

Home & Garden

A Summer of Delights and Surprises

Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve had a very encouraging summer. We now have almost 1,400 active members, local people who have allocated at least three square yards of their back gardens or allotments for some kind of wildlife-friendly use, e.g. pollinator-friendly plants, wildlife ponds, hedgehog homes, insect lodges, bird feeders, etc.

Our Citizen Science Group tells us that the average allocation of garden / allotment space per person is about 3.65 square yards. That means we have now exceeded our original target of creating a community nature reserve of 5,000 square yards, the area equivalent to a full-sized football pitch. This achievement is not only encouraging, but a testament to the amazing cooperation and support we have received from the Felixstowe community. Thank you!

Alongside our growth this summer, we have also been encouraged to learn how our members have organised plant-swap schemes among themselves. This has been very interesting to learn about, particularly when we hear about the walks people make across town carrying bags of plants, pond weed and materials for hedgehog homes.

These walks have inspired many new questions, which we have been happy to try and answer. Walks have also inspired some of our members to recall childhood memories. Some have turned those recollections into creative writing. Others have found their plant-swap-inspired walks have led them to produce new painting and drawing. New photography has also been produced. Who knew that plant swapping across our Community Nature Reserve could be so fruitful?



Another benefit of these walking expeditions across town has been to stimulate new questions for our Citizen Science Group to investigate. The first such question still remains one of our favourites. It was 'Why are stinging nettles so successful?'. It's a great question! Soil samples show that stinging nettles grow most often in phosphate-rich soil. Often, that phosphate comes from various kinds of fertiliser which may have seeped out from local gardens or allotments.

To learn more about the work of
Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve, please visit:
www.facebook.com/felixstowecommunitynaturereserve

Submitted by Dr Adrian Cooper



T: 01394 766773
M: 07788 233054
M: 07572 452858

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