

# Friends of Hogsmill STW Nature Reserve

## Newsletter



Issue 3 June 2016



Hello and welcome. I hope this newsletter finds everyone well, happy and enjoying spring. We have had some lovely days as of late and hopefully continue to do so. There are a lot of bird songs in the air and I have already seen many

butterflies here and there. We have already had goslings come and go. Recently a clutch of 11 mallards has appeared. Little Grebe on nests as well as the usual Coot and Moorhen. The Kestrel chicks have been seen flapping away on the edge of the box. The juvenile Herons are spending sunny spells above the Sand martin bank.

We now have 83 members and counting.

I have had the pleasure of Brownie and Beaver groups visiting the reserve as of late. And receiving fabulous feedback from them. If anyone knows of a group/organisation that might be interested in visiting the reserve or want a tour of the sewage treatment works please pass on my contact details.

Please take a look on page 6 for the volunteer workdays and events coming up over the next few months. I have mixed a few weekdays with weekends to see what works best. If anyone has particular days which work better, please get in touch with me. Any additional events I will keep you updated via email and post for those not on email.

Kind regards,

Kristine Boudreau

Hogsmill Nature Reserve Manager

## Hide Tea



Photo by Kristine Boudreau

In the year we have been hosting our hide teas we have had 127 people join us for coffee, tea, biscuits, cakes and of course bird watching. As it has been such a great success, not to mention a very fun way to spend a morning, we will be keeping them going every third Friday from 9.30 – 11.30. Obviously you can pop in for a short time or stay the entire time.

We have seen some great wildlife, discussed management of the reserve and future enhancements and occasional days of setting the world to right.

For me it has been a great way to meet many of you and hear your thoughts on the reserve and our progress. I hope see more people at future hide tea events and hear your views.

## ***Surbiton Lagoon Water Level***

As you may have noticed we have yet to begin the spring draw down on the Surbiton Lagoon. We are currently unable to lower the water level, because when the water is lowered it is taken into the sewage treatment works and must go through the water treatment process. At present the pipework is not able to accommodate our needs. We are now going to create an alternate system to lower the water levels. I hope to have drawings of the new system soon and will pass the information on to you as soon as possible.

The tentative start date for the new system is in late August after nesting season as some of the brambles will need to be temporarily cleared for the work to be done.

## **Bird Song Walk - 16<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

I was contacted by design students Emma Young and Frøydis Hanssen-Bauer from Kingston University earlier in the year with the interest in having a bird house building event in conjunction with the Hogsmill Nature Reserve. I jumped at the chance to work with them as the idea sounded as if it would make for a great event.

Emma and Frøydis designed a bird house and had the pieces made using laser cutting. The pieces were painted with sponges and stencilled with designs also created by Emma and Frøydis. Once dry the bird houses were put together like a puzzle.

We had 14 children attend and they all had the most wonderful time with the amazing coloured paints on offer. Often the paints made it on faces and clothes, but still a wonderful time had by all.

The day was such a success that I have spoken with Emma and Frøydis and we will be using their bird house design for part of the craft activities for the Thames Tides Fest 11<sup>th</sup> September. I think they might even be coming on the day and you can all meet the faces behind the fabulous design.



Hard at work



A finished house.

# Bird Records: 2015

Species	No. through-out quarter	Species	No. through-out quarter
Little Grebe	176	Black-headed Gull	2782
Great Crested Grebe	5	Common Gull	17
Cormorant	5	Herring Gull	7
Shag		Yellow- legged Gull	4
Bittern		Great Black-backed Gull	5
Little Egret		Lesser Black-backed Gull	11
Grey Heron	127	Common Tern	18
Mute Swan	34	Stock Dove	15
Greylag Goose		Woodpigeon	106
Canada Goose	100	Collard Dove	37
Egyptian Goose		Ring-necked Parakeet	103
Shelduck	9	Swift	254
Mandarin		Kingfisher	3
Wigeon	4	Green Woodpecker	22
Gadwall	16	Great Spotted Woodpecker	12
Teal	37	Skylark	1
Mallard	520	Sand Martin	57
Pintail		Swallow	39
Garganey		House Martin	106
Shoveler	146	Meadow Pipit	
Pochard	32	Grey Wagtail	5
Tufted Duck	715	Pied Wagtail	12
Goldeneye		Wren	27
Smew		Waxwing	
Goosander		Dunnock	10
Ruddy Duck		Robin	73
Red Kite		Nightingale	
Hen Harrier		Redstart	
Marsh Harrier		Whinchat	
Sparrowhawk	7	Stonechat	
Buzzard	1	Wheatear	
Kestrel	122	Blackbird	58
Hobby	1	Fieldfare	
Peregrine	1	Song Thrush	22
Osprey	1	Redwing	
Water Rail	1	Mistle Thrush	5
Spotted Crake		Sedge Warbler	7
Moorhen	203	Reed Warbler	
Oystercatcher		Lesser Whitethroat	1
Coot	310	Common Whitethroat	25
Little Ringed Plover		Blackcap	13
Ringed Plover		Chiff Chaff	18
Grey Plover		Willow Warbler	
Lapwing	0	Gold Crest	3
Sanderling		Fire Crest	
Pectoral Sandpiper		Spotted Flycatcher	5
Curlew Sandpiper		Long-tailed Tit	23
Dunlin		Coal Tit	3
Ruff		Blue Tit	107
Jack Snipe		Great Tit	15
Snipe	12	Bearded Tit	
Red-necked Phalarope		Jay	33
Woodcock		Magpie	102
Blacked-tailed Godwit		Jackdaw	75
Whimbrel		Carrion Crow	104
Curlew		Starling	
Spotted Redshank		House Sparrow	64
Redshank		Chaffinch	8
Greenshank		Greenfinch	37
Green Sandpiper	7	Goldfinch	49
Wood Sandpiper		Linnet	

No. throughout quarter = total number of times species has been recorded during three month period.

