

Childwall Golf Club Ecology & Sustainability Newsletter February 2025

“From sustainability and conservation of wildlife, to health and well-being for all ages, to jobs and economic value through local supply chains, ***golf is good for nature and communities***” (Golf Environmental Organisation (GEO) Foundation)

Wildlife News

- **The Winter season has brought a few migrants to CGC** – Redwings and Fieldfares have been spotted on the golf course along with many of our resident birds. Also, Bramblings and Redpolls have been seen at the feeding station and around the course



Bramblings near the feeding station on 12th January

Left: Male

Right: Female



Redpolls near the feeding station on 10th January

Left: Male

Right: Female



Redwing at the 14th hole on 12th January



Meadow Pipit in the trees between the practice area and the 12th on 20th November (2024)



Fieldfare (for more information see "Birdie of the Month 13 – the Fieldfare")

Pictures courtesy of Steve Young



Great Spotted Woodpecker at our bird feeding station

- **Lichens** – you may have noticed an abundance of lichens on trees around the golf course.
- A **lichen** is formed from algae and a fungus in a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship. The fungi benefit from the carbohydrates produced by the algae by photosynthesis. The algae benefit by being protected from the environment by the filaments of the fungus, which also gather moisture and nutrients from the environment. The fungus provides a stable "anchor".
- *Hypogymnia physodes* and *Ramalina farinacea* are two of the commonest lichens found on trees.
- **Lichens** are good indicators of **air pollution**. This is great news as it means the **air is very clean around CGC.**



Ramalina farinacea has branching 'fronds' and looks like a tiny bush

Hypogymnia physodes (called 'Monk's Hood lichen') is flatter and has leaf-like lobes

Pictures courtesy of John Fox



Wildflower Zones

- Due to the unsightly nature of the wildflower zones, we have decided to concentrate our efforts on one area.
- We will be maintaining the wildflower zone on the 12th only. This needs to be replenished with seeds. If members have any wildflower seeds they would like to donate to enhance this area, please contact Carl, Indira Maddison or John Fox
- Josh Styles, our local Ecologist, is due to visit CGC in the Spring and will advise and help us to improve our wildflower zone on the 12th.

CGC appears on BBC North West Weather



Childwall Golf Club appeared on BBC North West Weather last month. The photo was taken by one of our members from the 2nd fairway and submitted to the 'Weather Watchers' link at the BBC

This is the original photo



Birdie of the Month 13

'The Fieldfare'

- Our 'Birdie of the Month' is the Fieldfare. Fieldfares can be seen during the winter months and many have been spotted around CGC. You may find them in flocks with other thrushes like Song Thrushes and Redwings.
- You can access this information on the Childwall Golf Club website ([Ecology](#))



Birdie of the Month 13

Fieldfare

The **Fieldfare** (*Turdus pilaris*)

Fieldfares are grey-headed, chestnut-backed large thrushes, much like a Mistle Thrush in size, shape and behaviour.

They stand very upright and move forward with purposeful hops.

They are very social birds, spending the winter in flocks of anything from ten or twenty to several hundred strong.

Fieldfares can be seen around the golf course during the winter months. They can be found on the ground (with Redwings) and in trees.

Fieldfares are 'winter migrants' which means that they have migrated to the UK from very cold areas of northern Europe (Russia & Scandinavia).

Fieldfares spend the winter months in the milder temperatures of Britain and Ireland where food, such as berries, is more abundant.

Food: Berries and Worms

Numbers in the UK: 720,000 but this fluctuates from year to year.

For more information go to:

[Fieldfare | BTO - British Trust for Ornithology](#)

[Fieldfare Bird Facts | Turdus Pilaris](#)



Grey head

Chestnut back



Fieldfare - a medium thrush often seen around CGC in Winter



Speckled body similar to a Mistle Thrush

Presentation of CGC Ecology Strategy

Ecology and Sustainability Strategy at Childwall Golf Club

John Fox

Ecology Strategy at Childwall Golf Club GEO Foundation



Ecology and Sustainability Strategy at Childwall Golf Club

1. The Origins of Childwall Golf Club (CGC)
2. What CGC looks like now
3. Ecology and Sustainability Strategy at CGC
4. The Value of CGC to wildlife
5. Species at CGC

1. The Origins of Childwall Golf Club (CGC)

- ▶ The course was built *in 1938* on *farmland*.
- ▶ There were *no trees* other than an *orchard*, of which only an odd *apple and plum tree* remain.
- ▶ There is also the remnant of a *hawthorn boundary hedge*.
- ▶ *All the current trees were planted shortly after the course was opened and some are now over 80 years old.*
- ▶ The course is described as *parkland*.



Ecology Strategy at Childwall Golf Club GEO Foundation

Childwall Golf Club 3


The previous newsletter (November 2024) highlighted the many achievements made over the past 4 years by the Ecology and Sustainability Committee.

The Committee was recently asked to provide a presentation, regarding our 'Ecology Strategy' achievements to 'Widnes Horticultural Society'.

The PowerPoint presentation can be found in PDF format on the CGC website under 'Wildlife ➡ Ecology'.

Brochure of Ecology at Childwall Golf Club

...a wildlife paradise on our doorstep.




Our Green Team are continuously finding nature-friendly ways of tending the course, reducing the use of chemicals and exploring eco-friendly ways of maintaining and improving the golfing experience at Childwall.

