

## Guppy's Pond Management Committee

### Annual Report 2013/14

The committee has met six times in the past year to review the status of Guppy's Pond and the associated area owned by the Parish.

The year started with considerable concern about illegal fishing. It was not clear whether this was by youngsters enjoying an open-air activity or of more concern, professional adults aiming to catch and remove valuable specimens. A CCTV image had been reported from a nearby property, which showed adult activity very early in the morning with unknown persons appearing to be carrying large containers of water, presumably including fish. Following much publicity, the involvement of the local police and the improvement of some barriers to the water, this apparently illegal activity has not been repeated to our knowledge. We hope that the problem has ceased but we will keep an active state of vigilance.


We have organised three work parties during the year. These have been aimed at keeping the area clear of obstructions to access areas for walkers, as well as one underwater obstruction, which was endangering maintenance boating operations. Our aim is always to minimise maintenance to provide the maximum habitats for wildlife, whilst making access as easy and pleasurable as possible. To this end we have recently opened up a new viewing area to the water and we intend to build a simple low cost bench seat within the opened area, for visitors to enjoy the ambience.

It is interesting to note how popular the Hinton Hedges Road (track) has become with walkers to enjoy the immediate area as well as to access Fairchild's Meadows. During the last winter this has become very muddy due to the increased traffic and prolonged rainfall. We are hoping that it will soon dry out and become more pleasant underfoot, or we may have to consider some permanent improvement to the surface. There have been some occasional problems with dog fouling along and around the pathway, but this is not now a regular problem and the dog walkers are thanked for their consideration.

A boating day was again held in September last; it was a good success with around 20 visitors enjoying the experience and waterfowl and kingfishers were seen by visitors.

One notable innovation last year was the manufacture and securing of a memorial to Nicholas Guppy, who was originally responsible for the development of the conservation area, as well as the naming of the Guppy fish. The memorial is a stainless steel image of the Guppy fish in the form of a wind vane. It is now sited on the island in the middle of the lake. Our thanks go to John Burgess for the provision of the materials and the manufacture and fixing of the memorial.

We hope that parishioners are happy with the state of the pond area and as always we appreciate constructive comments and in particular, assistance at our work parties. New volunteers are most welcome and our Haddenham Parish Council clerk will be pleased to provide more information.

  
15/4/15