
SEND NATURE TRAILS

HEATH FIELD NATURE RESERVE

WHAT IS IT?

About 4.3 acres of meadow grass, rush, reed, native trees, scrubs and a naturally fluctuating pond. The water in the pond rises and falls according to the water table. It's considerably lower in summer than in winter, but there's always enough depth of water to sustain pond life. The reserve is always accessible even in the wettest weather due to the boardwalk that skirts the pond and brings you to a viewing platform overlooking the water.

WHERE IS IT?

Heath Field is located between Send Road, Sanger Drive and Wharf Lane.

HOW CAN I ACCESS IT?

You can access Heath Field from Sanger Drive or from Wharf Lane behind the five garages at the end of the road. The Wharf Lane access means that you can include a visit to Heath Field when you are walking the Wey navigation tow path. Cross the canal via the high foot bridge that gives you access to Wharf Lane.

HISTORY OF HEATH FIELD

This site was formally known as Winton's yard, where a number of light industrial units ran businesses. The activities on this area varied from breakdown recovery to portacabin storage. At one time horses and pigs grazed the fields and within living memory there were market gardening activities here.

In 1992 while the current Sanger Drive homes were being built, the then owners Crest Homes were obliged to give Guildford Borough Council (GBC) this land and financial support to turn the area into an amenity for Send residents. This agreement was required when the developers changed the original outline plans of the site and built along most of the canal, limiting public access. After public discussion on the residents' ideas for this area and how it could best be used for all the community, GBC agreed to the current amenity use.

The site is now managed by Guildford Borough Council in conjunction with local residents. Since 1992 the area has seen a lot of change, the construction of the natural pond, boardwalk access and the planting of native trees and scrubs.

The project has had wide support from numerous grant giving organisations and conservation groups.

As at 2015 there are plans to perhaps apply for Nature Reserve status.

WHAT MIGHT I SEE THERE?

In August 2006 Surrey Wildlife trust conducted an ecological survey that showed a total of 98 species of flora on the site, trees, shrubs, grasses reeds, flowers and plants. (For a full list see the end of this document.)

The site is home to numerous birds, and the pond feeds a heron when s/he is allowed to land by the territorial crows which dive bomb him/her and chase it off the area. The usual small animals, mice, moles, and fox frequent the area. The pond is full of life including snails and fish. Deer used to visit but since the adjacent woodland was cut down in 2015 for the Vision Engineering development that may no longer be the case.

WHAT CAN YOU DO HERE?

Walk the boardwalk any time of year and in the dry weather the mown paths. There are picnic tables and benches for relaxation. Children can play and get close to nature in this area. Although the pond is deep in the middle it shelves very gently on all sides and if they get wet feet, a retreat to drier ground is easy. Parental responsibility is always necessary near water.

WHAT ONE YOUNG PERSON SAID OF THIS AREA

'The wildlife area was fantastic it meant that I could safely play outside all summer long with my friends. It allowed me to have the freedom to be away from home and have the type of childhood you hear parents of a previous generation speak of. Thank you mum for helping to make it.'

This is what one girl told her mother as she was off into the wider world of Gap year and University.

FORESIGHT

The creation of this natural habitat was ahead of it time. It happened before the Agenda 22 came into operation (local consultation on conservation issues). We are still ahead of government thinking as they are now talking of the need for wild areas for children to explore in safety and freedom. Our village has this facility. Make good use of it and help to keep it going by getting involved with the regular working parties (see Heath Field contact details under Local Clubs etc.).

FEEDBACK

If you have a view to share or pictures of this site, please email editor@sendparishcouncil.gov.uk.

