

## Newt Survey 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April 2016-04-16

### Survey

Our charity has had a long relationship with this site. We have funded a survey each year since 1999 and we have data going back to 2002.

We conducted a survey this year. The methods we used were:- torch survey, egg search, bottle trap, netting survey. The temperature was 5 degrees. Spring is later this year.

Main Pond	Torch	Egg	Bottle	Netting	Total
Main Pond	GCN's 1 Male, 6 female Smooth 4 male, 12 female, 2 immature.	GCN egg present	10 traps GCN 2 male Smooth 2 male, 2 female	GCN present	(torch) 7 GCN's  (Bottle) 2
Eastern Cutting	4 x 2m sections surveyed 4 female GCN's 4 Male GCNs 1 Male smooth 2 Female Smooth				(Torch) 8 GCN's

### Report on the site

The site looked good on the whole and had clearly benefitted from the work that our Charity had done over a year and a half ago. What was pleasing was that the careful tree work we had done had lightened the ponds. The greater amounts of light had increased the Spring flora with Cuckoo Flower and Hedge garlic very visible.

The sculpting we did on the Eastern Cutting had resulted in marginal pond vegetation which provides egg laying material on site for the newts. The torch surveying of the Eastern Cutting revealed a good number of Great Crested newts and smooth newts and we watched egg laying and mating behaviour from both GCN's and Smooth newts.

The main pond had benefitted from a good amount of rain.

The hedge that Stroud Valleys Project laid is looking good and is beginning to regenerate.

The dead hedge we made at the Eastern cutting is also beginning to shoot.

### Work that needs to be done by workers with newt licences

Trees and bramble are beginning to encroach the main pond and will need to be removed, to ensure that the pond can be surveyed and accessed.

The dipping platform is probably coming to the end of its life and needs to be replaced. We had to warn the people who came on the survey not to stand on it for fear of damaging it further, and damaging themselves (falling in). Some of the planks lifted up as people stood on it.

The newt barrier is still broken. This is a shame because the newts are adventurous and can leave the site and get run over.

The area around the main pond site suffers from dog mess (looked like one dog and one owner not picking up). We flagged the mess with canes so that children didn't stand in it and there were 5 flags.

Fly tipping is becoming a real issue on the site, again. The ponds and the cuttings were largely clear when Stroud Valleys Project left the site.

There is substantial garden waste on the banks of the Eastern cutting. If this continues unchecked it will avalanche into the Eastern Cutting and pollute the pond.

There is a tree down at the end of this pond and this prevented us from surveying this end of the pond.

There is a great deal of fly tipping further up in these cuttings at the back of the houses in Midland Road. This needs to be cleared and disposed of, ideally by people with newt licences because you will undoubtedly come across Great crested newts under the rubbish.

I attach some pictures so that you can see the scale of the problem.



The Eastern cutting. The sculpting of the bank has been naturally colonised by pond vegetation. This provides egg laying material for female newts. This is very pleasing to see.



There is substantial amount of garden waste being tipped down the banks of this pond.



Garden waste by the Eastern cutting.



Garden waste by the Eastern Cutting



There is a tree down on the Eastern cutting which prevented us from surveying this end of the pond.



An electric fan, amongst other things.





A large amount of soil.



Carpet/underlay



Carpet/Underlay



Child's table



Dipping platform, probably at the end of its life.



Trees and bramble beginning to encroach on the main pond.