

# Graves Park Wildlife Area

## Description of Wildlife Area

The Graves Park Wildlife Area is located on an area previously occupied by Norton Nurseries at the western end of the current nursery site in the south east corner of Graves Park. The total area is approximately 1000 m<sup>2</sup>, backing on to cow fields to the north and Serpentine Walk at the southern edge. There are mature trees located in the northern square of the site, in the eastern boundary with the park and along the southern boundary. Young sapling trees have been introduced along the wire fence that creates the eastern boundary with Norton nurseries. The central area defined by the path is primarily sown with a summer meadow mix largely composed of Black Knapweed, Oxeye Daisy, Selfheal, Ribwort Plantain, Red Clover, Ribbed Melilot, Wild Carrot and Meadow Buttercup. The borders contain a more diverse selection of flora that have either been introduced or have self seeded over the past few years that the site has been in existence. At least 78 species of flowering plant have been identified within the whole area during 2006. In addition, nearly 30 tree / woody shrub species have also been noted. Since this is the first year of the detailed flora survey, it has been a learning exercise and it is hoped that confirmation of the identification of the species will continue in subsequent years. Locations of the flowering plant, tree and woody shrub species identified have been mapped and are included in this report along with the legends to the 2 maps created.

The site has a small overgrown pond, located in the mid section of the southern border, which was temporary in dry / hot weather and did not appear to support much in the way of wildlife through 2006. A few Mallard frequented the pond in the winter months. In March 2006 frog spawn was noted but few tadpoles survived as the water level dropped significantly, reducing to a muddy bog by the end of April and becoming grassed over during the summer months. No damselflies / dragonfly species were consistently observed in the pond area, unlike previous years when the pond depth had allowed the retention of water through the summer.

In spring 2006, bird boxes were put up in the taller mature trees to the north end of the site and bat boxes were placed on mature trees along the southern edge. Great Tits were observed to nest in one of the boxes during the summer and Nuthatches showed interest in a second of the nest boxes. Of the 34 species of bird so far seen associated with the area, most were in the trees and shrubs with few seen in the central meadow area. Highlights included a Kestrel at the south western corner in July, Willow Warbler and Blackcap singing in the western trees during the spring. A Songthrush anvil was found littered with fresh snail shells under a patch of willows on the southern border. Several bird (Woodpigeon) kills, presumably by Sparrowhawk have been noted in the meadow area, although this species eluded the records until late in September 2006.

Butterfly species started appearing in the site during June 2006 following a rather cold spring. A total of 15 species were recorded on the site in 2006 and the best day for butterfly observations coincided with the opening of the Black Knapweed flowers on a hot, sunny, still July afternoon (23/07/06). This spectacular day held all 15 species recorded, the most noteworthy species being a single White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrium w-album*) that spent 30 minutes feeding on a Common Ragwort and was photographed! This species is at the northern edge of its range and normally spends much of its time in the canopy of mature trees.

## **Maintenance and improvement of Wildlife Area**

It is hoped that the site can be managed more regularly to attract and sustain an even greater diversity of wildlife. To achieve this, the following suggestions are put forward:

- The central meadow area has not been mown since the site was developed. However, as a trial, a portion of the central meadow will be mown to observe the impact on seed dispersal. The grass path was mown once over the summer to keep it defined within the site.
- The area would benefit greatly from an improved pond area. This could be helped by drainage of water from surrounding fields that, in heavy or persistent rain, spills through the southern entrance to Graves Park and onto Norton Park View.
- Sightings of Great Crested Newt in ponds in the local neighbourhood (less than 200 m from the site along Norton Park View) have been made over the last few years and it would benefit the site greatly if the pond area is improved to allow this species to be recorded.
- From the records, it is clear that there are many flowering species that prefer damp places. To this end, the central meadow could be sown with a seed mix including Cowslip, Ragged Robin, Devil's-bit Scabious, Meadowsweet, Teasel and Red Campion that are suitable for damper areas.
- The light along the southern border would be improved by selectively taking out some of the sapling trees and Leylandii there, being careful to still maintain effective screening with the houses to the south of the area. The brambles along the western edge provide excellent wildlife habitat (many of the butterfly species were seen in this area) as well as forming an excellent barrier to unnecessary short-cut access from the main Graves Park path and should be maintained as far as possible.
- The trees on the west side provide a barrier to prevailing south westerly winds as well as screening from the main path and, consequently, this area should be preserved and/or added to where appropriate.
- The area has one bench by the pond. Seating could be improved by placing rustic logs / seats within area that are in-keeping and also not attractive targets for vandalism.
- Strategic placing of large logs / trunks under the mature trees along the southern and northern edges would attract invertebrates and fungi, adding to the diversity of wildlife.
- It has been noted that there are two dead tree snags to the west that can provide ideal habitat for wildlife (these are marked on the tree map). If possible these could be left standing with the lower branches made safe to avoid risk of children climbing them.
- The area could be improved in its diversity by the introduction of tree species such as Crab Apple and Hazel that are not represented currently.

