



BERKSHIRE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS



Newsletter no. 173

August / September 2004

Task Reports

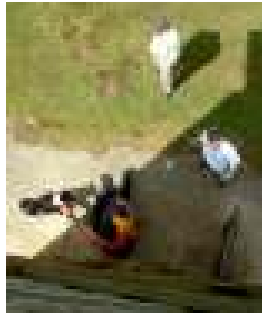
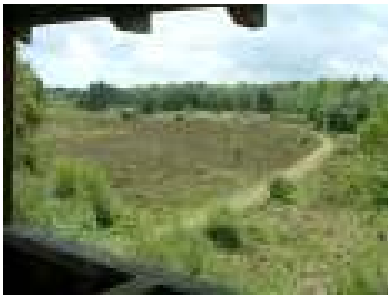
6th June – Snelsmore Common – Photos Neil Frankum & Richard Coles

A day of wandering around the southern parts of the common, slasher in one hand and map in the other. The task was to knock back the bracken, birch, holly, and bramble that was encroaching on a number of the paths around the site. We split into a couple of groups, and started at opposite ends of the area, and gradually worked our way into the middle, with the occasional regrouping for a cup of tea back at the van. Keith also opened up the lookout tower at lunchtime to let us get an aerial view of the site.

Right – Anna, Peter, & Phil looking at the map and planning where to go next.

Below left – view across the common.

Below right – Richard, Peter & Anna



11th July – Beale Wildlife Park – Neil Frankum

Thistles, ragwort, and Meercats! We started off in the field we have been pulling thistles in for the last few years. We've obviously been successful, as you had to look hard for the little bit that was left. After lunch we moved into the field by the River Thames.



L-R: David, Peter, Richard, Louise, Ben, & Owen



This was very much like the other field had been when we started. Large clumps of large, easily visible thistles, and even quite a bit of ragwort. When we had covered the entire field we went to see the meercats and other animals in the wildlife park itself. The pub trip afterwards was a complete failure when everybody else decided to follow the van to the pub. The only problem being that the van wasn't going to the pub!



30th May – Greenham Common – Photos – Maurice Budden



27th June – Snelmore Common – Philip Allen Photos – Neil Frankum

Up early, but the van started first time this week, so phoned Nigel to let him know that a lift was not needed today. Got the van loaded with tools for path clearance before Caragh a new volunteer arrived at 9.10. Peter & Matt did not turn up so we put inside the 4 wheelbarrows that Keith wanted to borrow for a group of 40 office workers due to spread gravel on the paths that we were to clear today. No one at the station either so were glad to see Nigel & Ben in the car park at Snelmore. Neil joined us later as he had wondered all round the site after someone had parked in front of the first sign and hidden it. The task was scraping the mud off the paths and cutting back any overhanging vegetation. Nigel attempted to boil the kettle using thick wads of paper & wood without fine kindling. Unsurprisingly he was unsuccessful. However Caragh did manage to get the kettle boiling for the lunch time brew. After completing the task we adjourned to a hostelry near the Watermill Theatre which served very fine cider from Adlestons which we enjoyed out in the garden & inside during the heavy showers, before driving home along the flooded roads.



Above – Phil, Caragh, & Ben clearing the footpath.

23rd May – Wildmoor – Neil Frankum

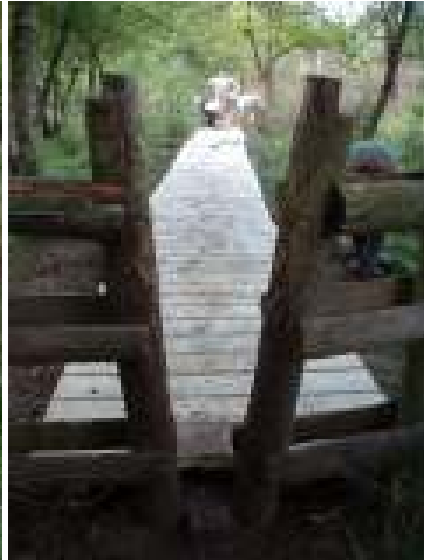
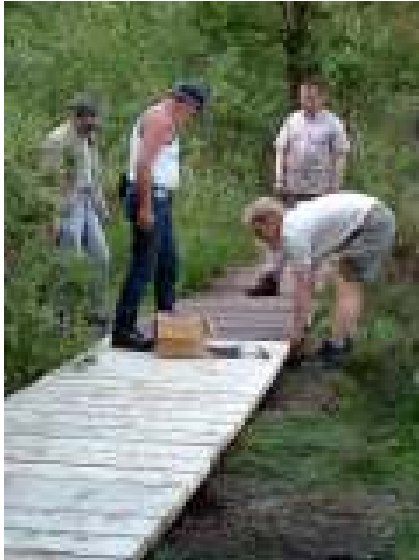
Today’s task was to replace a section of boardwalk in the middle of the Wildmoor reserve. We were actually lucky to have a job to do, as a large heath fire a couple of weeks before had burnt much of the area adjacent to where we were working. The top of the existing boardwalk was still in reasonable condition, but many of the support beams were very rotten. The first job involved demolishing the existing boardwalk. Then we had to install a number of sections of tree trunk into holes in the ground to form the main supports. Beams were then installed across the posts, and finally a new deck nailed into place. We didn’t finish until 6pm, but it was a sunny day, and it was nice to go home having finished a nice construction task. At lunchtime, we were visited by some of the rather inquisitive ponies that graze the site, and had to defend our lunches.



