

Adapting to change

As we will not see you at Bluebell Day or the usual shows this year, there will be a monthly bulletin posted on www.wightsquirrels.co.uk and on our Facebook page. If it is popular I will keep it going and produce a hard copy newsletter once a year but perhaps change the time it comes out.

Have you ever wondered why it comes out in September/October? It's because when WSP was founded I was taking a degree with the Open University and their break was in the autumn so I had a bit more time to work on it. Simple!

Since we have been told to stay at home and drive far less, the number of squirrel road deaths have dropped, that's not surprising I suppose. I am not taking road deaths for post mortem at the moment but would still like the ears for genetic and disease studies. There is no blood or mess involved, so if you see a dead squirrel and are able to, then please cut the ears off and put them in a plastic bag, marked with date and location found and put the bag in the deep freeze. I will pick it up as soon as possible.

Bluebell day May 3rd

Obviously we won't be there in person this year. However, not to be out done, the footage and photos I've taken at Knighton Eastwood over the years are being put together as a short film and uploaded on to our website with a link from Facebook. Alan from Vectis TV has volunteered to put the film together to save me time. That is the plan anyway. If you have not been to a Bluebell day before, I hope you will be encouraged to pop along next year. We have the generosity of Nicky and Iain Eaton to thank for allowing us to use their beautiful wood to raise funds for red squirrels.

Keep in touch and keep your squirrel sightings coming via the website, email, phone or the app from Epicollect 5.

'Squirrels in your garden' survey

Whilst stuck at home, how about doing a bit of science? Those of you who are lucky enough to have red squirrels in your garden that is. Citizen Science is the catchy name for public involvement in this type of data collection. So if you fancy yourself as a Citizen Scientist why not give it a go.

I've drawn up an identification form and questionnaire along with a guide to identifying each squirrel. If you would like to join this survey, please ring me on 611003 or by email – wightsquirrels@hotmail.com. Results and an ongoing story on how our reds are getting on will be in the next bulletin and posted on Facebook. If you are not on Facebook, the page can be accessed via the website: www.wightsquirrels.co.uk.



A new volunteer, Karena, has joined us to promote the charity on Facebook. I have a go now and then but can't say I get on with it wonderfully well, so thank you Karena.

I'm still very busy as most work is on the computer at home and not in the woods, sadly. A large amount of data collected over the years has not been written up because I just haven't had time. Instead of doing the spring cleaning (boring!) I'm writing up this data, ably helped by professional statistician, Ian Rennie. He is excellent at extracting graphs and tables so I can concentrate on the text.

Keep well everyone. *Helen*

