

CROW NEWS



The official publication of **Conserve Reading On Wednesdays**



British Trust for Conservation Volunteers



Issue no. 24 Spring/Summer 1999

PRACTICAL MIDWEEK VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION WORK
TO PROTECT OUR LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE



CROW *spring/summer 1999*

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Have fun!

TASK DETAILS

MAY-SEPT 1999

KEY:



The date of the task



The type of work we will be doing



The name of the site on which we will be working



Ordnance Survey grid reference



Indicates where the minibus is most likely to be parked.



This indicates approximately where the task will take place

CROW hold practical conservation tasks in and around Reading (almost) every Wednesday. Anybody is welcome to come along and join in for all or part of the day. We provide transport from the back of Reading railway station (short term car park area) at 9:30am and sometimes do a pickup around midday too. You can also make your own way to the worksite and meet us there. We aim to return people to the station at around 4-5pm. All you need to bring is a packed lunch and wear sensible outdoor clothing and strong footwear. We provide all necessary tools and training and also cups of tea / coffee and biscuits. If you've not been on a CROW task before, please phone (0118) 9015200 to let us know you are coming. You can also contact us during a task by phoning mobile no. 0378 743210.

MAY 1999



5th May



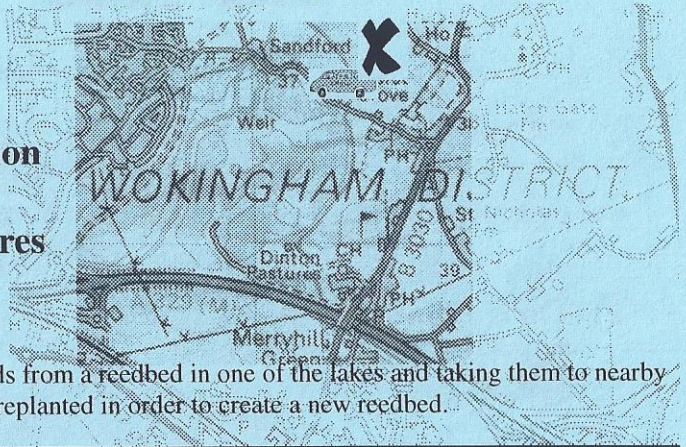
Reed Collection



Dinton Pastures



We shall be gathering reeds from a reedbed in one of the lakes and taking them to nearby Maiden erleigh park to be replanted in order to create a new reedbed.



12th & 19th May



Pond Construction

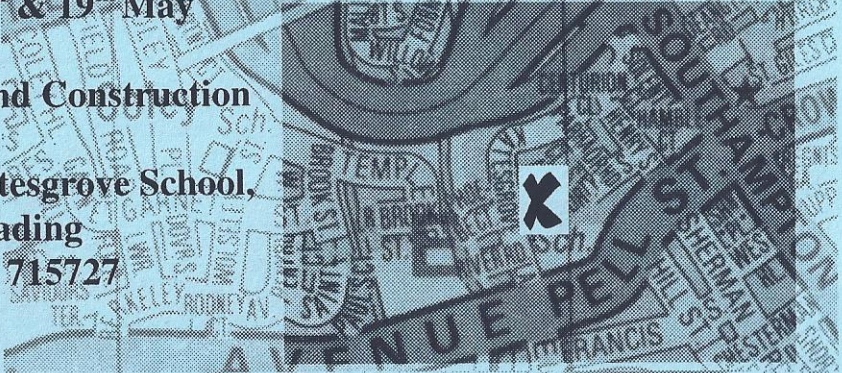


Katesgrove School,
Reading



SU 715727

We return to Katesgrove to finish the pond project. We will be creating a dipping platform and working on the fence and gate.



