

BRINSLEY HEADSTOCKS

Heritage & Nature Reserve.

OTHER WILDLIFE

2019 Update

Significant events in 2019 were the first site record of Bank Vole and close views of a fine dog fox

MAMMALS

MOLE *Talpa europaea*

One was found freshly dead on the path adjacent to Brinsley Brook pond on 01/01/2012. Judging by the number of molehills found, this species is present in good numbers.

RABBIT *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

This species is a scarce visitor to the site, with previous records of a single on 18/05/2008 and 23/07/2008. However, there was an increase in records during 2019, with two seen on the edge of Saints Coppice on 23/04/2019.

BROWN HARE *Lepus europaeus*

This species is normally seen regularly in the fields adjacent to the site, with a maximum of 5 on 14/06/2013. However, this species has drastically declined in numbers on the site and, sadly, there were no sightings in 2019.

GREY SQUIRREL *Sciurus carolinensis*

Recorded frequently throughout the site. Largely ignored by the recorders, but a maximum of eight were recorded on December 2nd 2016.

BROWN RAT *Rattus norvegicus*

The first site record was of one in the Dell on 22/03/15, hoovering up the contents of a bird feeding-station !.

DEER species

On 20/05/2009, whilst out dog walking, a resident reported a young deer running onto the site. This was probably a fallow deer.

WATER VOLE *Arvicola amphibius*

A resident reported a water vole on the brook in March 2002 and again in February 2009 (actual dates not known).

SHORT-TAILED FIELD VOLE *Microtus agrestis*

Judging by the regular presence of hunting kestrels, this species is a common resident on the site. A juvenile was found freshly dead on the path close to Brinsley brook pond on 22/07/2014, following torrential rain overnight. One was caught by a FoBH's members dog in the Long Meadow in March 2015, during a working party. The vole was rescued and released.

BANK VOLE *Myodes glareolus*

The first site record occurred on November 5th 2019, when one was closely observed in the ditch by the old railway line, feeding in a discarded pumpkin !

RED FOX *Vulpes vulpes*

The first sighting of this species by the recorders was of a fine dog fox in the pasture adjacent to the railway line on March 16th 2016. On 17th December 2019, one was seen strolling nonchalantly through a field of sheep adjacent to the old railway line, affording relatively close views.

BADGER *Meles meles*

One found freshly dead at the roadside on 09/04/2013. Although off site, it was only 100 metres from the car park. It was found very close to the spot where a juvenile was also found dead in 2008.

STOAT *Mustela ermine*

The first site record of this species was on 06/12/2014, when one was seen in the dyke by the railway line.

PIPISTRELLE BAT *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*

On the nocturnal night held on site on 10/07/15, a walk was organised, during which bat detectors were employed. A minimum of 6 Pipistrelles were heard and seen.

BROWN LONG-EARED BAT *Plecotus auritus*

The bat detectors used on the nocturnal night were not set-up to locate the frequency used by this species, but two large bats seen well just before dusk were considered by the experts present to be of this species.

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

GRASS SNAKE *Natrix natrix*

A pencil-thick juvenile was seen in the Dew pond in 2012. However, on 27/08/2013, a full adult measuring approx.. a metre was by the path adjacent to Brinsley Brook pond. A most impressive sight !.On 31/08/2014, a visitor to the site photographed a snake which was initially considered to be an adder. The evidence was sent to Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, who pointed out that the photo showed the underside of a grass snake, a view not often seen. This species has a trick of “playing dead” if disturbed, which could explain this event.

COMMON FROG *Rana temporaria*

There have only been two records for the site prior to 2013. The first sighting in 2019 was of a single in the Willow Holt ponds on March 5th. On March 20th, there were 13 males in this same location, with lots of spawn evident. There was also plentiful amounts of spawn in the Dipping pond.

COMMON TOAD *Bufo bufo*

Another species which is probably under-recorded and which was not seen in 2014. The only definite record is of a male which spent the daylight hours hiding under a piece of wood adjacent to the brook on 12/05/2010.

INSECTS

The expertise of the recorders is a little thin, considering the vast number of species within this genus. One unmistakeable species however is :-

EUROPEAN HORNET *Vespa crabro*

Four Queens of this species were observed feeding on flowering ivy close to the Headstocks on 14/10/2009, dwarfing the Queen wasps which were also present. A single worker of this species was observed close to the Headstocks on 18/06/2014, and then counts of 20+ were regularly made in the Dell during August, suggesting that a nest was in the vicinity. A Queen was seen in Willow Holt on 31/10/2014, apparently searching for a hibernation site.

TREE BUMBLEBEE *Bombus hypnorum*

The first site record for this relatively new colonist was of a single in the Dell on September 4th 2016.

LILY BEETLE *Lilioceris lilii*

Three adults of this species, in their bright scarlet garb, were seen in the only patch of lilies on site (Pyrenean lily) on 07/09/2014.

AQUATIC SPECIES

Almost immediately following the creation of the ponds on site, they were colonised by **pond skaters**. These early colonists were soon followed by small numbers of **water boatmen** and a few months later by the enormously entertaining **whirlygig beetles**. **Minnows and sticklebacks** have been seen in the brook, but **minnows** have now managed to colonise Brinsley Brook pond (6+ were seen in the pond on 30/04/2014).