Other suggestions include:

- An owl box (Tawny Owls in area).
- More bird boxes.
- Fence maintenance (northern area).
- Screening of barn.
- Increased Oak
- Litter clearance, mainly under southern border trees.
- Expansion of site into more of Norton nurseries unused land.

**Selected Wildlife Area Photographs (many more taken !)**

(Better resolution photographs were taken; these have been reduced to keep the file size down).



Graves Park Wildlife area pictured from South East corner, March 2006.



Graves Park Wildlife area pictured from South East corner, June 2006.



Graves Park Wildlife area pictured from South East corner, July 2006.



White-letter Hairstreak on Ragwort (23/07/06)



Black Knapweed (16/07/06)



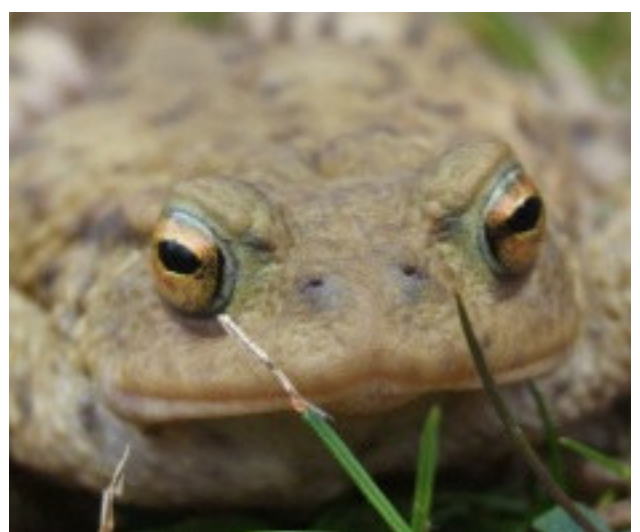
Comma (23/07/06)



