

## Winter Works on Troopers Hill – What are you waiting for?

So what's good about winter? The leaves drop from most trees, the birds stop nesting, it's colder and maybe a bit greyer. Well, while nature is taking a bit of a rest, humans can do a lot of work so when spring comes, the plants that provide habitats for the highly valued wildlife on Troopers Hill have the best chance to thrive.

This is the time of year when Friends of Troopers Hill, a truly "outstanding" group of people need the most help from you, local people living near the Hill. If you can give just 2 hours of your time between now and March you could make a tremendous difference to the survival of very special wildlife and plants on Troopers Hill.

This work cannot be done during the bird nesting season which runs from March until the end of September. It would be illegal for Friends of Troopers Hill to disturb nesting birds. Winter is also ideal because with no leaves on most trees and shrubs, you can easily see where cutting tools need to go and it is a lighter job removing debris.



The Friends will not be the only people working on the Hill. At this time of year Bristol City Council's Parks team will have met with the Friends to review the Hill's conservation management plan and agree the tasks for the winter that need heavy machinery and strimmers. Most of the work concentrates on pushing back seedling trees and bramble to preserve as big an area of acid grassland and heathland as possible.

It is the grassland and heathland that provides the important habitat for species ranging from common lizards to mining bees. 75 species of bee have been recorded on Troopers Hill, 24 types of butterfly, 92 moths and over 500 other invertebrates.

Why have I called the Friends “outstanding”? For the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row the Royal Horticultural Society South West in Bloom assessment of the Friends of Troopers Hill in the It’s Your Neighbourhood category is the highest level “5 - Outstanding”. The Friends are really proud of this.

Please give your Local Nature Reserve a helping hand to not only be outstanding for 2018 but to preserve this very special area for wildlife, local people and their children, into the future. Just turn up a little before 10am on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday or 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of any month at the red slide on Troopers Hill Field. You will be given a warm welcome, provided with gloves, tools and guidance on what to do and why. Dress code is sensible footwear for rough ground and a steep hillside plus old trousers and a long-sleeved top to protect you from scratches. If you have any questions please contact Susan on 0117 947 5037 or email [friends@troopers-hill.org.uk](mailto:friends@troopers-hill.org.uk).

[www.troopers-hill.org.uk](http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk)



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