

## **Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Watch Groups' Report for March 2009 to February 2010**



Wildlife Watch is the junior membership of The Wildlife Trusts and is the UK's leading club for young environmentalists and children interested in wildlife conservation. Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust has a number of Wildlife Watch Groups who meet regularly and are run by volunteer Leaders. The main aim of all the Wildlife Watch Groups is to create opportunities for young people to participate in environmental action and wildlife discovery whilst developing individual and interpersonal skills and knowledge

The Vitacress Conservation Trust has agreed to sponsor the activities of HWT's Wildlife Watch programme for a five-year period from March 2007 until March 2011.



During the period March 2009 to February 2010:

- A new group started on the Isle of Wight, bringing the total to ten Watch groups, each meeting at least once a month.
- Three of the groups won awards in the Watch Group of the Year competition. Swanwick won the SE Region, Four Marks was Regional runner-up and Southampton was Commended.
- An activity box was given to the new IOW group.
- One of our Wildlife Watch members achieved his Gold Award. We have arranged for it to be presented to him By Chris Packham in May 2010.
- We have recruited 7 additional leaders, bringing our current total to 27 registered leaders.

- We redesigned the Watch leaflet to reflect the new national style of Wildlife Watch publications and have printed 4000 copies.
- We printed 1 issue of the old style local newsletter in May, then 2 new-look newsletters in October and January, 10,500 copies in all. These were sent out to members and distributed to leaders and our education centres.
- 15 leaders, helpers and potential leaders attended a training day in January on working with willow, followed by games and guidance on administration tasks and child protection.
- Thirteen leaders have participated in a distance learning package on Child Protection.
- Four leaders attended a training day on Working with Living Willow.
- One leader is attending a First Aid course in March 10.
- 24 leaders now have Trust Volunteer clothing to help identify them during Watch activities.
- 5 groups had 'Support Visits' to check that all is well and policies and procedures adhered to.

### **Benefit**

The Trust is very grateful for this sponsorship: it has enabled us to provide enhanced support for the volunteer Watch group leaders. This, in turn, results in increased skills and ability to develop and lead quality activities for the young people who attend Watch groups – demonstrated by their recent Watch Group of the Year awards and the willow- weaving and bush-craft activities appearing in the group programmes.