

## **RED RIVER LNR**

### **Quarterly SLA Report for July - Sept 2021**

#### **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 and Wildlife Recording Visits**

This year will hopefully be much better than last year regarding Covid-19 and being able to organise more community conservation talks and events. We have carried out 5 days of conservation tasks. The details of these tasks are shown below. Four wildlife recording visits were made to ensure each month was covered during quarter two.

#### **Conservation Task Day Details**

##### **JULY**

A site visit was carried out by Marion Farrell (Groundwork) and a volunteer to check the condition of paths etc through the reserve. A bag of litter was also collected.

##### **AUGUST**

On Wednesday 11 August 2021 all of the meadows were cut using Groundwork's special reciprocating mower, brush cutters and strimmers. One of our volunteers also came with his scythe and made excellent work on the first meadow. It was hard work but thankfully we had 3 volunteers to help and both Gary and Marion from Groundwork attended. This late summer hay cut is crucial to ensure the correct management of the meadows. Wildlife was also noted as we worked which included several frogs and a couple of voles.







On Saturday 14 August 2021 we held a Friends of Red River conservation task. This was very well attended by 11 volunteers and both Marion and Gary. The main task was to rake up the grass of the meadows we had cut on the previous Wednesday. Other tasks included litter picking and taking the wonky handrail down from the steps see below.



## SEPTEMBER

There are several sections of railings/handrails that need work as they have all become rotten at the same time. On Wednesday 8 September we made a start on two sections. There was good attendance of 5 vols and Marion. It was hard going as the ground was very hard due to the lack of rain. However we got three posts in on one section and another post and rail in. The timber has been ordered and paid for by the Friends of Red River. This work will be continued on future Friday sessions.





On Saturday 25 September 2021 we held a Friends of Red River conservation task. This was very well attended by 10 volunteers and both Marion and Gary. Tasks included litter picking, reed pulling, preparation for hedge laying. Casual observations of wildlife were also noted





Please see photographs showing Barry giving a leaving speech and appreciation from the Friend of Red River for all Gary's support and hard work. The group gave Gary a lovely rose and plant pot, bunch of flowers for his wife and Ann made a lemon drizzle cake, which was marvellous – we polished it off. Gary intends to continue to be involved as a volunteer at Red River and particularly wants to do wildlife recording.



## Meetings

Due to the current government regulations concerning the Coronavirus outbreak, there have been no committee meetings held between July and September. The committee have kept in touch with each other and with Groundwork by telephone and email. Some committee members have attended the task days arranged.

## Publicity

Existing publicity posters and leaflets are still present in local outlets, but additional publicity has been put on hold for the time being. Our published task programme is on hold, as volunteers for activities are being invited by telephone or email to control the numbers attending.

## Funding

The committee members and Groundwork staff continue to seek out funding opportunities to support our work on the reserve.

## Statistics

<b>Summary Statistics - Quarter 2</b>	
No. of individual volunteers on practical tasks	13
No. of individual volunteers on wildlife recording	3
No. of Practical volunteer days contributed by adult volunteers (94hours divide by 6 hours) = 15.67	15
No. of volunteer days contributed by volunteers on wildlife recording (12 hours divide by 6 hours) =2	2
No of activities/practical days delivered by Groundwork Staff	5
No of wildlife recording visits delivered by Groundwork Staff	4
No of additional days spent on site by extra Groundwork Staff	3

## 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. Recording visits took place on 17 July, 12 August, 27 August and 9 September 2021. These monthly 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.

## Birds

The bird species seen or heard during quarter 2, (July to the end of September 2021) are shown in the table below. The table shows a list of all the species seen in the previous 18 months. The number of bird species recorded in quarter 2 was 30.