26th May



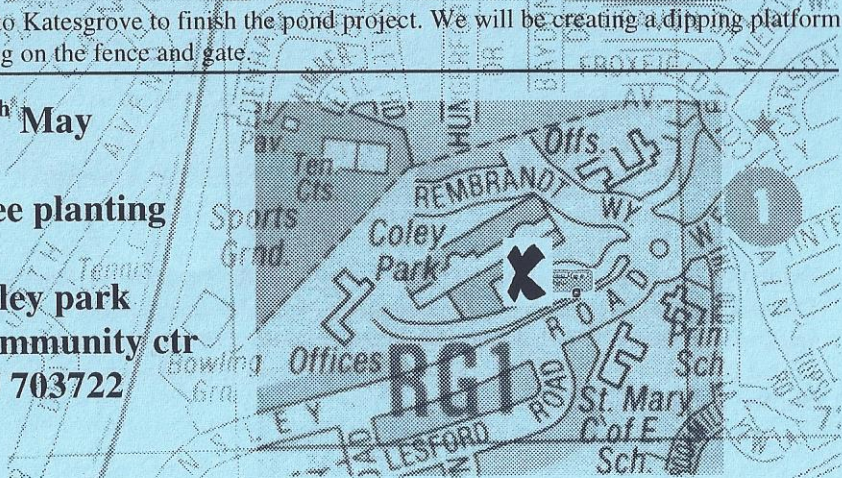
Tree planting



Coley park
Community ctr



SU 703722



JUNE 1999



2nd June



Woodland Garden

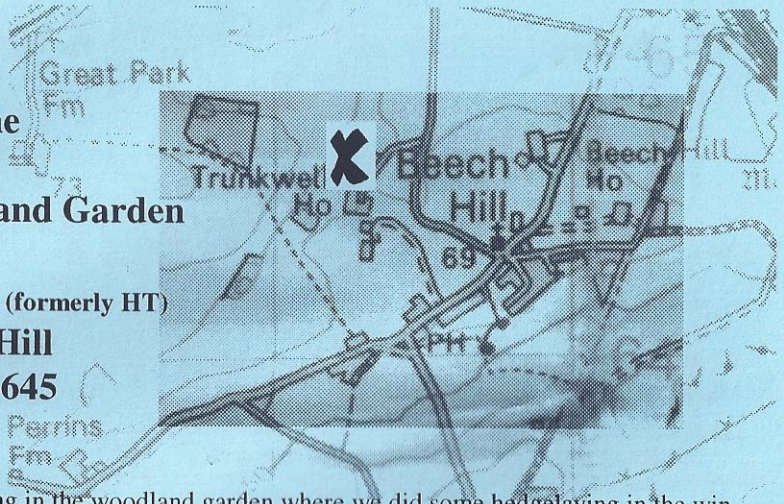


Thrive (formerly HT)

Beech Hill



SU 693645



We shall be working in the woodland garden where we did some hedgelaying in the winter, we will be doing various things including possibly pathwork



9th June



Thrive Flower Show

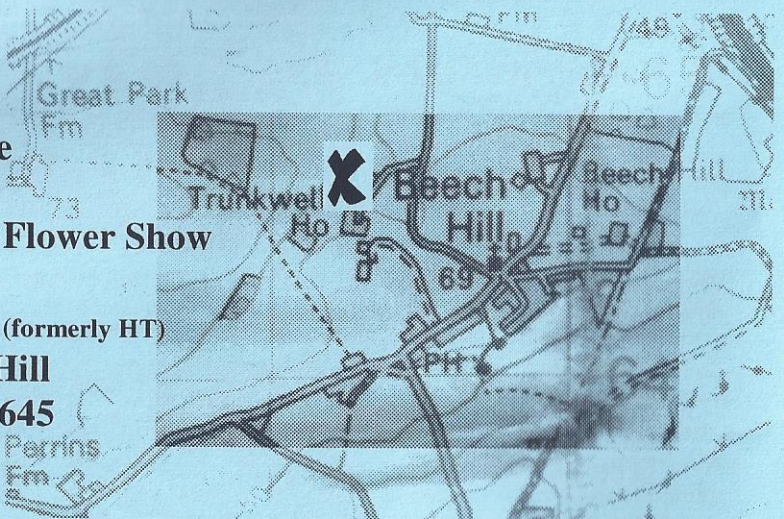


Thrive (formerly HT)

Beech Hill



SU 693645



Not really a task this, but a chance to admire some of the work we've done in the past. This is Thrive's annual open day, there will be lots of fun things to see and do. Some assistance may be required with setting things up, but other than that you will be free to wander around and see what really goes on here. NB transport arrangements may be different for this day, please check in advance.



