



Wolvercote Commoners'

NEWSLETTER October 2019

The war on *Crassula helmsii* continues

Some of you may have seen a person out on Wolvercote Common by the Jubilee Gate wielding a rather ominous looking flame thrower. This was just one of our volunteer helpers during the September work-day when we were trying, yet again, to eradicate an invasive plant called *Crassula helmsii*, (or Australian Swamp Weed to you and me). If allowed to grow unimpeded the weed is capable of completely taking over all the natural habitat found in the wetter areas.



A pond completely overrun with untreated *Crassula helmsii*

One of the roles of the Commoners' Committee is to ensure that such invasions are prevented. We have in the past employed a specialist company to apply a special hot foam, at vast expense, but virtually ineffective. So if we are to be successful in eliminating it, we will have to look to alternatives to continue the fight.

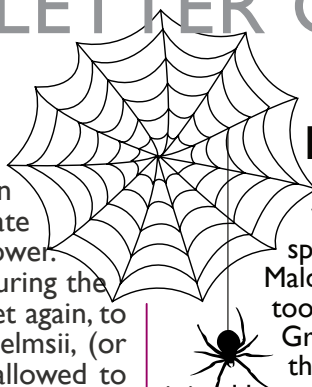
Rome wasn't built in a day...

The installation of permanent traffic lights on the railway bridge has been promised longer than we care to remember. At last, in our previous newsletter, we were able to report that they would be installed by the end of September. However, September has come and gone but no traffic lights!



On contacting the Council for an update, they informed us that they have had to reschedule the 'current start date' until next year and the new 'current start date' will be at the end of February 2020. Note the wording, 'current start date'. Current does indicate a slight impression of flexibility. So it should be said, as stated in our last newsletter — watch this space.

Rome wasn't built in a day but you bet they could have erected traffic lights quite quickly!



Wolvercote Wildlife Explorers, hunt for spiders

No, it's not Halloween quite yet but the Wolvercote Wildlife Explorers went a huntin' spiders. The team, led by June Williams, Jo Malden and their latest volunteer Carol Stone, took the young explorers on to Wolvercote Green for their September session. Autumn is the time for spiders and the youngsters were joined by expert guide Lawrence Bee, an ecology consultant.

After not too long an extensive collection of spiders were found in the surroundings and brought back for closer examination by the keen explorers. They all had special containers with magnifying glass lids.



Young explorers identify and draw their finds

Some, however, wanted a more close-up and hands-on approach (under the expert direction of Lawrence). The Explorers meet every month in different locations, usually with an expert on hand, and discover many amazing facts about the flora and fauna to be found in the area. Wolvercote Green is perfect for exploring as it has such a variety of plants and insects during all the seasons.



Elsa Tudor-Jones, gets close-up and friendly with a 4 spotted Orb spider

STOP PRESS

For those who use the tow path between Godstow Road and Aristotle Bridge regularly please note:

Starting on 21st October the above path will be closed periodically for 3 to 4 months for repairs. For details and closure dates, see notices at tow path entrances

We know you don't want reminding that Christmas is on its way but one thing not to miss is the Commoners' Carols Concert.

So put Monday 16th December in your diary now!



Don't forget Village Work Mornings second Saturday of every month

Meet outside the Village Hall at 10am (bring garden gloves, wellies and any gardening tools you have). Children welcome

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