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## Task Reports June 2003

22<sup>nd</sup> June – Wildmoor – David Fiddes (Photos – Neil Frankum)



Seven of us aided by a couple of wardens cleared three areas of bracken on the Wildmoor heathland. We started on two extensive areas on the drier part of the site that were encroaching on gorse and wildflower. The group set to the bracken with slashers, pitchforks and rakes, whilst be serenaded (or verbally abused depending on your point of view) by a couple of stonechats. Lunch was interrupted by the lightest of showers, but otherwise the weather was very pleasant. Having slashed enough bracken for two sizeable piles whilst avoiding





the orchids we moved on to a smaller area in the boggy part of the site. Here the bracken was less dense and we made quick progress before retiring to the Queens Oak in Finchampstead for a well deserved drink - I had a pint of Bee Sting - honey-flavoured beer!!

### **29<sup>th</sup> June – Beale Wildlife Park – Richard Coles**

On a hot sunny day we pulled thistles from a field of unimproved grassland. Not much you can say about that. As often happens during these repetitive tasks, one's brain slips into neutral and I remembered Eeyore (who liked thistles, You will remember) and considered whether they could graze donkeys to do the job. Or one young volunteer who suggested ploughing it all up to get rid of them. It is noticeable that unlike previous summers, our numbers have kept up this year on every task, somehow - new people join, or others we have not seen for ages turn up out of the blue. The only low turn out we had was back at Easter, and that was Bank Holiday, tree weeding, rotten weather, King's Meadow (nuff said). Several of us took the opportunity of visiting the park itself at lunchtime, to see how the Meerkats were doing, and we retired to the garden of nearby pub afterwards. I went in the river on the way home to cool off, nice to swim about in the quiet early evening as the church bells rang out from Pangbourne.

