline in bird species in recent years.



### Wildlife walks

Our walks and talks are an important part of our work to raise awareness of the diversity of wildlife in SNCP. Our first bird walk for 2024 was ably led by enthusiastic birder and committee member, Howard Dingley. It was the first time Howard had led a walk after our previous expert moved to Somerset! He had no need to worry about stepping into someone else's shoes though. Howard's walk was very informative and his little anecdotes were

thoroughly entertaining.

Look out for information about more walks and talks over the coming months.

Finally .... the Friends of South Norwood Country Park are an enthusiastic group of volunteers with one thing in common – we love our designated local nature reserve. If you would like to join in with one of our workdays and learn more about the importance of conservation, please email us on [friendsofsncp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofsncp@gmail.com)

For more information about SNCP, please visit our website [www.friendsofsncp.org.uk](http://www.friendsofsncp.org.uk)



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