



## **RED RIVER LOCAL NATURE RESERVE Quarter 1 April to end June 2025.**

### **General background aims and objectives.**

The aim is to work in partnership with the Friends of Red River community group to deliver an annual work programme, agreed with Heanor and Loscoe Town Council representatives, on the Red River Local Nature Reserve at Loscoe.

The intention is to improve the site for the benefit of the local community by ensuring public access, and to manage, maintain and develop the site to improve habitats and encourage biodiversity of species. The Local Nature Reserve is home to a variety of both local and visiting wildlife. Regular wildlife recording visits are made to record the changing wildlife throughout the seasons.

Additional funding will be sought to deliver a selection of environmental events, activities, and guided walks to ensure ongoing public interest and involvement.

### **Summary of Volunteer Practical Tasks, Events and Wildlife Recording Visits**

From April to end of June 2025 Marion Farrell (Groundwork Five Counties) and the Friends of Red River have carried out 3 conservation tasks 2 newt surveys plus attended newt training course. The details of these are shown below. These have been very well attended with 13 individuals taking part and 11 volunteer days carried out. Wildlife records have also been collected (5 volunteer days). Groundwork staff have continued work on an updated Management Plan for the site This has included collating as many wildlife records as possible from previous years. We have continued to liaise with Derbyshire Amphibian & Reptile Group regarding deepening the pond and a grant application has been submitted by Friends of Red River on 30 June 2025 to NeighbourGOOD Severn Trent Funding.

### **Conservation Task Day Details and Events**

Marion Farrell (Groundwork Five Counties) has provided guidance and support for the volunteer on all task days and events:-

The Friends of Red River task day on Saturday 12 April 2025 with 6 volunteers. Thomas Hollier (Groundwork) stood in for Marion and with the group divided up the snowdrops "in the green" so that they will spread. In addition, a bag of litter was picked. We were delighted to have a new volunteer join us for this session.



A task day was held on Saturday 10 May 2025 a lovely sunny morning. 5 volunteers with Marion. We cleaned all the interpretation panels and signs. Cut back vegetation blocking the steps and paths. Lot of birds and butterflies. Unfortunately, the round bale of hay that had been rolled onto site last year by vandals was smouldering. We did our best to douse the bale with water scouped from the pond. A bag of litter was picked.



A task day was held on Saturday 21 June 2025 with Marion and 5 volunteers. We started to prepare the chicane for painting. This proved to be hardwork to sand down the peeling paint work and there is still more to do before we can repaint chicane. Other work included limited trimming back of vegetation along the paths, a litter pick (full bag's worth) and wildlife was recorded during the session and photograph below of Bee Orchid -this is not rare but it is the first time it has been recorded at Red River – we were thrilled.



Over this very dry quarter all of us have been concerned regarding the lack of water in the pond. This is happening more often due to climate change and will have a negative effect on the Great Crested Newt population. The Friends of Red River have spent considerable time putting in an application form to hopefully fund the work to deepen part of the pond. We hope to hear if we have the funding by July. Please see photos below that demonstrate the lack of water. First ones on 10 May 2025 shallow water, and



taken 21 June 2025 – no water at all



## Meetings

The Friends of Red River held their Committee Meeting and AGM on Tuesday 6 May 2025 at 7pm at The Gate Inn with Marion attending. All posts remain the same.

## Publicity

Publicity posters have been updated and are put up in local notice boards. Websites have been updated. Dates of our published task programme are on various websites and volunteers are being actively engaged in conservation tasks, and wildlife recording. All events have been promoted by Groundwork's social media and has linked to Heanor & Loscoe Town Council social media.

## Funding

The committee members and Groundwork staff continue to seek out funding opportunities to support our work on the reserve. We have continued to liaise with Derbyshire Amphibian & Reptile Group regarding deepening the pond and a grant application has been submitted by Friends of Red River on 30 June 2025 to NeighbourGOOD Severn Trent Funding. This has taken considerable time and perseverance by the Secretary including contacting contractors for quotes and collecting signed consent forms. We should hear the result of this in July 2025.