Above left – Phil inspecting the existing boardwalk. Above middle & right – Work in progress.



Above left – Laurence, Richard, Phil & the ponies. Above right – view across to the burnt area. Below – finishing touches, and the completed boardwalk.



13th June – Yateley Common – Neil Frankum (Photos Neil Frankum & Maurice Budden)

Over the years, many of the footpaths and bridleways across the common have migrated away from where they should be. Part of the plan to move the paths on the ground back to where the rights of way map shows they should be, is to ensure that there are good quality paths in the right places. One of the bridleways in the middle of the site regularly turns into a mudbath in the winter. It was still a bit damp even after the really dry weather of the last month. Our task was to create a 3m wide length of proper hard surfaced path across one of the worst bits. The construction involved installing wooden retaining boards along the edges of



the path. Then a layer of birch brash was laid down over the mud to provide a mesh that would stop the next layer of gravel from sinking too far into the mud. The final wearing course was a thick layer of hogging.



Above left – Neil knocking in one of the support stakes. Above middle – Matt, Richard, Alisdair, & Beth. Above right – Vicky, Peter & Alisdair.



Above – L-R: Richard, Matt, Beth, Maurice, Alisdair, Phil, Owen, Peter, & Vicky

20th June – Greenham Common – Philip Allen Photo – Maurice Budden

The van would not start even with a jump start so I called Nigel who had called the day before to say he would be out. Nigel was just waking up but agreed to take people & tools in his car if I could get to the tool



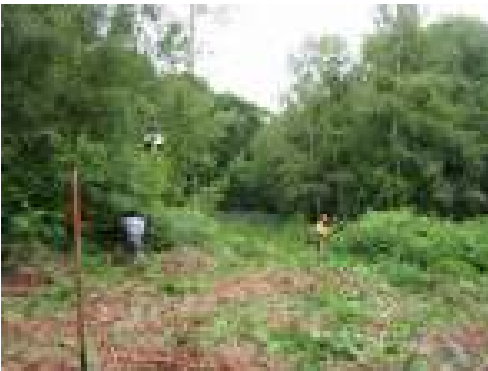
store. So I rode my bike as fast as I could so as not to keep last week' s new volunteers Matt & Beth waiting to long. (Beth did not come as she had got home late from a concert the previous night). We got the saws; loppers & kettle & water ready and left a message on the warden' s office phone before Nigel arrived at 9.30. We picked Peter & Owen up from the station (David was only at the station on route to another run.) and headed off via my house to pick up the tea things from the van & via the co-op for Peter' s food. Maurice & the Warden were waiting in the car park when we arrived followed shortly by Ben. The task was to cut down the charred remains of

gorse & birch scrub that the local kids had torched on the Friday Night so as not to encourage more burning. We cut and staked the material ready for a controlled burn when it was less windy. We had a enjoyable day although got covered in soot but did see some Bee Orchids. Maurice took Peter & Matt home after the task so the rest of us could go for a walk then have a meal in the Swan Inn which had a beautiful riverside garden, before helping with a Nightjar survey around Greenham. Ben left after the meal so only three of us joined the survey we did not see any in our section but did hear one at 10.10pm & another at 10.20. 12 Nightjars were seen by the other teams from 9.30 onwards. The van started on Monday after playing with battery & distributor so I took the tools back to Caversham Court but it would not start when I tried it on Friday evening after getting home from an interview in London. Rodney came and fitted a new battery on the Saturday while I was up in London for my Mum' s surprise birthday do.

