

# Managing for Nature

## This issue:

Pond creation and restoration

River restoration update

Nature Nurture Volunteer Group

Managing your own space for nature

## Welcome to our spring newsletter

It may have been a rather soggy start to the year, but as the days start to lengthen and the first bulbs start to emerge, the exciting transition into spring is here.

In this newsletter, we're sharing updates on the work that has taken place over the winter, our plans for the spring months ahead, and how you can get involved.



## Pond creation across the city with ParkWork

Despite the cold and wet start to the year, volunteers rolled up their sleeves in January to create two new wildlife ponds at Arnall Drive Open Space and Crow Lane Open Space.

The Managing for Nature Project has worked alongside volunteers to create a total of seven new ponds across the city. They will be valuable habitats for wildlife and beautiful places for people to enjoy as nature moves in.

## Pond restoration

Managing for Nature Roving ranger Nicky has been busy working alongside volunteers to care for existing ponds across three sites.

At Okebourne Road, volunteers cleared bramble and young trees to improve access and help the pond retain water into summer. With its rich aquatic plants, it should soon be alive with tadpoles.

At Kings Weston Estate, the group joined the Parks FixIt team and the Kings Weston Action Group to restore two ponds in the Echo woodland removing scrub, clearing silt, and installing protective fencing.

Ashton Court ranger Tom Thorn has been working with volunteers to dig out the historic Clarcken Coombe pond in the estate. This pond was extremely silted up and holding almost no standing water. The newly restored pond will be left to naturally re-colonise with aquatic and marginal plants, and will now provide an improved habitat for amphibians and invertebrates.



## Inspired to get involved in caring for the new ponds?

This spring, we will enhance some of the ponds with native aquatic plants.

The plants will help to regulate the nutrient levels in the water and provide cover for breeding amphibians and insects that rely on water for part or all of their lifecycle.

Joe from ParkWork will be leading regular pond maintenance sessions to ensure the new ponds are cared for.

If you'd like to know more, contact Joe at [joe.mckenna@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:joe.mckenna@bristol.gov.uk) or by phone on 07469400689



*"Now, our pond is just over 3 months old there's Pond skaters, Water Boatmen, Marsh Springtails, several species of algae and all sorts of seedlings emerging from the bare soil around it."*

(Dylan - Horfield Common)



Building a dead hedge with BART and Nature Nurture volunteers at Manor Woods Valley January 26.

## River Restoration Update

Bristol Avon Rivers Trust (BART) have worked with the Manor Woods Valley Group to restore sections of the Malago River in South Bristol. Together, the team have:

Coppiced riverside vegetation to increase sunlight and encourage plant growth, added woody material to the river to create varied habitats and helped slow water flow and support natural flood management.

Caroline, a River Restoration Project Manager at (BART) talks through some of the inventive ways that BART, and the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority are supporting nature in the Malago.

## Nature Nurture update from Roving Ranger Nicky

The Nature Nurture group showed amazing resilience this very wet season. Many of our sessions focused on helping freshwater habitats thrive, ponds, ditches, streams, and the special spaces along their edges. By teaming up with other groups, we were able to make an even bigger difference.

The variety of tasks also gave volunteers plenty of chances to learn new skills and enjoy the satisfaction of seeing real improvements for wildlife.



Funding secured by

**WEST** MAYORAL  
OF ENGLAND COMBINED  
AUTHORITY





*"I am meeting people from different backgrounds, and we are making green spaces better for people and nature"*

Libby - Volunteer with Nature Nurture

## Nature Nurture update continued:

At Manor Woods Valley, volunteers built a dead hedge to protect the Malago stream bank. With this protection, wild garlic and other damp-loving plants should soon flourish again.

Along Brislington Brook, volunteers coppiced and cleared scrub, allowing more sunlight to reach the ground and encouraging a richer understorey.

On Lawrence Weston Moor, volunteers cut back bramble and saplings along ditch edges to support water voles by encouraging grasses and aquatic plants to grow.

A huge thank you to all the brilliant volunteers who made this winter's work possible. I'm excited to see what we can achieve together this spring

If you are interested in volunteering for nature and would like to know more about what kind of things you might be doing and what you might get from the experience, then we invite you to take a look at [Libby's story](#).

Libby takes part in nature restoration work across the city with both the Nature Nurture and the Stoke Park ranger groups.

If you would like to join Nicky, Libby and the Nature Nurture volunteers you can sign up on our [Can Do page here](#).

Call to action: Wondering what to do with your garden or allotment waste? Why not create a dead hedge?

Last month, the M4N team spent a wonderful (and very wet!) morning at Manor Woods Valley working with nature Nurture volunteers and Bristol Avon Rivers Trust to build a dead hedge. A dead hedge is a simple structure made from fallen or cut branches and trimmings. It's an excellent way to reuse natural materials to create a sustainable, attractive barrier that also provides brilliant habitat for insects, small mammals, and fascinating fungi.

Team Wilder have some great guidance on [natural barriers](#); with all the information you need to get started.

Finally – just for fun.

Many of you already enjoy using bird ID apps, but if you haven't tried one yet, now is the perfect time to give it a go. Here is a short [Merlin recording](#) from a recent morning walk at Badocks Wood – there are seven different species in the clip. How many can you identify?

Wishing you all a wonderful spring,

Bristol Avon Rivers Trust  
and communities along the  
Bristol Avon rivers



Funding secured by

**WEST** MAYORAL  
OF ENGLAND COMBINED  
AUTHORITY

