



#LoveLincsPlants

Update Report No.4

October 2018 - March 2019

Welcome to the latest 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 National Lottery Heritage Fund project. Thank you National Lottery players!

Lincolnshire Herbarium is now online!

Over the course of the autumn and winter project staff, volunteers and Trustees at the Sir Joseph Banks Society have been working hard on developing an online herbarium resource for botanists, plant researchers and plant enthusiasts. Our contemporary Lincolnshire collected in the heat of 2018 is being digitised and made available online at the Sir Joseph Banks [website](#). This will allow collection and mounting volunteers to view their work as well as providing an opportunity to view and study the collection prior visiting the centre. Learn more about developments at the Sir Joseph Banks Society and the herbarium and archive room on page 7. (Right: *Water plantain* collected by The South Lincs Flora Group and mounted by Margaret Bateson).

"What an enjoyable morning learning to catalogue botanical specimens. Thanks to the hard work & dedication of project staff and volunteers at Sir Joseph Banks Centre. The herbarium processing manual is simple and very easy to use. I feel confident that it will help anyone to volunteer with this valuable and nationally important project."

Debbie, Lincoln (Jan 2019)



Volunteers at Sir Joseph Banks Centre, Horncastle

Following on from Kath Castillo's (NHM) introduction to herbarium specimen mounting training in September 2018 a core group of 8 Love Lincs Plants volunteers have since contributed over 100 hours of their time to processing our new Lincolnshire herbarium specimens. Training workshops in January and March has covered freezing specimen batches, data logging, specimen label production, mounting, scanning and archiving. A total of 130 specimens are now stored within our specialist herbarium cabinets.

Volunteers are now able to book a herbarium room workstation based on their interests using our new online booking system. Volunteers can also view an online task bar to see what's waiting to be done before they make a trip to the centre. To register your interest in volunteering at the Sir Joseph Banks Centre herbarium send an email to: lovelincsplants@gmail.com





Public events & training

Following on from a busy plant collection season in 2018, work has continued on project promotion and engagement. Project staff and partners have been out and about across the county delivering a total of 44 project publicity events including talks to Wildlife Trust Area Groups, Caistor Arts and Heritage Centre, Boston Preservation Trust, Explore Churches org, Revesby Church fund raising meal (top right), and the University of Lincoln; Reaching a total of 1500 people across Lincolnshire and enlisting new volunteers as we go. This has included a first time partnership with Historic England at a Sir Joseph Banks themed training session (left), aiming to integrate local history into the curriculum.



Other highlights included a herbarium room open day and Christmas card making session at the Sir Joseph Banks centre (top left) as part of the #ThanksToYou lottery campaign.



In November children and parents from Coningsby Watch Group (left) were trained in mounting plant specimens for their own personal herbarium folder. By the end of 2020 all 12 Watch Groups across the Lincolnshire will have started their own plant archive as well as contributing specimens to the contemporary herbarium collection.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust's Conservation Forum: 3rd November 2018

Over 120 Lincolnshire wildlife enthusiasts attended the annual Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust Conservation Forum at Woodhall Spa Golf Club in November. Plants were the focus of the day with inspirational talks from Love Lincs Plants project volunteer and coordinator of the South Lincs Flora Group, Sarah Lambert; the changing Flora of the Lincolnshire Fens, by Owen Mountford from the Fenland Flora Project as well as Aidan Neary celebrating the results of the first year of Love Lincs Plants with LWT Whisby Nature Park warden Phil Porter wrapping up the day with wayside warden training and opportunities to apply botanical identification skills in a 'real life' conservation setting. From this event we have managed to raise the profile of the project with local naturalists' which resulted in four young botanists signing up for our Young Botanists training programme.

"It's clear how much hard work and effort has been put into producing our new Wildlife Watch herbarium kits. We can now go out with the children and create our own plant archive as well contribute specimens to the contemporary collection. An exciting project for Lincolnshire children to take part in."