4th July – Padworth Common – Neil Frankum (Photos by Neil Frankum and Maurice Budden)

A large impenetrable area of bracken was today's target. This patch was too high to treat with chemicals, so

our job was to flatten it, and to scrape away several years accumulation of dead leaves. Adrian hopes to come back and treat the smaller regrowth next year, to allow the heathland flora to recolonise without being out competed by the bracken. Highlight of the day for me was seeing a slowworm for only the second time ever.



Above left – Maurice setting to work on the head high bracken.
Above right – slowworm.
Left – Neil & Richard
Below – Maurice
Right – the cleared area.



Above – Richard, Maurice, Laurence, & Phil

18th July – Greenham Common – Neil Frankum

A day with mostly sunny weather, with the occasional rain shower saw nine of us pulling ragwort on the northern edge of this former cold war airfield. The B52's and cruise missiles are long gone, and nature is now re-colonising. After finishing the task, a bit of lateral thinking was needed to work out the logistics of some people needing to get away on time, and some of us being able to go on a walk around the site. After collecting the van and dropping others off, a few of us finally adjourned to the Griffin for a nice Sunday roast (beats having to cook for yourself at the end of a long day!)



L-R: Louise, Phil, Richard, Maurice, & Nigel



L-R: Louise, Phil, Maurice, David, Nigel, & Richard

Congratulations

Congratulations to Amanda and Laurence on the birth of their daughter Seren on 22nd June.

AGM

Well, another AGM has come and gone, with the committee being re-elected to serve for another year.

Socials

Pub – Sundays after task

If everyone feels up to it we sometimes adjourn to the pub after task. We'll usually decide where we are going on task, when we've found out what everyone wants to do.

Other socials etc

These get arranged on an ad hoc basis - turn up on task, contact one of us, or sign up for the Email mailing list to find out the details.



BERKSHIRE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS



Annual Report 2003-4

Introduction

Berkshire Conservation Volunteers (BeC) is a voluntary organisation founded in 1975 to carry out practical nature conservation work in and around Berkshire. We are a "Roving" Group - we do not have a site of our own, but work on a wide variety of sites throughout Berkshire and S. Oxfordshire and N. Hampshire, such as nature reserves, common lands, public open spaces, woodlands, heathlands, grasslands, ponds & wetlands.

We go out every Sunday and work a whole day, from about 10 to 4.30 (depending on daylight). We have a van to carry tools and volunteers. The work involves in many different skills including coppicing, hedgelaying, fencing, dead hedging, path work, pond clearance, heathland restoration etc. Anyone can join, no prior knowledge or skills are required, and people of all ages are welcome.

We are affiliated to the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, BTCV, which explains why we are known as BeC rather than BCV, to avoid confusion. We follow BTCV practice for task organisation and methods, and for safety.

This report summarises the group's activities over the period 1st April 2003 – 31st March 2004.

Socials

Post task trips to the pub were a regular feature during the year, as was the occasional trip to the cinema. We also had a skittles evening and rounders match against Basingstoke Conservation Volunteers, which we won convincingly (at long last!!)

Membership

By the end of 2003 the group's paid up membership had reached 34.

Task Leaders

This year's tasks were led by 7 people:
Richard Coles
Philip Allen
Neil Frankum
Mark Clay
David Fiddes
Nigel Mason-Flucke
Laurence Herniman

Committee

The committee for the year 2002-3 was:
Richard Coles Chair & Tools
Phil Allen Treasurer
Rodney Chapple Van Admin
Laurence Herniman Task Co-Coordinator
Neil Frankum Membership, Newsletter & Website
David Fiddes Social Secretary
Peter Harrison Committee Member (From June 2003)

Treasurer's Report

A summary of the financial affairs of the group in the financial year 2003-04 are presented here. Although it looks like we made a loss on the year, there is still a large outstanding task income that has yet to be paid. When paid, we will have made a small profit.

Income		Expenditure	
Chainsaw	£30.00	Van Insurance	£1159.39
Task Labour	£1347.50	Road Tax	£165.00
Task Mileage	£1057.90	Servicing	£602.68
Training/resi	£0.00	Petrol	£697.84
Tool Sales	£0.00	Tool Hire	£0.00
Subscriptions	£165.00	BTCV Affiliation /	
Tool Hire	£0.00	Insurance	£473.50
Socials	£0.00	Task Consumables	£89.48
Members Van		Administration	£4.86
Use	£191.50	Tools Maintenance	£0.00
Xmas Tree Sales	£150.00	Chainsaw Maintenance	£153.73
Donations	£28.00	Chainsaw Training	£0.00
Grants	£100.00	Tool Purchase	£0.00
Interest	£196.94	Training/Resi	£0.00
		PO Box	£52.00
		Publicity	£0.00
		Newsletter	£261.01
		Social	£73.70
TOTAL	£3266.84		£3733.19

