

Plant Survey Report for Open Meeting 23rd October 2019

I continue to see new species – 9 more will be added to the list for this year: mostly the very small insignificant species like Thale Cress and Eyebright which barely make 2” but I have also spotted an Alder Buckthorn bush, approx. 6’ high.

The new species identified this year are:

168 Pale Persicaria	317 Pink Sorrel
212 Thale Cress	320 Small-flowered Crane’s-bill
214 Hoary Cress	405 Eyebright
333 Large-flowered Evening Primrose	446 Canadian Fleabane
312 Alder Buckthorn	

Page references are to: The Wild Flower Key ----- by Francis Rose.

While tree-popping sycamore saplings (in Newstead Wood), I also took the opportunity of removing several bay tree saplings (non-native) and potted up a few with good roots and put them up for sale at the Keston Open Day but sadly, none were purchased. (Bargains at £2!) Plants with flowers are much preferred.

Dredging in the Marsh has proved very interesting. Initially it looked a mess – the banks covered in mud and assorted building debris: glass, wire, bricks, old pipe etc. Within a few weeks however it was covered in a green layer of Callitriche. This is a small water plant not much bigger than duckweed and usually only found in the water but for a few weeks it had the mud and the light to itself. By July however the banks were covered in new growth of Redshank. At first, I thought this had come up from the depths of the Marsh as I had not seen it there before in the last ten years. But, in such prolific growth, I now suspect it has come in on the dredging equipment used. By August it was flowering prolifically and competing with rampant bindweed and nettles enjoying the nutrient rich mud.

Another result of the dredging is that Water-plantain has reappeared. There has been an occasional specimen of this in the last six years or so, but in September, I counted 7 young plants in the water and one was flowering.

Last year, contractors were brought in to thin out a patch of Badger Sett Wood immediately south of the Darrick Wood School playing field, mostly ash and downy birch. The area is fairly moist and feeds into the Ponds. Bramble has now taken over but I did find in the summer, some soft rush, water mint, yellow pimpernel (not common), wood spurge, spindle and black bryony under the logs which I have not seen before in this area. Light makes such a difference!

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