

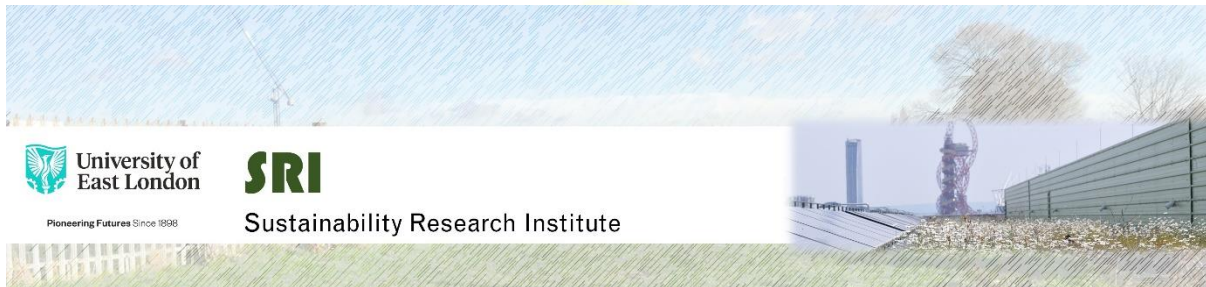
ARENA business support:
Scotscape – Forest for Change
Biodiversity Sweep 2021



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Cover photo: Small tortoiseshell butterfly on privet at the Forest for Change, Somerset House, London © C. Nash

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Introduction

This brief report represents part of a business support project delivered through the ERDF ARENA project on behalf of the Scotscape. The report provides some initial results from a biodiversity sweep undertaken at the Forest for Change in the grounds of Somerset House in London on 24th June 2021. The biodiversity sweep was carried out by Caroline Nash, an ecologist at the University of East London (UEL), and involved a basic bird and invertebrate survey to record an inventory of species using the Forest for Change woodland installation.

Methods

The bird survey lasted for approximately 1.5 hours and used a mixture of vantage point and transect methods, whereby the surveyor viewed the Forest for Change from various vantage points and then walked a slow transect around and through the woodland, to record any birds seen or heard in the vicinity of the woodland. The surveyor used binoculars to assist with bird identification and recorded the registrations/numbers of each bird species observed.

The invertebrate survey involved walking a transect through and around the Forest for Change, recording any invertebrates that could be reliably identified in the field i.e. butterflies, bumblebees and some of the more distinctive hoverflies and dragonflies/damselflies. Additionally, 'beating-sheet' sampling was undertaken on a small number of trees/shrubs. This method involved installing a sheet beneath a tree/shrub and then shaking the vegetation to dislodge any invertebrates resting on the plant onto the sheet, which were then collected using a pooter for later identification using a microscope.

Results

The preliminary results from the biodiversity sweep are as follows:

Birds

During the bird survey, two goldfinches *Carduelis carduelis* were seen to briefly alight on trees in the Forest for Change. No other birds were seen to utilise the woodland. Additional

birds recorded included: six lesser black-backed gulls *Larus fuscus*, three feral pigeons *Columba livia*, a single pied wagtail *Motacilla alba* and magpie *Pica pica*, all of which were seen either perched on the surrounding buildings or flying over the site, but not directly interacting with the woodland.

Invertebrates

Honeybees *Apis mellifera* were the most frequently recorded species during transect survey. Around 35 honeybees were seen during the transect, with the majority foraging on privet flowers. Additional species recorded during the transect included:

- 1 x small tortoiseshell butterfly *Aglais urticae* seen feeding on privet flowers;
- 3 x buff/white tailed bumblebees *Bombus terrestris/lucorum* seen feeding on lime tree/privet flowers;
- 1 x hairy-footed flower bee *Anthophora plumipes* resting on a birch tree;
- 8 x hoverflies of at least three species (*Syrphus vitripennis*, *Episyrphus balteatus* (marmalade hoverfly) and *Eupeodes* species) – perching on birch and various shrubs;
- 1 x 2-spot ladybird *Adalia bipunctata* on an Italian alder tree.

Next steps

Results from the beating-sheet sampling will follow once identification of the specimens has been confirmed.

A selection of photos and videos taken during the survey have been provided with this interim report.

A final report detailing the findings of all biodiversity surveys undertaken for Scotscape as part of the ARENA business support will be provided upon completion of the fieldwork. This will include some interpretation of the findings and recommendations for enhancing the biodiversity value of the products being monitored.



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