

Turnpike Fields Wildlife Report for 2021

This report covers the months from January to November 2021. The earlier starting of the survey means that a number of new species have been included. The majority of last year's species of wild plant were noted whilst a number of new insects, birds and animals have been added. This is not to suggest that they were not present before but just that they have not been sighted or recorded. However there are new species on this year's list which can be related to action carried out on the fields, particularly regarding the new ponds. Some maintenance action did have an effect on some species, especially the early cutting of the grass and the cutting of the hedge edgings. It is to be noted that the hedge cutting did not conform with the agreed habitat maintenance plan which is based on best practice for hedge cutting. As agreed, two areas of the fields were planted with young trees to form wooded areas.

The list of sightings takes a different form this year. It is displayed as a single list without differentiating habitat or month of sighting. However, new sightings have habit and season indicated. The 2020 and CWT June 2019 lists are included to provide comparison. Species missing from the 2021 list may have been affected by the weather or just missed in the surveying.

Wild plants

Most of 2020's species were sighted. There is the addition of some early Spring flowering plants, particularly those more usually associated with cultivation, such as Snowdrop and Crocus. It is noted that some plants were more widespread than the previous year.

Animals, Insects & Reptiles

There has been an increase in the number of species recorded. This is due to being "in the right place at the right time", and with respect the insects, a more thorough survey. We did not see some of the Grassland insects this year. The Brook habitat is at last revealing some interesting sightings with a probable Water Vole sighting and using a trail cam an Otter. This being a night-time sighting it has to be recorded as probable. It is hoped that further use of a trail cam will reveal more.

Ponds

These have continued to mature and are now well established. All vegetation is self grown (nothing has been introduced to the ponds). This has been a very interesting process to watch. Oxygenating, as well as water cover, plants have grown and also bull rushes and other sedges. The surface algae, in the pond in the top field, caused by the nitrogen-high run-off from the fields, has been controlled by the use of Barley Straw and judicious use of a rake. The underlying water seems to be crystal clear.

The good quality of the water has been shown by the presence of dragonfly and damselfly nymphs in the summer. Various species of Dragonfly and Damselfly have adopted the ponds as home, which is a sign of the ponds' growing maturity. Frog spawn was spotted in the Spring and small frogs have been observed since.

The pond in the Lower field does not suffer from the algae problem as the grass in the field was not "improved". It does, however, have a consistently lower water level. This does not seem to limit the beetles and other pond creatures from inhabiting it.

Trees

Two areas have been planted with trees to form a future new habitat. The trees planted in the Spring on the top of the lower field, consisting of Oaks and Scotch Pine, have all established well during the summer. We will need to wait to see whether the newly planted trees in the top field consisting of 40 trees, planted in the Autumn, will also flourish. This is a mixed woodland planting with Oak, Ash, Sweet Chestnut, Beech and Horse Chestnut. This planting is designed to, in time, provide a "corridor from the Oaks in the centre of the field to the hedge line trees. In addition the hedge line corridor adjacent to the canal in the top field which was begun in the Spring with Holly has been augmented with additional Holly and Hawthorn saplings.

In addition it is noted that there are a number of self generating Oak saplings both in the hedge line and also around the trees in the centre of the top field.

Maintenance

This year with the grass cut early it gave an unexpected opportunity to experience the fields in a different way. It had the appearance and feel of an urban park. This had some advantage for those exercising their dogs (which is the primary amenity that the fields provide at this point in time.) We did lose the Grassland habitat that many people have said that they appreciate and enjoy. The Grassland habitat is a more ecologically

favourable one for not only the encouragement of wild flowers but also the flourishing of insects and small mammals.

This raises a conflict between Public Amenity and Wildlife Conservation. Perhaps the answer does lie in providing a cut area at the top of the top field (as we had proposed this year) and leaving the rest of the Grassland to a later cut. It would be worthwhile to do this in 2022.