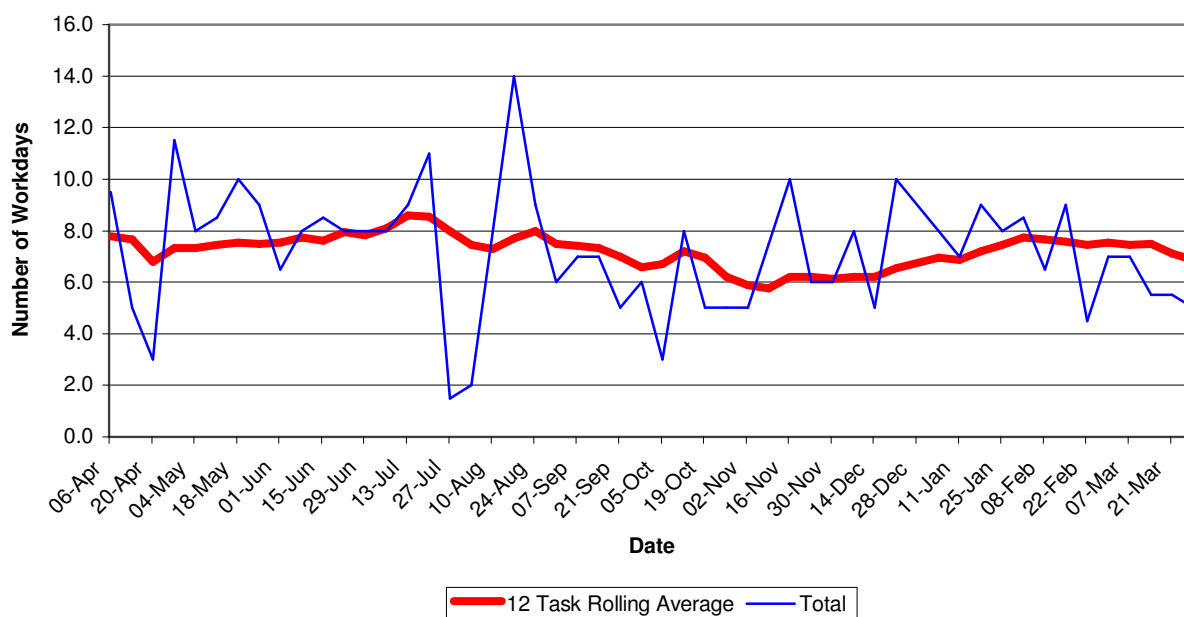
Grant

We received grants / awards from the following: Wokingham Without Parish Council. Thanks go to all of these.

Task Attendance

During the period 1st April 2003 – 31st March 2004 we had a total of 62 volunteers out on task. This was slightly down on last year. Top volunteer again was Richard Coles with a total of 46 workdays. The year has shown a similar pattern to last year, with peaks and dips in numbers at similar times to last year.

BeC Task Attendance 03 - 04



Tasks

During the year we carried out a total of 53 tasks at 27 different sites.

Userbody	Site	No. Of Tasks	No. Of Workdays
Child Beale Trust	Beale Wildlife Park	5	37.0
Reading Borough Council	Clayfield Copse	4	35.5
West Berkshire District Council	Snelsmore Common	5	31.0
BBOWT	Warburg Reserve	4	26.5
Arborfield Parish Council	Pound Copse	3	26.5
Dorset County Council	Langton Herring	3	22.5
West Berkshire District Council	Padworth Common	3	20.0
Wokingham Without Parish Council	Pinewood	2	16.0
Wokingham District Council	Dinton Pastures	2	16.0
Hampshire Wildlife Trust	Bartley Heath	2	15.0
West Berkshire District Council	Greenham Common	2	14.5
Reading Borough Council	Kings Meadow	2	13.0
BBOWT	Moor Copse	1	11.5
Hampshire Wildlife Trust	Greywell Fen	1	11.0
Wokingham District Council	California Country Park	1	9.0
Reading Borough Council	McIlroy Park	1	8.0
BBOWT	Wildmoor	1	8.0
Ecchinswell Parish Council	Ecchinswell Village Pond	1	8.0
Ruscombe Parish Council	Ruscombe Village Pond	2	8.0
Hampshire County Council	Yateley Common	1	8.0
Hampshire Wildlife Trust	Old Burghclere Lime Quarry	1	7.0
Hampshire Wildlife Trust	Ancells Farm	1	6.0
Wokingham District Council	Lavell' s Lake	1	5.0
Reading Borough Council	Blundell' s Copse	1	5.0
Earley Town Council	Maiden Erleigh Lake	1	5.0
Wokingham District Council	Charvil Meadows	1	5.0
Reading Borough Council	Waterloo Meadows	1	1.5
		53	379.5

Userbodies

During the year we worked for 13 different userbodies across Berkshire, north Hampshire, and south Oxfordshire. There were also weekends away in Dorset and the Peak District.