16th & 23rd June



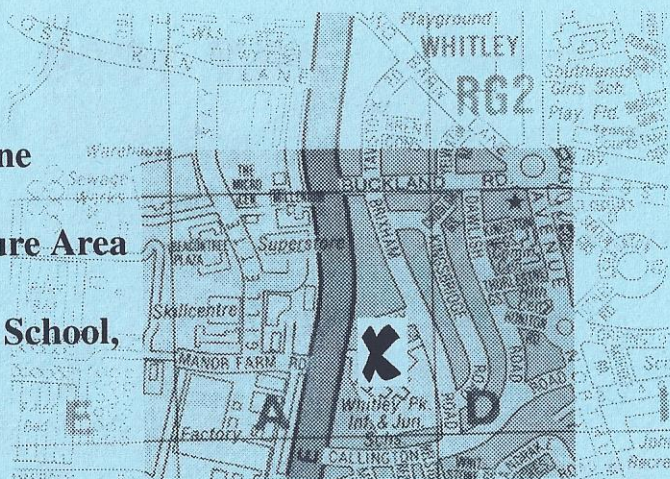
Creating Nature Area



**Whitley Park School,
Reading**



SU 719706



The school had a derelict swimming pool which has been demolished and the area is being made into a wildlife habitat including a pond and rockery area. We will be carrying out some preparatory work to the site.



30th June



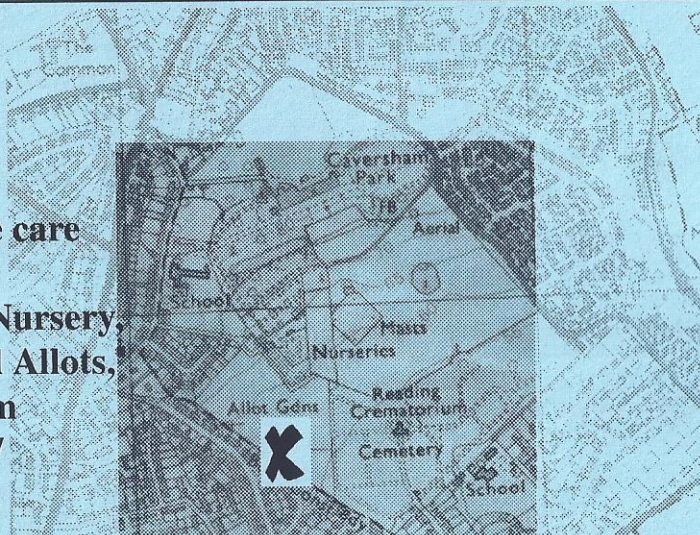
TFOF tree care



**The Tree Nursery,
Henley Rd Allots,
Caversham**



SU 723757



Trees For Our Future is a project which aims to collect local seedlings and tree seeds to be planted in Reading around the Millennium, at the moment the young trees are in several nurseries about the town. We will be weeding and mulching trees and recording and labelling species. NB The entrance to Henley road allotments is in Chiltern Road.

JULY 1999



7th July



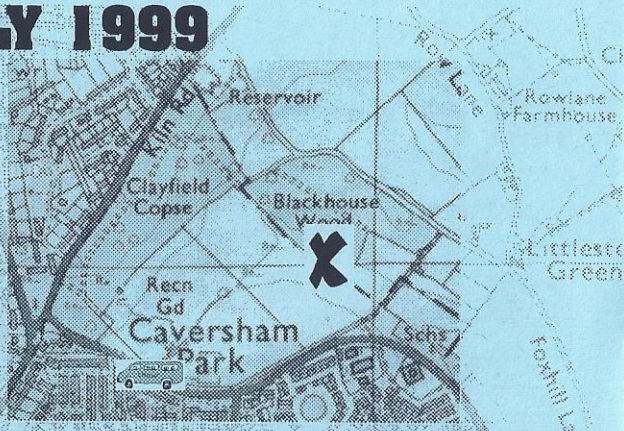
Bramble Bashing



**Blackhouse Woods,
Emmer Green**



SU 729771



This area of ancient woodland is being invaded by brambles which smother the ground flora such as bluebells and primroses, we will be redressing the balance by hacking all the brambles down and using them as dead hedging to keep walkers to the paths.