It was also unfortunate that the grass was cut tight to the hedges. The hedge line is an important habitat and wildlife corridor. I would ask that a 2 metre strip of uncut grass be left beside the hedge line to provide this corridor.

Community Engagement

The Fields featured in this year's Britain in Bloom judging. A dossier of wildlife was prepared for this and provided for the judges. It stands as a useful document to describe the wildlife of the Fields.

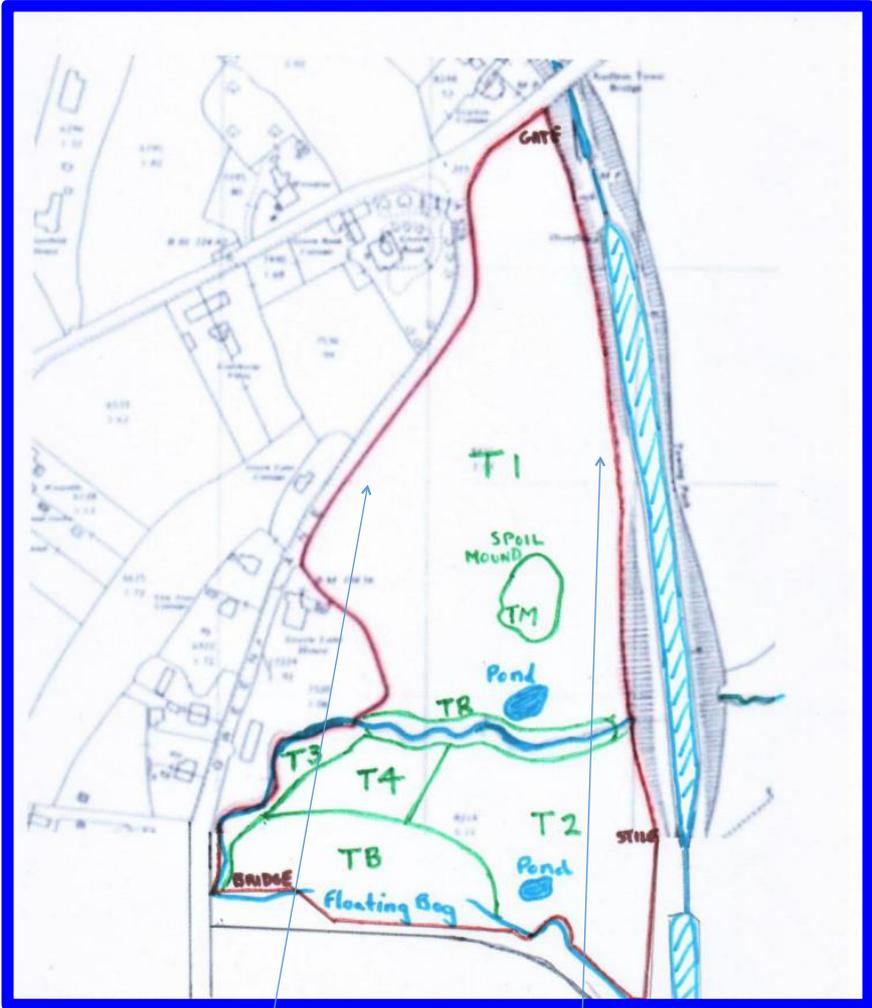
Articles on AudlemOnLine have been regularly posted to inform the community about the wildlife of the Fields. A book "Audlem Wildlife Diaries" has now been published to extend this.

A couple of "Wildlife Safaris" with groups from the community took place in the Summer. It is hoped to continue and extend these in the coming year (one group has already been booked).

Possible Future Actions and Developments

- 1.Continuing of surveying. This will be more difficult this year as one of our main surveyors, with particular botanical knowledge, has moved away.
- 2.The provision of a wildlife notice board would add to community engagement.
- 3.The provision of a pond-dipping platform for educational and surveying purposes.
- 4.Further tree and hedge planting, with an area set aside for the growing of Christmas trees for community use.
- 5.The provision of a bird feeding station.

