

READ ALL ABOUT THE COTHILL RESERVES

The Cothill area is unique in having a tightly knit cluster of six nature reserves, mostly owned by BBOWT the local Wildlife Trust. A 40-page book by Dr Antony Searle, "Wildlife in the Cothill Region", has just been published by the Pisces Press, to their usual high standard, with a foreword by the Chief Executive of BBOWT. The account is admirably concise and factual, as all through the 1980s Dr Searle spearheaded the management of Dry Sandford Pit and has a wide knowledge of the area's natural history. The book highlights the region's history from coral reefs 160 million years ago through 19th century peat-digging and 20th century quarrying to recent nature conservation, and asks the question "Why so special?"



The next quarter of the book gives pen pictures of the six reserves and their differing features and histories, supported by maps and photographs. Important issues such as scrub control and the effects of rabbits are included.

Most of the second half of the book summarises and highlights the astonishing range of plants and animals to be found in the reserves. Dr Searle has presented a composite list, which avoids the repetitive listing of the same species in each reserve in which they appear. Accounts of the insects really make them come alive, particularly the antics of bush-crickets, glow-worms, water boatmen, cinnabar moths and bee-flies. Somebody has identified 100 kinds of hoverflies, and there are 26 rare "Red Data Book" species of fly. The nearest neighbours of some of the aquatics are in Cambridgeshire and Wales and for some sand-lovers, in the Breckland of East Anglia. Orchids, signal crayfish, Desmoulin's (Newbury Bypass) snail and "Ratty" all get a mention.

Finally, where do we go from here? The answer is downhill, without the positive conservation he describes. With his long experience of managing Dry Sandford Pit, Dr Searle makes it very clear that, left to itself, a nature reserve will get overrun first by coarse herbs and then by scrub and woodland, with a steady decline in uniqueness and diversity. Dr Searle has financed this book himself from an unexpected grant received as an ex-Japanese-prisoner-of-war, so every penny from its sale will go to help local wildlife.

To receive a copy of **WILDLIFE IN THE COTHILL REGION**, please send your name and address and a cheque for £5, made out to The Friends of the BBOWT, Cothill Reserves, to Stephen Grigson, Hon. Treasurer, 221 Cothill Rd, Dry Sandford, Abingdon OX13 6JW.

ABINGDON TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

The historic centre of Abingdon has a great deal to offer to shoppers, visitors, and residents. At the moment its streets are often heavily congested, creating unpleasant conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. As part of Abingdon Integrated Transport Strategy (AbITS), your local Councils have been working together on plans to enhance the environment in the town centre to make it more attractive. These plans will be on display in Abingdon Market Place on the following dates:

Thursday 8th July (10am - 8pm)

Friday 9th July (10am - 8pm)

Saturday 10th July (10am - 5pm)

Please come along and give us your views.

To advertise your local event, write, call or email the editor

ABINGDON RUGBY

SAT 21ST AUGUST

Lambrick Way (off Preston Rd)

Kick off 11.30 Final at 17.00

16 teams compete for the oldest Club 7s Trophy in England

Abingdon RFC recruiting at all ages 01235

No previous experience necessary 553810

Do you want to make a difference to someone with a life threatening or terminal illness ?



The Oxfordshire Befriending Network is looking for reliable and trustworthy people to befriend someone in this area who has a life threatening or terminal illness. We offer excellent free training and on going support . Next training starts October.

If you'd like to find out more please contact Catherine Gundry on 01865 316200 or oxford@befriending.net

Registered Charity No. 1086264

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE SUMMER

Come and see the archeologists at work
on National Archeology Day
Sunday 18th July
in Trendles Field
next to the former Noah's Ark pub

FRIDAY 16 - SUNDAY 18 JULY THE CHILTERNSSHOW
At Great Missenden, Bucks. Five themed areas: Chilterns Life; Countryside; Classics; Taste of the Chilterns; Creatures Great and Small. See website: www.chilternsshow.co.uk. Tel: 01494 450504. Email: info@chilternsshow.co.uk

SUNDAY 5 SEPT 12 - 5 PM FOREST FAIR 2004

The highly popular 'Wychwood Forest Fair' will this year be at Lower Farm, Ramsden. It is being organised by the The Friends of Wychwood in support of the Wychwood Project which aims to encourage local people to understand, conserve and restore the rich mosaic of local landscapes and wildlife habitats of the former Royal hunting Forest of Wychwood. Amongst the highlights will be:

- Rural craft demonstrations
- Food from members of the Oxfordshire Food Group
- Plants, trees and shrubs for the garden
- A story-teller
- Hatwell's funfair
- Beer from Wychwood Brewery
- Teas, cakes and other refreshments
- Three Morris dancing teams
- Farm animals from Cogges Manor Farm Museum
- Local cart horses
- Conservation group and local history displays
- Wychwood Project exhibition
- Children's painting of 'Veteran Trees'

Entrance will be £2 for adults, 50p for children, with free parking. For more information contact Ken Betteridge, Chairman of the Friends of Wychwood, Tel: 01993 878615