Jill Francis, Bourne Watch Group Leader



Residential weekend format for our young botanists in 2019

After a period of consultation and evaluation with our 2018 young botanists (18-35s) we have switched from our midweek training sessions to a weekend residential format in 2019 to cater for working students and career changers. Trainees will have an opportunity to focus on specific habitats and associated flora from Friday to Sunday and will include ancient woodland, meadow and coastal grassland flora. Using the excellent hostel style facilities at Claxby Viking Centre (top left & right) in the Lincolnshire Wolds and local LWT nature reserves, trainees will be immersed in plant ecology both in the field and in a class room setting under the guidance and tuition of expert botanists. The residential season will begin with an Ancient Woodland ecology weekend on the 26-28th April with internationally renowned woodland ecologist Dr Keith Kirby of Oxford University (far right).

Over the course of the winter we have doubled the number of young botanists on our mailing list to 100. To engage new trainees over the cold winter months our knowledgeable Love Lincs Plants officer Kevin Widdowson delivered another successful winter tree identification session at Chambers Farm Wood on the 17th February above. With access to the Forestry Commission woodland and excellent Barn classroom facilities a total of 12 students were introduced to botanical keys ; giving them the skills to work independently with identification guides.



"Course was well paced and didn't feel rushed and I feel like I've learned a lot." Matthew, Lincoln

"Very good blend of outdoor and indoor activity. Very knowledgeable teacher." Colette, Spilsby

Quotes from Winter Tree ID session, 17th February at Chambers Farm Wood



2nd Lincolnshire Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC)

The project was proud to deliver the first FISC assessment in Lincolnshire in July 2018 at Whisby Nature Park to fourteen Lincolnshire botanists in partnership with The Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland and Natural England. Following on from the success of this event and high demand in 2018 Love Lincs Plants will be hosting two FISC assessments on the 3rd and 4th July in 2019 at Horncastle Community Centre and a private local wildlife site. A free session exclusive

to our young 18-35 botanists is intended to give our next generation of botanists an indication of their individual skill level after attending Love Lincs Plants training in 2018/19. A second 'open to all' FISC on the 4th July will be aimed at local ecologists and plant enthusiasts and is being administered by



the BSBI. Together, these sessions hope to continue to develop and support a community of local botanists that will aim to provide the volunteer base for future botanical recording, research and development of the new Lincolnshire herbarium. For more details about the BSBI's Field Identification Skills Certificate, the format of the assessment and how to book on to the 4th July session visit

[here.](#)

Plant collection partners

Over the autumn and winter the team have been working on developing the plant collection strategy for the coming seasons. The core of the collection will consist of native plants that are widely distributed across the county to address the lack of 'common' Lincolnshire plants within the British and Irish Herbarium held at NHM. To gather our wildest plant populations from some of our ancient sites the project is currently negotiating consent to collect plants from Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with Natural England. Non-SSSI Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust reserves will continue to act as the main collection sites but through collaborative effort with partners and the South Lincs Flora Group the project has gained consent to collect plants from local authorities, Forestry England land holdings as well as habitats within private estates such as the Grimsthorpe Estate in Bourne and Beeswax estate in Nocton. Collecting from a diverse range of habitats across the entire county will help to provide an accurate picture of the counties flora and provide a scientifically robust collection.



"It's great to see the project developing and I have enjoyed collecting specimens with the South Lincolnshire Flora Group as well as an independent collector. The final specimens are looking fantastic!" Sarah Lambert (Vice County Recorder).

Support from South Lincs Flora Group (SLFG)

Love Lincs Plants are fortunate to have the support of Sarah Lambert and botanical recorders from the South Lincs Flora Group (SLFG) again in the 2019 plant collection season. Following a planning meeting in early March the group will aim to deliver 8 plant collection sessions as part of their monthly plant recording meetings. This will include collection of brambles, of which there are 300 sub species! This will be with Alex Prendergast (Natural England) at Bourne Woods (Forestry England) and will provide an opportunity to gather the first DNA samples of this tricky group for the microbiology unit at the Natural History Museum.

The South Lincs Flora Group always welcome new volunteers whether you're an experienced or a beginner botanist just starting out. To help out with plant recording and specimen collection this year visit the group's [Facebook](#) page for the latest field meeting information.

