Volunteer opportunities

There are lots of volunteer opportunities in the Stour catchment to engage with wildlife and habitat management and to help improve the water environment.

Join a volunteer work party
Carrying out practical tasks including habitat management, surveys and monitoring species or even train to identify species, there are lots of volunteering opportunities, below are some ideas.

Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT) has a number of groups you can join with from groups in North Dorset to the heaths in East Dorset and Christchurch and in and even underwater surveys of the sea, see the DWT events guide on-line at www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/events. Activities are regularly carried out at Fontmell Down, Girdles Coppice (nr Sturminster Newton), Ashley Wood (Tarrant Keynes ton), Budgens Meadow (Verwood) and Sopley Common.

Garston Wood, nr Six Penny Handley – RSPB volunteer days Wednesdays and Sundays from October until March. Contact Claire Young Tel: 01929 555983 or E-mail: Dorset.Volunteering@rspb.org.uk

Get involved looking after the butterfly populations, by volunteering with the Dorset Branch of the Butterfly Conservation visit: www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/events. If Amphibians and Reptiles are your interest contact the Amphibian & Reptile Trust for training and volunteering activities or visit: www.arc-trust.org.

The Dorset Bat Group carries out surveys and walks and talks, visit: www.dorsetbatgroup.org.uk for more information.

The Christchurch Conservation Volunteers have winter volunteering Tuesdays at Steamer Point Nature Reserve, occasional visits to Stanpit Marsh. Thursday and Sunday tasks cover sites such as Mude Valley Nature Reserve, St Catherine’s Hill, Nea Meadows and Grove Copse from September to March contact Christchurch & East Dorset Landscape & Countryside Team Email: countryside@christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk or Tel: 01425 470721

Avon Heath Country Park also has volunteer events throughout the winter contact Avon Heath Country Park Email: dorsetcountryside@dorsetcc.gov.uk or Tel: 01425 478082.

Become a trained Riverfly Monitor
The Dorset Wildlife Trust in partnership with the Environment Agency trains volunteers to participate in the Dorset River Monitoring Scheme, itself part of the national Riverfly Partnership. The scheme is of interest to keen anglers and wildlife enthusiasts alike, who both share a concern for the present and future health of our rivers.

The scheme is based on the carrying out a kick sample a month and counting the numbers of 8 key river insect species as a method of assessing river quality. Many insect species are extremely sensitive to pollution levels and therefore their reduction in number act as an early warning system of any potential problems. The data obtained is then submitted to Dorset Wildlife Trust. In the event of a reduced count, the Environment Agency is contacted for investigation of a potential pollution incident.

If you are interested in being trained as a River Monitor please contact Sarah Williams or Angus Menzies on 01305 264620 or email: riverfly@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk