

WANT TO HELP YOUR LOCAL WILDLIFE?

IT'S EASY TO GET INVOLVED IN....

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AT PAXTON PITS

September 2009 - March 2010

**Just join in the Working Parties organised by
the Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve
and
the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds**

These Working Parties are supported by Bardon Aggregates and
Huntingdonshire District Council Countryside Services



Welcome!

You are guaranteed a warm welcome if you can manage just one of the Sunday Working Parties at Paxton Pits

- No previous experience is needed.
- We'll show you how to do the work.
- Range of tasks to suit all abilities, energies and ages.
- Meet new friends who also enjoy wildlife and the open air.
- Families especially welcome.
- Find out how management benefits wildlife.
- Our first task is always to put the kettle on!

Your work will make Paxton Pits an even better place for wildlife!



Long-tailed tits benefit from management of scrub at Paxton Pits

Each Working Party is organised by either the Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve (FPPNR) or by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), as indicated by logos. Please see important notes at the end of the programme.

Sunday 27th September 9.30 - 1.00 pm

Pumphouse Pit shoreline – cutting back scrub growth on the shoreline helps keep this lake attractive to wetland birds and especially for breeding waders on Pumphouse Pit Island (SE).

Meet at the Visitors' Centre. Transport to the site will leave shortly after 9.30 am. If you miss departure, phone 07905 809548. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided.

We thank Bardon Aggregates for special support for this event.

Please note: there is no public access to this operational part of the Quarry.



Photo: John Oates

Wintering bitterns regularly use Hayling Lake – perhaps they benefit from our reedbed reclamation work?



Sunday 11th October 9.30 - 1.00 pm

Willow coppicing on Hayling Lake - extending our long-term efforts to reclaim valuable reed bed for the special birds and insects that depend on this rare habitat.

Meet at the Visitors' Centre; if you are coming later, follow the direction map provided at the bridge-end of the car park. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided.



Sunday 1st November 9.30 - 1.00 pm

Viewpoints on Island Pit - trimming viewpoints will help visitors using the Ouse Valley Way, and the bird survey teams, get a better look at wildfowl using this important 'wintering' lake.

Meet at the Visitors' Centre. Transport to the site will leave shortly after 9.30 am. If you miss departure, phone 07905 809548. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided.

We thank Bardon Aggregates for special support for this event.

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Ranger Matt Johnson makes short work of shoreline scrub on Island Pit

Photo: Ray Matthews



Sunday 22nd November 9.30 - 1.00 pm

Pumphouse Pit shoreline – a return to cutting back scrub growth on the shorelines of this important site for wetland birds and especially for breeding waders, close to Pumphouse Pit Islands.

Meet at the Visitors' Centre. Transport to the Quarry will leave shortly after 9.30 am. If you miss departure, phone 07905 809548. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided.

We thank Bardon Aggregates for special support for this event.

Please note: there is no public access to this operational part of the Quarry.



Sunday 6th December 9.30 - 1.00 pm

The Gully - this sandy, shallow water haven for sun-loving insects and amphibians needs occasional management to keep the sunlight streaming in. The tasks will include some hedge laying.

Meet at the Visitors' Centre; if you are coming later, follow the direction map provided at the bridge-end of the car park. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided.



Sunday 10th January 9.30 - 1.00 pm

Turkey Oak control – most of the felling programme for this invasive alien has been completed (in the Reserve and in the quarry), but re-growth from the stumps needs to be removed periodically. We'll be working in West Scrub, a part of the Quarry that will eventually come into the Reserve. Here, the extra light is allowing native shrubs to regenerate and scrub cover to thicken. Maybe we can entice nightingales to move in? - it's close to the first area they colonised at Paxton Pits.

Meet at the Visitors' Centre; if you are coming later, follow the direction map provided at the bridge-end of the car park. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided.

We thank Bardon Aggregates for special support for this event.

Please note: there is no public access to this operational part of the Quarry.