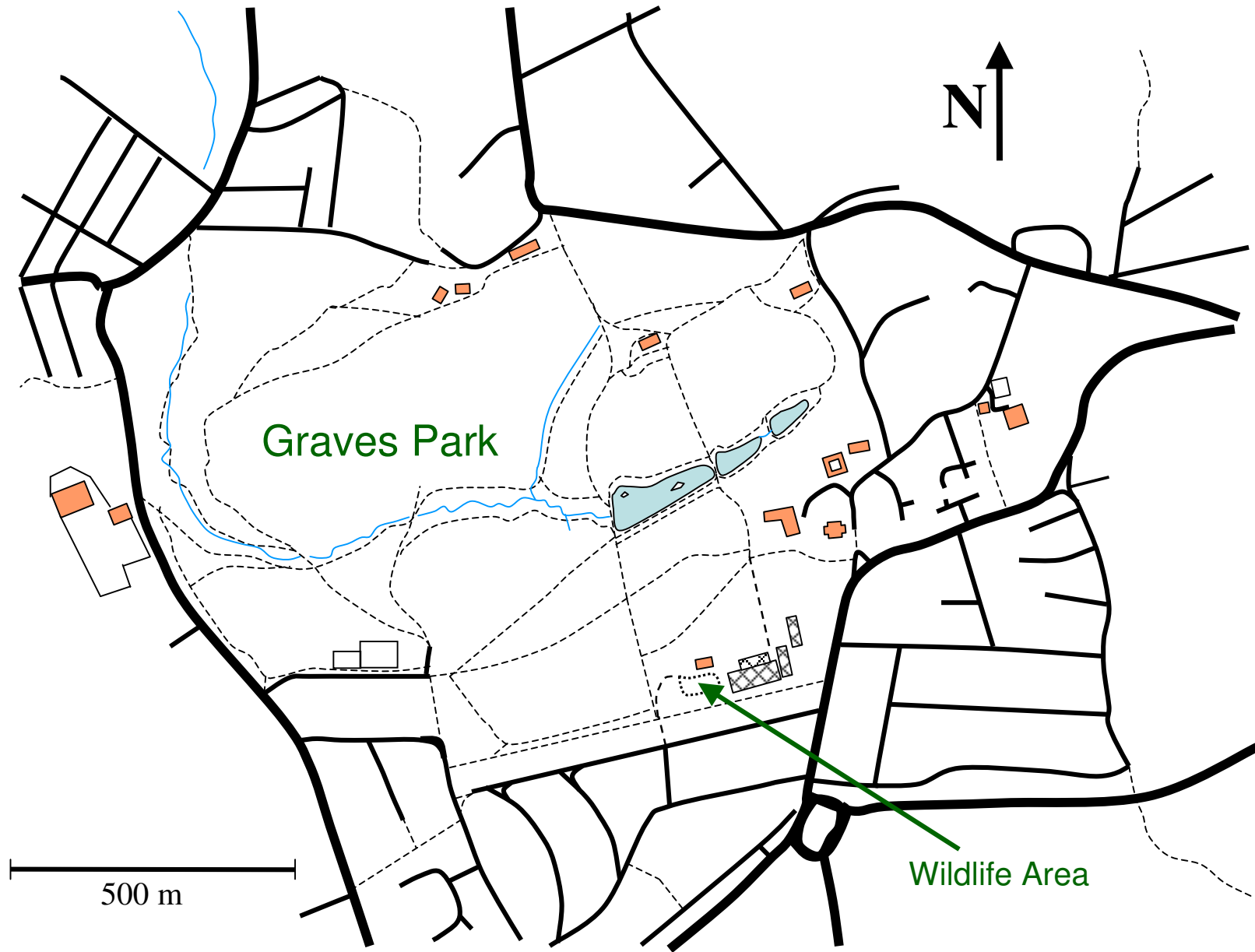
Rosebay Willowherb (09/07/06)