14th July



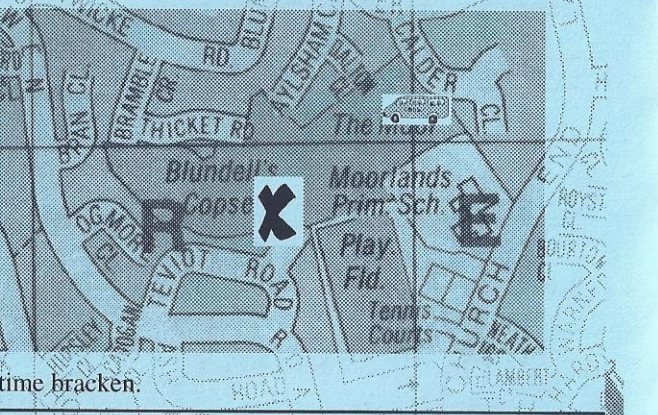
Bracken Bashing



**Blundells Copse,
Tilehurst**



SU 673734



More slashing undergrowth, this time bracken.



21st July



Construction task



**Thrive (formerly HT)
Beech Hill**



SU 693645



We will be building some steps and a handrail.



28th July



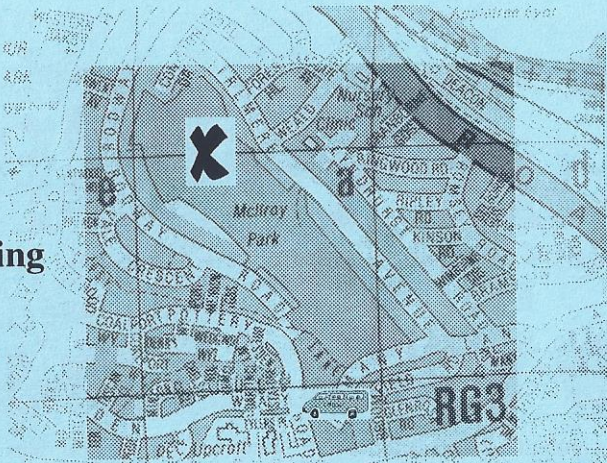
Bramble Bashing



**McIlroy Park,
Tilehurst**



SU 677743



This park commands stunning views across Reading and the Oxfordshire countryside. We will be bramble clearing.

AUGUST 1999



4th August



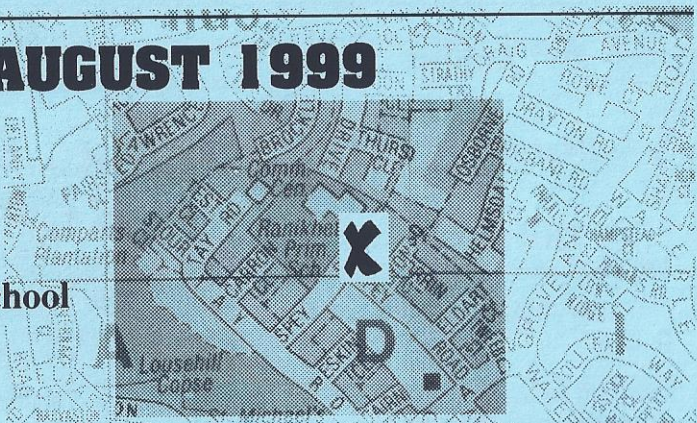
Mega Task



**Ranikhet School
Tilehurst**



SU 683736



200 volunteers from a local company are going to 'convert' the school grounds, this will involve creating seating areas, painting wildlife murals etc. We have been given the job of co-ordinating this. If you would like to try leadership, this could be your chance.



