

CANS PM9 Rolfes Land Nature Reserve

For those of you that maybe new to the village or perhaps it may have slipped the memory of some longer-term residents, we have our own Nature reserve right here in Stisted. Many of you may be familiar with the larger Brookes Reserve on the outskirts of the village, but we have a lovely little reserve of our own. I am not sure of the exact history of this Reserve other than it was very kindly donated by an adjacent owner / resident to the Essex Wildlife Trust who currently manage it. I am sure that our Stisted Academy school children know lots about it as they have regular trips there and can often be seen marching up to the Reserve with school teachers. Safety is of the utmost importance and with High Visibility vests they pull barrows of equipment single file with plenty of staff on hand to supervise the children and manage road safety. Within the reserve itself is a circle of cut tree stumps that the children can safely sit on and listen and learn about Nature and the area.

Essex Wildlife Trust use a team of volunteers (seen in photo below) led by Area Officer Nicky Payne. The volunteers come from mainly local villages like Halstead, Coggeshall, Sible Hedingham etc. The team mainly work at Brookes reserve but keep a watch-full eye on Rolfes Land and I have met them there on several occasions. Recently they had carried out an in-depth survey of the wild flowers within the small meadow area. They had removed a lot of Thistle that was overtaking certain areas within the meadow, and they have given a list to CANS volunteers that will help plug specific wildflowers this Autumn in conjunction with EWT's requirements. They are also laying Live Hedges down along the perimeter of some younger trees to provide a natural fence to keep Muntjac from eating the young shoots. They keep a couple of small ponds clear and deal with fallen trees and the general safety of the area as well as its natural wellbeing. Rolfes Land can be accessed from the entrance to the right of the Village Pond and allotment plots. CANS have donated and supplied bird feeders within specific areas of the reserve so that wildlife is encouraged, and the children may have the opportunity to see more of the reserve inhabitants.

Please visit and enjoy the area. I was there only last week and observed a Buzzard calling its young from above the trees. I have seen Nuthatches, Greater Spotted woodpeckers, Great tits and Robins. Thank you for reading my article this month. Enjoy our lovely village and its Natural beauty.

Graham Holloway – CANS Wildlife Rep.