LIST OF SPECIES FROM 2006 ECOLOGICAL REPORT

Table 1 Species List for Heath Field

Scientific name	Common name	Abundance
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	rare
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	rare
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping Bent	locally frequent
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent-grass	rare
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder	frequent
<i>Alopecurus genticulatus</i>	Marsh foxtail	locally frequent
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Meadow Foxtail	occasional
<i>Anisantha sterilis</i>	Barren Brome	rare
<i>Armoracia rusticana</i>	Horse radish	rare
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat-grass	abundant/dominant
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	rare
<i>Betula pubescens</i>	Downy Birch	rare
<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>	Flowering rush	occasional
<i>Callitriche sp.</i>	Water-starwort	rare
<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	Hedge Bindweed	abundant
<i>Carex hirta</i>	Hairy Sedge	locally frequent
<i>Carex otrubae</i>	False Fox-sedge	locally frequent
<i>Carex riparia</i>	Greater Pond Sedge	locally dominant
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Common Mouse-ear	occasional
<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>	Rigid Hornwort	locally frequent
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping thistle	locally dominant
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	occasional
<i>Crassula helmsii</i>	NewZealand pygmy weed	locally dominant
<i>Cratageous monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	locally frequent
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth Hawksbeard	occasional
<i>Cyperus longus</i>	Galingale	locally abundant
<i>Dactylis glomeratus</i>	Cocksfoot	frequent
<i>Elodea canadensis</i>	Canadian Waterweed	locally frequent
<i>Elytrigia repens</i>	Common Couch	locally frequent
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Great Willowherb	locally abundant
<i>Epilobium palustre</i>	Marsh Willowherb	rare
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	Field Horsetail	frequent
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue	rare
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash	occasional
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	occasional
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	cut-leaved Crane's-bill	occasional
<i>Geranium molle</i>	Dove'sfoot Crane's-bill	rare
<i>Glyceria fluitans</i>	Floating Sweet-grass	frequent
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed	rare
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	Hoary Mustard	rare
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog	abundant
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	rare
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow Iris	occasional
<i>Juncus acutiflorus</i>	Sharp-flowered Rush	occasional
<i>Juncus articulatus</i>	Jointed Rush	occasional
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft rush	frequent
<i>Juncus inflexus</i>	Hard Rush	occasional
<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	Prickly lettuce	occasional
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow vetchling	rare
<i>Lemna minor</i>	Common Duckweed	locally abundant

Scientific name	Common name	Abundance
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass	locally frequent
<i>Lotus pedunculatus</i>	Greater Bird's-foot-trefoil	abundant
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Purple loosestrife	occasional
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black medick	rare
<i>Mentha aquatica</i>	Water mint	locally frequent
<i>Nitella (flexilis)</i>	Stonewort	rare
<i>Nuphar lutea</i>	Yellow Water-lily	rare
<i>Odontites vernus</i>	Red Bartsia	occasional
<i>Oenothera agg.</i>	Evening Primrose	rare
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common Poppy	rare
<i>Papaver somnifereum</i>	Opium Poppy	rare
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	Reed Canary-grass	occasional
<i>Phleum pratense</i>	Timothy	occasional
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common Reed	rare
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	frequent
<i>Plantago major</i>	Greater Plantain	locally occasional
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Smooth Meadow-grass	rare
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Rough Meadow-grass	frequent
<i>Polygonum maculosa</i>	Redshank	occasional
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Creeping cinquefoil	occasional
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn	locally frequent
<i>Quercus robur</i>	Pedunculate Oak	occasional
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	locally frequent
<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	Bramble	locally abundant
<i>Rumex conglomeratus</i>	Clustered Dock	occasional
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock	occasional
<i>Salix alba</i>	White Willow	frequent
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat Willow	rare
<i>Salix cinerea</i>	Grey Willow	frequent
<i>Salix fragilis</i>	Crack Willow	occasional
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	rare
<i>Schoenoplectus lacustris</i>	Common Club-rush	locally abundant
<i>Scirpus sylvaticus</i>	Wood Club-rush	locally abundant
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Common Ragwort	rare
<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	Lesser Stitchwort	rare
<i>Taraxacum agg.</i>	Dandelion	rare
<i>Tragopogon pratensis</i>	Goat's-beard	rare
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	occasional
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	occasional
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Common Reedmace	rare
<i>Ulmus procera</i>	English Elm	rare
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common Nettle	locally abundant
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Germander Speedwell	rare
<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Guelder Rose	rare
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	Tufted Vetch	locally abundant
<i>Vicia hirsuta</i>	Hairy Tare	frequent
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common Vetch	occasional
<i>Vivia sepium</i>	Bush Vetch	occasional

Note The use of the word 'rare' meant that it is not found frequent on this site it does not mean it is a rare plant nationally.