11th August



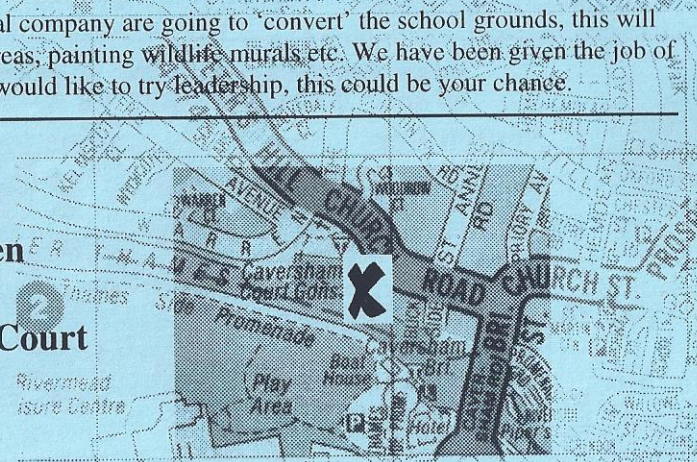
Demo Garden



Caversham Court



SU 709748



We will be working in the demonstration garden and wildlife corner.



18th August



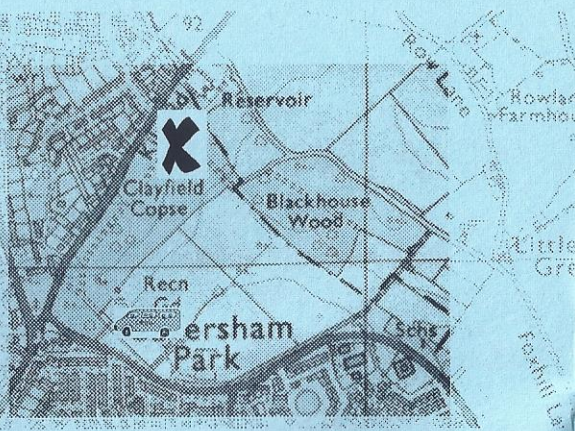
Bramble Bashing



**Clayfield Copse,
Emmer Green**



SU 725772



This area of ancient woodland is being invaded by brambles which smother the ground flora such as bluebells and primroses, we will be redressing the balance by hacking all the brambles down.



25th August



Nature Trail



Thrive



SU 693645



We will be working on a nature trail that runs through Trunkwell Park, this may involve footpath surfacing and stile

SEPTEMBER 1999



1st September



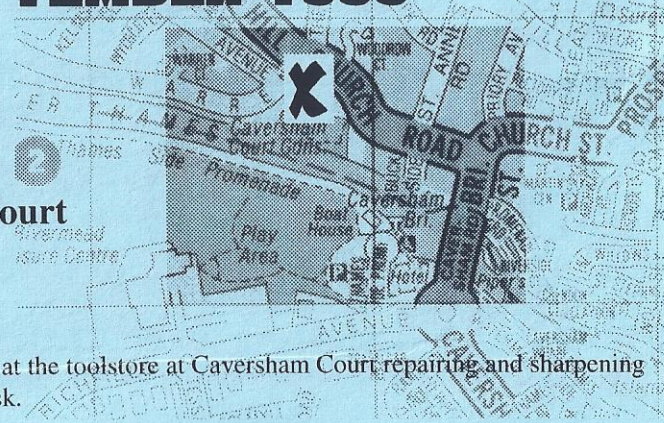
Tools day



Caversham Court



SU 709748



We will be spending the day at the toolstore at Caversham Court repairing and sharpening the tools which we use on task.

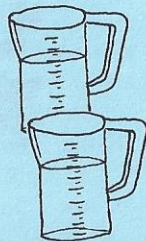
Sarahs

PAULS PUZZLE PAGE

Q1. If 3 plums are worth 2 apples, how many apples are 24 plums worth?



Q2. There are 2 plastic jugs filled with water. How could you put all of this water into a barrel, without using the jugs or any dividers, and still tell which water came from which jug?



Q3. What is the cubic capacity of a newt?



