

Some of the Invertebrates seen in The Wilderness



Common Darter Dragonfly
– *Sympetrum striolatum*

A small brown dragonfly species with males becoming bright orange - red at maturity. They are seen throughout the summer until late autumn. They breed in small shallow pools and fly considerable distances. Often seen basking on stones and vegetation.



Ground Beetle, Black Clock
– *Pterostichus madidus*

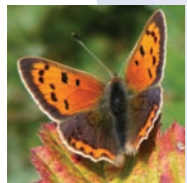
A large black ground beetle with red colouration on its legs. It lives under stones and in grass tussocks. It is a very good predator of slugs and caterpillars and also eats other invertebrates.



Peacock Butterfly
– *Inachis io*

A brightly coloured butterfly with "peacock eyes." Its larval foodplant is nettle and the caterpillars are black and often occur in groups which move around together eating the tops of nettles.

The adult butterfly is easily recognised by its eye markings on the wings. It is a colourful mixture of dark red, with black, blue and yellow. The undersides look very dark to black.



Small Copper Butterfly
– *Lycaena phlaeas*

A small brightly coloured copper and brown butterfly which is highly territorial. Its main larval foodplants are common and sheep's sorrel and occasionally broad-leaved dock.



Gatekeeper Butterfly
– *Pyronia tithonus britanniae*

A small brown butterfly with four orange patches on the wings and two black eyespots, each with two white dots. It occurs along hedgerows and flowery areas of scrub and woodland edges. Its larval foodplants include grasses such as bents, fescues, meadow grasses and couch. It likes taller grass avoiding open grassland with short vegetation.



Shaded Broad-Bar Moth
– *Scotopteryx chenopodiata*

A widespread moth species which occurs across a variety of open habitats. Its larval foodplants include vetches and clovers. Seen July – September.



Latticed Heath Moth
– *Semiothisa clathrata*

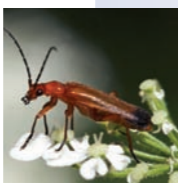
A variable moth species which is found across a range of habitats. Seen flying both by day and by night. Its larval foodplants include lucerne and clovers.



Hoverfly
– *Volucella inanis*

A black and gold banded hoverfly which traditionally had a southern distribution - generally occurring across southern England and being most frequent in south east England. Now becoming more widespread. A notable record that it is found here.

The larvae occur in wasp nests where they live on organic debris. The adults fly from July to September and are attracted to a range of flowers particularly thistles.



Common Red Soldier Beetle
– *Rhagonycha fulva*

A common brown or red coloured beetle which is seen on the tops of hogweed, sometimes in high numbers. It is active during daylight when it hunts for small insects in the tops of flowers.



Meadow Bumble Bee
– *Bombus pascuorum*

Several different bee species occur here including a variety of bumble bees which tend to look furry and are often coloured black with white and yellow stripes. These can be difficult to identify but one type of bumble bee is the meadow bumble bee, an entirely yellow haired bee which is very common.



Gwynne's Mining Bee
– *Andrena bicolor*

There are some 70 different andrena bees. These nest in the ground and in old mortar in walls. They particularly like warm sheltered conditions such as hot sandy banks where they can dig small tunnels for their brood. There may be many present in a suitable bank, but they do not form colonies and do not co-operate with others. They are therefore called solitary bees.



Honey Bee
– *Apis mellifera*

The common honey bee is a smooth brown bee kept in hives but also occurring in the wild. This bee is social - working together in colonies of thousands of others and a queen is present. They will fly up to several miles to locate and harvest nectar and pollen from flowering plants. The Wilderness represents a valuable area for foraging bees as it has a good variety and large concentration of flowering species. They can be seen close up on plants such as white clover and buddleia.



Warley Woods Community Trust



The Wilderness



Why Wilderness is Important

Most areas are managed for tidiness and hence have a lack of biodiversity.

Biodiversity is encouraged by a mix of substrate, structure, position and dry and wet conditions which give a variety of habitats and so support a wide range of species.

Different habitats occur on The Wilderness, these include:-

Open Mosaic Habitats

Particularly valuable due to their transitional nature and the fact that a mosaic of habitats has variety. Bare and sparsely vegetated habitats include plants such as coltsfoot, weld and black medick and are important for a wide range of species such as invertebrates including mining bees and wasps, ground beetles, spiders and hoverflies. Hot sunny banks and sheltered bare conditions are vital for these invertebrates.

Grassland

The flatter area on the west of The Wilderness is becoming colonised by grassland species such as yorkshire fog grass, false oat grass, creeping bent grass, white clover, cats ear, common toadflax and tufted vetch and with young sallow and birch becoming established. Conservation management work will cut and remove scrub and cut the grass to create and enhance a meadow type habitat which will be attractive for butterflies and birds.

Scrub

Regenerating young sallow, birch, buddleia and other trees and shrubs rapidly become established and create dense scrub which if left unhindered ultimately would become woodland. Scrub is valuable as it provides sheltered conditions and food for invertebrates and is a habitat for nesting birds. However it will need to be restricted to prevent the whole site becoming dominated by dense scrub which would mean open conditions and other habitats could be lost.

Pond

A small ephemeral pond was retained between mounds of spoil. However due to the inconsistent nature of the spoil, water was only retained for a temporary period. The landscaping and boardwalk has retained a pond area and hopefully, with attention given to the pond, water will be retained for a longer period. Associated species include hard, soft and jointed rush, although pond vegetation is limited due to the ephemeral nature of the pond.

Wild areas cannot be expected to be tidy!

