



Observations of Steart Marshes

Wildlife Update

Otter

Local WWT volunteer Nicole Wigley dedicated numerous hours and weeks until finally all the hard work paid off when she managed to obtain this fantastic shot of a dog otter on the reserve. A 10 second video was obtained which can be enjoyed in full on our Twitter page

<https://twitter.com/WWTSteart>



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Otter surveys are carried out on a monthly basis to keep us informed of how they move around the reserve.

New Sedge



As a result of changing the management of the Stockland Marshes area of the reserve, with increased water levels for prolonged periods of time. There's a noticeable change in the vegetation as more marsh species start to colonise. New Sedge for the site was found in Stockland by our Reserves Assistant Chloe Date and local WWT volunteers Richard and Becky Foyle/ The sedge is found around pond margins and damp areas, flowering from

midsummer to autumn. It has distinctive flat and oval shaped nuts, which are found at the end of branches formed into a recognisable umbrella shape. The record has been sent to the BSBI for inclusion within the Somerset Record Database.

Birds

As we progress into the winter months, although not as cold as expected there has been a huge increase in birds activity on the site. Joe Cockram our new Reserves Assistant has been employed to monitor the wintering bird activity as part of the agreement WWT have with the EA. Some of the spectacles that Joe has been lucky enough to witness to date are;

328 Black-tailed Godwit feeding on large worms in lagoons. **320** Curlew roosting, **3500** Dunlin roosting when Bridgwater Bay and River Parrett are flooded, **640** Golden plover, **1500** Lapwing, **1300** Redshank roosting.

980 Teal, **800** Wigeon both feeding on seeds of saltmarsh plants, Wigeon also seen grazing grass of the sea wall.

3 Merlin, **7+** Short-eared Owls

Cattle Egret feeding with livestock on Stockland (Below)



Purple Heron (first for Steart Peninsula)



Spoonbill (seen from Quantock View Hides)

Permit Paths

The permit paths were locked Friday 20th November, permits can still be obtained (£2 per applicant) from the WWT Steart Marshes office. Please contact the site manager, Alys Laver;

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