

## **Turnpike Fields Wildlife Report for 2020**

This report covers the surveying period May-September 2020. It follows the spot check survey undertaken by Cheshire Wildlife Trust in 2019.

For purposes of comparison and continuity the survey has been undertaken along the lines of the area designations made by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust survey, with one or two slight modifications.

The CWT survey was undertaken along a specific route through the fields, the 2020 survey by members of Audlem Wildlife Group (AWEG) has followed a more extensive random route over the whole of the fields. It has been undertaken by experienced surveyors (with 5 years experience of surveying the canal towpath) alongside knowledgeable wildlife enthusiasts. The results give an insight into what was observed but are a first effort and from experience it is probable that a further surveying project next year will yield further species for recording.

The most complete survey has been of plants as these are the easiest to record and are the basis of bio-diversity. The insects recorded are of those present at the time of surveying and records are affected by the weather especially sun and wind. Animals and Reptiles are recorded on a basis of the recorder being in the right place at the right time. Further surveying could focus on our gathering more complete data on the non-plant species. In the future it may be possible to include a method of recording number and density of species recorded.

The sightings have been collated in two ways:

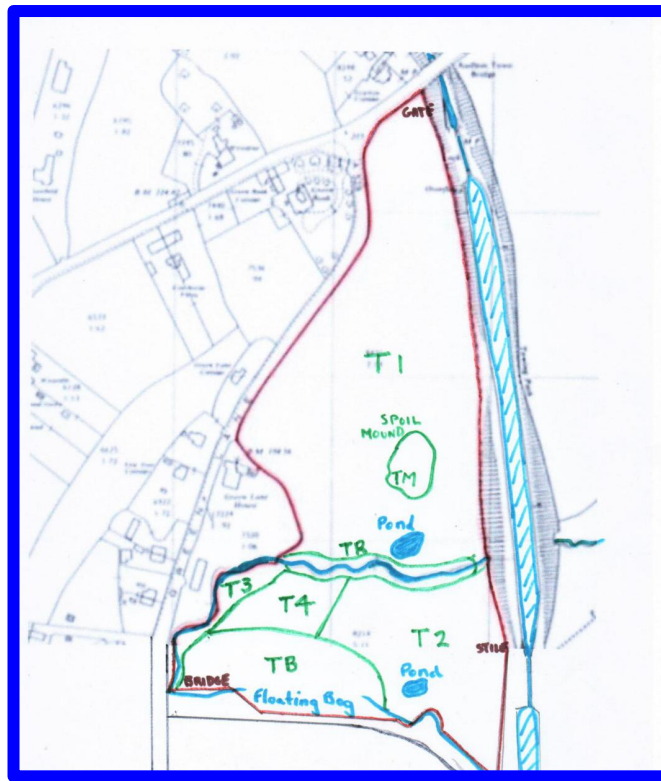
### **Monthly Record**

The records of plants are of flowering plants as this is when they are most clearly identified. There are one or two species which have also been recorded in other stages of the plants life. This record helps us to understand at what stage in the year these plants are important for other wildlife, I.e. Insects to thrive.

### **Area Record**

This records the species in the area of the fields that they were sighted. The dividing line between areas is sometimes blurred and some species straddle the boundary.

## **Area Designations**



### Monthly Record of Sightings

Plant Species	June 2019	May	June	July	August	September
Alkanet Green		*	*	*		
Angelica Wild	*				*	
Aven Wood (Herb Bennet)		*				
Balsam Himalyan	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bedstraw Common		*				
Bedstraw Marsh	*					
Bistort					*	
Bittercress Large		*				
Bittersweet/ Woody Nightshade	*			*		
Bluebells English		*				
Bluebells Hybrid		*				
Bluebells Spanish		*				
Brambles (in flower)			*	*	*	
Burdock		*		*	*	
Butterbur			*			
Buttercup Bulbous		*				
Buttercup Creeping	*	*				*
Buttercup Meadow	*	*	*	*	*	

