

Knighton Community Woodlands Group

Update

Some notes on our activities since Christmas 2023 in random order!

If you would like to send anything to this non-regular update or say you don't want to receive this please get in touch with Nicola.Colston@gmail.com

- KCWG are staffing a stall at the Volunteer Fayre at Knighton Community Centre on April 14th between 10 am and 2 pm. We need more volunteers/members especially for the wood/charcoal and the moth group so hopefully we will attract some new people. **COME ALONG** and meet other members/volunteers and answer any queries from the public. Two members of the moth group, a birder and a wood worker are staffing the stall – any other contributors would be great! Pitch up! Contact Nicola.Colston@gmail.com
- The Bird group held their first informal visit of the year to Castle Ring recently. The Woodlanders were coppicing (felling trees) so their birding had to take place beyond the Ring. Dates of chain sawing are now being sent to the group so that kind of clash does not happen again! The first formal recorded survey will be on 13th April with others to follow during the summer. Contact rebeccamorrisinitaly@hotmail.com
- The Moth group is now led by Belinda Scadding. New members are actively sought but a trap has already been placed at Castle Ring three times. – not many moths have appeared because it is not key moth trapping times and the weather has been very wet. The second moth trap has been loaned to Knucklas Community Land Trust, so the equipment is fully used. Contact: belindascadding@gmail.com
- The Botanics/plant group and enjoy being in the woods and other sites as well as in the pub discussing our work. Our role is to help inform management of Castle Ring Woods and improve our plant skills at the same time. We are conducting surveys of the wood to monitor the diversity of vegetation in established and recently cut hazel coppice. We find greatest biodiversity in recently coppiced areas which is because light loving species move in amongst the residual shade tolerant plants. We also survey for moss, lichen and fungi (the latter are not plants). These groups total over 250 species with more to discover. Contact: dave.molesworth@gmail.com
- A new shared drive is under development so members can see what the whole group is doing. Currently the shared drive is being populated with information prior to fully launching the site to members of KCWG. Minutes/decisions from the committee, information about activities and results from the biodiversity groups are expected. More information will follow.
- The Small Woods Association has worked with KCWG and the owner of Castle Ring to produce a biodiversity management plan. A copy is attached. In line with the plan a birder, two Woodlanders and a botanics/plant member helped owner Alitheia to ring bark some trees. Rotting trees help biodiversity. The main track (ride) has been 'scalped' with some help from the wood group. This should increase habitat for insects and the wood group

are creating brash piles (remains of trees) which also encourage biodiversity. Felling improves light to the wood floor too.

- The wood group, the owner of Castle Ring and a member of the moth group have been involved in research led by Llais Y Goedwig (a community woodlands support group) exploring how best to support volunteers and increase the number of volunteers in community woodlands. Transcripts of the conversations on sustainable products, woodland management, fundraising, and volunteering are now available from Nicola.Colston@gmail.com
- Coppicing (felling) stopped on 28th March as sap is beginning to rise in the trees and also due to potential nesting activity. There is a lot of processing of the felled wood still to be done! Charcoal making will start on the first dry workday in April. If anyone is interested in charcoal making get in touch – the wood group has been preparing all the wood necessary! Contact Nicola.Colston@gamil.com

March 29th 2024