

March Newsletter

Covid 19 and What We Are Doing

Due to the recent announcements from Government and rapid way in which things are changing because of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19), we have changed our plans for at least the next 8 weeks.

All the planned events and activities delivered by the Scheme showing in the 'What's On' page of our website have been postponed until later in the year.

Our Heritage projects volunteering activities have also been suspended for this time. You will see on the website that partner organisations also had events and activities planned over the next few months, and we recommend that you visit their websites and social media channels for the latest information.

The Fifth Continent team are currently working from home and will, where possible, continue to keep in contact with those involved in both supporting the delivery projects, partner organisations and volunteers through phone calls or online meetings.

As part of the monitoring of the marsh project we had a series of interesting wildlife identification talks and walks planned starting in the early summer this year. We are keen to engage with people about the plants and animals all around us, to help everyone learn more about the way these species live and to help identify them. We hope to enthuse people to record what they see when out in the countryside and then to submit what they see to the county record centre. Unfortunately, due to the current situation with Coronavirus we are having to re-schedule these talks, but we do still plan to put these on later this year, so watch our website and social media for further details.

We hope you are all staying safe and wish you good health at this time and will update you again. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us via the fifth.continent@kentwildlife.org email.

Dive into Romney Marshes History

Due to most of us being on lockdown at home we thought it would be a good idea to send out some resources where you can learn more about Romney Marsh.

Some of the best websites to start at are:

<https://theromneymarsh.net/>
<https://ivychurchhistory.weebly.com/>
<https://newchurchvillage.org/index.php?cID=142>
<https://dungeness.org.uk/history/>

Between these websites there is a plethora of knowledge to enjoy and learn. Also why not do a bit of research on smuggling and the local hidden tunnels running between pubs and buildings, unfortunately most are now collapsed or sealed. We hope these resources help you a little through these times to keep busy.

Fifth Continent on Film Calendar

If you do go for a walk for exercise or even just out in the garden, don't forget you can still get involved in the year long calendar project— all you need to do is to use your phone camera and make a film clip between 1 and 2 minutes long. The content can be anything from wildlife visiting your garden, to shots of the wildflowers blossoming along the footpaths and verges in Romney Marsh and the wildlife that you see. Be involved in capturing the changing beauty of the Marsh over the next few months. For more information go to <https://www.screensouth.org/events/fifth-continent-film-calendar/>

Time to spruce up your garden for wildlife?

This is the perfect opportunity to get outside and get all that gardening work done that you have been putting off. Why not focus a little on how you can improve your own garden for wildlife in the Romney Marsh area. Here are a few tips and options to get you started on your journey:

- If you have a tree in your garden then construct a basic bird box to hang in it using scrap wood. Basic instructions can be found here: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/build-a-birdbox/>
- Create a log pile from scrap wood and bits of trees. These can be fantastic for insects and reptiles to hide in and sunbathe on. Who knows you might also get some interesting fungus and lichen as they begin to decompose as well. <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-make-log-shelter>
- Start composting your food waste if you don't already. A great way to reduce your waste going to land fill and save a little money as well.
- Start a vegetable patch in your garden. Line the outside of the veg patch with wildflowers such as Borage, Cornflowers and Scabious. You can start breaking ground and planning it out now ready for when the lockdown lifts.

For the Children, you can find a great range of resources which are relatively easy to do in most gardens at the Wildlife Watch website: <https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/Downloads>. A fun and easy way to educate your children while out on your one exercise walks or in your own garden.

An introduction from Andrew Mayfield

Hello! My name is Andrew and I will be covering for Lucie whilst she is on maternity leave.

In the short time since I took over from Lucie at the start of March, we ran one finds processing session, where the volunteers continued to work on marking and processing the finds from our Brenzett dig last August.

The volunteers are also working hard to complete the transcription of the Brenzett Church survey and we are deciding how it can be disseminated alongside the Burmarsh booklet!

I will be keeping in touch with the heritage volunteers by email, so do get in touch if you would like to learn more about future heritage projects!

Staying In Touch

The Fifth Continent Team are pleased to send you their monthly update by way of this newsletter. We would encourage you to share news of this scheme with others where you are able and regularly check our website for updates or via our Blog and social media accounts.

Don't forget we also have a facebook page @FifthContinentLPS where you can share your wildlife pictures and clips about Romney Marsh with us, help us keep connected to nature and each other online.

Thank You and Stay Safe