Userbody	No. Of Workdays
West Berkshire District Council	65.5
Reading Borough Council	63
BBOWT	46
Hampshire Wildlife Trust	39
Child Beale Trust	37
Wokingham District Council	35
Arborfield Parish Council	26.5
Dorset County Council	22.5
Wokingham Without Parish Council	16
Ecchinswell Parish Council	8
Hampshire County Council	8
Ruscombe Parish Council	8
Earley Town Council	5
	379.5

The Great Ice-storm cum Snowstorm of January 1940

– The Beginning of the End? – Peter Harrison

From 1895 to 1939 western Europe was visited by mild to very mild winters, the only exceptions being the cold to very cold winters of 1916/7 and 1928/9 (cold to very cold meaning there is usually a month, usually February, of severe weather with daytime temperatures at freezing point or below, with some snow). These spells lasting for a week or a week and a half throughout the month.) There were occasional cold spells throughout these mild winters.

Suddenly it was all change, and the severe winter of 1939/40 (Jan being the coldest month since Jan 1895) was to herald in a number of very cold to severe winters during the 1940's and to a more general cooling of the climate, culminating in the coldest decade of the 20th century – the 1960's.

Below is a table of the number of mornings with snow cover on the ground during the 1940's at various places throughout England. Compare them with the 1990's to current period (using your memory).

Winter of:	York	Buxton	Birmingham	Kew (London)	Goudhurst (Kent)	Ringwood (Manchester)	Ifracombe (Devon)
1939-40	36	45	37	23	34	31	10
1940-41	30	45	35	7	22	17	1
1941-42	45	57	16	11	26	25	0
1942-43	9	13	3	0	2	2	0
1943-44	7	27	8	0	9	3	0
1944-45	26	35	19	14	15	13	7
1945-46	12	17	2	3	17	4	0
1946-47	57	71	59	47	55	49	19
1947-48	6	32	13	8	10	10	4
1948-49	3	12	4	1	1	6	0

Note the exceptionally severe winter of 1946-47

An indication of the severity of the weather during January can be seen from the reports in The Times from the northern Mediterranean area. On the first January The Times reports heavy falls of snow on the French Riviera, the Rome was like a huge winter sports ground with 15cm of snow on the terrace of the central meteorological Office, drifts were reported up to a foot deep and snow falls as far south as Naples and Bari. The lagoon at Venice freezes over and slabs of ice impede traffic on the canals. Throughout most of January reports continuously filter out from northern Italy of severe transport disruption due to heavy snow.

Sometime during the middle of January another blast of bitterly cold air strikes into the central Mediterranean area with snow reported as far south as Sicily. The Times shows a picture of a lone model T Ford like car moving along a slush filled road in the centre of Naples, with snow decking the central reservation, footpaths and occasional palm tree!

As usual with prolonged spells of severe wintry weather wildlife begins to lose its fear of humans in the search for food and thus reports begin to appear of wolves being seen near human habitations in and around the Balkan regions and the occasional Brown Bear being spotted.

Further north Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish ice-breakers were kept busy keeping the shipping lanes free of ice in the Baltic Sea.

Back in Britain, and Reading specifically, a look over Caversham Bridge in early January would reveal not the usual swirling brown coloured water, but a still dark surface with the occasional splash of white – the Thames had frozen over. So thick was the ice people could walk from bank to bank quite safely. The local reading newspaper, then known as The Mercury, reported “the ice extended from the danger post near

Reading Lock to De Montfort Island”, and at Windsor, day trippers arrived by their hundreds to experience the first freeze of the river at this spot since an ox was roasted on it in 1895.

As usual in these severe spells of weather wildlife was badly hit. At Windsor Great Park, swans became encased in ice and had to be rescued, and other lakes in the region became frozen. An Alsatian dog and a swan were found frozen in Whiteknight’s lake.

Because of the previous long spell of mild winters, not much attention had been given to insulation of water pipes. Consequently, when the severe weather hit there was much “distress and hardship” as water pipes froze. This being the beginning of the 40’s, the great depression had just ended, and a war was in progress, there was not a lot of money around. The North Berks Herald reports “Not for many years has there been such a demand for heating appliances to thaw out pipes, and those few who came out of the ordeal without any burst pipes must feel particularly grateful”.