Volunteers at Banovallum House wildlife garden

Local volunteers from Clarence House ([Prime Life](#)) in Horncastle continue to support the project with monthly wildlife garden management sessions as we continue to develop our botanical demonstration site at the Trust headquarters (right). Volunteers with learning difficulties and physical challenges have been helping to manage herbaceous borders, our native hedgerows and mini meadow plot. Future work includes development of three botanical raised beds, planting of cowslip pot plants and hay raking in late summer. The Trust have recently applied for additional funding to enhance the garden through the Lincolnshire Co-op Community Champions Fund. More details in our next update report in October 2019.

[Lincoln Conservation Group](#) volunteers enjoyed their meadow scything session so much at Banovallum House last summer that they have agreed to cut the mini meadow again in early July. Together, Clarence House, Lincoln Conservation Group and LWT staff have contributed 38 volunteer days to garden enhancement!



"The residents at Clarence love coming to the Trust garden, having a chat and seeing nature up close. They're energy level is always lifted after a morning with the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust." Jo, Clarence House supervisor.

Schools, Wildlife Watch and engagement

Community and Education Officer, Sue Fysh (right) and LWT education staff have developed and delivered an exciting programme of plant themed assemblies, inspiring 4800 pupils at 32 primary schools across the county. The team will be following up on assemblies with Plant Explorer sessions over the spring and summer to help schools develop their own mini herbarium while contributing to the main collection. It is hoped that these sessions will nurture the botanists of the future at a grass roots level.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Watch Leaders came from as far afield as Hull and Stamford at the end of March as the team delivered a one day training session to twenty four leaders from 10 Watch Groups at Banovallum House, Horncastle. Leaders were trained in plant collection, specimen mounting and were provided with individual herbarium folders and a collection kit to equip them beyond the life of the project.



Events and Media Stats

70 x 18-35 year old botanists engaged in plant collection/pressing/identification.

4800 primary school children inspired at 32 assemblies.

24 Watch Leaders trained in plant collection and specimen mounting.

240,000 engagements on Twitter (Nov'18—March '19).

Stats & Media update

The project continues to engage with our partners, young botanists and the herbaria community through Twitter. Over this reporting period #LoveLincsPlants Twitter feed has received a total of 240,000 engagements. Stand out Tweets such as the *Young Botanists (18-35) Botany Weekend* (bottom left) proved to be a top Tweet of the month for March; reaching over 9000 people. This media engagement may have been responsible for a surge of interest in our new residential training session with all three sessions being 75% fully booked within ten days.

BBC Look North Environment Correspondent, Paul Murphy took a trip behind the scenes with NHM project officer Kath Castillo in March, developing footage for a special feature on the Love Lincs Plants project. Paul aims to join plant collectors and specimen mounters over the course of the summer to capture the story of how local volunteers are contributing to the creation of a new archive of plants for the county.

LWT Communication Officer Rachel Shaw will be promoting the project on air with BBC Radio Lincolnshire on the 16th April, bringing our first set of Inspirational Plants into the studio to inspire 60,000 Lincolnshire listeners.



News from partners.



Lincolnshire Naturalists' Union (LNU) by Chris Manning & Nick Tribe

The 2019 [field meetings programme](#) is now finalised (right) . Eight field meetings have been arranged between 28th April and 13th October. This will allow collecting for Love Lincs Plants throughout the growing season; we found last year that collecting late summer-flowering species and species with berries could be done successfully as late as October. The field meetings will be run around Lincolnshire and will collect species from a variety of habitats. As a new approach for the field meetings, three of field meetings at the height of the flowering season will start in the morning to allow time for extra collecting. Some field meetings extend into the evening for moth and bat recording; the LNU covers all aspects of natural history recording! In 2018 we attracted extra attendees to the field meetings, with a mixture of members and non-members of the Union. We found that groups of three or four people formed an effectively-sized collecting team. In 2019 we will aim to have two collecting teams on the larger sites.