## Statistics

<b>Summary Statistics - Quarter 1</b>	
No. of individual volunteers on practical tasks and events	13
No. of individual volunteers on wildlife recording	6
No. of Practical volunteer days, committee meeting, grant application contributed by adult volunteers (66hrs divide by 6hrs) = 11 days	11 days
No. of volunteer days contributed by volunteers on wildlife recording including newt training/surveys (30 hours divide by 6 hours) = 5 days	5 days
No of activities/practical days delivered by Groundwork Staff	3
No of wildlife recording visits delivered by Groundwork Staff	5

## Wildlife Recording

Groundwork staff look and listen out for wildlife on most of the task days on the reserve, but often we are too involved with supervising the volunteers to systematically record everything seen or heard. We are helped on these recording sessions by our regular volunteers. We are fortunate to have their knowledge, enthusiasm and expertise. These recording visits help to build up a picture of what is likely to be seen during the year giving a good indication of the wildlife to be found on the reserve in the different seasons. These types of records become more valuable over time and help to influence the habitat management on the reserve. We continue to prepare an updated Management Plan for the site. This has involved collating as many wildlife records as possible from previous years and has taken considerable time so far.

### Newt Training and Surveys

Marion and a Friends of Red River volunteer, attended Great Crested Newt training course on 5 and 6 April 2025. It was delivered by Nottinghamshire Amphibian & Reptile Group with Derbyshire Amphibian and Reptile Group. This was a mix of theory and practical session and helps to ensure that we have the skills to survey Great Crested Newts. There were follow up surveys required to ensure that we can put the knowledge into practice on 12 April at Fenedock Woodlands in Moira, and two more sites in the Peak District.

Newt surveying took place on Tuesday 8 April 2025 at Red River by torchlight survey (9pm – 10.30pm starting temperature at 11 degrees Centigrade). We were really pleased we saw overall **5 Great Crested Newts** 3 Male Great Crested Newts, 2 Female GCN (GCN tail wafting courtship display seen) and 2 female Smooth Newts. It was good to see plenty of little beetles, shrimps etc in the water too. If the water hadn't been a bit scummy, we would have seen more. Tawny Owl heard, as well as Moorhen and Mallard

Newt surveying Tuesday 29 April 2025 at Red River by, torchlight survey 9.40pm – 10.40pm. Starting temperature was 17 degrees centigrade. Overall, we saw a total of **11 Great Crested Newts** (6 male, 3 female, 2 sex not known), and 14 Smooth Newts (2 male, 2 female and 10 sex not known). The water was a bit scummy particularly around the pond platform, so it was a case of recognising the size difference and this is why several have been put as sex not known. We also saw 2 Common Frogs (one identified as being male due to size and its white chin, the other moved too quickly to know). In addition we saw and heard Mallard (1 male, 1 female) and via bat detector noted Common Pipistrelle (at least 2), heard and some of us lucky to see Tawny Owl and heard Moorhen A great turnout of 6 enthusiastic spotters including Debbie (Notts Amphibian & Reptile Group – who was a participant on the recent Newt training course) and Chris Monk from Derbyshire Amphibian and Reptile Group. Thanks particularly go to Chris for coming out with us again and ensuring that we are doing everything correctly.

The last Newt surveying of the spring was planned for Tuesday 20 May 2025 but lack of water meant we had to cancel. It is now more urgent than ever to get on with our management plans for the pond.

Monthly Records - The month by month summary is shown below:-

A very dry spring – no rain to speak of which has caused the pond to completely dry out by the end of June. On 12 April 2025 12 species of bird were recorded. Plus Tawny Owl Mallard and Moorhen were heard during the newt recording session on 8 April 2025 – see bird table below. As mentioned above during newt

surveys a maximum of 11 Great Crested Newts and 14 Smooth Newts plus Common Frog (2) and Common Pipistrelle Bat (2)

Flowering plants this month included Primrose, Snakes Head Fritillary, Cowslip, Dogs Mercury, English Bluebells, Yellow Archangel, Wood Anemone, Lesser Celandine and Dandelion. It was good to see butterflies on the wing Orange-tip, Small Tortoiseshell and Speckle Wood. Common Carder and Buff-tailed Bumblebees were also recorded.