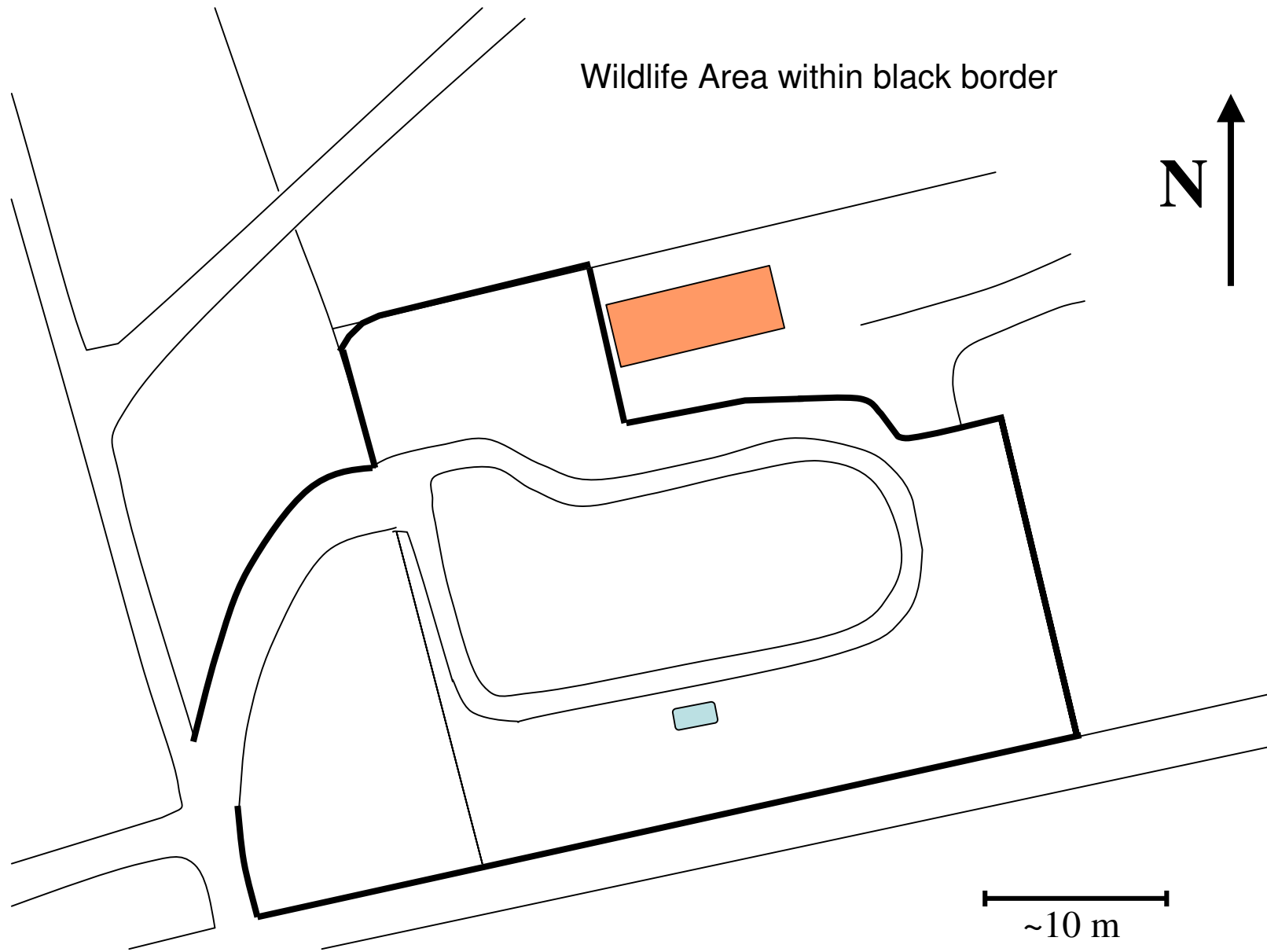


Wood Forget-me-not (22/04/06)

