

THE APAA BIODIVERSITY GROUP

Report for AGM 20th July 2024

Unable to recruit a new Biodiversity Officer at the AGM last year, Helen and Sally together formed a group of tenants interested in making our plots more friendly for wildlife. We have had 5 well-attended meetings over the year, open to all. Our aim has been to maintain and build on our previous Biodiversity Officer, Robin's work.

Working as a group has proved fun and productive. It's given the opportunity for learning and brain-storming, with different people taking on different projects.

So far we have organised:

A Biodiversity Whatsapp Group – Shelly set up a Biodiversity Whatsapp Group for sharing wildlife sightings and information and keeping us in touch between meetings. We currently have 22 members. If you would like to join please email shelly.fennell@gmail.com with your mobile number and she will add you to the group.

Two Whiteboards – the new Whiteboards outside the Meeting Shed are for recording your wildlife sightings and topical tips for improving biodiversity on your plot. We aim to update the Biodiversity information 3 times a year.

Talks and Workshops – In January Chris Carbone gave us such an interesting and inspiring talk about our endangered Hedgehogs, and in March we had a very successful Compost morning featuring composting methods used throughout the site.

Biodiversity information for tenants - Helen and Peter wrote a leaflets and posters giving ideas on enhancing biodiversity on allotment plots and adapting to climate change for last year's NGS Open Day. The leaflet was later amended, first to give to new tenants and subsequently for all tenants across the site (copies in the Meeting Shed). We also have information garnered from the Compost morning to distribute and lots of information leaflets on Hedgehog conservation. We plan to have a file of information available to all.

Work Parties - We have had 3 very hard working work parties to weed and maintain the Hazel groves and the native hedging outside our

perimeter fencing which Robin and volunteers planted up. They are surviving but need regular weed clearing whilst the saplings are quite small. The next work party will be 10am to 12noon before the Allotment Cafe on August 4th. Free coffee for all volunteers!

Pond Survey - Hilary and Shelly carried out a Pond Survey on the site and found about 32 ponds in all which is an increase of 6 ponds since the last Survey in 2014. They reported that there were a wonderful variety of pond wildlife havens. We are hoping to set up a bank of 'Pond Champions' who would be willing to offer advice to new pond makers!

Top path management for wildlife – regular input from Bob to the Green Maintenance team on how best to manage this for wildlife.

Several other projects are in the planning stages, so do come along to our next meeting on **22nd September at 10.30am** in the Meeting Shed!