



Barkbooth Lot Nature Reserve Project Update 2016

Barkbooth Lot ... small but perfectly formed! With terrain ranging from rough fell land, to grassland, wetland and wooded areas, there is always something to do to carefully manage and maintain this hidden gem of a nature reserve.

Many tasks are on-going, but last year there was a particular focus on the control of non-native species in Low Fell Plantation, an area added to Barkbooth Lot in 2007.

Walls and fences have been maintained, keeping grazing stock in the right place and to keep deer out of the woodland. Despite this, deer invariably manage to get into the woodland, so staff and volunteers have to spend time

'sweeping' the nature reserve with a line of people to herd them towards an exit ... not an easy task given the terrain and the size of the site!

Species surveys were carried out, highlighting the abundance of wildlife at Barkbooth Lot – damselflies and dragonflies, particularly around the tarns, glow worms and even the rare medicinal leech. Sadly, the recent trend of warm, wet winters and poor summers has resulted in a marked decrease in butterfly numbers – further surveys will be carried out in 2017, when we all hope to see a reversal in this trend.

Other plans for 2017 include further control of non-native

species in Low Fell Plantation, and to thin the scrub on Barkbooth Lot. Work will continue to gradually restore Howbarrow Meadow by adding further to the species of this grassland area. Keeping the bracken under control is a continuous requirement, so again there will be bracken bashing. Trees will be inspected to ensure safety and work will take place as required, although dead wood is purposely left to create habitats for invertebrates and birds.

Your fundraising efforts really make a difference to the amount of work we can undertake at Barkbooth Lot, and helps us keep this remarkable area open for everyone to enjoy.

Thank you again for your fantastic support!