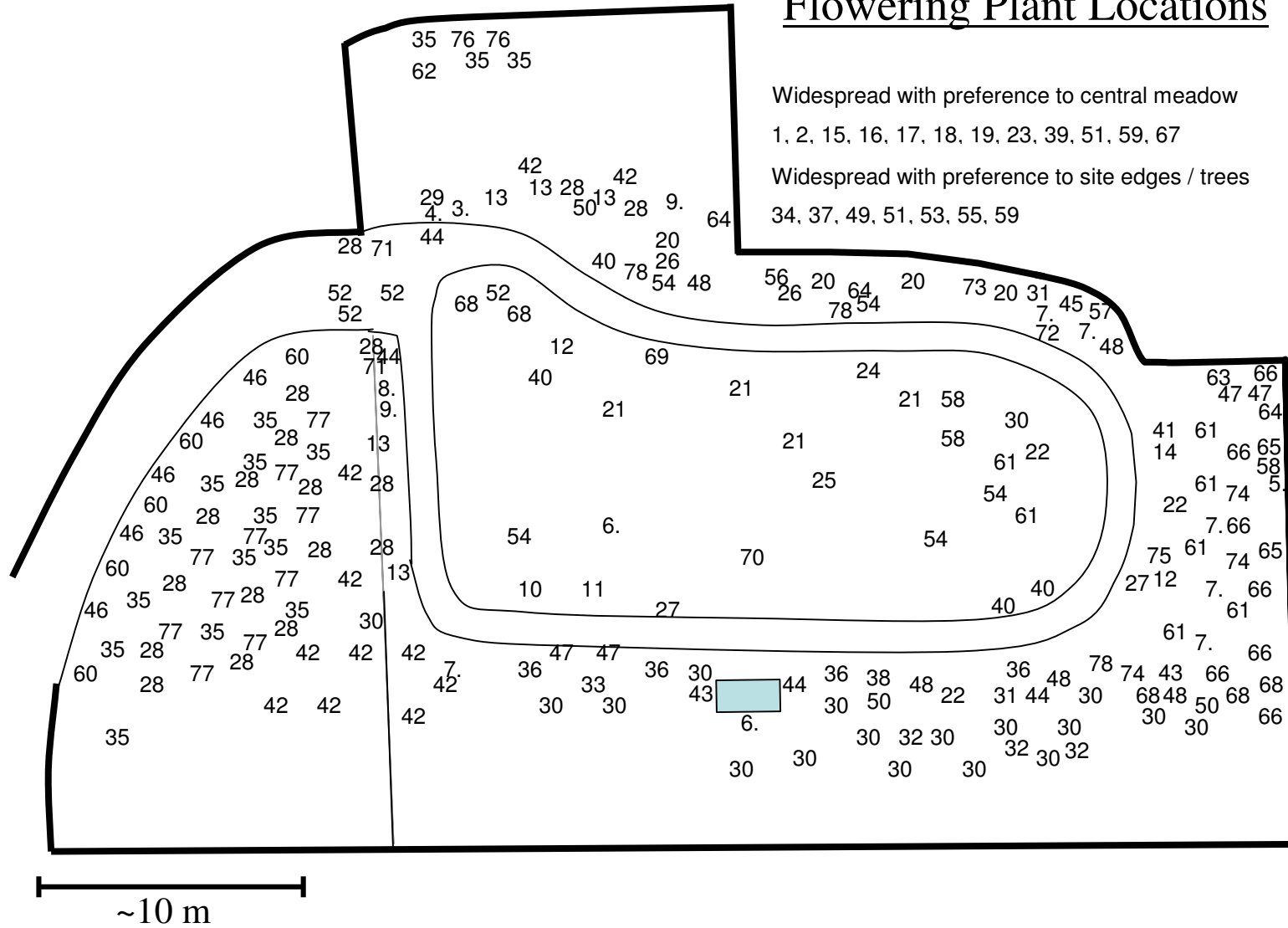


Toad (08/07/06)





