

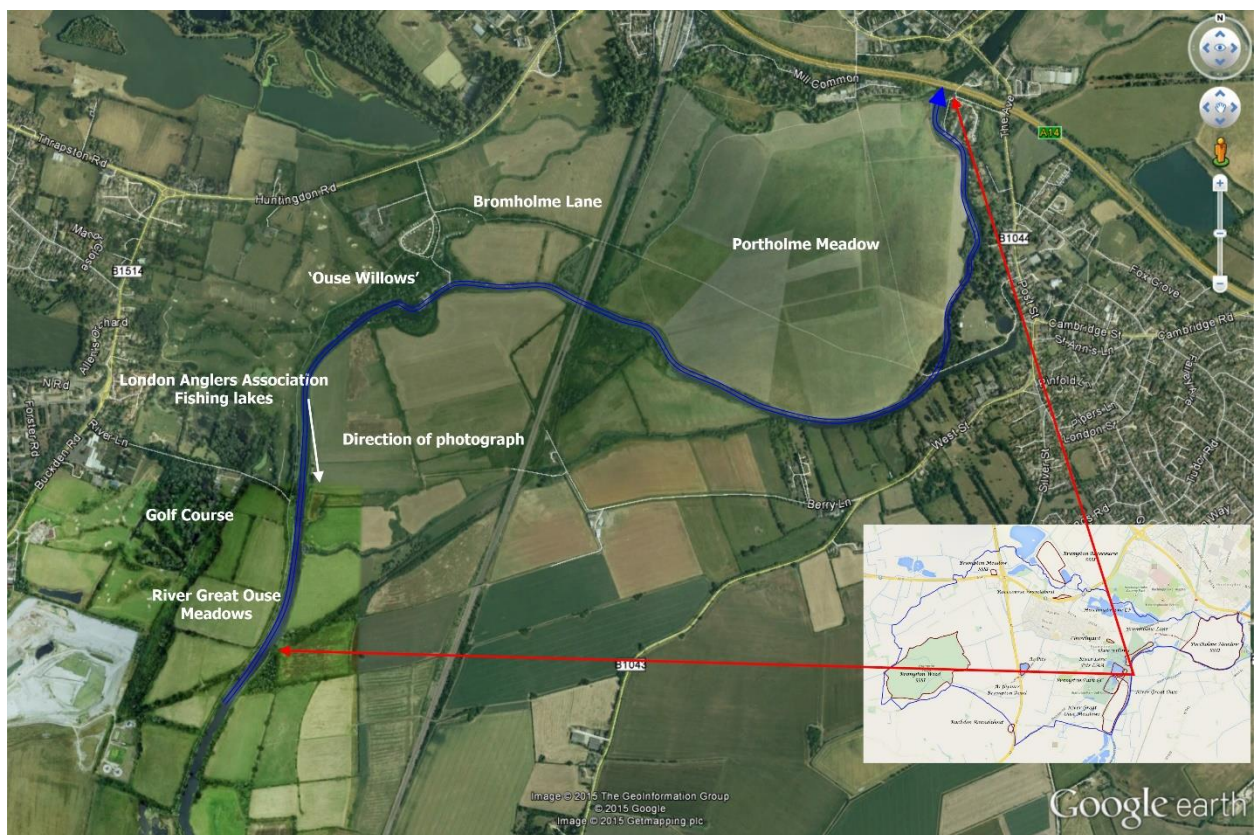


Brampton Biodiversity Project

Hotspot Report, River Great Ouse TL 223707 to TL 242713

[Dr J Patrick Doody, January 2016, email jp.doody@ntlworld.com]

The River Great Ouse forms the major part of the south eastern boundary of Brampton Parish. It flows from the Bedfordshire/Buckinghamshire county border through Bedford, St Neots, Huntingdon, St Ives and on, via the Ouse Washes (an internationally important Special Area of Conservation) into the Wash. Bordering the river there are a number of other Parish 'Hot Spots', these are shown on the location map below.



Location map:

The river is relatively slow moving and has a rich flora and fauna. These include floating water plants such as *Nuphar lutea* Yellow Water-lily, bank side vegetation with *Phragmites australis* Common Reed and a wide variety of animals. This bank side vegetation provides nesting habitat for species such as Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*, a summer visitor from sub-Saharan Africa. Otters inhabit the river. In summer dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies abound. During the course of the biodiversity project, we visited the river on several occasions. The 1st June 2013 was also a Community recording day. The lists below are not exhaustive but provide an indication of the variety of plants and animals living along the river. Together with the other 'Hot Spot' reports, it is clear that the river valley is a major feature with abundant wildlife.



Photograph: the river near River Lane in Autumn

The meadows adjacent to the river are an important habitat. They include Portholme Meadow Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation and a County Wildlife Site (see 'Hot Spot' report River Great Ouse Meadows).

