

Old Sulehay Nature Reserve nr Yarwell, Northants

Details

Clients	Carillion
Date	August 2005
Location	Old Sulehay Nature Reserve

Carillion Natural Habitat Fund



The Carillion Natural Habitat fund provides the opportunity for business groups and contracts to support the branch of The Wildlife Trust within the area that they are operating in. The Carillion Road Maintenance Area 8 contract was approached by the Northampton branch of The Wildlife Trust for support with their program to establish whether Dormice are present within the Old Sulehay Nature Reserve



On average, three quarters of the dormouse year is spent asleep hence its colloquial name 'sleep mouse'. The dormouse requires habitats with a range of species and feeds mainly on fruit, flowers, insects, nuts and seeds. The population in Britain is in serious decline and thus they are a protected species under UK and European legislation.

Dormice were rediscovered in Northants in 1986 and since then 17 woodlands in the county have been found to support this shy little creature. The Northants Dormouse Group, run by volunteers, has been actively helping our small populations by installing nest boxes. Sadly, the numbers of dormice have still been falling in recent years..



Dormouse tube fitted to a branch at a height and location favoured by Dormice

This project will enable the Dormouse Group to look at some new sites that are potentially good habitat and see if any dormice have set up home there.

The first phase of this project was to install 30 Dormice tubes (see Photo) within an area of Sulehay Nature reserve a potential habitat for Dormice. This was carried out with the aid of volunteers from the trust and Carillion. Dormice will fill the tubes with material to make a protected environment to sleep in.



Members of the Wild Life Trust and Carillion employees

During late autumn volunteers will return to inspect the tubes looking for signs of use. A search of the woodland floor will also be made looking for nuts that have the distinctive marks of being opened by a Dormouse. If there are signs of Dormice being present the woodland will be coppiced to encourage the development of a Dormice friendly habitat

This case study will be updated with the results of the autumn work