For further information, please contact:
 Gavin Brown, General Manager
 E: office@childwallgolfclub.co.uk
 Phil Denny, Chair Ecology Committee
 E: paul@gogmail.com

ECOLOGY

at Childwall Golf Club




Great Spotted Woodpecker
 leaving its nest on the golf hole.

Thank you to the staff and members who have supported the Ecology Committee for their commitment to making the club a better place for wildlife.

Many thanks to Steve Young for providing the photographs. All other pictures are copyright Steve Young.

Childwall Golf Club
 100 Years of Golf
 1913-2013

We are proud to have the support of the


Welcome to Childwall Golf Club,

The original course was built on farmland. There were few trees other than areas devoted to orchards, of which only the odd apple and plum tree remains. There are also the remnants of the original seawall boundary hedgerows. Most of the current trees were planted shortly after the course was opened and some are now over 100 years old.


The course is rich in species that would be associated with a woodland. There are 85 different species of shrubs and trees. All different species of flowering plants, mosses, liverworts and ferns and 256 different species of fungi.

We have also recorded 68 species of birds within the course.


This booklet highlights what type of wildlife you are most likely to encounter during your round at Childwall Golf Club, and during which seasons. We have a wildlife log book located at the bottom of the main staircase in which you can add your sightings.

Spring

The wooded copses are a delight in spring with an abundance of bluebells.



In spring birds are busy peering up and looking for suitable nest sites. You are likely to see Buzzards, Jays, Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Goldcrests, Kinglets, Great Tits, Robins, Wrens and many other common woodland and garden birds. We have over 60 nest boxes providing homes for many of these birds.




Summer

The wildflower zones are in full bloom by now and you will see poppies, marigolds, scabious, comfrey, one-eye daisies amongst other meadow plants providing a dash of colour. Insects will be collecting pollen including red admiral, peacock and orange tip butterflies, buff-tailed and large red-tailed bumble bees alongside hover flies and cochlear beetles.



Summer migrant birds such as Swallows, House Martins and Swifts can be seen hunting for insects around the fairways.

Willow Warblers and Chiffchaffs can be seen and heard amongst the shrubs and trees. Buzzards and other raptors such as Sparrowhawks and Kestrels are to be seen hunting.




Autumn

During autumn an abundance of fungi appear including fly agaric, honey fungus, wax cap and milk cap. The fruiting body appears above ground from a mass of threads imbedded underground. Millions of spores are produced from these fruiting bodies.




A profusion of fall like hedgerow appears on the shrubs and trees, providing food for our local populations of woodland and garden birds, and attracting many birds on migration.



Mistle Thrush at least five pairs with many young are to be seen. They are frequent visitors to the course seen dotted around the course during autumn to feed on berries. An early singer, which can be heard from early December.

Winter

Even though winter is regarded as a time of hibernation and dormancy, Childwall Golf Course is still alive with many birds foraging for berries, insect larvae and worms. Pink-footed Geese are often seen and heard flying overhead on their way to the Mersey or Dee estuaries. Winter migrant birds like Redwing are not an uncommon sight on the fairways and trees. Fluctus can often be seen feeding on worms and berries.



Members can enjoy the honey from the on-site hives (see back cover photo). To assist the Ecology Committee contacted the Liverpool and Merseyside Beekeepers Association to see if some beehives could be located on the club premises.

A suitable site was agreed upon and late in 2021 we moved seven colonies on to the site and the bees settled in under the supervision of Ted and Denis.

- **Ecology Brochure** - this is available to view by members and visitors in the lounge area of the clubhouse. It has been produced by the Ecology & Sustainability Committee with superb photographs of wildlife around CGC by Steve Young.

Sustainability News

- The **solar panels** have been agreed and financed. The successful contractor has been chosen and installation will take place sometime this year.
- The **boiler** replacement has also been agreed and financed. Two new, energy-efficient boilers will be installed once the weather improves sufficiently for the heating and hot water in the clubhouse to be turned off.
- Carl is promoting **sustainable golf accessories** including biodegradable leather golf gloves in recyclable packaging, metal water bottles, bamboo tees, etc.
- **Water conservation** is an ongoing topic and is being reviewed by various committees.
- Thank you to all members who continue to use our **recyclable bins** for plastic and paper waste

Eco Team Photo Competition



Picture courtesy of Carl Smith
– “Rainbow over CGC”

Eco Team Photo Competition – ‘Spring/Summer’ season 2025

We have another Eco Photo Competition for the coming ‘Spring/Summer’ 2025. The deadline for entries is 31st August 2025 (in time for the November 2025 Newsletter). Photos can be taken anywhere and are not restricted to the grounds of CGC. Send your entries to Helen Gale (h.gale27@hotmail.co.uk).

Prizes courtesy of the Pro Shop



We have already received
some entries for the
Spring/Summer Competition



Childwall Golf Club Calendar 2025

Childwall Golf Club calendars for 2025 are still available to purchase from the bar for £10. All photographs have been taken around the golf course by Steve Young.

We have a few left so please consider buying one as £5 of the £10 goes towards the Captains' charities

Childwall Golf Club Ecology Team



Gavin Brown



Pat Donnelly



Steve Douglas



John Fox



Helen Gale



Neil Martin



Frank Sanderson



Carl Smith



Mike Smith



Tom Kinloch



Indira Maddison



Steve Young



Mark Kofoed

Best wishes,

The Childwall Golf Club Ecology & Sustainability Team