

BS9 Wildlife Audit Report

March 2022

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 to further the first two aims

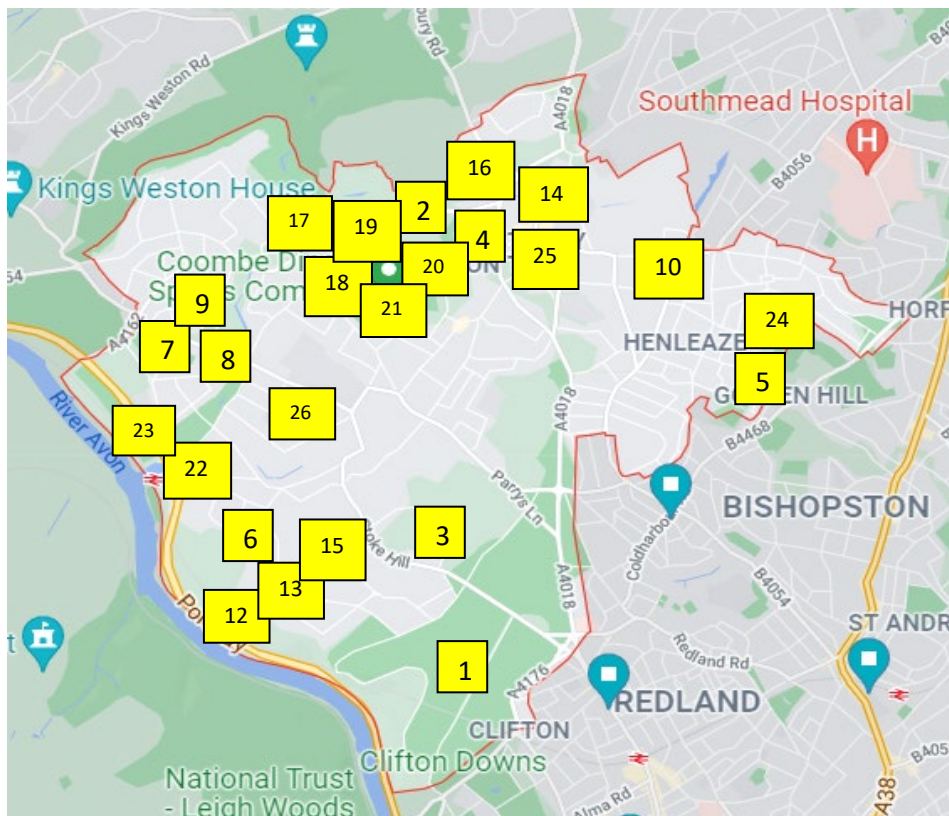
Contact BS9 Wildlife Group on:

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 of BS9:



1. The Downs and Avon Gorge
2. Canford Cemetery and Crematorium
3. University of Bristol Botanical Garden
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. Trymside Open Space and Clack Mills
12. Bennetts Patch and Whites Paddocks
13. Bishops Knoll Woods
14. Westbury Wildlife Park Foundation
15. St Marys Stoke Bishop Graveyard
16. Falcondale Road Allotments
17. Blaise Estate Castle (Woods)
18. Southside Wood/Coombe Dingle
19. Canford E Allotments
20. Canford B Allotments
21. St Brendan's Rugby Football Club
22. Bristol Manor Farm Football
23. Portway Rugby
24. Kelleway Cres
25. Badock's Woods
26. Bristol Croquet Club

1. The Downs and Avon Gorge

Contact Info: robertjwestlake@gmail.com

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

The Downs and Avon gorge is approximately 440 acres of largely open limestone Downland with some area 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. The Avon Gorge is one of the most important sites for rare plants in the UK.

At this site northwest 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 rockcress 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. The 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, recently a walk with the Nordic Walkers across the downs was done to raise awareness of Ash dieback. The friend's 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. They still monitor Butterflies and clear scrubs to preserve precious grassland and encourage rare plants; Remove noxious weeds {Alexanders} from the top of the canopy on the Portway. This year 3 bee-friendly wildflower meadows have been created at Clifton Green and areas of previously close mown grass has been left to encourage greater diversity. The Downs and Avon Gorge continue to develop alliances with like-minded stakeholders. They have contributed to a Downs committee initiative to consider how the Downs might be better managed in the future.

The goat herd stock has been replenished this year with 4 Bagot goats being introduced plus a few more of the original Kashmiri breed from the Great Orme in N Wales. Some of the original stocks have died through old age.

2. Canford Cemetery and Crematorium

Contact Info: cems.crems@bristol.gov.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Canford-crematorium-And-Cemetery/154752164546358>

Canford Cemetery and Crematorium covers approximately 22 acres and is situated adjacent to Canford Park. Although no formal surveys have been carried out to determine the biodiversity of the site, several different species have been spotted at the site by employees and the public. Including, woodpeckers, squirrels, the occasional fox. There are no current plans on enchanting wildlife on the site but hopefully, these plans will change in the future.

3. University of Bristol Botanical Garden

Contact Info: botanic-gardens@bristol.ac.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BrisBotanicGdn>

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. The Botanic Garden is essentially a museum, and the plants are the exhibits; the plants are arranged in displays that tell stories of evolution, geography, relationships with pollinators. Part of their mission is to conserve local flora and several displays reflect this; the Avon Gorge is home to flora that grows nowhere else and so the garden aims to tell this story and protect it. Native meadow, woodland, aquatic, hills, cliffs, and coastal plants are grown and displayed.

