



Newsletter

July 2023

May Day Plant Sale and Beyond

The plant sale went well, with a generous number and variety of plant donations. We had flowers, vegetables, herbs, indoor plants and even some swan planters.



It was an enjoyable day, with support from the local community and passers-by.

Sales, including swan food and some donations, came to just over £175, which is a great help to the project. A big thank you to all of you who contributed!

We plan to do another sale next Spring, but we're still selling plants through our *Garden Gate Giveaway*. We put out home propagated plants for people to take, in exchange for a donation. We've made £157 so far.

Currently in operation outside 11 Cole Hill, WR5.

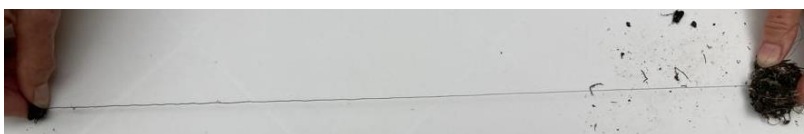
*If you'd like to donate plants or do a 'giveaway' yourself, please message Marilyn on:
07742 295149*

New Litter Picking Volunteers

Two volunteers have joined us to litter pick along the Riverside Park. Litter can be hazardous to swans and other wildlife – a plastic ring stuck round a swan's beak prevented it from eating and cut into its mandible. And Vale Wildlife Centre recently treated a swan with bundles of fishing line stuck in its throat. Fragments of wet wipe were found in one bundle - which shows the importance of never putting wet wipes down the toilet.



Two bundles at either end of the fishing line - one at the top of the swan's throat, one at the bottom.



Look out for our litter volunteers, wearing The Swan Food Project blue vests. They will be very happy to answer any questions about the project.

Illegal Fishing in the Swan Sanctuary

The Worcester swan sanctuary was set up by Worcester City Council and Worcester Cathedral, and stretches from the cathedral water gate to the railway viaduct.

There is signage stating that fishing is prohibited on this stretch of water, but not everyone sees it, and not everyone takes notice of it.



Our litter picking article shows how dangerous abandoned fishing line can be – the swan that was rescued would have died of starvation without intervention.

In May, Worcester News published an article on illegal fishing in Worcester, asking people to phone the Environment Agency to report transgressions.

Here's the link to the article if you missed it:

<https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/23558156.poachers-spotted-fishing-river-severn-environment-agency/>

Report immediately to the Environment Agency incident hotline 24/7 on 0800 807 060, or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Work Parties – Join the Fun!

The project organises work parties on an ad hoc basis, to make life easier and safer for the swans. Normally outdoors, it can be a fun and sociable activity.

These are some of the tasks we've carried out in the past:

- Cleared undergrowth from around the Screen House by Worcester Bridge, to give the swans a safe place to get out to preen and rest.
- Worked with Canal & River Trust to build a ramp into the Balancing Pond in Diglis. Swans used to nest there and their cygnets were unable to get out and onto the canal.
- Built a floating swan and duck island, and a small ramp to enable cygnets and ducklings to get out of the canal.

More recently, we gave the boathouse steps a thorough clean to make them safer for visitors to the steps, and covered up some jagged metal just below the waterline where we feed.



There are lots more improvements we'd like to make, so we're looking to create a Project Task Force of people keen to help. If you'd like to know about what we're planning to do and when, please message Marilyn (see above).

Newsflash! Do you want become a volunteer swan feeder?

We feed the swans every afternoon, and currently have a swan feeding team of 9 volunteers. We'd like to grow the team to cover holidays or sickness more easily. If you'd like more information, please message Marilyn (see above).