



# Newsletter

July 2024

## The Project Celebrates Its 10 Year Anniversary!



The project was set up in 2014, so volunteers met in the Spring to celebrate such an auspicious milestone and to discuss the project's achievements.

In those 10 years we bought 1,045 sacks of pellets and 2,733 sacks of corn and sold 23,437 handy bags of pellets and 607 sacks. *Thank you for your support!*

We've also been keeping the boathouse and Worcester Bridge steps clean, have engaged with the City Council and the public to promote swan welfare, provided information boards and leaflets, held work parties to maintain and protect the swans' environment, and collaborated with Vale Wildlife Hospital and Wychbold Swan Rescue.



Worcester Bridge steps – see *Work Parties* section, below

## Fundraising and Events



Despite the poor weather forecast, our May Day plant sale was a success. We did almost as well as last year, raising £164.89, including selling a few swan items (last year just over £175).

Plant sales are ongoing at 11 Cole Hill, WR5 1DG. *More plants needed please!*

Book sales continue in Caffe Nero, Broad Street. You'll find the bookcase towards the back of the café - only 50p per book.

If you have good quality paperback novels to donate, please contact Angie on 07748-224148.

The last few years have seen escalating costs for swan pellets, which we've tried to absorb, but in the current economic climate fundraising is getting harder.

### Can you help?

Would you like to help, and to feel part of the service we provide to the swans and the wider community?

In addition, TheGivingMachine will be closing both its *Shop&Give* and *Donate Now* platforms at the end of August, which will mean a loss of income for us.

A regular income would really help us to plan. If you would like to make a small monthly donation of your choice to The Swan Food Project, please contact Marilyn on 07742-295149.

## Do Swans Mate for Life?

More often than not, yes, but swans that lose a mate will usually look for another. However, there was an unusual situation this Spring, with three swans in Diglis Basin.

At first, the intruding swan was chased around rather than away, and mainly by the pen rather than the cob. Normally, a resident pair will be very aggressive towards any swan intruding on their territory.

A week or two later, the three were seen 'mirroring', the courting ritual that precedes mating. A pair was also seen mating - but with which pen? Eventually, the cob took up with the intruding swan and the original pen disappeared. She was the prettier of the two – no accounting for taste!



*Photo courtesy of Ralph Hancock*

## Work Parties



*Bolstering the food store foundations*

The frequent flooding this winter left us with some important jobs to do.

We started by cleaning the thick mud from the steps at Worcester Bridge (see page 1) which were very slippery and dangerous. The public sometimes use these steps, and swan rescuers sometimes need to release swans to the river there.

We also bolstered the eroded ground alongside the swan food store with a dead hedge, to keep it stable, and cleaned the outside and the roof to protect the paintwork. The tarpaulin that keeps the food store cool in summer was replaced in 2023.

If you have skills you want to share, but don't want to become a regular volunteer, you could join our Work Party team and work with TSFP on an ad hoc basis.

Interested? Contact Marilyn (number above).