May wildlife recording was carried out on 10 May 2025 which was a sunny warm day. We recorded 16 bird species and were pleased to hear the screams of swifts overhead. The bird box that we put up at the far end of the site by the bridge is currently home to a family of Blue Tits. They were very busy going in and out of the box feeding their young. Butterflies were showing well in the sunshine including Comma (1), Large White (1), Green veined White (3), Orange-tip (5) (see photo), Speckled Wood (4) Brimstone (2) and Peacock (2). Common Carder and Buff-tailed Bumble bees were also recorded. Other insects included Honeybee and Hornet.

Flowering plants included Cow Parsley, Lesser Celandine, English Bluebell (see photo below), Red Campion (photo), Yellow Archangel, Jack by the Hedge, Bush Vetch, Lesser Stitchwort, Wild garlic, Red Clover, Meadow Buttercup and Dandelion. Both the Rowan and Hawthorn trees were in blossom.



Wildlife recording was carried out on Saturday 21 June 2025 which was a glorious sunny day. It was good to see 15 species including Tree Creeper, Song Thrush and Swift. There were plenty of butterflies about including Meadow Brown (2), Red Admiral (1) Comma (6), Large White (9), Small White (2), Ringlet (6) Speckled Wood (7) and Large Skipper (1). 7 Spot ladybird was also recorded both adult and larvae stages and Grey Squirrel. The meadows are looking good, and we are pleased that the yellow rattle is growing well see below photo. Yellow rattle (also known as Hay rattle) is semi parasitic on the grass which is good to help knock back the coarse vigorous grasses and allow more flowers to grow. Flowering plants recorded included Bush Vetch, Meadow Vetchling, Meadow Cranesbill, Common Knapweed (also known as Black Knapweed or Hard Head), Creeping buttercup, Red Clover, White Clover, Fox and Cubs, Ox eye Daisy, Red Campion, Fox Gloves and last but not least our first Bee Orchid for Red River see photo below.



Birds - The bird species seen or heard during quarter 1 are shown in the table below. The table shows a list of all the species seen in the previous 3 years. The number of bird species recorded in quarter 1= 24.

<b>Bird Species 2025 at Red River LNR</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>
Bullfinch			
Chaffinch		Y	
Goldfinch			
Greenfinch	Y	Y	
Buzzard	Y	Y	
Sparrow Hawk			
Kestrel			
Dunnock	Y		Y
Robin		Y	
Wren		Y	Y
Grey Wagtail			
Pied Wagtail			
Great Tit	Y	Y	
Blue Tit	Y	Y	Y
Coal Tit			
Long Tailed Tit			
Mallard	Y		Y
Moorhen	Y	Y	
Pheasant	Y		
Chiffchaff	Y	Y	Y
Blackcap	Y	Y	Y
Willow Warbler			
Crow		Y	Y
Magpie		Y	Y
Jackdaw			
Jay			
Starling			
House Sparrow			
Nuthatch			

Goldcrest			
Lesser B. B. Gull			Y
B. H. Gull			
Wood Pigeon	Y	Y	Y
Stock Dove			
Feral Pigeon			
Collared Dove			Y
G. S. Woodpecker			
Green Woodpecker			
Mistle Thrush			
Song Thrush		Y	Y
Blackbird	Y	Y	Y
Swallow	Y		
Swift		Y	Y
Field Fare			
Redwing			
Tree Creeper			Y
Skylark			
Raven			
Rook			
Lapwing			
Tawny Owl	Y		
Herring Gull			
Heron			
Siskin			
Ring Necked Parakeet			
<b>Monthly Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Quarterly Total 24</b>			