

Visit 25th February 2020



February may not be the most exciting month on the Village Green, but it is always good to look for and find signs of spring.

Work on cleaning out the beck had been carried out since my last visit — just in time to avoid the peak of the spawning season for our frog population.



Looking east towards entrance

Looking west towards wildlife area

Reed mace removed

It was clear that the work had been done with care and I was particularly pleased to see that clumps of Reed Mace (*Typha latifolia*) had been dug out and deposited on the bank. It will be worth keeping an eye on dumped and loose material to make sure that re-establishment of this invasive plant is limited. The level of the pond had been lowered and was now well below the dipping platform.

Early spring plants included Daffodils near the entrance and Cowslips amongst the birch trees. Marsh marigolds were present as buds and will open within a week or so. All these are ‘planted’ or ‘introduced’ plants, whereas the masses of Lesser celandines appearing in the grassland have been present all along having extended as conditions developed to their liking.



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Marsh marigold in bud



Lesser celandine in flower

Perhaps the most exciting thing I saw was a huge 'communal' deposit of frog spawn - fully half a metre across. Adjacent to the clump of spawn was the remains of a frog, nothing more than a little skin and some bones. Earlier in the week I had photographed a Heron on the bridge over the beck—he/ she was looking for frogs and had no doubt taken advantage of them coming together to spawn.



Over against the south facing garden walls Snowdrops were flowering in profusion and Alder catkins were covered in pollen.

I left by forcing my way through the reed bed, noticing on my way what I think was a (bright orange) Slime Mould (Trichia sp. ?) These are notoriously difficult to identify.

