

BRIERDENE WILDLIFE SITE - WHITLEY BAY



The Friends of Brierdene began the management of this site on the 11th October 2006, with advice and guidance from Jackie Hunter. Their main intentions were to manage and improve the biodiversity within the site.

In the Lower Dene two wild flower meadows have been created, an area of wild flowers and grasses runs the whole length of the north bank below the treeline, with two new glades at the western end. The Woodland and semi shade areas have been planted with suitable bulbs and wild flowers. Work is underway on improving the Upper Dene with the establishment of wildflowers and grasses and the western and northern edges of the dene top.

At the end of 2014 friends had put in a total of 21,898 hours of which 15,181 hours were spent on conservation and maintenance work, and have raised over £60,000 in grants and awards to support their activities in the Brierdene Wildlife Site. This has allowed us to sow all areas annually for 5 years, plant over 1,900 trees, 4,500 spring bulbs and 7,500 wild flower plugs some of which are grown from seed by our members and local schools.

The site has been awarded and maintained a Green Flag Community Award for the last three years; we were one of only 160 sites in the UK to receive this award in 2014.

In 2007 we started to keep a record of all sightings of Birds, Butterflies, Bumblebees and Ladybirds. The table below shows the increase in numbers recorded from 2007 to 2014.

Species	Total number species in 2007	Total number species as of 31 st December 2014
Birds	95*	124
Butterflies	14	21
Bumblebees	3	10
Ladybirds	2	6

* This is the total number of species that had been recorded in the Brierdene by Nick Dales

We carry out three annual surveys; the bird survey was commenced in 2007, the butterfly survey commenced in 2011 and the bumble survey commenced in 2013. The increase in density or numbers is shown in the table below.

Species	Results
Birds	Density increased by 71% from 2007 to 2014
Butterflies	Density increased by 88% from 2011 to 2014
Bumblebees	Density increased by 38% from 2013 to 2014

The above figures appear to show that the conservation work we were carrying out in the dene was having an effect on the biodiversity of the area, new species were being recorded and the density of some species was increasing.

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In 2011 we recorded all species that were found in the dene if we could name them correctly; not being experts in any field of biology we were unable to name or even recognise different species.

In 2013 with a Heritage Lottery Award we were able to carry out two scientific surveys, one into moths with Tom Tams and the other into mosses, lichens and liverworts with Dr Janet Simpkin. We also were able to run a Bio Blitz in the dene, with help from the staff from E.R.I.C. (Environmental Records Information Centre), at the Hancock Museum. The results of the surveys and the bio blitz were astounding, and even the experts were surprised at the number species that were found.

The lower plant life figures also include 39 additional lichens and liverworts which were recorded by Dr Sean O'Leary British Bryological Society recorder for vc24 Bucks, who carried out a survey in the dene during his holiday in the Northeast.

BIO BLITZ

Over 200 new species were found and recoded

MOTH & MINOR SURVEY

101 species were found and recorded including some Northumberland rarities.

LOWER PLANT LIFE (Mosses, Lichens & Liverworts)

115 species were found and recorded including one new and the second recording of a Lichen in Northumberland.

Total Number of Recorded Species in the Brierdene Wildlife Site

Numbers correct on the 31/12/2014

Groups	Number
Bats	2
Birds	124
Bugs & Beetles	23
Bumblebees	10
Butterflies	21
Crustaceans.	5
Dragonflies	3
Fish and Amphibians	3
Flies	10
Fungi	10
Harvestman	2
Ladybirds	6
Mammals	7
Molluscs	3
Lichen, Liverworts Mosses and Slime Moulds	115
Moths & Miners	107
Plants, Bushes & Trees	296
Spiders	20
Wasps	3

A list of individual species that have been recorded in the Brierdene Wildlife Site is attached.