For the last decade, there's been around 30 singing males at Paxton Pits each year – can we increase this number?



Photo: Ian Johnston



Sunday 31st January 9.30 - 1.00 pm

Sailing Lake Islands - our annual mowing and vegetation control on the two islands maintains the right habitat for a common tern colony and nesting waders (with spectacular results in 2009!).

Meet in the Sailing Club car park. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided. Wellies useful for getting in and out of the boat.

We thank Paxton Lakes Sailing Club for support.



Photo: Ray Matthews



Brush cutting and raking off the vegetation on the Sailing Lake Islands ensures we have breeding waders and common terns - and the same applies to the islands on Pumphouse Pit (East).



Sunday 14th February 9.30 - 1.00 pm

Pumphouse Pit Island – now that reprofiling is complete, the vegetation needs clearing to make the south east island as attractive as possible to breeding lapwing, redshank and common tern.

Meet at the Visitors' Centre. Transport to the site will leave shortly after 9.30 am. If you miss departure, phone 07905 809548. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided. Wellies useful for getting in and out of the boat.

We thank Bardon Aggregates for special support for this event.

Please note: there is no public access to this operational part of the Quarry.



Sunday 7th March 9.30 - 1.00 pm

Pumphouse Pit South-East Scrub – this ‘landscape’ planting from the 1990s needs to be arrested to create valuable scrub habitat and prevent establishment of ‘predator perches’ that will threaten breeding waders on nearby islands.

Meet at the Visitors’ Centre. Transport to the site will leave shortly after 9.30 am. If you miss departure, phone 07905 809548. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided.

We thank Bardon Aggregates for special support for this event.

Please note: there is no public access to this operational part of the Quarry.



Sunday 28th March 9.30 - 1.00 pm

Hedge laying on Haul Road – making a start on enhancing the biodiversity of the young hedge that will eventually border Paxton Reedbed in the Reserve extension.

Meet at the Visitors’ Centre; if you are coming later, follow the direction map provided at the bridge-end of the car park. Wear stout footwear and warm clothing. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided.

Please note:



FPPNR Working Parties are run under conditions set by Huntingdonshire District Council. Anyone can attend without prior arrangement, but children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult who takes responsibility for them.



RSPB Working Parties are run under conditions set by the Society. All volunteers must be registered with the Society prior to the event so that RSPB insurance arrangements apply. To register, please contact Ray Matthews (01480 215277). Volunteers must be aged 16 years or over.

If you have any questions concerning this Programme, please contact David Cobham (01480 475576), Ray Matthews (01480 215277) or Mike Thomas (01480 387749).

If you’d like to volunteer during the week, contact Jim Stevenson (01480 406795).

Health & Safety

Many of us are aware of the increasing emphasis on health and safety issues in this modern world. This applies as much to the volunteer work that we do as to anything else. Some of the precautions we need to take are obviously dependent on what we are doing and on the site itself. However there are a number of precautions that are universal and are listed below.

Remember - do not work alone.

Clothing	Wear clothes that protect you against the weather, including sun and the work e.g. skin abrasions, cuts, dust, plant sap, flying debris.
Footwear	Use boots that protect and support with a good tread, preferably with steel toecaps. Wellies if needed.
Fitness	Only attempt what you are personally capable of. Work at a rate that matches your own level of fitness.
Slips & Trips	Check for uneven ground, steep slopes, wet ground, dense ground vegetation, accumulated debris, trenches and holes.
Handtools	If you don't know how to use a specific handtool ask the leader. Pay particular attention to the condition of blade and handle. Grip is reduced if wet or using gloves!
Workspace	Be aware of what's happening around you; allow plenty of room. Make sure a fellow volunteer is aware of your approach into their workspace. Use voice warnings.
Health	Ensure wounds stay clean. Cover wound and wear gloves. Make sure your anti-tetanus is up to date.
Lifting	Always lift and carry safely. Use arms and legs and not the back.
Digging	Use arms and legs, and not the back. Stop when tired.