Campion Red	*	*	*	*	*	
Catsear Common	*		*	*	*	*
Celandine Greater		*	*	*		
Celandine Lesser		*				
Cinquefoil Creeping			*		*	
Chickweed Common				*	*	
Cleavers	*	*	*	*	*	
Clover Red		*	*	*		
Clover White	*	*	*	*	*	
Cocksfoot			*	*	*	
Columbine					*	*
Comfrey Common		*				
Coltsfoot	*	*				
Cow Parsley		*	*			
Crocsmia (Montbretia)					*	
Crowfoot Common Water				*	*	
Cuckooflower (Lady's Smock)		*				
Daisy		*		*		
Daisy Oxeye			*	*		
Dame's Violet		*	*			
Dandelion Common	*	*		*		
Dock Broad-leaved	*		*	*	*	
Dock Curled	*		*	*	*	
Eyebright Common		*				
Figwort	*		*			
Forget-me-not		*		*		*
Garlic Mustard (jack-in-the hedge)		*		*		
Gorse		*	*			
Hawkweed			*	*	*	*
Herb Robert		*		*		
Hogweed	*	*	*	*	*	*
Honesty		*				
Horehound Black				*	*	
Horsetail	*	*	*	*	*	*
Iris Yellow Flag	*	*				

Ivy Ground		*	*			
Kingcup		*				
Loosestrife Purple					*	*
Lords-and-Ladies		*		*	*	
Marigold Marsh	*	*				
Mayweed			*			
Meadowsweet	*	*		*	*	
Mousebit			*			
Mouseear Common	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mullien Greater			*	*		
Nettle Common	*		*	*	*	
Nettle Red Dead				*	*	
Nettle White Dead		*		*	*	*
Nipplewort					*	*
Pansy		*	*		*	
Pignut		*	*			
Pimpernel Scarlet				*		
Plantain Broad-leaved	*		*			
Plantain Common	*		*		*	
Plantain Greater			*			
Poppy	*					
Primrose Evening			*	*		*
Ragwort Common			*	*	*	*
Ramson (Wild Garlic)	*	*				
Redshank	*					
Reed Mace				*	*	
Rose Dog			*			
Rush Bull		*			*	*
Rush Hard				*	*	
Rush Jointed	*					
Rush Soft	*	*	*	*	*	
St John's-wort	*		*	*	*	
Sedge Lesser Pond (?)	*			*		
Sedge Pendulous		*				
Sedge Yellow				*		

Sorrel Common		*				
Speedwell Field		*				
Speedwell Germander		*	*	*		
Speedwell Slender			*			
Teasel	*	*	*	*	*	
Thistle Creeping	*	*		*	*	*
Thistle Marsh	*	*	*	*	*	
Thistle Rough				*		
Thistle Spear	*		*	*	*	
Thistle Sow Prickly	*		*	*	*	
Thistle Sow Smooth				*	*	
Trefoil Greater Birdsfoot	*		*	*	*	
Trefoil Common Birdsfoot	*		*	*		*
Vetch Bush		*				
Vetchling Meadow			*			*
Willowherb Greater Rosebay	*	*		*	*	*
Willowherb Lesser Rosebay				*	*	*
Willowherb Hoary			*			
Woundwort (107)	*					
<b>Grasses</b>						
Bent Common	*		*			
Bent Creeping	*					
Cocksfoot				*		
Crested Dog's-tail					*	
Fescue Red	*		*			
Fescue Meadow			*			
Field Woodrush		*				
Foxtail Meadow	*	*	*			
Grass Reed Canary	*					
Grass Rough Meadow	*					
Grass Sweet Vernal	*					
Oat Grass False	*	*	*			
Rye Grass Perennial	*		*		*	
Timothy	*	*	*	*	*	
Yorkshire Fog (15)	*	*	*	*	*	

Insect Species	June2019	May	June	July	August	September
Bee Buff-tailed Bumblebee					*	
Bee White-tailed Bumblebee					*	
Bee Red-tailed Bumblebee					*	
Bee Common Carder					*	
Beetle Alder Leaf						*
Bee Honey					*	
Butterfly Comma				*		
Butterfly Common Blue			*	*	*	
Butterfly Fritillary			*			
Butterfly Gatekeeper			*	*	*	
Butterfly Green-veined White				*		
Butterfly Large White			*	*	*	*
Butterfly Small White				*	*	*
Butterfly Speckled Wood					*	
Butterfly Meadow Brown			*	*	*	
Butterfly Orange Tip		*				
Butterfly Peacock			*	*	*	
Butterfly Ringlet			*	*		
Butterfly Large Skipper			*			
Butterfly Small Skipper			*	*	*	
Butterfly Small Tortoiseshell			*	*	*	
Cricket Great Green					*	
Cricket Oak Bush					*	
Grasshopper Common Field					*	*
Grasshopper Meadow				*	*	
Damselfly Blue Tailed			*			
Damselfly Large Red					*	*
Dragonfly Broad Bodied Chaser			*	*	*	
Dragonfly Emperor			*			
Hover-Fly Dronefly					*	
Moth Cinnabar			*	*		
Moth Cinnabar Caterpillars				*		
Moth Heart-and-Dart			*			
Moth Scalloped Oak					*	*