There was a land war being fought in France, the battle of Britain was taking place in the skies over England, and another battle was soon to take place – the battle of the air masses and the battle zone being the British Isles, as well as the western half of Europe.

By the end of January the high pressure area over northern Europe, which had held the area in its icy grip, had begun to weaken. A large depression had formed in the southern Atlantic and began to move slowly towards the British Isles bringing with it benign maritime warm air.

On the morning of 27th January the battle began. A warm front (band of rain followed by warm air) began its assault on the bitterly cold continental air from the southwest and usually dispels the cold air within a few hours. However, a slack area of high pressure stationed over Scandinavia began to strengthen and continued to feed bitterly cold air from Europe over the bulk of the British Isles.

Once this situation happens, a stalemate begins to take place, with the warm front grinding to a halt. The position of the warm front in this case covered an area stretching from about Kent, through the Midlands, to the northwest of England and western Scotland, and because the airflow (south easterly backing to easterly) in this area is very fast, strong to gale force winds are taking place.

As warm air is lighter than cold air, the warm air rises above the cold air, and water droplets falling into this cold air (below freezing point) becomes “supercooled” and on touching an exposed object immediately turns to ice.

The ice-storm lasted for about 48 hours and covered much of southern England. The death, disruption and destruction was most severe in the area bounded by Exmoor, Coswolds, Salisbury Plain, and the extreme west of Sussex.

At Stonor Hill, near Petersfield in Hampshire (the information below is gleaned from the meteorologist Robin Starling’s book – “The Weather Of Britain”) on the 27th January ice began to form at about 4pm and continued to build during the night and following day and together with a strong wind, ice build up to a depth on the sides of houses facing south and east such as made it impossible to open windows.

A picture in the above author’s book shows the telegraph wires on Salisbury Plain broken by the weight of ice, which amounted to 6 tons. In other instances, the weight of ice on the wires made the telegraph poles bend at an angle to the ground.

At Cirencester, in the Cotswolds, on the 28th – 29th, rain fell continuously in temperatures between –4° C and –2° C resulting in “So complete was the covering of ice that all leaves on shrubs made a noise like castanets rattling in the wind, in an uncanny way”.

Next in the line of destruction, though not as severe, were the trees. On the night of 28th to 29th, the boughs of beech trees could be heard cracking from the main tree & crashing to the ground. “That night many places

sounded like a battlefield. There was a constant roar of falling timber, just like a bombardment, which must have sounded menacing in that first winter of WWII. As a matter of fact, the noise was out of all proportion to the damage, for the splintering of the ice casing made even more noise than the rending of the wood, & large limbs cased in ice made more noise than a whole tree usually does in falling, especially at the moment of impact when all the ice cracked and shivered like broken glass". There was so much ice around that it made it impossible to walk on a sloping surface.

The effect of the ice-storm on the wildlife was devastating, and akin to almost being tortured to death. The Daily Telegraph weather columnist – Philip Eden, put the amount that died (if I remember correctly) into the hundreds of thousands figure. There were numerous reports of birds and even cats being frozen to branches, and also of birds being brought down in flight due to the weight of ice on their wings. Pheasants and rabbits could be caught by hand.

When a warm front moves into very cold air, a band of snow usually forms on the outer edge of this front. Thus with the front stationary over the northwest, Midlands, & southeast Britain, a 48 hour snowstorm developed. On 27th 10" of snow lay at Eastbourne on the south coast. By the 28th, 15" had accumulated at Pontefract, and 2' at Malvern. In London small children would probably be gazing out of the windows of their homes with glee and wonderment in their eyes, caused by "remarkable" heavy drifting snow.

Further north, an express train became buried in a drift. No it wasn't travelling over the Pennines. It was in fact only a few miles from Preston station!

Much of Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire had accumulated 1-2 feet of undrifted snow, and the normally snowfall free coastal plain of Lancashire, Liverpool and Southport had falls of undrifted snow equivalent to Yorkshire. In Sheffield, getting out and about would prove very difficult, if possible at all – 4 feet lay in gardens. "Pavements were made impassable for weeks by the vast masses of ice and hard compacted snow". In Scotland, some of the "finest herds" of deer perished.

The high pressure system over Scandinavia continued to build and pushed the snow band further westwards, and the southwest became hit by the snowstorm. On Exmoor, walking on top of the snow, a person would not realise that they were walking over hedges and gates.

Question – was this severe ice-storm unique. Robin Stirling points out in his book – probably not. It is fact that in previous centuries freezing rain caused less inconvenience and danger on the roads than it does today. There were also few wires to be brought down and no electric trains to be delayed.

Will there be another period when the "Winter North Atlantic Oscillation" turns to negative mode (North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) in positive mode means that western Europe receives mild weather with low pressure to the north, and high pressure to the south. NAO in negative mode indicates high pressure to the north and low pressure to the south, bringing cold to very cold weather to western Europe). According to research by the Climate Research Unit of the University of East Anglia, the NAO has endured in positive mode for longer than usually, and we are due a spell or even a longer period when it turns to negative mode as during the 1940's.....

Thankyou

A big thankyou to everyone who has contributed to the newsletter this month, and in particular to Peter for his bumper first article! More contributions always welcome...

Task Details: 25th July – 26th September 2004

To book for task, please contact the task-leader listed below (If possible, by the Thursday before the task). Transport is available from the Tool Store at Caversham Court at 9:10am, and from the front of Reading Station (near the taxi rank) at 9:30am. Other pick-up points can sometimes be arranged – please contact the task-leader.

You are advised to wear old clothing, and stout boots or wellies (preferably with steel toecaps). Also bring waterproofs and a packed lunch, BeC will provide Tea/Coffee/Squash and Biscuits. As it is summer we could experience any type of weather, so wrap up warm, and bring the sun cream!!

Whenever possible, please do let the task leader know you are planning to come on task. Occasionally task details change at short notice, and we can only let you know of changes if we know you are planning to attend the task. However we do always take enough tools and biscuits for a few extras, so if you get the urge on Sunday morning, but haven't booked, you will still be made welcome.

We usually go to the pub after task, so remember to bring some money (and a change of clothes if it's likely to be a very muddy task) if you want to join us.

KINGWOOD COMMON, Sonning Common

25th July 2004

Task: Heathland management. This is possibly a new site for BeC. We certainly haven't been here in my time in the group.

Leader: Mark Clay 07810 838916

Meet at: 10:15 at the site. Meet immediately south of Great Davids at ref. SU 696829 From Reading take B481 north. Just after Sonning Common (at the top of the 1st hill) fork L towards Stoke Row. At second junction turn R but go to left of Unicorn pub down Colemore Lane. Follow lane for 1km and park on left.

Userbody: BBOWT.

BEALE WILDLIFE PARK, Lower Basildon

1st August 2004

Task: Thistle pulling, to help the wildflower meadows to flourish.

Leader: David Fiddes 0118 950 0735

Meet at: 10-15am at the main car park. Take A329 west from Pangbourne. Leave the village passing under the railway bridge towards Lower Basildon. Look for signs to the park entrance, which is on your right about a mile and a half after leaving Pangbourne. Look out for the arrows from the car park if you can't see the van, as we could be working further along near Church Farm, or down by the river.

Userbody: Child Beale Trust

POUND COPSE, Arborfield

8th August 2003

Task: Finish woodchipping path, bramble control, clearing path.

Leader: Richard Coles 0118 976 0580

Meet at: 10:00 at Grid Reference 751673. Follow the Shinfield Road (A327) south out of Reading. Cross the M4, pass through Shinfield village, and bear left at the mini-roundabout passing the ESSO petrol station. Half a mile after crossing the River Loddon turn right into Greensward lane opposite the signpost to Swallowfield. Pound Copse is 100m on the right.

Userbody: Arborfield Parish Council

YATELEY COMMON, Yateley

15th August 2004

Task: Footpath work.

Leader: Philip Allen 0118 941 0471

Meet at: 10:15 at Wyndhams car park off Cricket Hill lane in Yateley (Grid ref: SU821596). If you're coming from Reading, then you need to come down the A327 and take the B3272 left towards Eversley and Yateley. Once in Yateley, turn right at the second roundabout (just after the Royal Oak pub and signposted to Fleet) into Cricket Hill Lane. You will go past the Cricketers pub on the right and a right hand turning into Handford Lane. Shortly after this on the left is the entrance to the car park, just before a phone box. It is not well signposted and very easy to miss

so keep your eyes open! There is a possibility we may be working near one of the car parks on the A30. Turn left out of the Wyndhams car park. Left again at the A30 roundabout. The car park is on the left just after the start of the dual carriageway.

Userbody: Hampshire County Council.

KINGWOOD COMMON,

22nd August 2004

Task: Heathland management.

Leader: Neil Frankum 0118 975 1528

Meet at: 10:15 at the site. Meet immediately south of Great Davids at ref. SU 696829 From Reading take B481 north. Just after Sonning Common (at the top of the 1st hill) fork L towards Stoke Row. At second junction turn R but go to left of Unicorn pub down Colemore Lane. Follow lane for 1km and park on left.