Some common plants which grow in The Wilderness



Coltsfoot
– *Tussilago farfara*

One of the first spring flowers of the year with bright yellow flowers appearing before the leaves grow. The leaves are soft and velvety underneath and have a resemblance to a colt's hoof print – hence the name. The seed head becomes round and fluffy with white seeds like a small dandelion clock.



Cats Ear
– *Hypochaeris radicata*

A small yellow flowered plant which has low rosette type, jagged and rough hairy leaves. It has a thin stem which can be branched and has small bracts with bright yellow flowers at the ends of the stems. It is sometimes known as the false dandelion because it can look like a small version, but the leaves are not so jagged shaped.



Weld
– *Reseda luteola*

A tall growing plant which has short narrow dark green leaves growing up the stem and very small flowers as an upright flower stalk and which ripens to produce lots of tiny seeds. It can be used as a dye plant giving a yellow colour.



Silver Birch
– *Betula pendula*

Young silver birch trees are growing around the area and can grow very quickly from the very small winged seeds. Although with brown and dark coloured bark when young, they develop lovely white and silver coloured bark with black markings when older.



Goat Sallow
– *Salix caprea*

A rapidly growing shrub or small tree which spreads by tiny windblown fluffy seeds which need wet muddy conditions to germinate. In the early spring the first flower buds are covered with dense soft silky silver hair which gives the name of pussy willow to the tree.



Buddleia
– *Buddleia davidii*

A shrub which originates in China and has spread across many derelict city sites by its very tiny windblown seeds. It grows very quickly and produces long purple (and sometimes white) flowers which are very attractive to bees and butterflies. It is also known as the butterfly bush.



Red/White Clover
– *Trifolium pratense/ Trifolium repens*

A very important plant which is grown by farmers to help improve the soil as it fixes nitrogen from the air and puts it into the ground via nodules on the roots.

White clover is smaller than red and is often found in lawns and low growing.



Yorkshire Fog
– *Holcus lanatus*

Is a common grass which has a soft velvety seed head and velvety grey-green leaves with pink coloured stripes on the stalk bottoms. It is the larval food plant for speckled wood butterflies and it tends to be found in wetter areas.



False Oat Grass
– *Arrhenatherum elatius*

Is a common grass that grows on waste type areas producing a tall light yellow grass like light straw. It can grow up to 1.5 metres tall.



Tufted Vetch
– *Vicia hirsuta*

Grows as a scrambling plant within grassland and has a one sided deep purple flower head and tendrils at the ends of leaves so that it can climb up through grass. It is a legume meaning that, like clover, it can fix nitrogen from the air via its roots to enrich the soil. The dark purple flowers are much loved by butterflies and bees.



Hard Rush
– *Juncus inflexus*

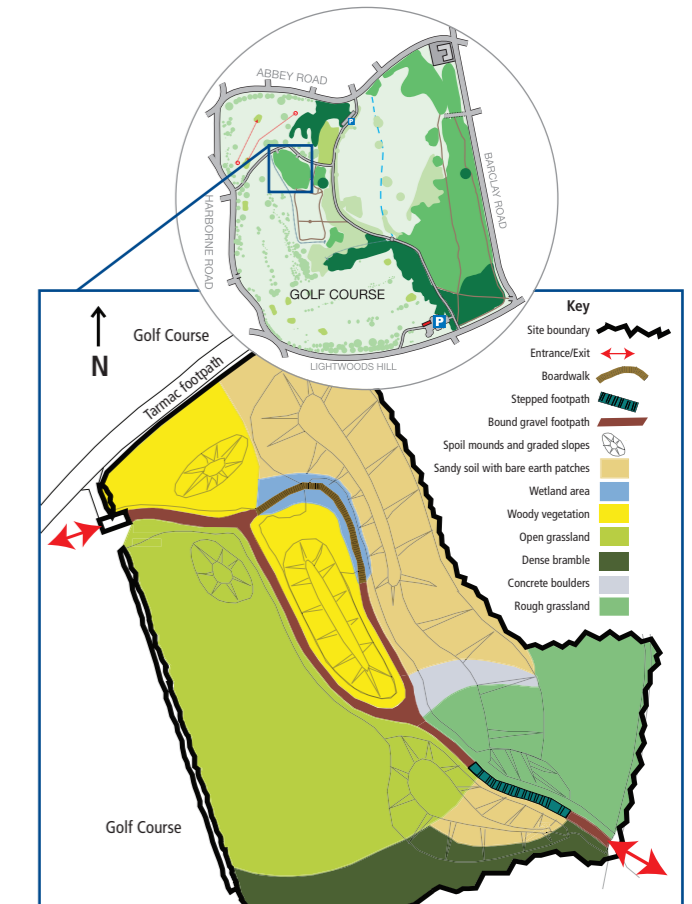
Grows in wet areas and forms a spiky looking tuft with thin spike like stems which are quite grey blue in colour. Inside the stem, if peeled back, it shows pith with gaps along the inside like a little ladder. The loose brown flower head occurs near to the top of the stem.



Soft Rush
– *Juncus effusus*

Like the hard rush, it grows in wet areas as a spiky tuft but with thicker brighter green stems. The greenish-brown loose flower head occurs towards the top of the stem.

Where is The Wilderness?



Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council



CommunitySpaces



Printed on recycled paper

Warley Woods Community Trust

The Pavilion
101 Lightwoods Hill
Smethwick
West Midlands
B67 5ED

Office: 0121 420 1061

Fax: 0121 434 4430

Golf: 0121 429 2440

Email: admin@warleywoods.org.uk

Web: www.warleywoods.org.uk

Leaflet by Bacroom Design 0121 420 3205