

Nailsea Environment & Wildlife Trust

Chairman's Annual Report 2017

2017 has mainly been a year of maintenance plus some small projects.



In terms of flora, we were delighted to find that the transplantation of hay from Netcott's Meadow had resulted in the appearance of the first orchids in the area of our meadow which was prepared and seeded. The Coronation Meadow plaque from Netcott's Meadow reserve, which has now been sold into private hands has been placed on the gate leading into our meadow.

Common Spotted Orchid photo by Hilary West



A plant survey was carried out in the summer across the whole reserve with help from botanist Pam Millmam which resulted in the recording of further new or previously unrecorded plants.



We were encouraged by the increase in butterflies recorded, including a first record for the Marbled White. Many other species did very well, including the Meadow Brown, The Small Copper and the Comma. The annual hay cut was completed in the last week of August, just in time before the rains set in.

Marbled White photo by Hilary West



Over the course of the year we carried out a number of small projects to improve the environment for people and wildlife. In March we fixed 4 new bird nesting boxes in the carr and on a very cold and frosty morning in early December an Owl/Kestrel nesting box which was funded by Waitrose Community

Matters was erected (with some difficulty, as the pole was extremely heavy to move on-site) in the meadow on the eastern side of the carr to give some protection from the prevailing westerly winds. A female Kestrel has regularly been observed around the reserve over the last two years and Barn Owls are known to have bred successfully nearby. The Kestrel even "inspected" the new box on the day it was installed!

Much to our relief, in April the Environment Agency carried out stabilization works on the Land Yeo river bank, ensuring that the danger of collapse was prevented for the foreseeable future.



Later in the summer, work was done on the syphon system to maintain water levels in the ponds. Ian constructed a floating raft of aquatic plants to add interest to the second pond, which has not proved immediately successful but gave a lot of amusement to those who watched! It can be improved upon this year. At the end of its third year pond 2 is looking completely naturalized.

A small party of volunteers installed a flight of wooden steps up the embankment to the Land Yeo bridge which will be very much appreciated by walkers who were finding the bank difficult to negotiate, particularly in the winter months.

The native species hedgerow at the eastern boundary of our land - planted in 2010 the year we took up management of the reserve - was successfully laid by volunteers in November, our numbers boosted by a family of 2 adults and three youngsters, who have become regular volunteers.

At our last workday of the year an insect “hotel” was constructed from scrap materials, also in the shelter of the carr, which we hope will be inhabited by a variety of small creatures.

Since it is some time since the Moorend Spout information leaflet was first written, Helen has kindly reviewed and re-written the text and produced new graphics. Work on this needs to be finalised before it can be re-printed.

Finally, I would like to mention two trustees – Hilary who has been writing a fascinating blog which keeps us all interested and Ian who organises the work required on the reserve and supervises the work parties on the first Saturday of the month. Their help is invaluable.

We are fortunate to have a regular core of volunteers at our workdays without whose reliable and enthusiastic help we could not have achieved so much on the reserve. On behalf of Newt, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of them.

In 2018 we hope to carry out further developments and projects, such as wildflower seeding of more areas of the meadow. We also hope to develop links with the local schools and with this in mind we are planning to hold an Open Day on the reserve in the early summer.

As always, financial support is difficult to obtain, but we hope to gain some favourable response from local organisations and grant applications.

Tim Southwood – Newt Chairman 16th January 2018

