



# #LoveLincsPlants

## Quarterly Report Dec 2017—March 2018

Welcome to the 2018 winter edition of our Love Lincs Plants (LLP) project update report. Learn more about what has been achieved so far, upcoming events and opportunities to get involved in this exciting Heritage Lottery Fund Project.

### Boston College Plant Presses

As we move towards the plant collection season the project has been fortunate to work with local young talent at Boston College. Seventeen 16-19 year old Level 1 Carpentry & Joinery Diploma students worked to a tight deadline to manufacture 60 plant presses. These professional presses will play a vital role as we seek to collect 4500 plant specimens over the next three years. Further collaboration work with the department is planned for a series of botanical raised beds at Banovallum House Garden in 2018.



**Quote:** “This has been a fantastic project for our students to be involved in. Not only has it given them a chance to learn about the construction of a specialist piece of herbaria equipment but they have learned valuable ‘real world’ skills such as working in a team to satisfy a commercial design brief, quality control and meeting a tight deadline. We look forward to working with you on other projects in the future.” (Mike Pryjdun. Course lecturer)



### Project Staff update

We are delighted to announce that we now have a full cohort of project staff both in Lincolnshire and London.

Whisby based Education and Community Officers, Suzanne Fysh and Kevin Widdowson (left) joined the team at the end of January and have already made excellent progress establishing links with community groups and delivering educational activities. Together they will bring experience of working on local heritage projects, delivering training, a love of the arts and a passion for plants.

Working alongside senior curator Fred Rumsey with the NHM Project team are Kath Castillo (Project Officer) and Debra Turner (Herbarium Technician). Following their appointments in March, both Kath and Debra (left) have started to tackle the Lincolnshire Historic Specimen collection delivered to the museum in October last year.

Debra will bring a wealth of experience in museum curation and specimen processing while Kath will be sharing her knowledge and experience from the recent [Orchid Observers](#) NHM citizen science project as part of her key role in delivering training to Lincolnshire volunteers and guiding the processing of the Historic and Contemporary collections.





## Events

In early December the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust hosted 7 open day events across the county as part of the National 'thankyou' to UK lottery players celebration week. This included a plant based Christmas card drop-in workshop at Banovallum House promoted at the local Lincolnshire Co-Op store (left). The Trust's Whisby Wildlife Watch Group also began to explore the world of plants through arts and crafts. Georgia Widdowson (left) was one of 15 children who took home her own plaster of Paris hanging tile with beautiful imprints of our native flora. As we anticipate the arrival of spring it was also great to see 2000 people of all ages attend the Whisby Easter Egg Hunt (bottom right). This years' hunt took on a plant based clue trail developed by Education and Community Officer Suzanne Fysh and proved to be a huge hit.

**Quote:** "It was lovely to meet some of the Trust staff and hear about the amazing lottery funded projects over the years. Really enjoyed making Christmas cards from pressed leaves...a great idea!" (Suzie. Horncastle Community Centre service user)

## Events: Summary Stats

**13** Events (Talks/Training/Workshops).

**31** events so far.

**124** children engaged at educational sessions.

**42** 18-35 volunteers/trainees at training and task events to date.

**2217** estimated audience reached at public events

### Media update

Our Twitter engagement has seen a steady rise of followers and greater engagement over the last 3 months. Increased followers has led to increased engagement and is proving to be a valuable social media tool for inspiring and engaging with new audiences.

### Media Stats (Jan-March):

**160%** increase in Twitter views

**50%** increase in Twitter followers

'The Garden' article circulated to **430,000**

RHS members







## Developing Banovallum House Flora

Restoration work has continued to progress at the Trust's Wildlife Garden. Working with volunteers over the course of the project we aim to showcase the flora of Lincolnshire to aid learning and promote conservation. During the winter months the project officer continued

working with our bi-monthly volunteers with learning difficulties from Clarence House (PrimeLife) but also forged a new relationship with the Lincolnshire Wolds Federation children (15-16 years). As part of their Life and Living Community Involvement modules, 5 pupils from St. Lawrence School in Horncastle helped to plant Lincolnshire grown native ground flora within the woodland restoration plot (top left); developing skills in planting techniques and conservation management. Volunteers also stepped into the icy waters of the wildlife pond to control invasive Reedmace/ Bulrush (top right) transforming into it an open, vibrant habitat for aquatic flora and fauna for the future (bottom left).