Area Designations



Addition Habit Designation T1H = T1 Hedge

Turnpike Fields Wildlife Analysis - Plants 2021

Species	June 2019	2020	2021		

Alkanet Green		*	*		
Angelica Wild	*	*			
Aven Wood (Herb Bennet)			* T3		
Balsam Himalyan	*	*	*		
Bedstraw Common		*	*		
Bedstraw Marsh	*	*	*		
Bistort		*	*		
Bittercress Large		*			
Bittercress Wavy			* TM		
Bittersweet/ Woody Nightshade	*	*			
Bluebells English		*	*		
Bluebells Hybrid		*	*		
Bluebells Spanish		*	*		
Brambles (in flower)		*	*		
Burdock		*	*		
Butterbur		*			
Buttercup Bulbous		*	*		
Buttercup Creeping	*	*	*		
Buttercup Meadow	*	*	*		
Campion Red	*	*	*		
Campion White			* TIH		
Catsear Common	*	*	*		
Celandine Greater		*	*		
Celandine Lesser		*	*		
Cinquefoil Creeping		*	*		
Chickweed Common		*	*		
Cleavers	*	*	*		
Clover Red		*	*		
Clover White	*	*	*		
Cocksfoot		*	*		
Columbine		*			
Comfrey Common		*	*		

Coltsfoot	*	*			
Cow Parsley		*	*		
Crocus			* T1		
Crocsmia (Montbretia)		*	*		
Crowfoot Common Water		*			
Cuckooflower (Lady's Smock)		*	*		
Daffodil			* TM		
Daisy		*	*		
Daisy Oxeye		*	*		
Dame's Violet		*	*		
Dandelion Common	*	*	*		
Dock Broad-leaved	*	*	*		
Dock Curled	*	*	*		
Dog's Mercury			* T1H		
Eyebright Common		*	*		
Figwort	*				
Forget-me-not		*	*		
Garlic Mustard (jack-in-the hedge)		*	*		
Gorse		*	*		
Hawkweed		*	*		
Herb Robert		*	*		
Hogweed	*	*	*		
Honesty		*			
Horehound Black		*			
Horsetail	*	*	*		
Iris Yellow Flag	*	*	*		
Ivy Ground		*	*		
Kingcup		*	*		
Loosestrife Purple		*	*		
Lords-and-Ladies		*	*		
Marigold Marsh	*	*	*		
Mayweed		*			

Meadowsweet	*	*			
Mousebit		*	*		
Mouseear Common	*	*	*		
Mullien Greater		*	*		
Nettle Common	*	*	*		
Nettle Red Dead		*	*		
Nettle White Dead		*	*		
Nipplewort		*	*		
Pansy		*	*		
Pignut		*	*		
Pimpernel Scarlet		*			
Plantain Broad-leaved	*				
Plantain Common	*	*	*		
Plantain Greater		*	*		
Poppy	*		*		
Primrose Evening		*	*		
Ragwort Common		*	*		
Ramson (Wild Garlic)	*	*	*		
Redshank	*				
Reed Mace		*	*		
Rose Dog		*	*		
Rush Bull		*	*		
Rush Hard		*	*		
Rush Jointed	*				
Rush Soft	*	*	*		
St John's-wort	*	*	*		
Saxifrage opposite-leaved golden			*		
Sedge Lesser Pond (?)	*	*			
Sedge Pendulous		*	*		
Sedge Yellow		*	*		
Snowdrop			*		
Sorrel Common		*	*		

