

## Lloyds Day to Make a Difference on Troopers Hill

Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2014



Thank you to 17 volunteers from Lloyds Bank who gave their time to help make a difference on Troopers Hill Local Nature Reserve. They also did some work in Troopers Hill Field.

The aim of Friends of Troopers is to work to improve the site for people and nature. One of the "people" tasks of the day was to stake a very large log into position. This log has been part of a seating/play area but unfortunately its old retaining stakes had rotted. A team of 4 (The Loggers) set to with a sledge hammer and new stakes to carry out a neat, secure job to keep the log in position.



The same team also cut back a poplar stump that had grown long shoots that were overshadowing a young hornbeam tree that had been planted by young children as part of the Tree Bristol project.





They then went on to start clearing the steps that run from the top to the foot of Troopers Hill of a build up of grass and soil. This was a very strenuous job.

The "nature" tasks were covered by these parts of the site's 5 year management plan:

2012 Management Plan - Objectives for this work party		Compartments
6.2.2.9	Removal of all tree species growing scrub before maturity	2-11
6.2.2.10	Removal of all tree seedlings from grassland and heathland	2-11
6.2.2.11	Control bramble and scrub encroaching onto grassland and heather	2-11
6.2.2.12	Manage to maintain some areas of heath type scrub and broom	2-11

A team of 7 (The Hunters) set out on a sapling hunt removing young trees, most less than 60cm tall, that had taken root in the heathland. If left to grow the trees would overshadow and kill the acid grass and heathland that make this open space so ecologically important.



The Oscars, a team of 6, cut back bramble to gain access to a patch of broom in the sacrificial stone area (so named by one of our younger, imaginative volunteers, Oscar). They carried on removing brambles and saplings from this area that would otherwise overcome the broom and kill the grassland.



After a short break the teams swapped tasks. The Oscars picked up the spades and the Hunters set to work in the sacrificial stone area. The Loggers cleared an area of bramble that had built up in an area where the scarlet and white fly agaric toadstool is usually found. Two, past their best, fly agaric specimens were found under the bramble and we are looking forward to seeing many more in the next few weeks, now the bramble has been removed.

After lunch it was the Hunters turn with the spades, while the Oscars went broom cutting where the broom was starting to invade areas of heather and grassland where it had not been found in previous years. Part of the management of Troopers Hill involves keeping a balance between the plant species to continue to supply a habitat for the wildlife that is special to the site.



The Hunters took up the battle in the sacrificial stone area, having some quite impressive scratches to show at the end of it.

Our grateful thanks to everyone from Lloyds, particularly Dan Mould who made all the arrangements on behalf of the team.

Thank you also to the Friends of Troopers Hill volunteers, Chris, David, Kit, Rob and Susan, trained as work party leaders, who made time in their busy lives to help make this happen.