



Burley Model Allotments

Burley Model Allotments Association The Cardigan Centre 145-149 Cardigan Road Leeds LS6 1LJ
Email: bmaasecretary@gmail.com www.burleymodelallotments.org

Newsletter

Nature Watch 2018

Introducing Nature Watch

Hello All Allotmenters

Welcome one and all to what we are calling the “Introducing Nature Watch” newsletter 2018. Included here is everything you will need to know about the Nature Watch Scheme as well as how you can help with this. There is as ever some other items that you may find of interest; so without further ado.

The Cherry Trees



Trading Hut Jan 1960

As the more observant of you may have noticed the two cherry trees outside the Trading Hut have been taken down. We started this process over 12 months ago when we asked Leeds City Council, who we thought were responsible for the cherry trees, along with all of the other trees around the Hut. This was recorded in the Committee Meeting Minutes of March 2017 (Item 14) and is available to view on the website; as are all our meetings. The photo is from a leaflet when the site was re-modelled in 1958 showing the trees when they were planted. Today we advise plot holders to use trees on dwarf rooting stock. No one thought at the time these trees would become the problem they have become today. After a number of months going backward and forwards we finally received confirmation from the Council stating that it was up to the committee to carry out the work and to ensure the safety of the site.

Given the condition of the two trees, the one the left side was leaning and had split, the one on the right had a number of branches that were rotten and completely unsafe. There were also a number of other trees round the hut that were found to be self-seeded sycamore and were not in good condition. As such a decision was made to take them down to a safe level. This decision was not taken lightly but due to the unsafe state they were in it was either leave them to fall on their own and damage something or someone or cut them back so they can re-grow and the height can be better managed. I hope you agree the correct decision was made.

History of Nature Watch



After the AGM in 2016 it was agreed to implement a Nature Watch scheme to record wildlife sightings at Burley Model Allotments, and after a bit of a shaky start we managed after the 2017 AGM to find some volunteers to manage and run the project.

To this end we have also set up a Nature Watch page on the website <http://www.burleymodelallotments.org/> more of this later.



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History of Nature Watch

So starting from February 2018 we have been recording wildlife seen on (and over!) the site. We are very keen to hear from all plot holders; so we would ask you to use the blackboard outside the trading hut or send your observations in online. This can be done by sending your observations and photo's directly to the website. We will of course keep you up to date on sightings and progress through the newsletters as well.



Some Existing Environmental Issues



So what prompted us to start this project? Mother Earth is currently facing a lot of environmental concerns. Environmental problems like global warming, acid rain, air pollution, urban sprawl, waste disposal, ozone layer depletion, water pollution, climate change and many more affect every human, animal and nation on this planet.

Over the last few decades, the exploitation of our planet and degradation of our environment have gone up at an alarming rate. As our actions have been not in favour of protecting this planet, we have seen natural disasters striking us more often in the form of flash floods, tsunamis and cyclones. Different environmental groups around the world play their role in educating people as to how their small actions when combined together can play a big role in protecting this planet. We can all do our bit and most of already do; the issues of waste pollution, global warming air pollution, ozone layer depletion, water pollution, marine pollution, deforestation, genetic modification and soil and land pollution; are just a few of the issues that need to be resolved, and they are all things that we can, if only in a small way, to help combat.

We can in our own way help to monitor the wildlife on the allotment site. By creating a record of the things we see on and over the allotments will help to give a living record of not only our local environment but used in conjunction with other organisations will help to grow a picture of regional and national issues.

So we ask that you please help us with this project.

So you ask, "How can I help with the Nature Watch project"?

Well below are the answers to that very question.



How Can I Help With The Nature Watch Project?

Ah, a good question and one that we hope to answer for you.

First there is a blackboard at the Trading Hut that you can use to record what you have seen on and over the allotment site. Second and for the more adventurous of you we have added a page to the website where you can record sightings. From here you can not only record what you have seen but also upload pictures of the very things you have seen and in this way share them with others via our website.

