

Volunteers at Landskill

26 June, 2009

Local volunteers and farmer help to significantly improve the habitats and visitor opportunities at Landskill Farm, Calder Vale

Over the winter of 2008/9 local volunteers from the community, Wyre Countryside and Lancashire Countryside Services have spent several wet miserable and some dry sunny days learning the art of hedgelaying with guidance from Geoff Whitely. Their efforts are contributing to a programme of work to restore wet grassland habitat for wading birds in this area of Bowland. Gapping up



and laying of relict hedgerows and the removal of beech trees, not only restores the historic boundary network but opens up the landscape and removes taller trees and remnant hedgerow shrubs that wading birds tend to avoid. The work has already made a big difference with Lapwings nesting more widely across these fields closer to the field boundaries plus Redshank and Snipe have even been using the felled tree stumps as songposts!

The farmer is planning to carry out ditch edge re-profiling and scrape creation in the autumn of 2009 to provide boggy feeding areas for wading birds and their chicks. He's also planning rush management to open up rank areas of pasture to provide further habitat. The fields at Landskill adjoin land at Cobble Hey and Broadgate Farms where similar habitat work has already been undertaken to great effect. Two local RSPB volunteers have been surveying the fields at Landskill and have recorded good numbers of Lapwings with chicks, Redshank and Snipe behaving as if they have young and Curlews and Oystercatchers too.

Locals and visitors to the area can now overlook these fields from two newly installed bird-hides at Landskill and Cobble Hey farms. If you'd like to venture a little further on foot or via a Trampler (all terrain wheelchair) you can continue to Broadgate Farm where there is another bird hide overlooking fields used by waders, as well as enjoying the outstanding views of the Bleasdale fells and beyond to Pendle Hill.

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