Bluebells English					*				
Bluebells Hybrid								*	
Bluebells Spanish		*		*					
Brambles (in flower)	*			*					
Burdock	*	*	*						
Butterbur	*								
Buttercup Bulbous	*						*		
Buttercup Creeping		*		*	*		*	*	*
Buttercup Meadow	*				*				*
Campion Red	*			*	*		*	*	*
Catsear Common	*			*					
Celandine Greater	*	*		*	*				
Celandine Lesser								*	
Cinquefoil Creeping	*								
Chickweed Common									
Cleavers	*				*		*		
Clover Red	*	*			*				
Clover White	*								
Cocksfoot	*								
Columbine		*			*			*	
Comfrey Common				*					
Coltsfoot									
Cow Parsley	*			*	*		*	*	
Crocsmia (Montbretia)		*							
Crowfoot Common Water			*						
Cuckooflower (Lady's Smock)	*			*					
Daisy	*								
Daisy Oxeye	*								
Dame's Violet		*							
Dandelion Common	*								
Dock Broad-leaved	*			*					
Dock Curled	*								
Eyebright Common	*								
Figwort					*				
Forget-me-not	*	^		*			*		





Reed Mace							*		
Rose Dog	*								
Rush Bull			*			*	*		
Rush Hard		*							
Rush Jointed							*		
Rush Soft		*				*	*		*
St John's-wort	*	*							
Sedge Lesser Pond (?)									
Sedge Pendulous							*		
Sedge Yellow	*	*							
Sorrel Common					*				*
Speedwell Field	*								
Speedwell Germander	*								
Speedwell Slender				*					
Speedwell Thyme-leaved					*				
Teasel	*	*							
Thistle Creeping		*	*	*				*	
Thistle Marsh	*						*		
Thistle Rough									
Thistle Spear	*	*			*				
Thistle Sow Prickly	*		*						
Thistle Sow Smooth	*								
Trefoil Greater Birdsfoot		*		*					
Trefoil Common Birdsfoot	*				*			*	
Vetch Bush									
Vetchling Meadow				*					
Willowherb Greater Rosebay		*			*			*	
Willowherb Lesser Rosebay	*	*			*				
Willowherb Hoary	*								
Woundwort (107)									
<b>Grasses</b>									
Bent Common	*								
Bent Creeping	*								
Cocksfoot					*				
Crested Dog's-tail	*								

Fescue Red	*								
Fescue Meadow	*								
Field Woodrush					*				
Foxtail Meadow	*				*				
Grass Reed Canary									
Grass Rough Meadow									
Grass Sweet Vernal				*					
Oat Grass False	*				*			*	
Rye Grass Perennial	*								
Timothy	*							*	
Yorkshire Fog (15)	*				*			*	
	5 7 + 10	34	7	22+1	28 + 5	3	22	16 + 3	6

<b>INSECTS</b>	T1	T1M	T1P	TR	T2	T2P	TB	T3	T4
Bee Buff-tailed Bumblebee		*							
Bee White-tailed Bumblebee		*							
Bee Red-tailed Bumblebee		*							
Bee Common Carder		*							
Bee Honey		*							
Beetle Alder Leaf				*					
Butterfly Comma					*				
Butterfly Common Blue	*				*			*	
Butterfly Fritillary					*				
Butterfly Gatekeeper	*	*							
Butterfly Green-veined White					*				
Butterfly Large White	*								
Butterfly Small White	*								
Butterfly Speckled Wood					*				
Butterfly Meadow Brown	*	*			*				
Butterfly Orange Tip	*			*					
Butterfly Peacock	*			*					
Butterfly Ringlet	*	*			*				
Butterfly Large Skipper		*			*				
Butterfly Small Skipper	*	*		*	*				