Peak no. = peak number of particular species seen at any one time (better indicator of numbers using the site).

Birds that are known to be on the site regularly and have been recorded in log books as seen, but no numbers recorded are listed above as regular visitors.



## New seating area and pond

Last year's enhancement programme enabled us to create a few new features on the Surbiton Lagoon side of the Hogsmill Nature Reserve. We installed a new seating area and created a new pond dipping pond.

The pond although it is not even a year old has already produced a great deal of aquatic invertebrates, such as water boatmen, pond skaters, and dragonfly larvae to name but a few. The wildflowers have been wonderful this spring and continue to attract many species of bees and other insects.

We are pleased the newly created enhancements have been such a success. Not only has it benefited the wildlife, but also members of the nature reserve and the local community. We have had numerous Brownie and Beaver groups visit and use the new facilities.

This year's programme will see the creation of a new path to the north side of the lagoon leading to a new bird hide. We will also be installing a composting toilet. Currently scheduled to start works in September.



Seating area: photograph by Kristine Boudreau



Pond dipping area: photograph by Kristine Boudreau

## Help Please



Mark Godfrey

I am organising an open day to coincide with the wider Thames Tide Fest 11<sup>th</sup> September. As it is to do with water and wildlife associated with the River Thames, I will be doing the bottle fish craft again as part as the craft activity programme on the day, particularly as the children loved it last year. Thus my call for help. If you have any 1 litre water bottles or soda, lemonade or tonic etc... that you wouldn't mind rinsing and donating, I would be very appreciative.

I have a box in the bird hide so you may drop them off at your convenience.

Thank you.

## Bee Update

I thought I would take a moment to give you an update on the bees as numerous people have emailed me asking "Where have the bees gone"!

We were having some works done on the water main and they needed access past the bee hives, so we thought best to have them moved. The question then was where are we going to move them? Well coincidentally, (silver lining and all that) we had some criminal activity occurring on an area that is managed for scrub on the north side of the sewage treatment works, which required a bit more regular presence to prevent further cultivation of illegal substances.

This being said I spoke with Keith McMahon (the bee keeper) to see if he would like to move his bees to this area. So now Keith's bees are happy campers living it up in a lovely scrub habitat with lot of yummy flowers.

Last year's honey was amazing! Hopefully this year's will be equally delicious. Keith will have a stand at the Thames Tide Fest event and hopefully have some of the honey on sale then.



Photograph the Telegraph



Photograph Greenpeace

I wouldn't be able to do many things without the help of volunteers and I want to say a huge thank you for all of the volunteers who have helped on Wednesdays to fill up the bird feeders. I particularly want to say thank you to Graham and Valerie Craig and Ann O'sullivan. They have come just about every Wednesday without fail. This wouldn't have been as successful without them.

I would like the opportunity to include photos from friends of the reserve in the newsletters as much as possible. If you could please, send any photos you would like to be used in future newsletters to me at [kristine.boudreau@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:kristine.boudreau@thameswater.co.uk) it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you to those who have sent in photos so far.

# Forthcoming events 2016

## Hogsmill Nature Reserve

Date	Event	Meeting details
Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month.	<b>Hide Tea:</b> Hide tea takes place regularly on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month. We will not be having hide tea in August as I will be on annual leave.	In the hide.
Wed. 22 <sup>nd</sup> June	<b>Thames Water Bee Talk:</b> My Colleague Ian Crump will be talking about our conservation work across Thames Water land holdings. Tea, coffee and biscuits available. Talk should last approximately one hour.	Please meet at the Sewage Treatment Works blue gates at 7pm
Sun. 11 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	<b>Thames Tide Fest:</b> This will be an event for everyone. It is being held in conjunction with wider Thames Tide Fest events. We will have a variety of stalls hosted by local wildlife organisations, Kingston Beekeepers and Kingston Biodiversity Network only to mention a few. We will be having a number of wildlife crafts, bird watching and pond dipping. We will have some nibbles, tea, coffee and other drinks available. More information have a look at <a href="http://www.thamestidefest.org">www.thamestidefest.org</a>	The car park of the nature reserve. 11-3pm
	Currently we are still at the mercy of the Hogsmill Growth Project and there for I am limited as to what events I am able to hold this year as much of the reserve on the operational side is being affected by the works. However, when the works are completed we will have amazing habitats created, such as 3 new hibernaculum, lovely new wildflower meadows and scrub areas.  I am trying to organise a few things and will email these events as and when they are confirmed. WE will be back to a full range of events next year.	

### Correspondence

Send any correspondence, including ideas for reserve management, species monitoring and community events to:  
 Kristine Boudreau (Hogsmill Nature Reserve Manager), Thames Water, Hogsmill STW,  
 Hogsmill Nature Reserve, Lower Marsh Lane, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 3BW  
 Mobile: 07747 647708 or [kristine.boudreau@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:kristine.boudreau@thameswater.co.uk)