## Equipment and materials

Local beekeeping equipment manufacture, Thorne Bees of Wragby, have modified their standard honey warming units to produce 5 bespoke plant drying cabinets for the project. Fixed with castor wheels to aid movement and a mesh shelf for accommodating our 'Boston College' plant presses, these thermostatically controlled units will help to speed up the drying process. These will be located at key plant processing sites such as Whisby Education Centre, Far Ings Nature Reserve, Banovallum House as well as two 'roaming' cabinets with the LNU and South Lincs Flora Group. Orders have also been placed with specialist herbarium cabinet makers, AmpFab of Oldham for storage of the Sir Joseph Banks Centre contemporary herbarium specimens.



## 25 young botanists ready to go!

Since the project was launched in September 2017 a total of 25 Lincolnshire based young botanists aged 18-35 have expressed a keen interest in developing their botanical knowledge over the next 3 years. To kick things off, newly recruited Education and Community Officer, Kevin Widdowson guided 7 trainees on how to identify our native trees and shrubs when in bud. This session focussed on using ID keys to develop confidence in identification. A three year programme of learning has been developed with a view to progressing young botanists into careers in botany. Sessions planned for 2018 include 'Herbaria and plant collection techniques' with NHM project staff as well as a LWT led 'Introduction to Botany' session where young botanists will get to grips with botanical keys and terminology.



## News from partners.





## Upcoming events:

Nationally renowned, Lincolnshire based botanical artist, Jan Hill, will be leading the first of several botanical watercolour workshops at Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve on the 11th April. The day will include stage by stage demonstrations and one to one tuition; allowing trainees to work on their own paintings, making it suitable for both beginners and experienced artists alike, for all to develop their skills. Further arts and crafts workshops with botanical artists are planned for summer 2018.

## BSBI Assessment: FISC 2018

As part of monitoring progression of botanists the project will host the first ever Lincolnshire Field Identification Skills Certificate Test (FISC) with Natural England field staff on Thursday 5th July at Whisby Education Centre. This is a nationally recognised qualification, established by the Botanical Society of the Britain and Ireland (BSBI) and is becoming the industry standard for assessing botanical survey skills. From this starting point it is hoped that Lincolnshire botanists can track their development, contribute to botanical recording and engage with the project. A mock FISC will be offered to our new 18-35 botanists in preparation for the real thing in 2019.



## Gravity Fields: Sept. 2018

#LoveLincsPlants will be taking part in the first ever three-day science exhibition as part of the 2018 Gravity Fields science festival in Grantham (26-30th September). Organised by South Kesteven District Council to promote the world of science and life of Sir Issac Newton, this years' festival theme will be centred on the 250th anniversary of Captain Cooks Endeavour voyage to the South Pacific. Project staff and partners will be using macro photography to reveal the hidden world of plants with secondary school children while project partners at the Sir Joseph Banks Society will seek to inspire the next group of young Lincolnshire botanists.



## Inspiring Talks

To promote the cultural and scientific role of plants in our lives a series of lectures is currently being developed to form part of the '[Great Lives](#)' lectures hosted by the University of Lincoln. Discussions with Head of Events at the university are planned with a view to hosting events outside of Lincoln to appeal to a wider audience and to 'spread the wealth' of the project across the county.

**Want to find out more?** For more information about events, workshops and training sessions follow us on Twitter [@LoveLincsPlants](#) and on [Facebook](#). Further project information can be found on the project website. Click [here](#).



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