

Taste of the town 2010 Summary of events

Napley Farm – Pond dip and Bug hunt 28th July 2010

Unfortunately only a small turn out for this particular event a total of five participants. We held a pond dipping session at two sites at Napley Farm to compare the range of creatures we might find. We started at the farms fresh water pond the pond itself had excellent and safe access that allowed large groups of children to dip. Secondly we moved to the fresh water stream that runs through the site, this is a clean and shallow stream that meant the children when supervised could wade into the water to catch various creatures.

A fantastic range of freshwater invertebrates were found as well as some small stickleback fish. There was even enough time to go on a small bug hunt. The Roberts family had previously placed large logs of dead wood out on the field to provide the perfect habitat for insects, it again gave the children a fantastic chance in finding some minibeasts and they thoroughly enjoyed it. A well managed site with fantastic educational capacity.

Dorrington Hall Farm – Go Wild! 2nd August 10am-12pm



The weather was perfect for this lively event. Thirty people arrived and were treated to a wonderfully bumpy tractor and trailer ride down to a beautiful pond on the farm. The aim was to try and recreate a "Swallows and Amazons" atmosphere with den building, feather headdresses, face painting and a camp fire. The group really entered into the feel of the morning and created some beautiful shelters, decorated with rushes and flowers. We made some muddy face paints too and some striking feather crowns.

When it came to toasting the marshmallows, everyone came to toast at least four or five each, with much hilarity as we ate our messy snacks.

We also had some time to explore and discover the wildlife by the pool and discovered grasshoppers, dragonflies and froghoppers.

Jane and her family worked so hard to make this event a success - we made full use of the classroom for the introduction and evaluation; the tractor and trailer ride was a real highlight for many people and the whole group got on very well- a very relaxed and happy atmosphere.

Jane's background is in teaching, which meant her enthusiasm and professionalism in planning and delivering the event was second to none.

Comments from some participants:

"Really enjoyable morning- thanks very much!"

"Lovely spot, great activities".



Park Hill Farm – Pond Dipping 18th August 2010

A fantastic turn out of families for the event with around twenty six children and adults participating. Park Hill Farm, with advice from Natural England, has created fantastic access for children via a dipping jetty and a support pole that goes out into the water so children can wade in safely. The pond itself is shallow and has an abundance of Bull Rushes and Yellow Flag ship Iris surrounding it, which makes it a perfect environment for amphibians also. We found lots of Newts and Frogs as well as Great Diving Beetles and Caddis Fly Larvae, Dragon Flies, Damselflies

and much more. The facilities were excellent which really gave the SWT member of staff confidence in being able to lead successful and safe sessions. The families had a really great time, brilliant weather and a well organised event.



Fordhall Farm – Pond Dipping session 23rd August 2010

Despite the bad weather on the day, there was a good turnout for the pond dip at Fordhall farm with 23 participants in total. Access to a suitable pond dipping site was quite difficult as previous appropriate areas had now changed for access to livestock. It meant that children could only dip from one area one at a time and that a member of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust had to be in the water with them at all times, holding them as the bank was very steep. The large lake itself was covered by trees, which was good on a rainy day, but there was not really a great variety of minibeasts, and the only animals found were juvenile newts. This may be hindered by not enough safe access points for children to dip from. Despite all that, the children enjoyed the session and getting stuck in the mud. A note for future is unless suitable and safe access can be provided it is perhaps not an appropriate site for pond dipping.

(Philippa adds: Also two successful fishing days took place under guidance of Peter Dykes licensed coach of the PAA & his colleagues; & tree-climbing with Jonathan Finlow & colleague from the Good Tree Company at Fordhall Farm Summer Fair - the queue of

children did not disperse when the heavens opened! All these activities were sponsored by the Local Joint Committee of the Shropshire Council)