Bird Species	July	August	Sept	Comments
Bullfinch		Y		
Chaffinch	Y	Y	Y	Summer Migrant
Goldfinch			Y	
Greenfinch				
Buzzard		Y		
Sparrow Hawk				
Kestrel		Y		
Duncock			Y	
Robin	Y	Y	Y	
Wren	Y	Y	Y	
Grey Wagtail				
Pied Wagtail				
Great Tit	Y	Y	Y	
Blue Tit	Y	Y	Y	
Coal Tit				
Long Tailed Tit	Y	Y	Y	Large family groups 10+
Mallard	Y	Y	Y	Family in July
Moorhen	Y	Y	Y	10 in July
Pheasant				
Chiff Chaff	Y	Y		Summer Migrant
Blackcap	Y	Y		
Willow Warbler				
Crow	Y	Y	Y	
Magpie	Y	Y	Y	
Jackdaw				
Jay			Y	
Starling		Y		
House Sparrow				
Nuthatch		Y	Y	
Goldcrest		Y		
Lesser B. B. Gull		Y		
B. H. Gull		Y		
Wood Pigeon	Y	Y	Y	
Stock Dove	Y	Y		
Feral Pigeon				
Collared Dove		Y		
G. S. Woodpecker			Y	Heard more often than seen
Green Woodpecker		Y		
Mistle Thrush				
Song Thrush			Y	
Blackbird	Y	Y	Y	
Swallow		Y		Summer Migrant
Swift				
Field Fare				
Redwing				
Tree Creeper				
Skylark				
Raven				
Rook				
Lapwing				
Tawny Owl				
<b>Monthly Totals</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>18</b>	
<b>Quarterly Total</b>	<b>30</b>			



## Butterflies/ Dragonflies

Butterfly sightings between July and end of September 2021 include seven species.

During visit on 17 July recorded Large White (2), Meadow brown (5), Ringlet (7), Speckled Wood (6). 12 August visit recorded Comma (1), Small white (2) Speckled Wood (2)

These have been reported to Ken Orpe, the Butterfly County Recorder for compilation into the national butterfly surveys. See photograph below of Ringlet.

Five species of Dragonflies were recorded on 12 August:- Common Blue Damselfly, Blue-Tailed Damselfly, Common Darter, Brown Hawker and Southern Hawker



## Amphibians/ Reptiles

On 12 August Marion was very lucky to see a young Grass Snake swimming at the edge of the pond. It was approximately 2ft long (60 cm) and half inch wide (1 cm). Marion luckily had her camera on and by cropping and enlarging the photograph it is possible to see it. The yellow/cream collar is very distinctive of a Grass Snake. Grass Snakes are protected by law from intentional killing, injury or selling under the Countryside and Wildlife Act 1981. This record was reported this to Derbyshire Amphibian and Reptile Group to help with their survey information. Marion has spoken to a few regular dog walkers at Red River and they have reported seeing Grass Snake a on couple of occasions – so it appears Grass Snake may well have been resident for several years. Grass Snake is a non-venomous snake that feeds almost exclusively on amphibians. Both Common Frog and toad were also recorded over this quarter and one Common Smooth Newt was noted when carrying out Reed Pulling on 25 September.





## Monthly Records

### July 2021

July was very warm with a heatwave recorded. On 17 July 13 species of bird were recorded including summer migrants Blackcap and Chiff Chaff. Many meadow wildflowers were in flower including many excellent plants for insects such as Red Clover, Birds Foot Trefoil, Common Knapweed, Meadow Cranesbill (see photograph above left) and Field Scabious (see photograph above right).

### August 2021

August again was a warm month with little rain. Wildlife recording took place on both 12 August and 27 August with several records made whilst working. The heat helped to see grass snake, butterflies and dragonflies, previously mentioned.

Wild flowers in flower were Bush Vetch, Oxeye Daisy, Field Bindweed, Comfrey, Lords and Ladies, Common Knapweed, Red Campion, Red Clover, Water Mint, Tufted Vetch, Purple Loosestrife, Buttercup, Greater Willowherb, White Dead Nettle. A good total of 26 Species of birds were noted – please see earlier table. Mammals noted included Common Rat, Field Voles and Grey Squirrel

### September 2021

September remained a very dry month. The wildlife survey was carried out on 9 September with some casual recording on 8 and 25 September whilst working on site. 18 bird species were recorded (see table) but no butterflies or dragonflies. Common Smooth Newt was recorded on 25 September when reed pulling. The only mammal seen was Grey Squirrel.

**Future Tasks** - Groundwork staff (with volunteers and Friends of Red River) will continue with conservation and maintenance tasks as Covid-19 restrictions allow.

Planned tasks for Quarter 3 include Pond management including reed pulling, annual vegetation clearance task linking with the church, repairs to the post and rail fencing and hand railings, coppicing hazels, and hedgelaying. The following dates are set but more will be added. Please check with Marion prior to attendance as these dates may change.

Saturday 16 October, Friday 5 November, Saturday 13 November, Friday 26 November, Saturday 11 December and Friday 17 December 2021.