Following collection advice from senior NHM curator Fred Rumsey the LNU plan to run rare Plant Hunt sessions in search of a rare subspecies of yellow archangel (an ancient woodland species –right) that is found in the woodlands on the eastern edge of the Wolds.

The Union has been tracking the conserving and cataloguing of the historic herbarium with interest and enthused to see these appearing on the NHM data portal and relieved to see that most were in good condition! NHM has kindly produced interim reports on the aquatic species and algae. These reports will be made available to members on the website.

The LNU are looking forward to collecting for Love Lincs Plants in 2019 and continue to advertise events on Twitter, the LNU website and through our Wildnews Bulletin to encourage new volunteers and members.

2701 Historic Specimens databased at NHM

Work on the Lincolnshire LNU historic collections is progressing smoothly with a total of 2701 now databased and 2076 sheets completed (mounted, digitised and the data accessible online through the data portal). The 2000th mounted specimen milestone was reached in early March with this beautiful specimen (left) of *Nymphaea alba*, (European white water lily) collected in Doddington in 1846. These completed specimens are now in the process of being integrated into the British & Irish herbarium main run. Some discrete taxonomic or ecological groups have been targeted and prioritised e.g. Charophyta (Stoneworts) and aquatic vascular plants, and stand-alone reports on these groups prepared and distributed to project partners. It is hoped that similar reports on certain critical groups, eg. *Euphrasia* (Eyebrights) and *Hieracium* (Hawkweeds), where the material has been determined recently by leading authorities, will be completed shortly and will prove useful to the wider plant recording community .

Contemporary Lincolnshire Specimens:

NHM received a total of 79 specimens collected in Lincolnshire in 2018 forming the first batch for the Lincs Plants Project contemporary collection with a further fifty ready to go to NHM in spring. Included in this batch are 8 'Inspirational Plants' specimens including Red Clover collected by Chris Packham at the University of Lincoln. Specimens were collected from 19 sites and represent 29 families. These specimens have been databased and are currently going through the mounting and digitisation process in preparation for the online [NHM data portal](#).

"It is a very interesting and a rewarding project and never dull!"

Claire Foote. NHM Herbarium volunteer, London.

Lincolnshire Naturalists' Union

field meetings 2019

Meetings are open to all - contact the leader to register your interest:
www.lnu.org/meetings/field-meetings/

Date	Site	Habitat
Sunday 28 th April	Osgodby Coppice North of Corby Glen	Semi-natural ancient woodland plus farmland
Sunday 12 th May	Ashing Lane NR Northeast of Lincoln	Broadleaved plantation, rough grassland, marsh, ponds, hedgerows and scrub.
Saturday	Freshney Bog LNR	Marsh, ponds, wet woodland, rough