## Flowering Plant Locations



## Key to flowering plant location map

<b>ID Number</b>	<b>Species (Scientific)</b>		
1	Creeping Buttercup ( <i>Ranunculus repens</i> )	41	Common Centaury ( <i>Centaureum erythraea</i> )
2	Meadow Buttercup ( <i>Ranunculus acris</i> )	42	Hedge Bindweed ( <i>Calystegia sepium</i> )
3	Lesser Celandine ( <i>Ranunculus ficaria</i> )	43	Common Figwort ( <i>Scrophularia nodosa</i> )
4	Hedge Mustard ( <i>Sisymbrium officinale</i> )	44	Water Figwort ( <i>Scrophularia aquatica</i> )
5	Wavy Bitter-cress ( <i>Cardamine flexuosa</i> )	45	Purple Toadflax ( <i>Linaria purpurea</i> )
6	Cuckooflower (Lady's-smock) ( <i>Cardamine pratensis</i> )	46	Common Field Speedwell ( <i>Veronica persica</i> )
7	Perforate St John's-wort ( <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> )	47	Red Bartsia ( <i>Odontites verna</i> )
8	White Campion ( <i>Silene alba</i> )	48	Hedge Woundwort ( <i>Stachys sylvatica</i> )
9	Red Campion ( <i>Silene dioica</i> )	49	Selfheal ( <i>Prunella vulgaris</i> )
10	Lesser Stitchwort ( <i>Stellaria graminea</i> )	50	Wood Forget-me-not ( <i>Myosotis sylvatica</i> )
11	Common Mouse-ear ( <i>Cerastium holosteoides</i> )	51	Ribwort Plantain ( <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> )
12	Musk Mallow ( <i>Malva moschata</i> )	52	Hoary Plantain ( <i>Plantago media</i> )
13	Herb Robert ( <i>Geranium robertianum</i> )	53	Cleavers ( <i>Galium aparine</i> )
14	Dove's-foot Crane's-bill ( <i>Geranium molle</i> )	54	Teasel ( <i>Dipsacus fullonum</i> )
15	Red Clover ( <i>Trifolium pratense</i> )	55	Common Ragwort ( <i>Senecio jacobaea</i> )
16	White Clover ( <i>Trifolium repens</i> )	56	Hoary Ragwort ( <i>Senecio erucifolius</i> )
17	Lesser Trefoil ( <i>Trifolium dubium</i> )	57	Common Fleabane ( <i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i> )
18	Tufted Vetch ( <i>Vicia cracca</i> )	58	Michaelmas Daisy ( <i>Aster amellus</i> )
19	Common Vetch ( <i>Vicia sativa</i> )	59	Oxeye Daisy ( <i>Chrysanthemum leucanthemum</i> )
20	Hairy Tare ( <i>Vicia hirsuta</i> )	60	Daisy ( <i>Bellis perennis</i> )
21	Smooth Tare ( <i>Vicia tetrasperma</i> )	61	Colt's-foot ( <i>Tussilago farfara</i> )
22	Meadow Vetchling ( <i>Lathyrus pratensis</i> )	62	Butterbur ( <i>Petasites hybridus</i> )
23	Ribbed Melilot ( <i>Melilotus officinalis</i> )	63	Yarrow ( <i>Achillea millefolium</i> )
24	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil ( <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> )	64	Mugwort ( <i>Artemisia vulgaris</i> )
25	Greater Bird's-foot-trefoil ( <i>Lotus pedunculatus</i> )	65	Spear Thistle ( <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> )
26	Creeping Cinquefoil ( <i>Potentilla reptans</i> )	66	Creeping Thistle ( <i>Cirsium arvense</i> )
27	Lady's-mantle ( <i>Alchemilla vulgaris</i> )	67	Black Knapweed ( <i>Centaurea nigra</i> )
28	Wood Avens ( <i>Geum urbanum</i> )	68	Dandelion ( <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> )
29	Broad-leaved Willowherb ( <i>Epilobium montanum</i> )	69	Common Cat's-ear ( <i>Hypochoeris radicata</i> )
30	Great Willowherb ( <i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> )	70	Rough Hawkbit ( <i>Leontodon hispidus</i> )
31	Hoary Willowherb ( <i>Epilobium parviflorum</i> )	71	Nipplewort ( <i>Lapsana communis</i> )
32	Square-stalked Willowherb ( <i>Epilobium tetragonum</i> )	72	Smooth Hawk's-beard ( <i>Crepis capillaris</i> )
33	Rosebay Willowherb ( <i>Chamaenarion angustifolium</i> )	73	Orange Hawkweed ( <i>Pilosella aurantiacum</i> )
34	Common Nettle ( <i>Urtica dioica</i> )	74	Perennial Sow-thistle ( <i>Sonchus arvensis</i> )
35	Cow Parsley ( <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> )	75	Prickly Sow-thistle ( <i>Sonchus asper</i> )
36	Hogweed ( <i>Heracleum sphondylium</i> )	76	Common Solomon's-seal ( <i>Polygonatum multiflorum</i> )
37	Wild Carrot ( <i>Daucus carota</i> )	77	Bluebell ( <i>Endymion non-scriptus</i> )
38	Wood Dock ( <i>Rumex sanguineus</i> )	78	Yellow Iris ( <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> )
39	Broad-leaved Dock ( <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> )		
40	Cowslip ( <i>Primula veris</i> )		



## Key to tree and woody shrub location map

### ID Number Species (Scientific)

A	Common Yew ( <i>Taxus baccata</i> )
B	Leyland Cypress ( <i>Cupressocypararis leylandii</i> )
C	Poplar sp. ( <i>Populus</i> )
D	White Willow ( <i>Salix alba</i> )
E	Osier ( <i>Salix viminalis</i> )
F	Goat Willow ( <i>Salix caprea</i> )
G	Silver Birch ( <i>Betula pendula</i> )
H	Common Alder ( <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> )
I	Common Beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> )
J	Hornbeam ( <i>Carpinus betulus</i> )
K	Sessile Oak ( <i>Quercus petraea</i> )
L	Wych Elm ( <i>Ulmus glabra</i> )
M	Hawthorn ( <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> )
N	Rowan ( <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> )
O	Cherry sp.
P	Common Laburnum ( <i>Laburnum anagyroides</i> )
Q	Holly ( <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> )
R	Field Maple ( <i>Acer campestre</i> )
S	Sycamore ( <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> )
T	Horse Chestnut ( <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> )
U	Common Lime ( <i>Tilia x europaea</i> )
V	Dogwood ( <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> )
W	Common Ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> )
X	Elder ( <i>Sambucus nigra</i> )
Y	Blackthorn (Sloe) ( <i>Prunus spinosa</i> )
Z	Common Gorse ( <i>Ulex europaeus</i> )
α	Dog Rose ( <i>Rosa canina</i> )
β	Raspberry ( <i>Rubus idaeus</i> )
γ	Laurel sp. ( <i>Laurelia sp.</i> )
•	Dead Trees
?	Unknown species