Spearwort Greater			*		
Speedwell Field		*	*		
Speedwell Germander		*	*		
Speedwell Slender		*			
Teasel	*	*	*		
Thistle Creeping	*	*	*		
Thistle Marsh	*	*	*		
Thistle Rough		*	*		
Thistle Spear	*	*	*		
Thistle Sow Prickly	*	*	*		
Thistle Sow Smooth		*	*		
Trefoil Greater Birdsfoot	*	*	*		
Trefoil Common Birdsfoot	*	*	*		
Violet - Purple			* TM		
Vetch Bush		*	*		
Vetchling Meadow		*			
Willowherb Greater Rosebay	*	*	*		
Willowherb Lesser Rosebay		*	*		
Willowherb Hoary		*			
Woundwort (107)	*		(+7)		
Grasses					
Bent Common	*	*	*		
Bent Creeping	*				
Cocksfoot		*	*		
Crested Dog's-tail		*	*		
Fescue Red	*	*	*		
Fescue Meadow		*	*		
Field Woodrush		*	*		
Foxtail Meadow	*	*	*		
Grass Reed Canary	*		*		
Grass Rough Meadow	*		*		
Grass Sweet Vernal	*		*		

Oat Grass False	*	*	*		
Rye Grass Perennial	*	*	*		
Timothy	*	*	*		
Yorkshire Fog (15)	*	*	*		

Turnpike Fields Wildlife Analysis -Insects, Birds and Animals & Reptiles 2021

Species	June2019	2020	2021		
INSECTS					
Bee Buff-tailed Bumblebee		*	*		
Bee White-tailed Bumblebee		*	*		
Bee Red-tailed Bumblebee		*	*		
Bee Common Carder		*			
Bee Honey		*	*		
Beetle Alder Leaf		*	*		
Beetle Blood-sucker (Soldier)			* T2		
Beetle Frog hopper			* T2		
Beetle Leafhopper			* T2		
Beetle Longhorn		*	* T2		
Beetle Rove		*	* T2		
Butterfly Comma		*	*		
Butterfly Common Blue		*	*		
Butterfly Small Copper			* T1		
Butterfly Fritillary		*			
Butterfly Gatekeeper		*	*		
Butterfly Green-veined White		*	*		
Butterfly Large White		*	*		
Butterfly Small White		*	*		
Butterfly Speckled Wood		*	*		
Butterfly Meadow Brown		*	*		
Butterfly Orange Tip		*	*		
Butterfly Peacock		*	*		
Butterfly Ringlet		*	*		
Butterfly Large Skipper		*	*		

Butterfly Small Skipper		*			
Butterfly Small Tortoiseshell		*	*		
Cricket Great Green		*			
Cricket Oak Bush		*	*		
Grasshopper Common Field		*			
Grasshopper Meadow		*			
Damselfly Banded Agrion			* TR		
Damselfly Blue Tailed		*	*		
Damselfly Common Blue		*	*		
Damselfly Large Red		*	*		
Dragonfly Broad Bodied Chaser		*	*		
Dragonfly Emperor		*	*		
Dragonfly - libellula depressa			* T1P		
Dragonfly - Black-tailed Skimmer			* T1P		
Hover-Fly Dronefly		*	*		
Hover-fly Helophilus pendulus			*		
Ladybird 22-spot			*		
Ladybird 2-spot			*		
Micro Fly			*		
Moth Cinnabar		*	*		
Moth Cinnabar Caterpillars		*			
Moth Common Rustic			* T1M		
Moth Garden Carpet			* T1M		
Moth Heart-and-Dart		*			
Moth Scalloped Oak		*	*		
Moth Silver Y		*			
Pond Skater		*	*		
Water Beetle		*	*		
BIRDS					
Blackbird		*	*		

Blue Tit			* T1H		
Buzzard		*	*		
Crow		*	*		
Goldfinch			* T1H		
Grey Heron			* TR		
Jackdaw			* T1		
Kingfisher		*	*		
Magpie		*	*		
Nuthatch			* TiH		
Robin			*T1H		
Starling			* T1H		
Wagtail Grey		*	*		
Wagtail Pied		*	*		
Wood Pidgeon			* T1		
Wren		*	*		
ANIMALS & REPTILES					
Common Frog		*	*		
Frogspawn			* T1P		
Fox (smell)		*			
Otter			* TR		
Rabbit		*	*		
Vole Bank			* T1P		
Vole Field		*			
Vole Water			* TR		
Squirrel Grey			* T2		

