

Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook

Occasional Titbits, issue 57, May 2018

www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

2018 Annual General Meeting - Monday 11 June, 7.30 pm

St Thomas's Church Hall, Ancaster Way (off Birdwood Road), Cambridge CB1 3TT

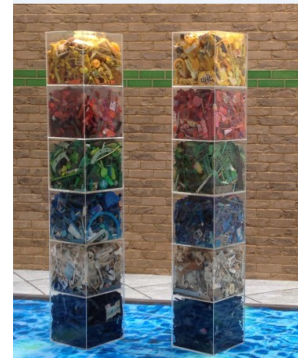
Come and join us at the AGM to hear what we have done over the last year and what we are planning for next year. We are also hoping to have some short talks on on-going activities relating to the Brook and adjacent lakes and will publicise these nearer the time. Refreshments will be provided.

We urgently need some new members for the Committee, particularly one or more people to help with liaison with our various partners e.g. RiverCare, organising participation at events, developing our display and educational materials, and fundraising for new activities. If you have a little time to spare and would like help us with our work, please get in touch.

RiverCare Annual Conference

RiverCare held its annual conference in April in Cambridge this year, in Milton Country Park. It was held jointly with the sister BeachCare programme and had the theme "From Street to Sea". With the current publicity about plastics, it was a timely focus on the important work that volunteers are doing from inland out to the coast to try and stem the tide of plastic and other debris that washes into the ocean. RiverCare and BeachCare groups demonstrated what they are doing and gave us lots of ideas.

A group in Southend-on-Sea worked with an artist last year who produced artworks from the rubbish (see picture). The Grantham RiverCare Group held a competition after one of the litter-picks for people to guess the weight of rubbish collected – we could perhaps do this outside Sainsbury's! The Marine Conservation Society demonstrated the method used to record the quantity and types of debris collected on beaches and some of the inland groups, including us, have volunteered to trial this with inland litter-picks. Altogether, it was an inspirational day.



NatHistFest

We had a stall at the Cambridge Natural History Society's NatHistFest – its 99th Conversazione, in the Department of Zoology on 7 & 8 April – with a display about our activities (see photo) and copies of our leaflets. If you would like some leaflets to give to anyone interested in Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook please let us know – we have plenty!

Birds on the Brook

Holly Anderson reports: Cetti's warbler heard every morning approx 8.30 am 16 - 20 April in scrubland on lakeside opposite entrance to St Bede's Gardens. Willow warbler heard morning of 10 April in same area. Blackcaps and chiffchaffs seen and heard along most of Snakey Path every day from 10 April.

Do let us know what birds and other wildlife you are hearing and seeing. Please email details (date, time, location, species) to Wildlife@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk

Riverfly monitoring

Following recent improvements to the Brook near Sainsbury's, mainly the addition of gravel to raise the stream bed, we were interested to see how wildlife has responded. Surveys of riverfly larvae – which are indicators of river health - are conducted monthly by Vic Smith from Cambridge City Council and a team of volunteers. The first survey in the new gravelly area found numerous riverfly larvae (of the group *Baetidae*, which are a family of mayflies) as well as damselfly larvae and lots of young bullheads (a type of fish). Larger bullheads and minnows were also recorded. All in all this is an initial positive sign, and the Brook will continue to be monitored to track ongoing improvements.

Photos © Berry Mulligan, left: riverfly monitoring kit; right: a bullhead and stickleback



Water voles

Now the weather is warmer the water voles along Cherry Hinton Brook – and the water vole watchers – are more active. Here are some of the recent sightings we've been told about.

- Friday 20 April – 9.30 am – Adult vole feeding on brook just past children's playground towards Sainsbury's.
- Wednesday 2 May – about 12.30 pm – Lamppost 8 – adult investigating a Monster drinks can.
- Monday 7 May – about 2.30 pm. Lamppost 6 – adult swimming towards me. I stood still and it got out of the water right by me and had a good wash.
- Thursday 10 May – about 2 pm. Lamppost 5 – sitting at burrow entrance eating a leaf – on opposite side of brook; photographer had seen a vole on the flow deflector at the beginning of Snakey path by Burnside allotments.
- Friday 11 May – about 3 pm. Lamppost 3 – not seen but definite loud plop that could only have been a vole.

Data protection

To ensure that we comply with the new General Data Protection Regulations, we inform you that you are able to withdraw your consent to be on the Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook mailing list should you wish. Your email address and contact details are currently held in our database to receive our email newsletter and other occasional messages about our activities and your membership. We do not sell or share your details with anyone outside the committee of Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook. Should you have any concerns whatsoever about the way we use your data, or wish to withdraw from our database, please let us know.



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Monica Frisch (editor@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk) 18th May 2018