
Grimsargh Wetlands Newsletter

Autumn 2018



Welcome

Dear Member,

Welcome to the first Grimsargh Wetlands Newsletter! The aim of this Newsletter is to keep you updated on all aspects of Wetlands activity. We will bring you news of the ongoing development of the Wetlands, the work being done by volunteers and the projects being undertaken by contractors. We will highlight the seasonal changes in the flora and fauna of the Wetlands, what to look out for on your visits and how best to engage with the wildlife of the Wetlands. The Newsletter will have a quarterly (seasonal) publication cycle and we hope you enjoy your reading!

With best wishes,

The Trustees

News

Funding Success

As most of you will know, the Trust has recently been successful in obtaining funding (£30,000) from the Lancashire Environmental Fund (LEF). This is a tremendous achievement and will have a very significant impact on the development of the Wetlands. Specifically, the funding will allow major, and much needed, improvements to access for visitors. Contractors will undertake work to improve the public footpath onto and through the Wetlands. In addition, steps will be replaced by ramped areas to enable full access for wheelchair users, prams and buggies. This work will start in the coming weeks and should be complete before the New Year. While this work is being

undertaken, the public footpath onto the site will be closed and access to the Wetlands will be limited. It is anticipated that this closure will be for a period of 4-6 weeks; however, all members will receive email alerts advising of the exact dates when the site will be closed. As always, the Wetlands Facebook page will provide updates on the progress of the work and the accessibility of the site for visitors.

The timing of our grant application to the LEF was particularly opportune in that it coincided with the 20th Anniversary of the Fund. In recognition of this anniversary, a small number of projects were selected for enhanced funding and the Wetlands was one such project! This additional funding (£20,000) means that once the work detailed above ('phase 1') has been successfully completed, further work to create a second access point, together with the construction of screens/hides accessible to all ('phase 2'), will begin. Further information about the implementation of this phase of the work will be provided in subsequent Newsletters.

Radio Lancashire

On the afternoon of Thursday 28th June, the Wetlands was the site for a live broadcast by Radio Lancashire. During the course of the afternoon, a number of invited guests were able to talk to John Gilmore 'Gilly' about the development of the Wetlands. Guests included Lindsay Philipson (Chair, Grimsargh Parish Council), David Hindle (Chair, Grimsargh Wetlands Trust) together with a number of trustees and volunteers. Special guests included a group of children from Alston Lane Primary School who were able to talk about how

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important their visits to the Wetlands are in their studies of nature and science.



David Hindle (left, seated) and Lindsey Philipson (left, standing) with Gilly (right, seated) 'warming up' for the live broadcast.

Feedback on the broadcast has been very positive and there are already plans for a follow-up visit/broadcast next year.

Sponsorship of the Wetlands



We are delighted to announce sponsorship of the Wetlands by Red Rose Blinds and Curtains (Rough Hey Road, Grimsargh, Preston, Lancashire PR2 5AR). The Trustees are grateful to Scott Nelson (Director) for his generosity and in recognition of this sponsorship it has been agreed that the wild flower meadow at the Wetlands with henceforth be known as the Red Rose Blinds & Curtains Meadow.

Patron of the Grimsargh Wetlands Trust



Lord Horam of Grimsargh (Chris McAndrew [CC BY 3.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons)

We are delighted to confirm that Lord Horam of Grimsargh has accepted the invitation of the Trustees to become Patron of the Trust. Lord Horam, who grew up living in the village, said that he felt deeply honoured to accept this position.

Summer on the Wetlands

The dry, hot summer has had a dramatic impact on the Wetlands as shown by the superb aerial photography from Mark Ashmore.



Aerial (drone) photograph of the Wetlands taken in July 2018 (photo by Mark Ashmore).

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The reduced water levels allowed volunteers to, for the first time, access the smaller island (on the right of the above photograph) and undertake scrub and tree clearance work thereby greatly improving the island habitat for the birds of the Wetlands.

