

Wildlife Report for Turnpike Field 21st July 2022

The Fields have continued to reveal the annual cycle of wildlife life. The winter did not see such a prolonged time of wet area and the Spring with its drier and colder weather held back much of the new growth. This has meant that the Grasslands have not grown so quickly this year and some of the prolific wild flowers have not shown so early with a consequence of less insects. The drier weather continued during early summer and is now having a noticeable effect.

Four characteristics of this dry weather pattern have been noticed:

- i. Some plants such as the grasses have not grown so much this year
- ii. This has had a the knock-on effect that deeper rooted plants such as Common Ragwort have done much better. There could be a benefit in culling some of this plant.
- iii. Plants have seeded earlier this year, this means that there might be benefit in cut the top field earlier completely.
- iv. The water level in the pond has shrunk considerable. This will have an affect on the aquatic life present but as it is natural feed with water there is little that can be done. Some judicious culling of some of the more vigorous Mace plants could be useful.

Survey Report

Surveying began again in April. This year we have an enhanced team of seven AWEg members undertaking the survey. This has enabled a more defined survey to take place with individuals focussing on different types of wildlife and different habitats. As well as using individual knowledge and expertise, the facility of a WhatsApp Group has assisted interchange of knowledge and ideas.

Our Spring sightings have totalled 76 species of wild plant, 35 species of insect and 20 species of bird.

By also plotting where these were seen we are being able to build up a picture of density and spread.

Each year different species seem to flourish. This year has seen extensive numbers of Lesser Celandine, Hedge Garlic, and Dandelions. For the month of June the survey team recorded 38 species of wild plant, 10 new; 15 Grasses with 1 new; 30 species of insect, 18 new, 17 species of birds, 10 new. The full list is attached.

Around our ponds, life has continued to emerge. Some pond dipping has revealed a pleasing number of dragonfly and damselfly nymphs. Whilst already, one species of dragonfly and four species of damselfly have been

sighted. The pond dipping also revealed among other creatures, Great Diving beetles, water spiders, snails, water boatmen and caddisfly larva.

Tree Report

Most of the saplings planted in the Autumn have survived the winter. One or two had animal damage. All the trees have been given new guards to overcome this problem. All the trees planted in the hedgerow are also thriving. Some of the trees in the original planting last May have also suffered some damage. We will wait until the Autumn to replace these.

Community Connection

In June an evening "Safari" was undertaken with the local Beaver Scouts. A very energetic hour included a wildflower hunt, pond dipping, insect find, and "Know your Oaks" scamper. All undertaken at 100 miles an hour!. Maybe here was one of our future leading botanists or entomologist among them. In July a "Habitat Safari" was undertaken with AWEG members and others. Further safaris are being planned during the summer.

The provision of the wildlife noticeboard mentioned in a previous meeting would be much welcomed.

Turnpike Fields Wildlife Sightings for June 2022

* () = New Sightings recorded

Plants

Balsam Himalayan

Bedstraw Marsh

Birdsfoot Trefoil

Bramble

Brooklime *

Buttercup Bulbous

Buttercup Creeping

Buttercup Meadow

Campion Red

Catsear

Chickweed

Cleaver

Clover Red

Clover White

Cocksfoot

Comfrey

Cowparsley

Dames Violet

Elder Ground

Geranium Cutleaf *

Horsetail

Mayflower

Mouseear Commonj

Nettle Common

Orchid Common Spotted *

Pea Meadow *

Pignut

Primrose Evening

Plantain sp

Rocket YellowRose Dog *

Snowberry *

Sorrel Common

Speedwell Germander

Thistle Creeping

Thistle Marsh

Thistle Spear
Vetch Common *
Willowherb Greater
Willowherb Lesser 38 (7)

Grasses

Bent Common
Bent Creeping
Brome Soft
Cocksfoot
Crested Dogstail
Fescue Red
Foxtail Meadow
Grass Reed Canary
Grass False Oats
Grass Sweet Vernal
Rush Soft
Sedge Common
Sedge Hairy *
Timothy
Yorkshire Fog 15 (1)

Insects

Ant *
Beetle Alder
Beetle Soldier *
Beetle Swollen thighed *
Bug Dock Leather *
Butterfly Comma
Butterfly Gatekeeper
Butterfly Green Veined
Butterfly Meadow Brown
Butterfly Ringlet
Butterfly Small White
Butterfly Speckled Wood
Damselfly Azure *
Damselfly Banded Demoiselle
Damselfly Blue Tailed
Damselfly Large Red
Dragonfly Broad Bodied Chaser
Drone Fly Eristalis Pevrtinax *
Dungfly *
Hoverfly (Marmalade) Episyrphus
Balteatus *
Scorpion Fly Panorpa Communus *

Ladybird Harlequin *
Mayfly *
Moth Nettle Tap *
Moth Brown Plume *
Moth Silver Ground Carpet *
Moth Yellow (caterpillar) *
Shield Bug Halothorn *
Spider Tetragnatha Exstensa *
Weevil Liophloeus Tessulatus *
30 (18)

Birds

Blackbird
Blackcap *
Blue Tit
Bullfinch *
Buzzard
Chaffinch *
Chiffchaff *
Coal Tit *
Goldfinch
Great Spotted Woodpecker *
Great Tit *
House Martin *
Jackdaw
Mallard *
Thrush *
Wood Pigeon
Wren
17 (10)

Animals & Reptiles

Rabbit
Frog