

## Pond Wood

A relatively small area of willow carr woodland, known as Pond Wood, was formed as the silt-trap pond, established by the building of a dam in 1976, became silt-filled during the 1990's (see Malago chapter).

In anticipation of contractors de-silting of the pond, Bristol City Council cleared willow scrub from the area during the winter of 2009-2010; however, the de-silting did not occur and instead the willow was left to re-grow as a coppiced willow carr woodland.



The silted-up pond cleared of scrub willows during the winter of 2009/10

An ecological survey conducted during the summer of 2010 described the heavily silted silt-trap pond. The silt bed had much Cow Parsley, Great Reedmace (often referred to as Bullrush), Great Willowherb and Branched Bur-reed. Some Amphibious Bistort was also present. No mention was made of the cleared Crack Willow, presumably because the stumps were so small and cut so low that they were not visible through the lush ruderal and emergent vegetation at the time of the survey.



Pond Wood during the summer of 2010

The 2010 survey was updated during the summer of 2021. It was noted that watercourse had narrowed, the silt bed had risen further above the water course and that willow carr woodland had grown-up. The ground flora had changed and was now dominated by Hemlock Water Dropwort, with Common Nettle, Cleavers, Water Mint, Butterbur, Fool's Watercress, Water Forget-me-not and Hogweed. The presence of young Sycamores indicated that the area was drying out as more silt was deposited after each flood event. The Himalayan Balsam that used to be very evident in this area, was very greatly reduced by 2021 and almost vanished by 2023. Moorhens and Mallards regularly nested and reared young in this relatively undisturbed area; however, there is a suggestion that disturbance by the greater number of dogs post-Covid, may have had a deleterious affect on breeding waterfowl.



Pond Wood in late summer 2022