Q4. This is a most unusual paragraph. How quickly can you find out what is so unusual about it? It looks so ordinary you'd think nothing was wrong with it – and in fact, nothing is wrong with it. It is unusual though, why? Study it, think about it, and you may find out. Try to do it without coaching. If you work at it for a bit it will dawn on you. So jump to it and try your skill at figuring it out. Good luck—don't blow your cool!

Q5 Easy peasy crossword.




CLUES:

- 1. Across: This metal is added to steel to make it stainless (chemical symbol)
- 1. Down: Method of propelling oneself in a boat using oars.

ANSWERS 1. 16 apples. 2. Freeze the water in one or both jugs. 3. 4.2 cm³. 4. The letter E (the most common letter in our language) does not appear in the paragraph. 5. 1. Across: Chromium (Cr) 1. Down: row.

**Attention
Grabber**

BOOTS



Last December we carried out some pine removal from a heathland near Camberley. These pine trees were then taken to Caversham Court and sold as environmentally friendly Christmas trees. The proceeds were shared out amongst all the groups that took part in collecting and selling the trees. With our share of the money we have purchased a bulk order of steel toe-capped safety boots, these are now available to CROW members for the bargain price of :



£8 /pair

Or £27.50 to anybody else (still pretty good).

There are no tear out coupons to fill in and post and we no longer accept postal orders. Crow T-shirts are also still available, but you have to ask very nicely.



TOAD TRANSPLANT

On the hottest day of the year so far (it was only march) a small select group of CROW volunteers gathered around the picnic table to hear the afternoon plans revealed in full. All that hot sweaty morning hedge planting the rumour had been of a cool shady job in the afternoon...what was it to be?

A wildlife rescue was on the cards. We were told a tragic tale of an over silted lake in need of draining. Leaving some of the indigenous population high and dry at a critical stage of their damp and squidgy lives. Spawn Rescue was needed and CROW were the unlikely band chosen for the job.

Waders were issued, buckets found and a huge bucket designated as transport module for the spawns short van ride to safety, the team set off for Heathlake. Dropping water levels were already revealing great rafts of frog spawn and tree branches dripping with toad spawn strings, suddenly that huge bucket didn't look so spacious. Thirty minutes, slimy hands and one leaky pair of waders later the first consignment of embryonic toads and frogs were dispatched to temporary store at the California Park paddling pool. It was at about this point a flaw in the plan became apparent, the huge bucket had no lid and was very full. Disaster threatened, had the spawn been plucked from a drying lake only to be smeared around the inside of a lurching van ... to be continued.

Meanwhile back at the lake, more amphibious nurseries had been discovered, full of the stickiest frog spawn known to CROW. This stuff was just like tapioca and about as easy to scoop up, once again buckets were filled to overflowing. Andy moaned about his leaking waders and Sarah wondered why she had ended up with the worlds first chin high waders. Members of the public regarded us with curiosity and learned the difference between Frog spawn (tapioca) and Toad (slimy strings with black dots).

Did the stricken spawn survive? Yes thanks to an ingenious new use for the humble black bin bag. It can be revealed that bin bags make excellent temporary transport modules for junior amphibians. Thanks to this discovery more spawn than anticipated were scooped from the lake and sent on their way to the paddling pool. Work on the lake's silt problem will hopefully be complete before the spawn hatch and in a few weeks the process will be reversed to return Heathlakes next generation to their natural home. This bunch of boarding school tadpoles will grow up never knowing what a close call they had with sunshine and the back of a van.

Good luck to them from all at CROW. grebbit, croak.

Sarah Miller

Wed 2nd June

Ice Skating at Nike Ice rink,
Bracknell 8pm. Minibus leaves from
station at 7.30pm

Wed 7th July

Pub trip in Reading. We will be visiting a
local pub, details to be arranged

Wed 11th Aug

Barbecue at Thrive followed by pub quiz at
Stratfield saye. 7.30pm at Thrive or 7pm
minibus at station. Bring some BBQ food.



ZOINKS!

Conserve Reading On Wednesdays, Caversham Court Environ-
ment Centre, Church Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 7AD

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01628 771189