

The Weardale Environmental Trust

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Spring 2008 Newsletter

Following our walk around Tunstall and Baal Hill Wood in March I'm pleased to say that the bluebells are now in full display but may have suffered with the strong winds and rain we've had in the last few days. There are pictures on the TWET website taken on Sunday 25th May.

Glenwhelt Bird walk

Our next guided walk is arranged, by kind permission of Mr Ian Dent, for 10.30am on the 29th June at Westgate. Meet at Glenwhelt farm, O.S. grid reference 900 372, which may also be marked as a mountain rescue centre on the map. Please park carefully along the roadside.

The walk will be led by experienced birder Dave Barlow, a long time member of Teesside Bird Club. John and Carol Graham have kindly offered to provide light refreshments after the walk and would appreciate an idea of numbers. *Could you please confirm with me, before the 21st of June, if you will be attending?*

Glenwhelt is situated in an upland area which carries a wide variety of birdlife. There may be an opportunity to catch sight of a Black Grouse during the walk.

RWET / TWET Amalgamation

Trust activities have slowed as talks between the two trusts continue. There have been three meetings since January and five people have come forward as possible trustees of a new Wear Rivers Trust. It is envisaged that the new group will take over the residual responsibilities of the Mineral Valley Project and retain the resources of Low Bat etc. Potential trustees from TWET were invited to accompany RWET's Working On The Wear group as they made a final inspection of the projects. They included a new fish pass at Langley Moor and the creation of wildlife corridors along feeder streams. The party also visited Low Bat to inspect willow spiling and fencing. Pictures of the visit are posted on the TWET website www.twet.org.uk (latest news).

A meeting at the Scotch Corner Hotel hosted by The Association of Rivers Trusts (ART's) brought together groups within the northern area including the Tyne, Wear and Tees.

TWET web cams

David Raymond and Peter Stephenson together with hosts Peter & Judith Rodenby have installed cameras on Peter and Judith's property which give live views of the main river Wear at St Johns Chapel and also a selection of bird boxes and feeding stations. There are a few teething problems around the wireless signal but the site www.rodenby.camstreams.com/ has had nearly 3800 hits since March. Many thank to Peter & Judith for their hospitality and the scones.

David has again rigged up cameras in his garden these can be seen at www.hwcam1.camstreams.com/ .There is currently a great tit rearing chicks.

Schools for Gambia

We met Anne Twiname at last year's Wolsingham Show were she signed up as a TWET member. Since then Anne has twice visited the Gambia as a volunteer and carried out work to provide school facilities and enable basic needs such as a failed water supply to be brought back into operation. We understand that they will be returning early next year to refurbish medical facilities there. The project is entirely funded by donation and volunteers' contributions. There is no expenditure on office space or staff. All volunteers pay their own airfare and expenses.

Anne has recently contacted us to say that as part of the ongoing fundraising activity Mae Winterton, the Schools for Gambia founder, will give a short presentation of the group's work at the St Anne's Centre Wolsingham on the 11th of June at 7.00pm. It will be followed by a wine and cheese evening together with a raffle. The cost of a ticket is £5.00. We hope you will be able to attend. The Schools for Gambia website is at www.schoolsforgambia.org.uk

Best wishes,

Peter Stephenson