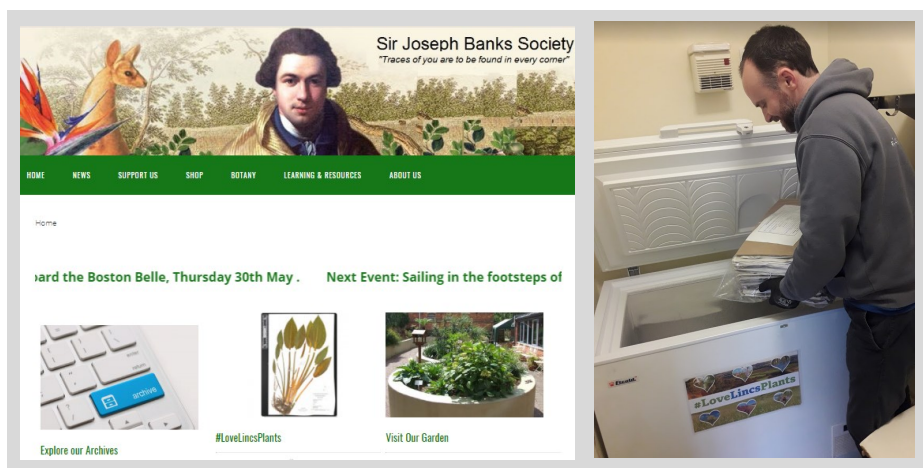


With the provision of two new herbarium cabinets the Herbarium Room at the Sir Joseph Banks Centre in Horncastle is now fully functional. Thought has been given to the arrangement of work stations in order to streamline work-flow in the comparatively small space available. Separate areas have been designated for data input, mounting of specimens and scanning. A cupboard has been fitted with racking for the storage of archival papers and other material for the specimen-mounting operation. A commercial-standard deep freeze (below right) has been installed in a nearby room so that new specimens can be de-contaminated before permanent storage, and the herbarium room now has automatic temperature and humidity control. The scans of all new plant specimens are being uploaded to the Society's website at low resolution, with a facility for researchers to obtain higher quality images if required.



During the period two trustees, Jean Shaftoe and Stuart Crooks, have represented the Society on the *Love Lincolnshire Plants* Project Board, and Trevor Olsson who was appointed as a trustee in February 2019, has worked with Aidan Neary (Project Officer) throughout the period to bring the Herbarium Room and data systems for the project up to the highest professional standards. Trustee, Paul Scott, has developed the Society's social media presence and makes regular updates.

The [Society's website](#), maintained by Trevor Olsson, has been overhauled and now includes a fuller section about the project, details of the Society's library and research material, and regular posts about the project and other Society activities (above left).



The Society is planning events during 2019 which will include a presence at the Heckington Show on 27/28 July; The President's Lecture by Simon Pearson of the University of Lincoln entitled "Lincolnshire's Role in the Fourth Agricultural Revolution"; a Members' Lunch; and a Heritage Open Day on 14 September. The Society is also planning a special programme of events for 2020 which is the bicentenary of the death of Sir Joseph Banks. We hope that the highlight will be an event in the autumn in the River Room of the House of Lords which will provide an opportunity to promote the Society as well as marking the culmination of the project's achievements.

University of Lincoln

Education and Community Officer, Kevin Widdowson played a key role in supporting over 60 undergraduates at the Universities' annual October Bioblitz as well as training 11 new BSc Ecology and Conservation undergraduates in herbarium collection and plant ID. Kevin also delivered a second winter tree ID session to 48 university students aged 18-35 with all students improving their initial ID test score by the end of the session. Kevin's plant family guides have proved to be a great hit with the students and have been incorporated into the course resources. All life sciences students have also been signposted to LNU and South Lincs Flora Group field meetings to encourage volunteering with plant collection and development of field skills.

To complement identification training, a drop in herbarium plant mounting session with NHM project officer Kath Castillo has been scheduled for the 1st May 2019 at the Minerva Building on the University campus. This will be open to all university students and lecturers to promote the project to a wider university audience .



Great Lives - Carry Akroyd

In partnership with the University of Lincoln the project hosted it's first Great Lives lecture on the 27th March at the Issac Newton building in the heart of Lincoln campus.

Painter and print maker Carry Akroyd captivated fifty guests with her enlightening talk about the role of plants and literature in her work. As president of the John Clare Society, Carry discussed Clare's poetic account of habitat loss in the early 19th century and the important role of art in the 21st century to inspire wildlife enthusiasts and the next generation of conservationists. Attendees from across Lincolnshire had the opportunity to meet with project staff, view our inspirational contemporary specimens and sign up for events and training in 2019.

In 2019/20 the project aims to host a series of Great Lives

Inspirational speaker events at several locations across the county to include Gibraltar Point, Gainsborough and Spalding . For more details see the Trust's [What's On](#) page .



'Banks on the Witham' and upcoming events:

Inspired by Sir Joseph Banks' late eighteenth century fishing trips on the River Witham, project partners and guests will be hopping on board the "Boston Belle" passenger boat on the 30th May in search of specimens for the new Lincolnshire herbarium. Passengers will be introduced to the project and the life of Sir Joseph Banks' as we travel up river from Boston to Anton's Gowt where we'll be stopping off for lunch and to hunt for specimens from the Witham Way Local Wildlife Site managed by Boston Borough Council. Visit our events page for more details.

More Public events:

- