

## **BODENHAM LAKE DIARY - SPRING AND SUMMER 2020 – Wendy Rushton**

A great start to Spring. On 1<sup>st</sup> April a mother otter and her two kits made a daytime appearance at the Lake.

Although the Lake was out of bounds to visitors and volunteers, the cameras kept recording as wildlife was encouraged to emerge during the day undisturbed.

The video can be seen on YouTube.

<https://youtu.be/3MKhx3HdjQU>

The young otters were filmed at night playing by the lake

<https://youtu.be/BjNB2FG5Mbs>



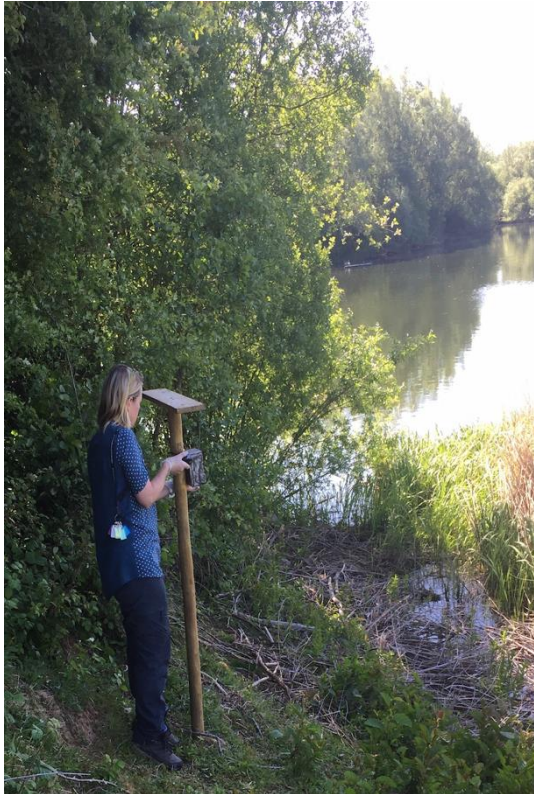
A sparrow hawk was filmed flying through the clearing. The first capture by the cameras.





Lockdown restrictions forced the camera team to split up into two pairs, taking it in turns to monitor cameras at fortnightly intervals.

In May, Sam positioned a camera in front of the old hide, whilst Wendy inspected the camera at reprofile area 2. We decided the waters were too high to reach without waders.



Sue and Viv were photographed on their patrol further around the wildlife area. And Viv checked a camera.





## **A SUCCESS STORY**

The reprofiling of the Lake to provide a variety of habitats for wildlife, especially the birds, was a success.

For the first time, a family of oyster catchers bred here. At the lakeside the oyster catcher was filmed feeding on freshwater mussels, then bringing them home to baby on one of the newly created islands

<https://youtu.be/7BICOahBIYg>





**Beautiful baby**



**Home Schooling**



These lovely photos were taken by Mick Colquhoun.



The oyster catchers were one of several species who colonised the new areas of sand and gravel created by the re-profiling; more than were recorded in previous years.



And the new islands at the far end of the lake were also popular.



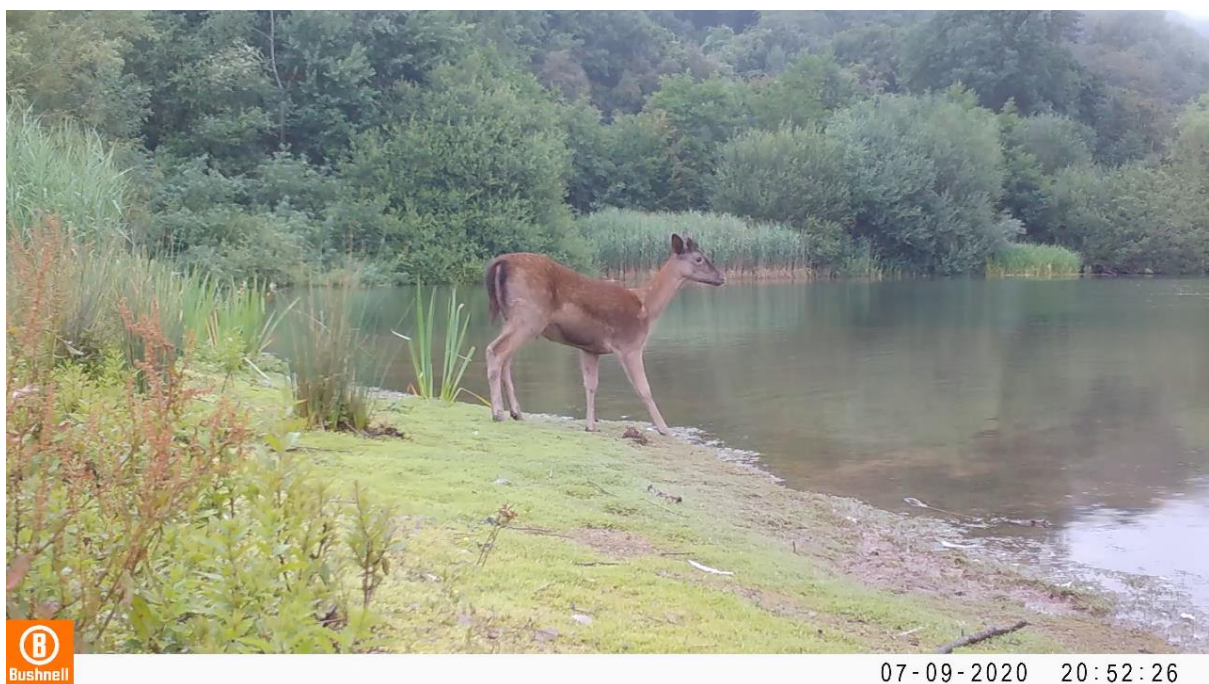


The extended beach at the very end of the lake in the wildlife refuge area attracted a variety of birds and animals.

Several greylag geese raised their young on the islands.



In the evening groups of fallow deer came down to drink and browse by the lakeside.

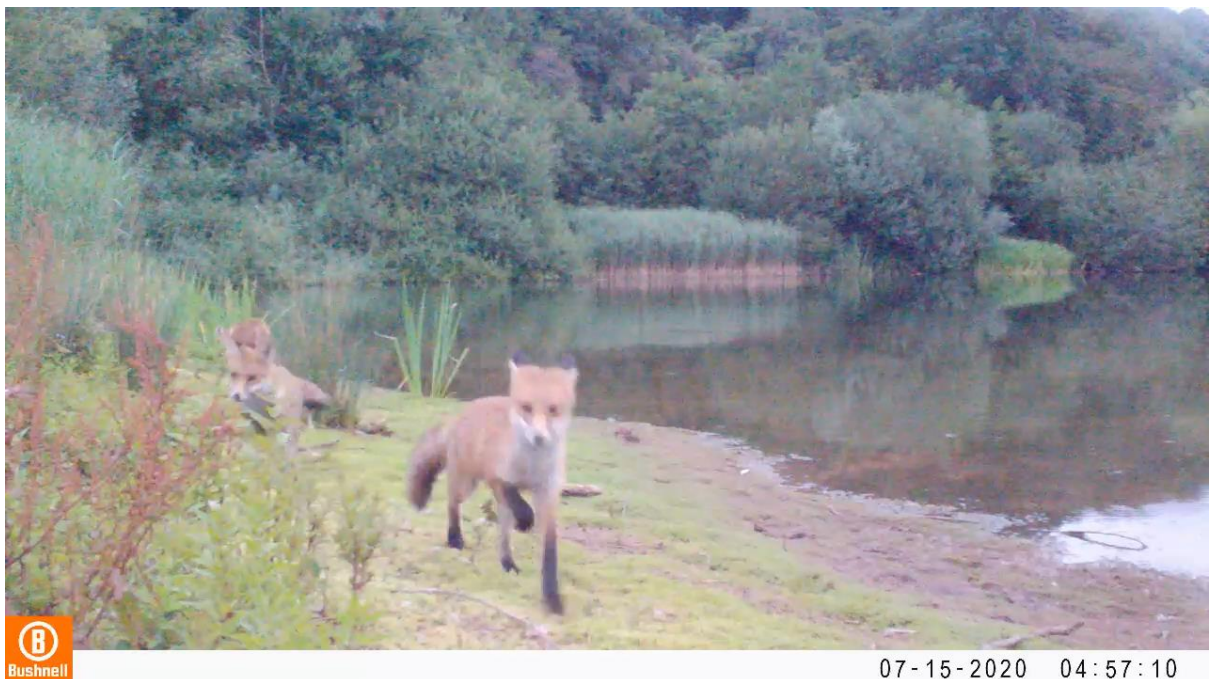




A large dog otter met some fallow deer.



And three fox cubs had a game of chase .



Two videos of their games have been posted on You tube.

[https://youtu.be/9Yfo9FrLp\\_c](https://youtu.be/9Yfo9FrLp_c)

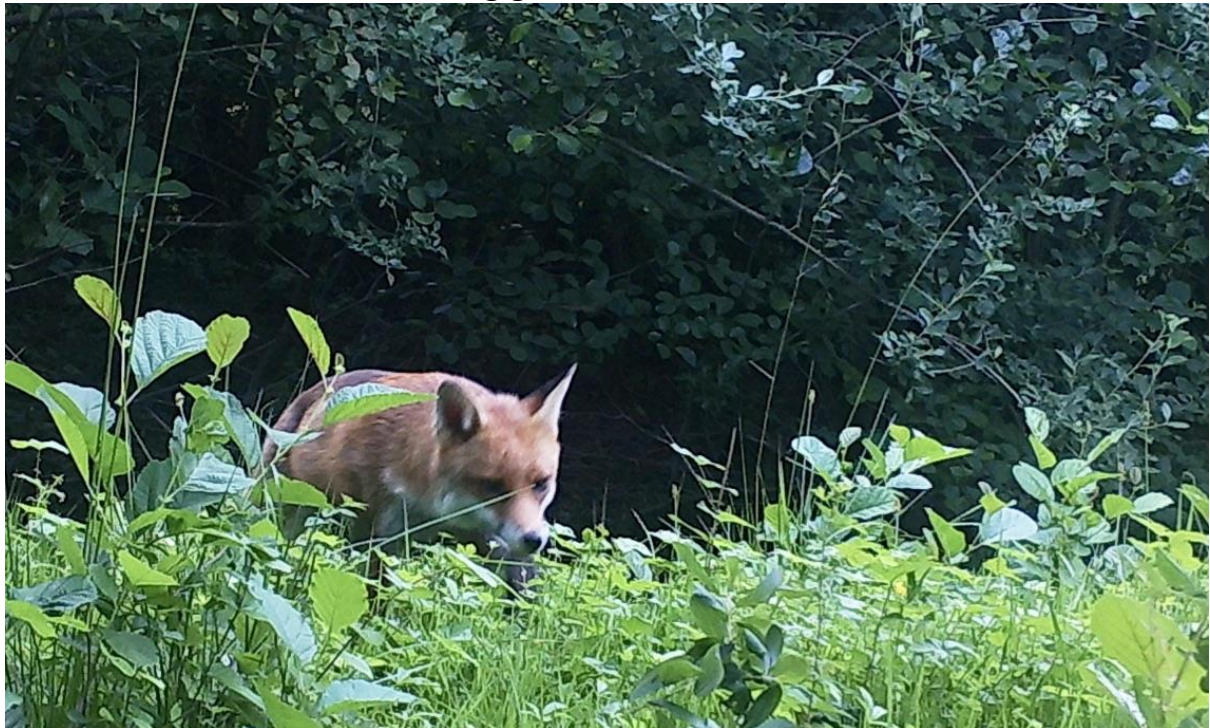
<https://youtu.be/tBC3M3pmGqE>



A buzzard found a meal in the dried-up pond next to the wooded path in the refuge area.



This was also a favourite hunting ground for the fox

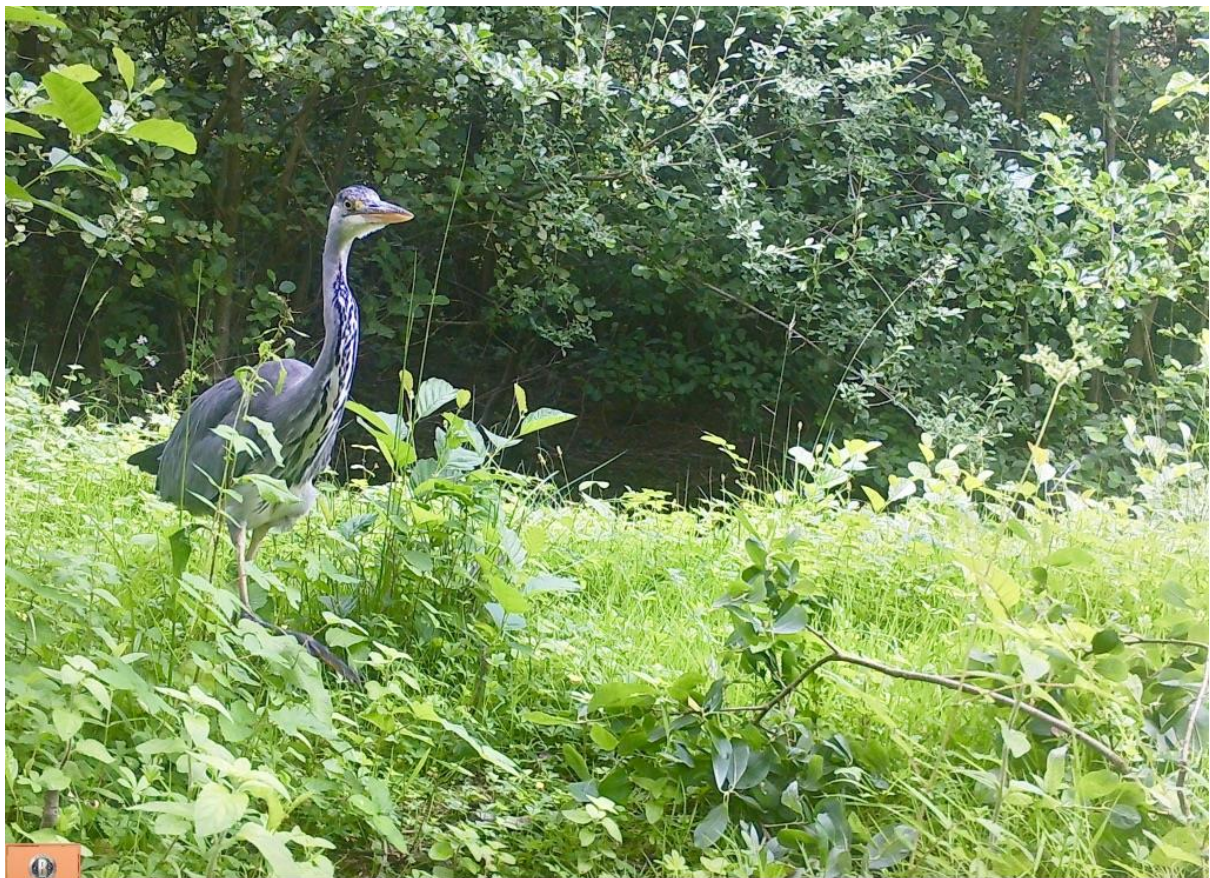




Muntjac deer were regular visitors.



And a heron was filmed here as well.



TROPHY CAM

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June and July were busy at the Lake

A flash of blue – kingfisher



And a lovely pair of legs on a heron





A peaceful place to relax.



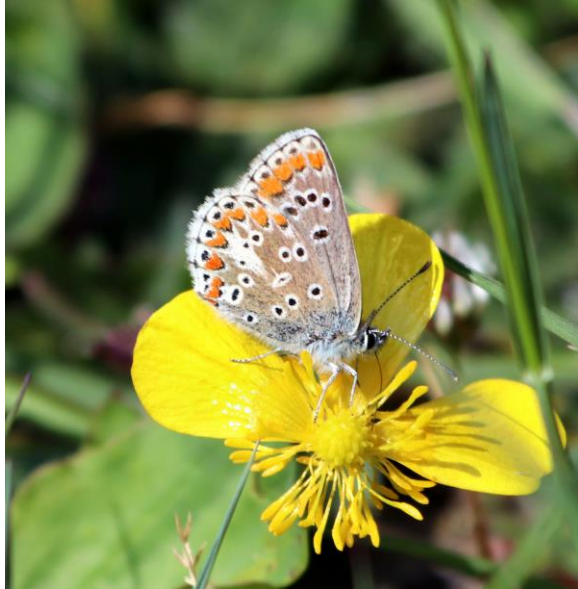
Newly created reedbeds and beaches were popular. Resident Canada and greylag geese, together with mandarin ducks were regular visitors.



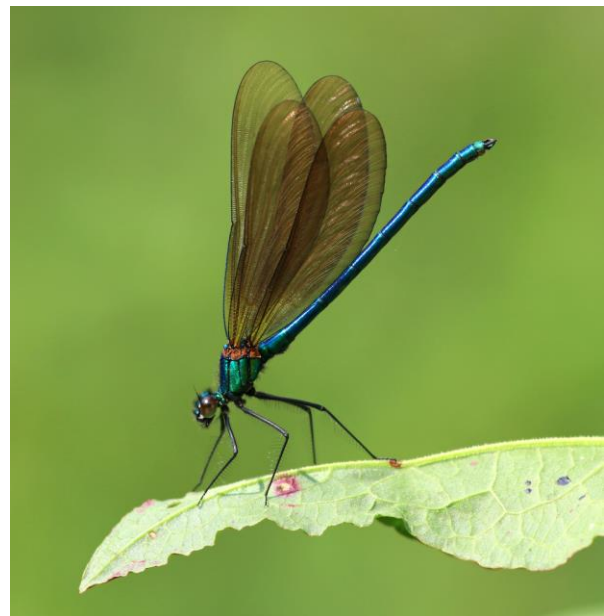


### **Flowers, butterflies , birds and a snake**

Trevor Hulme, HWT warden at the Lake, made regular patrols during the summer , taking some lovely photos during his bird and butterfly surveys. This brown argus was the first record of this species here.



Trevor photographed a hobby and oystercatcher in flight, and this beautiful demoiselle on a leaf.



Volunteers were able to return in the summer. The camera team took some lovely photos.





Purple loosestrife and yellow iris – Samantha Cox



Hummingbird hawk moth feeding on buddleia– Sue Griffin





Grass snake and apple blossom- Viv Quinn





Fallow deer were usually filmed at night, but sometimes they emerged into the wooded area of the refuge during the afternoon.



And a doe came here with her fawn at dawn.





Not every day was sunny! This heron looked a bit miserable and lonely, but made a good photo in the rain.



Birds soon came back to the island when the weather improved. At least seven herons, numerous cormorants, Canada geese, swans and mallard ducks were spotted.





On many evenings during spring and during the summer, a herd of fallow deer came down to the lakeside to browse and drink. A short video can be viewed on You tube. The large dog otter can be seen briefly by the lakeside.

[https://youtu.be/VbICI\\_X\\_KOI](https://youtu.be/VbICI_X_KOI)



Due to the extensive flooding in autumn 2019 the reprofiling work had to stop. Contractors returned in September 2020 to complete the works to enhance the habitat for wildlife. The next diary will show the transformation from former gravel pit to wildlife reserve.



Photo  
by Sue  
Griffin.