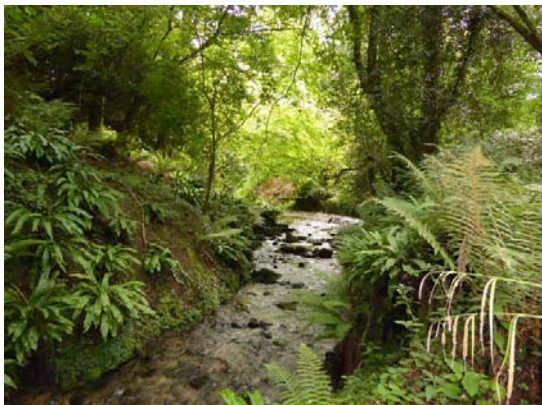


## Botany Bay Restoration Project

Botany Bay Newsletter December 2015

by Anne Dennig



It has been another active six months for all our volunteers at Botany Bay. After much help with surveys from various wildlife organizations we decided that we should start some recording for ourselves. Anne attended a surveying course at RSPB with a view to recording the still pond life at Botany Bay. Matthew Sennitt and Arthur Greenwood helped us by recording some of the birds and butterflies in Botany Bay, and Josef Amin (a Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteer) trained with The Riverfly Partnership to monitor the stream. We've had many visitors, a pilot biology lesson for a group from Seaford and we continue to prepare areas of the site for school groups to come and learn about this wetland habitat.

### June - December 2015 at a Glance!

(Some of the highlights)



#### June:

- Through the ARC project Anne learns how to survey a still pond.

- Matthew Sennitt records some interesting birds in Botany Bay including a spotted flycatcher, little egret and mistlethrush. We also find kingfishers nesting in the steep bank of one of the still ponds.



- Bruce Middleton and Howard Matcham make a site visit to see the progress.



- A Year 7 biology class from Seaford comes for a hands-on lesson about life in the stream.

#### July:



- A group of Seaford College students help to clear the cut grass from the meadow for their "community day".

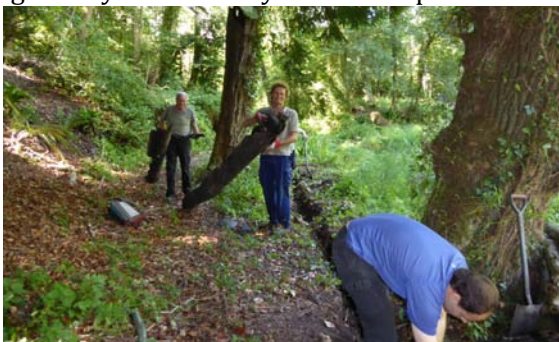


- Chris Mainstone from Natural England visits, surveys the stream, and gives useful suggestions for the restoration work.

## Botany Bay Restoration Project



- Josef Amin takes an invertebrate surveying course organized by SDNPA and given by The Riverfly Partnership.



- The SDNPA volunteers come in to help us to build a brush barrier and to take out one of the remaining pipes in use when Botany Bay was operating as a fish farm. Arthur Greenwood records 13 different butterflies while he works: small white, large white, brimstone, silver-washed fritillary, green-veined white, meadow brown, peacock, painted lady, gatekeeper, speckled wood, comma, small skipper and red admiral.

### August:



- Josef starts surveying the stream. His sample includes: over 1,000 gammarus, cased caddis, olives, mayfly nymphs and 13 bullheads.

### September:



- The bees in the apiary flourish, (despite the attentions of the hornets nesting in the wood!). With a number of swarms collected the apiary grows and some delicious honey is extracted.



- Various damsel, demoiselle and dragonflies are seen, including this one that came to visit us when we were surveying two of the still ponds. The ponds were full of life including: pond skaters, a water measurer, lesser and greater water boatmen, beetle and newt larvae, mayfly stonefly and demoiselle nymphs, and water mites.



## Botany Bay Restoration Project

### John Muir Award



- Anne takes a training course to learn about the John Muir Award and how it can be used at Botany Bay. The award encourages people to connect with, enjoy and care for the natural environment.



- With help from Seaford College we prepare a place for a dipping platform and an area with seating around a fire pit.



### October:



- Steve Batten joins us as our new fishing coach. He will also be teaching students how to tie their own fishing flies.



- Lorna Dimmock and Nigel Lord (field teachers from ARC) visit and make plans for school trips. Their ideas include: river speed experiments, river corridor recording, field sketches, kick sampling, pond dipping, grass sweeping, a hunt for woodland minibeasts, Andy Goldsworthy art, and miniature shelter building.



- The SDNPA Rangers visit the site to see the work that they and the volunteers have achieved, and to give us advice for future improvements.



- A new water treatment plant replaces an old cesspit for the gate-houses to improve the water quality of the fishing lake.

### November:



- Andy Thomas visits and recommends improving the stream by making some deeper pools to improve the spawning grounds for the growing population of brown trout. This is done with help from Robin Bray (Portsmouth Services Fly Fishing Association).

## **Botany Bay Restoration Project**



- Heavy rain causes revetment collapse; more work is needed to stop the erosion of the bank.



- Graham West teaches hedge laying and coppicing skills.



- Fran Southgate visits with Kathy Hughes from the World Wildlife Fund who is leading a national project on the value of UK's chalk streams. [www.wwf.org.uk/where we work/europe/rivers in the uk/englands chalk streams/](http://www.wwf.org.uk/where_we_work/europe/rivers_in_the_uk/englands_chalk_streams/) Kathy is surprised by the tufa deposits in the stream.



- Hannah Chivral visits Seaford College to talk to the staff about how the John Muir Awards could be achieved by both the staff and students, and Josef Amin is registered to take the Explorer Award.

### **December:**



- Seaford College Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteers help in the woods.



- Mink tracks are found on the clay in the raft and a trap is set.



- Plans are drawn up for a new bridge and a dipping platform for use by school groups in 2016.

- And the best news of all –with the barriers removed, the brown trout are now beginning to move upstream to spawn.

**Once again, many thanks for all the help that we have had from The ARC project, SDNPA, Sussex Wildlife Trust, The Wild Trout Trust, Portsmouth Services Fly Fishing Association, Artizans of Wood, and Seaford College.**

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