

# Backies News



## Stunning Wildflowers at Friends Walk

We had a lovely warm and sunny evening for our wildflower walk, led by our chairman Paul and his brother Michael. In a walk lasting just over an hour we visited different areas of habitat on the Backies, including woodland and meadows and saw 40 different species of wildflowers!

From the common and well-known such as clover to rarer species such as Smith's pepperwort there was an amazing variety of different plants. In the wooded area we found wild strawberries and flowers such as wood avens; while out in the open meadow we saw the lovely mauve betony and masses of deep maroon great burnet. Several types of grass also flourish there, such as Yorkshire fog, timothy and rye grass.

All in all, it was a really interesting and enjoyable way to spend an hour on a summer's evening and further proof (as if we needed it!) that the Backies is a special place for nature.

By Vanessa Grant

Picture: Great Burnet (Vanessa Grant)

In 2007 & 2008 Paul and Michael carried out a botanical survey to establish the diversity of plant life on Clifton Backies.

After a thorough examination of plants on site, painstaking identification and cross checking against previous surveys, they counted 202 species over the two years. This included trees, shrubs, grasses, sedges, rushes, ferns and horsetails as well as wildflowers to ensure all flora was accounted for.

Results of this survey and others are used to feed into maintenance of the site and work that is carried out as part Clifton Backies Stewardship. We are confident that this will protect existing species and most likely add new species as habitats develop.

Photos previously taken of plants on site can be found on our website at:

<http://www.cliftonbackies.org.uk/plant-gallery.html>

Copies of the original survey are available on request.

# Upcoming events

Events and meetings planned for late Summer / Autumn are:

- 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1:30pm - Butterfly walk led by Tony Fairburn
- 1<sup>st</sup> September, 7:30pm - Friends meeting & AGM - Burton Stone Pub
- 13<sup>th</sup> September - 10:30am - Drawing nature on Backies with Doug Heald

## Latest News

News from our June meeting

We held our June meeting on the Backies with the intention of having a walk round the site on a lovely summer's evening. However, the weather had other ideas and after about an hour rain stopped play!

Jenny, the Council Ranger, has reported that her application for funding for the water vole habitat improvement project has been accepted by the Healthy Planet charity. They just had a couple of queries before giving final approval.

Management news

- Tony is now on the Backies Management Board and they are keen to receive feedback from FOCB members on any issues so please let any of the committee members know about anything you would like raising.
- Tony has already mentioned to the Board that the large rocks at the Minchin Close entrance that were moved when the drainage work was done have not been put back in place. They need replacing to prevent vehicles from entering the site.

## Also

If you have any ideas for events, information or sightings you would like to report for Clifton Backies, please pass them to Tony Fairburn (antony.fairburn@gmail.com or 07714307709). We would be delighted to include them on our website or in our newsletter.

Please tell everyone about the great things we have planned at Clifton Backies and pass on a membership form - we always like to see new faces at meetings and events.

**For further information regarding the Friends please see the Clifton Backies web pages : [www.cliftonbackies.org.uk](http://www.cliftonbackies.org.uk).**