Userbody: BBOWT.

PADWORTH COMMON

29th August 2004

Task: Grassland Restoration

Adrian shall be cutting the grass a couple of days before we arrive. Task will be to rake up the cut grass off the open common into tree boundary.

This forms part of a plan to cut swathes through the areas dominated by purple moor grass which grows abundantly on the common.

The clippings are removed to reduce the nutritional value of the soil. Cutting also creates a more diverse structure and hopefully encourages other species to grow.

It will also help to produce fresh re-growth that is more palatable to grazing animals if they are introduced next year.

Leader: TBA

Meet at: 10-15am at the car park (Grid reference SU619648). Head west along the A4 from Junction 12 of the M4 for approximately 3 miles. Just before you get to the roundabout at the junction of the A4 and A340 turn left into a minor road signposted towards Padworth. Follow this road for approximately 2 miles. The car park is on the right just before you reach the T junction with the Burghfield Common to Tadley Road.

Userbody: West Berkshire District Council.

LANGTON HERRING, Dorset

3rd - 5th September 2004

Weekend Residential Task

Task: Drystone Walling. Whilst this may sound like hard physical work, it is in fact much more of a mental challenge – a three dimensional jigsaw puzzle with totally random shaped pieces, and no guarantee that even after several hours thinking about it that you'll be able to find a stone to fill that awkward gap. Accommodation is again on the floor of the Langton Herring village hall.

This is a perfect location– close to the worksite (assuming we are working in a similar location to the last five years), with the pub only a twenty yard walk away! We'll probably also fit in an afternoon doing something more relaxing as well. Contact the leader by Sunday 22nd August to book, thus enabling us to buy enough food for everyone! Let the leaders know if you have any special dietary requirements.

Leaders: Mark Clay 07810 838916

Richard Coles 0118 976 0580

Meet at: Contact the leader for the Friday night pickup times and locations. For the task meet us at the village hall (Grid Reference SY614824), or contact the leader to find out where we are working – mobile reception is fairly poor at the worksite, so phone in advance.

Userbody: Dorset County Council

THE COOMBES, Barkham

12th September 2004

Task: Rights of way repairs / step-building / path-laying

Leader: Philip Allen 0118 941 0471

Meet at: TBA – Contact the leader. There are several access points to this site from either Barkham Ride, the Sindlesham to Arborfield road, and the Arborfield – Barkham road.

Userbody: Wokingham District Council.

GREENHAM COMMON, Newbury

19th September 2004

Task: Clearing a well-overgrown path with bowsaws and loppers. There will probably be a bonfire.

Leader: Nigel Mason-Fluke 0118 984 4177

Meet at: 10:15 at the site. This is a LARGE site, so contact Nigel for details if you are coming.

Userbody: West Berkshire District Council.

PAMBER FOREST, Tadley

26th September 2004

Task: TBA. Joint task with Basingstoke Conservation Volunteers.

Leader: Laurence Herniman 0118 954 9620

Meet at: 10:15 at the site. This site has several entrances, so contact the leader for details if you are coming. The main entrance is along the track from the Pamber Heath to Tadley road at Grid Ref. SU609618.

Userbody: Hampshire Wildlife Trust.

Diary Dates

TBA Committee Mtg 7-45pm. Venue TBA. All welcome.

Mon 6th Sept. Newsletter copy date. Any (printable!) contributions to the newsletter are always welcome. Any items for inclusion in the next newsletter should be sent to the P.O. Box on or preferably before this date.

TBA Please contact Richard Coles for dates of tools evenings.

BeC Contacts

Chair & Tools:	Richard Coles	(0118) 976 0580
Treasurer:	Philip Allen	(0118) 941 0471 *
Van Admin:	Rodney Chapple	(0118) 986 4438
Task Co-Coordinator:	Laurence Herniman	(0118) 954 9620 *
Membership & Newsletter:	Neil Frankum	(0118) 975 1528 *
Social Secretary	David Fiddes	(0118) 950 0735
Committee Member	Peter Harrison	

* Answerphone available

Address for Correspondence: Berkshire Conservation Volunteers, PO Box 165,
Reading, Berkshire, RG6 4LD

Email: membership@berkshire-conservation-volunteers.org.uk

MOBILE: We now have a mobile phone for use on task – although primarily for use in emergencies, volunteers can also use it to contact us if they are having difficulties locating the worksite – the number is **0780 3360654**. **NB:** this phone will only be switched on during tasks.

www.berkshire-conservation-volunteers.org.uk