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**Tysoe Wildlife Review – Making Space for Nature in Tysoe**

This is a brief overview of the activities of Tysoe Wildlife over the past year and our plans for the rest of the year. Our aim is to preserve and nurture nature in the Parish of Tysoe for everyone to enjoy, by engaging the community in protecting natural habitats and encouraging greater biodiversity in animals and plants.

**Grant from the Caring for the Cotswolds Scheme**

In late 2020, with support from the Parish Council, we applied for a match-funded grant from the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly Cotswolds AONB) ‘Caring for the Cotswolds Scheme’ and were awarded a grant of £1,262. We were very grateful for the grant and the matched-funding provided by Tysoe Parish Council, the Tysoe & District Record, the Upton Estate and the Tysoe Utility Trust, plus an individual donor. This grant was to purchase three information boards and to create a nature map of Tysoe as a leaflet. The noticeboards are in place – in School Lane, and at the start of two footpaths onto the Upton Estate. They are updated as the seasons change. The Nature Map was printed and circulated with the Tysoe Record and copies are available in the Post Office and St Mary’s Church.

**Activities in 2021/22**

In 2021, there was a poetry challenge led by the Tysoe Record, a virtual quiz, a pumpkin carving competition and two informal walks in the parish, one to look at the wildlife areas in the village and one to the nature reserve at Radway Meadows (in the parish), plus the very successful Tysoe Wildlife Activity Week held from 2-6August.The Wildlife Week was attended by thirty primary school children. It was organised by Tysoe Wildlife, led by Rosemary Collier and Shirley Cherry, with Nicki Campbell (a former teacher) as the principle coordinator, plus a team of helpers and it was supported by St Mary’s Church. The children engaged in a full programme of activities at St Mary’s Church, combining science education, crafts and games based on a different wildlife theme each morning.

With the support of the Parish Council, many of our verges, with the exception of those in the centre of the village, took part in ‘No Mow May’. In addition, unmown strips were left beneath the two long hedgerows in the playing fields, to provide more room for wildflowers and insects. Several small areas of verge throughout Tysoe were left unmown for longer, some of them being sown with wildflower seeds. The Warwickshire Wildlife Trust offered to help Tysoe Wildlife sow wildflowers in School Lane and in the strips along the edges of the playing field.  This is part of their Wilder Communities project funded by Severn Trent. The seeds (provided by the Trust) were sown by the Wildlife Trust and a group of volunteers on 16th January 2022.

**Future plans for 2022**

The village is again taking part in ‘No Mow’ May with support from the Parish Council. St Mary’s Church continues to support wildlife in the churchyard and the wildflower areas and hedge are developing. There is a nature table in the Church and there will be wildlife activities for children in the church and churchyard as part of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

We were successful in winning more funding from the Cotswolds National Landscape, which was matched by a very generous donation from a Tysoe resident. The funding will be used to support the following:

* A series of interactive sessions in St Mary’s Church/Tysoe Village Hall and outdoors – on bats, butterflies, wildflowers and approaches to sustainable living (following on from COP26). The bat night (Warwickshire Bat Group) is on **28th May 2022**, the butterfly talk (Butterfly Conservation Warwickshire) is on **8th September 2022**. We are making monthly visits to the Sunrising Natura Burial Ground **from April 2022**.
* We plan to ‘re-enact’ in June 2022 a survey of the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve at Radway Meadows (neutral unimproved grassland – so probably one of the main local habitats prior to agricultural intensification) and adjoining privately-owned, but similarly managed, meadows. The first survey was undertaken on 8th June 1996 by the Warwickshire Research in Nature Group (25 recorders). We have access to their records.
* We are planning a second workshop for local children this summer (8-12 August 2022). The workshop will focus on the protecting our environment, and a major part of the time will be spent on engaging the children in the development and performance of a play using recycled materials.

Last but not least, the Stour Valley Climate and Environmental Action Group made contact with us and we have set up a South Warwickshire Area Network for wildlife so that we can work together and share ideas to protect wildlife in the area. Shipston-on-Stour and 10 villages are already members of the network and more villages have asked to join. Rosemary Collier is Chair and Shirley Cherry is Secretary.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who has supported Tysoe Wildlife and we welcome suggestions for further activities to support local wildlife.

Rosemary Collier & Shirley Cherry, May 2022