Items such as *on the 22nd April 2018 at 3.00p.m a peregrine falcon flew over heading from the valley towards the cricket ground.* have already been recorded.



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Your sightings and Photos

At the moment only 3 photos at any one time can be uploaded to the website but you can create multiple uploads. On the Nature Watch page of the website you will be asked to enter the date and time of the sighting, plus additional features such as; if the sighting was a bird, mammal, invertebrate/insect or other. There is a comments box where you can describe in greater detail what you have seen. There is also a contact me button so that we can get back to you in case you're not quite sure and you want to us to explain what it is you have recorded. The other fields on the form are self-explanatory name, plot number contact details etc. These are not required but should you wish us to contact you.....well I'm sure you get the idea.

We would like to display your photos of the wildlife like this *speckled wood butterfly* found on the site and we will be setting up a dedicated page on the Gallery section of the website. If however the number of photos we receive is substantial it may be that a new page on the website could be added to view your submissions and that these would be added on a more frequent basis.



Speckled Wood Butterfly

Thanks

A great many people were vital in getting this project up and running and we will try to thank everyone here. If we have missed someone please accept our apologies but know that you are/have achieved something greater than anything we have probably done before.

Our first thanks go to our former Councillor Lucinda Yeadon who was vital in helping us obtaining funding for the project. This has helped with the purchase of bat boxes, bird feeders and updates to the website. This was achieved through a grant to the Association from Leeds City Council. A lot of people say that the local Councillors do nothing or are not involved with their local communities, this is something we have not found and Lucinda has been a real "friend" of Burley Model Allotments over the years and has been of assistance on numerous occasions.

All the members of the Committee fully support the project and have been fundamental in setting up the scheme.

Mostly our thanks go to David and Pippa who are managing the project and who deserve the thanks from us all for getting the scheme up and running.

And as always to anyone we have missed of this list of thanks we are deeply indebted to you.

Glyphosate



The Association has been contacted regarding the use of pesticides on the Allotment Site, in particular that of Glyphosate. There are a number of views regarding the use of chemicals on individual plots and the problems encountered by others on the site that choose not to use chemicals. Many people believe that chemicals especially those deemed a possible carcinogen should be banned from the site.



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Glyphosate

We realise however that would be unenforceable, we would ask though that if you have a need to resort to using weed killer such as Roundup then do not do this just because you have had a letter regarding the state of your plot. Spraying chemicals to remedy lack of effort is not really what is required. We all realise that an allotment is a lot of hard work and should feel the need to use weed killer or other chemicals on your land, although why would you when you then grow things in the same soil for you and your family. Anyway if you do feel the need to use weed killer please do this in a responsible manner. Read the instructions on the label, do not use on a windy day where it can spill onto and contaminate your neighbours land. Ensure the packaging and empty contents of the container are disposed of in a responsible manner. In short please use a grain of common sense when dealing with dangerous substances.

Annual Show 2018

Well here's a red letter date for your diary. This year's Annual Show will be on Sunday the **2nd of September 2018**. We look forward to see you all there and hope you are able to submit loads and loads of entries into this year's Show.

Annual General Meeting 2018

This year's A.G.M. will be held on the **27th October 2018** another red letter day for your diary. Last year's minutes are available to view on the website library pages. This year the usual format will be followed there will be the officer reports and the election of officers to the Committee. It was agreed at last year's AGM that this year we would look at the Constitution and any necessary changes will be proposed one month before this year's A.G.M.

Help With Electrical Testing

We require help with the annual Portable Appliance Testing of the electrical devices we have in the Hut. We have a budget for the work, so if you can help with this or if you know someone that can help then please contact us.

And Finally

Please don't be a stranger call in and see us and have a chat and a cuppa in the Trading Hut one Saturday morning. The Hut is open from 10.00 to 11.00 and we are always pleased to see you.