Butterfly Small Tortoiseshell		*		*	*				
Cricket Great Green		*							
Cricket Oak Bush									
Grasshopper Common Field		*							
Grasshopper Meadow	*								
Damselfly Blue Tailed			*						
Damselfly Large Red						*			
Dragonfly Broad Bodied Chaser			*						
Dragonfly Emperor			*						
Hover-Fly Dronefly					*				
Moth Cinnabar		*		*					
Moth Cinnabar Caterpillars		*							
Moth Heart-and-Dart	*								
Moth Scalloped Oak		*							
Moth Silver Y		*			*				
Pond Skater			*						
Water Beetle			*						
	11	17	5	6	12	1	0	1	0
<b>BIRDS</b>	T1	T1M	T1P	TR	T2	T2P	TB	T3	T4
Blackbird	*								
Buzzard	*								
Crow	*								
Jackdaw	*								
Kingfisher				*					
Magpie	*								
Wagtail Grey				*					
Wagtail Pied				*					
Wren	*								
<b>ANIMALS &amp; REPTILES</b>									
Common Frog									
Fox (smell)		*							
Rabbit	*								
Field Vole		*							

## Notes on the Sightings

1. Almost all of the species mentioned on the CWT Survey were recorded except for several grasses which did not feature in grasses guides. More experience and further guide resources will remedy this next year. The CWT Survey did not include insects and other creatures.
2. All the plant species recorded were relatively common although there were number found on T1M which were unusual and were feral versions of garden plants, I.e. Violets and Crocosmia.
3. Certain plant species were very prolific this year especially: Cuckooflower, Garlic Mustard, Greater Celendine.
4. The area which showed the most eco-connections was T1M where 34 plant species supported 17 insect species.
5. The grass area on the slope of T1 was an area particularly full of crickets and grasshoppers.
6. In addition to the species recorded it was also noted that in several places both Oak and Alder seedling trees were to be found.
7. The area designated for the Green Car park was observed to have very few species of wild flower and consequently very few insects.
8. The ponds T1P and T2P are already showing signs of life and have attracted both Dragonflies and Damselflies this summer. At the moment the pond are cover in a yellow algae. This may be because there is not yet a proper balance of plants which time will correct or advice might be sort about ways to correct it.
9. Bird life largely has been limited to the hedge boundaries. The bird boxes put up in January have not had any occupants this year.

## Possible Ways Forward

It is clear that there already is an abundance of wildlife species in the Fields. It is also clear that certain habitats are very prolific.

Like it or not, Common Ragwort is a major food source for insects in the late summer and the destruction of the plant would remove this important food source.

The Aider trees which are seedlings are in one area and if allowed to grow could create a small wooded habitat we do not have in the Fields.

In the light of the abundant wild plant species that we know we have, I would recommend that we hold back from introducing further species into the fields for a year or so as the Fields move from being agricultural land to a less directly managed area.

In terms of maintenance, it may be more helpful to wildlife to treat the different habitats in different ways rather than taking a blanket approach. This broadly what was recommended in the report by Cheshire Wildlife Trust in 2019. It would be worthwhile to revisit that report when drawing up a detailed maintenance plan for 2021.

One possible idea for the future to help walkers is to install a board walk which bypasses the muddy part of the footpath at the bottom of T2. It would also make accessible a part where a number of particular species of plant were observed this year.

To help the community appreciate the wildlife in the Fields and in response to requests made earlier in the year, when it is possible, I would be happy to arrange a series of Nature Walks around the fields.

I would also like to suggest, to meet the same purpose, that of signs with names and details of plants present at a particular time. These would change throughout the summer.

At present the use made of the Fields, such as for exercise, dog walking, picnicking and other forms of socialising have not been incompatible with the encouragement of wildlife.

Indeed the wilding of this year has rather enhanced these activity and made them more enjoyable to many. In this sense it is a win-win situation. If it is possible to keep this "light touch" then we can achieve the objectives of nurturing the wildlife and providing a stimulating amenity area for the community. It does not the addition of further amenities in years to come

To increase our knowledge of particularly the animal population I would like to suggest that at an appropriate time a camera trap be used.

Similarly there are folk in the village with audio detection equipment who could be invited to survey the fields for bats etc.

Added enjoyment of the Fields and its environment could be the installation of benches in the bottom Field at suitable places for folk to sit and enjoy the vista of the field.

Another possibility for families, which I saw at Biddulph Grange, is the installation of low level walking planks and wooden stepping stones for children to enjoy. These would be in keeping with the ambiance of Fields and provide added interest for families on walks round the fields.

Adrian Leighton    October2020