

# FRIENDS OF THE CARRS NEWSLETTER



Spring 2020

## How to stay safe when exercising during virus restrictions



Stay close to home, don't travel unnecessarily



Only go outside with people from **your household**



Gatherings of more than **two people** in parks or public spaces are banned



Use your garden, if you have one

BBC

### Chairman's Message

This newsletter is appearing as the Coronavirus crisis is gathering momentum. At the moment the park is still open to the public and is clearly providing a welcome but safe change of scene for all of us caught up in the restrictions. Frustratingly, the Carrs is just starting to get over the effects of the winter floods and we have very recently received promises from the council that they will repair the serious collapse of the river bank and its reinforcements by the middle bridge. There are very welcome signs of Spring: we have seen lots of snowdrops which seem to have flourished despite the floods!



There are now daffodils, primroses, celandines and fritillaries on display, whilst there are plenty of

promising signs in the wildflower patch. The apple trees in the orchard have been pruned and we are looking forward to seeing the benefits of Ruth and Chris's expertise.



The frogs have been very busy – there are industrial quantities of frogspawn in the numerous puddles left by the Spring rains.

The spring and early summer are the busiest and in some ways the most rewarding time in the Carrs, but sadly this year the events which we had planned have all had to be cancelled or postponed. We hope to rescue the Dog Day and the guided Ecology Walk later in the year, but there is so much we want to do

and so little we can do now. We recently introduced a regular working party schedule – on the second Wednesday in every month. We have cleared all the brambles and general undergrowth from the original tennis court site where we had planted saplings to commemorate the Queen’s Jubilee and we were delighted to see how many had survived, and even flourished, but we feel a little challenged by the amount of new open space we have created.



We also identified the area beyond Twinnies Bridge up to Styal National Trust as a suitable area for tree planting. We are delighted that ANSA have now planted 1000 native tree whips as part of Cheshire East Council’s commitment to carbon reduction.

So to all our friends and supporters we wish you all a safe spring and summer and look forward to us all getting together again when things improve.

Ian Baillie, Chairman

## Dates for your Diary 2020

We had developed a full schedule of events for this summer, but of course the current pandemic has forced us to cancel them. We hope that maybe we can hold the Dog Day and an Ecology walk led by Prof John Handley in September. Other events usually held on The Carrs have also been cancelled- the parkruns and Cinema in the park. The Britain in Bloom competition has been suspended for 2020. We will be watching Government advice carefully and will not reinstate any events unless they can be held safely. Please follow Government Guidelines and keep yourself and others safe. The childrens playground and outdoor gym are closed and must not be used. At the time of writing parks remain open and we hope very much that The Carrs can remain a place of quiet enjoyment for the people of Wilmslow during this crisis.

Our website [www.friendsofthecarrs.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthecarrs.org.uk) or Facebook or Twitter page will carry details of any updated dates.

## Exotica on The Carrs

There is a wide range of birds that can be seen on The Carrs including crows, magpies, various tits, robins, mallards and gulls flying through. The more observant may well have also seen heron, woodpeckers and treecreepers. Less often seen, but

definitely about, are buzzards and although these are usually high in the sky and heard before being seen they can also be observed at lower levels hunting for food. Kingfishers are also seen along the river by those who know where to look and provide a welcome splash of colour. Owls may often be heard in the evening, but are rarely spotted. Recently however we have seen more exotic birds namely a group of goosanders on the river and since the turn of the year, a pair of green parakeets.



This latter bird has probably come from the flock to be found in the Didsbury/Chorlton area of Manchester although Bowdon is another possible source. Whilst the parakeets provide an exciting flash of colour they are not, of course, native to this country but have adapted so well that they are now a considerable nuisance in and around London and the Home Counties. It will be interesting to see if they remain and how well they adapt to The Carrs. The photograph(s) below show the parakeets on a bird feeder in a garden backing on to The Carrs where an interesting war with resident greater spotted woodpeckers could well develop over the coming months.



## Committee Working Parties

Since the autumn the Committee have been holding monthly working parties on The Carrs. So far these have cleared a thicket of brambles from the Jubilee Wood (planted on the site of the old tennis courts in Jubilee year).



**Emma Houghton celebrating victory over a bramble**

We have also pruned the apple trees and planted bluebells on the slopes behind the Jubilee Wood, Other session concentrated on litter picking, repairing fencing, renewing the barrier around the wild flower area and pruned back some trees that had become a concern.

## **Riverlands Project**

As discussed in previous newsletters there has been concern for some time about the poor quality of water in The Bollin and other rivers throughout the North West. Last year the National Trust set up the Riverlands Project. On the Bollin this aims to tackle the influx of non-native species such as Himalayan Balsam along the river. It will also create new wetland habitat to encourage native wildlife such as brown trout and Atlantic salmon. They are also working with local farmers to manage the surrounding landscapes and livestock with good river health in mind.

We invited Sara Armstrong, Engagement Officer for the Riverlands Project in the North West to our Committee meeting in February to discuss what we could contribute. There are clear opportunities for us to work with them as the project develops and we look forward to a cleaner, healthier Bollin.

## **Balsam**

It looks very unlikely that we will be able to hold our usual Balsam Bashes this year. It would be a pity if the balsam gained ground. If the park remains open how about pulling some Balsam as you walk as long as you can follow Government Guidelines to keep yourself and others safe.

## **Contact Names**

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