

**BS9 Wildlife:  
Green Spaces  
Audit**

**Initial Report**

March 2021

## **Foreword**

**This report seeks to set out some basic information relating to wildlife habitats in the larger, often public, spaces in or bordering BS9. It also attempts to capture both the existing activity and proposed plans of ‘custodians’ of these spaces.**

**Although we are not dealing here with domestic and community gardens, we acknowledge that these are probably even more significant for both the abundance and variety of wildlife in BS9 than are the larger green spaces. Every window box counts. Hopefully, both larger and smaller green spaces can be made more wildlife productive in future years.**

**The information gathered and distributed in this report will contribute to the achievement of the three aims set out for the BS9 Wildlife Group.**

**The BS9 Wildlife Group’s three aims are:**

- a) To make local people more aware of the wildlife around them**
- b) To help make the BS9 area of Bristol more hospitable to a wide range of wild creatures and native plants**
- c) To collaborate with other agencies and groups in order to further the first two aims**

**Contact BS9 Wildlife Group on**

**[bs9wildlifegroup@gmail.com](mailto:bs9wildlifegroup@gmail.com)**

**See also the [BS9 Wildlife Group on Facebook](#).**

**There follows a summary of responses from groups and organisations supporting the larger green spaces in and near BS9. These responses will provide ideas about what to do in 2021 and beyond.**

## MAP



1. The Downs and Avon Gorge
2. Canford Cemetery and Crematorium
3. University of Bristol Botanical Gardens
4. Canford Park
5. Golden Hill Sports Ground
6. Old Sneed park Nature Reserve
7. Sea Mills Recreational Ground
8. Trymside Allotments
9. High Grove Allotments
10. Old Quarry Park
11. Bishopston Cricket Club
12. Trymside Open Space and Clack Mills
13. Bennett's Patch and White's Paddock
14. Bishops Knoll Wood

## 1. The Downs and Avon Gorge

**Contact:** [robertjwestlake@gmail.com](mailto:robertjwestlake@gmail.com)

**Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/fodagbristol>

The Downs are approximately 440 acres of largely open limestone Downland with some areas of woodland and scrubland. It consists of the Durdham downs - owned by Bristol city council and the Clifton downs owned by the Society of Merchant Venturers. The Avon Gorge is a 1.4 mile long gorge on the river Avon that runs south to north. At this site north west of the city centre, many processes are carried out to maintain the area and maximise biodiversity. These are carried out at weekends by the Friends of the Downs & Avon Gorge group, in addition to volunteers carrying out annual surveys of butterfly populations which are fed into a national database.

The Downs and Gorge are rich in wildlife including foxes, weasels, horseshoe bats, badgers, squirrels,

Ravens, Buzzards and many other raptors as well as Peregrine Falcons. The gorge is also blessed with rare plants and trees, some unique to the Downs such as the Bristol Onion, Bristol Whitebeam, the Bristol rock-cress and many more.

Many of the areas on this large site are mown only once a year and these areas will be extended to include tree lines from this year forward. Scrub is regularly removed to ensure the Downs remain open and improve the limestone grasslands.

A small goat herd in the Avon Gorge is also managed here, which is a long-term project to help manage scrubland. Other maintenance duties include checking on the animal's welfare, replanting redundant flower beds to encourage bees and other pollinators and repairing a series of 'dead hedges' to encourage joggers to stay to a defined line to avoid trampling of rare orchids.

The group works closely with the Downs Education officer to bring a

diverse range of citizens from across the City to the site. Walks and talks are organised to highlight the biodiversity of the site in addition to a recent Zoom lecture for 100 members on the subject of the Butterflies of the Downs and beyond. The friends group also manage very popular tree trails, bird trails and even a lichen trail in addition to creating numerous educational booklets and pamphlets for the education of the public. The Friends group work closely with the Downs and Avon Gorge Wildlife project who are dedicated to wildlife surveying and monitoring, Habitat Management and public education.

## 2. Canford Cemetery and Crematorium

**Email:** [cems.crems@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:cems.crems@bristol.gov.uk)

This site covers approximately 22 acres and is situated adjacent to Canford park. Although formal surveys haven't been carried out to determine the biodiversity of the site, a number of different species have been spotted at

this site by employees and the public. These include woodpeckers, squirrels, an old badger set and the odd fox. It is unclear whether there are any plans to implement plans to enhance the wildlife of the site

### **3. University of Bristol Botanic Gardens**

**Email:**

[botanic-gardens@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:botanic-gardens@bristol.ac.uk)

The Botanic Garden is home to 4,500 plant species, covers 1.77 hectares and has been managed by the University of Bristol since 2005. It is divided in a series of plant collections arranged in displays ranging from Mediterranean flora to traditional Chinese herbs whilst showing the story of plant evolution. A large part of the Garden is given over to local rare and threatened plants including a meadow, limestone rock garden and a wild area where bramble is allowed to grow and old wood is left lying around for invertebrates. A large Bee hotel is also present which is home to many different species of spiders. There is a good range of birdlife in the garden such as Woodpeckers, Nuthatch,

Goldcrest, Crows, Blackbirds and Robins.

There is also a large pool at the site which has been allowed to fill up with rainwater and is full of newts, dragonfly nymphs and frog spawn at the right time of year.

Different plant species are monitored in the garden meadow and weekly butterfly counts are run to check on which species are around, overseen by a volunteer.

Experts also visit the site from time to time, videos of which can be seen on the University of Bristol Botanic Garden [Facebook Page](#).

**No information provided / No  
custodians identified:**

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