During the summer, a number of surveys were undertaken by volunteers and the results of those surveys will be discussed at length in further Newsletters. It is clear, though, that the hot, dry summer has had a dramatic affect on the abundance of butterflies, dragonflies, bees and other insects.



A splendid Southern Hawker dragonfly resting in the sun (photo by Richard Moss).

Of course, this has sometimes made life difficult for volunteers who have braved the midges and the remarkable numbers of horseflies while working on site!

The coming months

As autumn approaches, the summer visitors, such as warblers, will be leaving (or will have already left) the Wetlands. However, we can expect the imminent arrival of winter visitors such as Fieldfare and Redwing.

As noted above, the Wetlands will be closed to visitors for part of the autumn. However, don't let this stop you getting out and about, the Alston Wetlands site is just 10 minutes away from the village (just off Pinfold Lane, Alston,

SD744475) and it is often possible to see many of the birds (e.g. Lapwings) that 'timeshare' between Grimsargh and Alston. You may also be lucky enough to see the Little Owl that resides along Pinfold Lane.



Canada (left), Pink-footed (centre) and Greylag (right) Goose on the Wetlands, Winter 2017.

Finally, it is always worth scanning the groups of Greylag and Canada Geese that can be seen grazing the nearby fields. Last winter there were small, but notable numbers of Pink-footed Geese present and it is, of course, always possible that a much rarer Bean Goose may be lurking amongst the more common geese.

You can always check on the latest sightings using the Wetlands Facebook page. More generally, sightings at both Grimsargh and Alston are often reported on the East Lancashire Ornithologists' Club (ELOC) records webpages:

<http://www.eastlancsornithologists.org.uk/Rep-Birdlist.aspx>

Fund-raising activities

The work undertaken by volunteers is entirely funded by your subscriptions, sponsorships and our own fund-raising activities. For example, the tools and protective/safety clothing needed by volunteers while working on the site need to be purchased and maintained. The Trust is

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therefore delighted that there have been many generous donations at events such as the Grimsargh Field Day and the Goosnargh and Longridge Show. Additionally, our stall at the Grimsargh Farmers' Market events has proved to be tremendously popular and, again, we thank everyone for their generosity. As a reminder, if you have any books, cds or dvds that you would like to donate for the stall, please contact Andy Small (07870 294158).

Membership information

Current membership fees are as follows:

Individual - £20

Life - £100

Corporate - £50

Volunteers - £10 – (if a member attends 3 volunteer days per year).

Membership is for a 12 month period from when the member joins. Members should already have received a membership card. If you need to update your contact details or have any other queries about membership (e.g. requests to upgrade to Life membership) then you should contact Jayne Woollam (email: jaynewoollam@hotmail.co.uk).

Volunteer days

The list of forthcoming volunteer days is shown below:

Sunday 7th October

Saturday 20th October

Sunday 11th November

Saturday 1st December

Sunday 23rd December

Saturday 12th January

Sunday 3rd February

Saturday 23rd February

Sunday 17th March

The arrangements for the day (start time, where to meet etc.) is always announced on the Wetlands Facebook page. Additionally, if you would like to be added to the volunteers mailing

list, then please contact Jayne Woollam (email: jaynewoollam@hotmail.co.uk).

Please note that it is now possible for young people under 16 to volunteer and families are welcome to attend volunteer days. The team-leaders will ensure that everyone is able to contribute to the volunteer day, irrespective of age, experience or fitness levels!

Please ensure that warm waterproof clothing and strong boots/wellingtons are worn. Appropriate tools will be supplied along with plenty of refreshments. If you have any queries about volunteer work, please contact Andy Small, 07870 294158 or Ken Maylor, 07398 279841.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Richard Moss and Mark Ashmore for allowing the use of their photographs in this Newsletter. We are grateful to the Lancashire Environmental Fund for their generous financial support.

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