Through the summer healthy populations of goldfinches, blue, great, and long tailed tits, dunnocks, robins, blackbirds, thrushes (mistle and song), jays, crows, ravens, magpies, goldcrests are present in the Garden. Now, redwings have arrived, and they are seen each morning when the team unlock the garden. There have been sightings of sparrow hawks hunting and peregrine bathing in the pool. The pool has all manner of life, frogs, newts (not sure what type), dragonflies and many insects on the surface and underneath. Foxes make regular appearances and badgers live down near the glasshouses.

In terms of preservation, wood will be left on the ground to rot down naturally to attract insects and fungi; various piles of wood around that are slowly being decomposed by natural means. Every now and then an expert in the Garden will have a look at the diversity of the garden; for example, in September 2020 a film was made about pollinators in the Garden.

4. Canford Park

Contact Info: friendsofcanfordpark@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Canford-Park/126395204120272>

No information was provided.

5. Golden Hill Sports Ground

Contact Info: <https://www.goldenhillsports.com/social/contact/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Golden-Hill-Sports-Ground-216607021723146>

No information was provided.

6. Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve

Contact Info: fospnr@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Old-Sneed-Park-Nature-Reserve/133235920876987>

The reserve is made up of wildflower meadows, woodland, scrubby areas, and the lake. Past surveys have been carried out at the nature reserve and 130 different plant species have been recorded, at least seven different species of butterflies and more than forty species of bird. Among the bird species, there have been sightings of, tawny owls, buzzards, and goldcrests. A lot of conservation work is needed to maintain the lake because of sediment filling the bottom and vegetation growing in shallow waters. The lakes hold lots of wildlife and many tree species grow along the margins.

Volunteers help with tree and shrub planting in the reserve with native British species being planted. To maintain the area where tree planting happens, regular maintenance, clearance and weeding are needed to give the best chance of survival for the new growth. The future aims by the friends of the old Sneed Park nature reserve are to carry out maintenance and conservation on the reserve in collaboration with Bristol City Council; to manage the land to increase biodiversity and provide education about wildlife and biodiversity, along with other aims.

7. Sea Mills Recreational Ground

Contact Info:

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sea%20Mills,%20Bristol/106124022751375/>

No information was provided.

8. Trymside Allotments

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

9. High Grove Allotments

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

10. Old Quarry Park

Contact Info:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Old-Quarry-Park/203912517079074>

No information was provided.

11. Trymside Open Space and Clack Mills

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

12. Bennett's Patch and Whites Paddocks

Contact Info: mail@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk

Facebook:

No information was provided.

13. Bishops Knoll Woods

Contact Info: enquiries@woodlandtrust.org.uk

Facebook:

Bishops Knoll Wood is 7.36-acre woodland on the outskirts of Sneed Park and the Avon Gorge. It's home to lots of different wildlife, including different species of bats, butterflies, and moths. With the woodland being located between two other nature reserves, it makes a great palace for lots of wildlife. Bird species such as blue tits, robins, great spotted woodpeckers, and wrens are in the area along with other wildlife like foxes and hedgehogs. The woodland at Bishops Knoll contains a mix of veteran exotic and ancient trees as well as planted native broadleaves, including oak, ash, hazel, and hawthorn.

The future goal for the area is a short 5-year management plan which includes planting new trees to continue the history of the arboretum and orchard, controlling vegetation and installing two new signs showing visitors the history of the site along with features of the site.

14. Westbury Wildlife Park Foundation

Contact Info: info@wwpf.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wwpfbristol/>

Westbury Wildlife Park reopened in 2021 after closure for more than 20 years. With the help of volunteers and other community members, it has been restored back to a wildlife park for visitors and wildlife to enjoy. Its aims are to create a place to preserve and protect flora and fauna. The park has reinstated 5 man-made ponds that were built when the park was a

wildlife park and that has increased the aquatic biodiversity in the area. A lot of surveying has been conducted throughout the park which is being used to make an action plan to conserve a wide range of species. Some of the species that have been seen in the park are various insects, reptiles, and plants. Including species of importance to the Bristol region including the Lessen-Mason Bees. Future plans are to be more involved in creating a snapshot of the area and promoting conservation and Biodiversity through education; along with getting a better understanding of what needs to be done to encourage hedgehogs into the area and maintaining riverbanks.

15. St Marys Stoke Bishop Graveyard

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

16. Falcondale Road Allotments

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

17. Blaise Estate Castle (Woods)

Contact Info: contact@friendsofblaise.co.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/blaisecastle>

18. Southside Wood/Coombe Dingle

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

19. Canford E Allotments

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

20. Canford B Allotments

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

21. St Brendans Rugby Football Club

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

22. Bristol Manor Farm Football

Contact Info: secretary@bristolmanorfarm.com

Facebook:

No information was provided.

23. Portway Rugby

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

24. Kelleway Cres

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.

25. Badock's Woods

Contact Info: fobwsecretary@yahoo.co.uk

Facebook:

No information was provided.

26. Bristol Croquet Club

Contact Info:

Facebook:

No information was provided.