Dragonflies and Damselflies

Aeshna grandis Brown Hawker
Aeshna mixta Migrant Hawker
Calopteryx splendens Banded Demoiselle
Coenagrion puella Azure Damselfly
Enallagma cyathigerum Common Blue Damselfly
Erythromma najas Red-eyed Damselfly
Ischnura elegans Blue-tailed Damselfly
Lestes sponsa Emerald Damselfly
Libellula fulva Scarce Chaser
Platycnemis pennipes White-legged Damselfly
Sympetrum striolatum Common Darter



Photograph: White-legged Damselfly

Additional record *Orthetrum cancellatum* Black-tailed Skimmer Val Perrin 03/07/1994

Photograph: Gatekeeper butterfly

Butterflies

Aglais io Peacock
Aglais urticae Small Tortoiseshell
Anthocharis cardamines Orange Tip
Gonepteryx rhamni Brimstone
Maniola jurtina Meadow Brown
Pararge aegeria Speckled Wood
Pieris napi Green-veined White
Polygonia c-album Comma
Pyronia tithonus Gatekeeper
Vanessa atalanta Red Admiral
Vanessa cardui Painted Lady



Birds recorded along the river

Blackbird *Turdus merula*
Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*
Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*
Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*
Buzzard *Buteo buteo*
Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*
Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*
Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*
Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
Coot *Fulica atra*
Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*
Gadwall, *Anas strepera*
Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*
Great Tit *Parus major*
Great-spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*
Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*
Grey wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
Greylag Goose, *Anser anser*
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*
Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*
Magpie *Pica pica*
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*
Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Oyster Catcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
Red Kite *Milvus milvus*
Redwing, *Turdus iliacus*
Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*
Robin *Erithacus rubecula*
Rook *Corvus frugilegus*
Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
Shoveler *Anas clypeata*
Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*
Teal *Anas crecca*
Tree Creeper *Certhia familiaris*
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*
Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*
Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Two unusual species are Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena* 20/10/2012 (see picture) and Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* 26/12/2010.



Plants

Community recording day 01/06/2013 records collated by Peter Walker

Carex acutiformis Lesser Pond Sedge
Carex riparia Greater Pond Sedge
Cerastium fontanum Common Mouse-ear
Cirsium arvense Creeping Thistle
Cirsium vulgare Spear Thistle
Crepis viscaria Beaked Hawks- Beard
Dactylus glomerata Cocksfoot Grass
Deschampsia cespitosa Tufted hair Grass
Dipsacus fullonum Common Teasle
Epilobium hirsutum Great Willowherb
Galium aparine Cleavers
Geranium robertianum Herb Robert
Glechoma hederacea Ground Ivy
Glyceria maxima Reed Sweet Grass
Hedera helix Ivy
Humulus lupulus Hop
Iris pseudacorus Yellow Flag
Lamium album White Dead-nettle
Nuphar lutea Yellow Waterlily
Phragmites australis Common Reed
Plantago lanceolata Ribwort Plantain
Plantago major Greater Plantain
Poa nemoralis Woodland Meadow Grass
Poa trivialis Rough Stalked Meadow Grass
Polygonum persicaria Common Persicaria
Potentilla anserina Silverweed
Ranunculus acris Meadow Buttercup

Ranunculus repens Creeping Buttercup
Rosa sp. Wild Rose
Rubus sp. Bramble
Rumex acetosa Common Sorrel
Rumex crispus Curled Dock
Rumex sanguinea Red-veined Dock
Senecio jacobaea Common Ragwort
Silene alba White Campion
Sparganium sp. Bur-reed
Taraxacum officinale agg. Dandelion
Trifolium pratense Red Clover
Trifolium repens White Clover
Urtica dioica Stinging Nettle
Veronica chamaedrys Germander Speedwell

Additional species

Lemna gibba Common Duckweed
Artemisia vulgaris Mugwort
Lythrum salicaria Purple Loostripe
Ranunculus scleratus Celery-leaved Buttercup
Lycopus europaeus Gypsywort
Calystegia sepium Hedge Bindweed
Stachys palustris Marsh Woundwort
Euonymus europaeus Spindle
Heracleum sphondylium Hogweed
Crataegus monogyna Hawthorn
Arctium lappa Greater Burdock

Laetiporus sulphureus Chicken of the Woods

Otters

Otters have become much more frequent in recent years. A survey report in 2007 stated “From Brampton to Needingworth there were 8 new positive records, with 4 more of these on the Alconbury and Ellington Brooks, a huge increase on previous years.” Within the Parish these included records in 2002 and 2007 on Alconbury Brook and on the River Great Ouse in 1997, 2002 and 2007. There have been additional sightings along the Ouse between River Lane and Brampton Mill in 2010 (Personal sighting) and near the Mill itself. In addition, a large, presumed male otter was photographed along Brampton Brook in 2014 see Photograph opposite.