## Butterfly, Moth, Ladybird, Damselfly and Dragonfly Species Identified in Wildlife Area

### Butterflies

#### June 2006

Large White (*Pieris brassicae*)  
Peacock (*Inachis io*)  
Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*)  
Small Skipper (*Thymelicus sylvestris*)

#### July 2006

Large White (*Pieris brassicae*)  
(6 on 23/07/06)  
Small White (*Artogeia rapae*)  
(8 on 23/07/06)  
White-letter Hairstreak  
(*Satyrium w-album*)  
(1 on 23/07/06)  
Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*)  
(1 on 23/07/06)  
Holly Blue (*Celastrina argiolus*)  
(1 on 23/07/06)  
Peacock (*Inachis io*)  
(6 on 23/07/06)  
Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*)  
(1 on 23/07/06)

G.J. and N.J. Baxter

Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*)  
(1 on 23/07/06)  
Comma (*Polygonia c-album*)  
(1 on 23/07/06)  
Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*)  
(2 on 23/07/06)  
Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*)  
(~40 on 23/07/06)  
Gatekeeper (*Pyronia tithonus*)  
(~15 on 23/07/06)  
Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*)  
(1 on 23/07/06)  
Small Skipper (*Thymelicus sylvestris*)  
(~30 on 23/07/06)  
Large Skipper (*Ochilodes venatus*)  
(3 on 23/07/06)

#### August 2006

Small White (*Artogeia rapae*)  
Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*)

#### September 2006

Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*)  
(15+ on 09/09/06)  
Small White (*Artogeia rapae*)  
(4 on 09/09/06)  
Peacock (*Inachis io*)  
(1 on 09/09/06)  
Comma (*Polygonia c-album*)  
(2 on 09/09/06)

### Moths

#### June 2006

Six-spot Burnet (caterpillar)  
(*Zygaena filipendulae stephensi*)  
Cinnabar Moth (*Tyria jacobaeae*)  
Willow Beauty (*Peribatodes rhomboidaria*)

#### July 2006

Six-spot Burnet  
(*Zygaena filipendulae stephensi*)  
Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet

(*Zygaena lonicerae latomarginata*)  
Cinnabar Moth (caterpillar)  
(*Tyria jacobaeae*)  
Swallow-tailed Moth  
(*Ourapteryx sambucaria*)  
Smoky Wainscot (*Mythimna pallens*)  
Silver Y (*Autographa gamma*)

#### August 2006

Cinnabar Moth (caterpillar)  
(*Tyria jacobaeae*)

#### September 2006

### Ladybirds

Two-spot ladybird (*Adalia bipunctata*)  
Seven-spot ladybird (*Coccinella 7-punctata*)  
Twenty-two-spot ladybird  
(*Psyllobora 22-punctata*)

## Damselflies

July 2006

Common Blue Damselfly  
(*Enallagma*  
*cyathigerum*)

## Dragonflies

July 2006

Skimmer sp. (Black-tailed ?)  
Common Darter (*Sympetrum*  
*striolatum*)  
(1 on 24/07/06)

September 2006

Hawker sp.  
(1 on 17/09/06)

## Bird Species Identified in Wildlife Area

	Mar-06	Apr-06	May-06	Jun-06	Jul-06	Aug-06	Sep-06	Oct-06	Nov-06	Dec-06
Woodpigeon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Magpie	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Nuthatch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Wren	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Robin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Blackbird	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Redwing	✓									
Greenfinch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Chaffinch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Great Tit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Blue Tit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Long-tailed Tit		✓	✓	✓			✓			
Sparrow		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Mallard		✓								
Duncock		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Pied Wagtail		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Songthrush		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Blackcap		✓	✓		✓					
Goldfinch		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Willow Warbler		✓				✓				
Great Spotted Woodpecker		✓	✓			✓				
Collared Dove		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Starling		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Swallow		✓			✓	✓	✓			
Carrion Crow		✓	✓		✓		✓			
Mistle Thrush		✓			✓		✓			
Swift				✓	✓					
Jackdaw				✓	✓	✓	✓			
Stock Dove					✓	✓	✓			
Kestrel					✓					
Goldcrest					✓	✓	✓			
Coal Tit							✓			
Sparrowhawk							✓			
Treecreeper							✓			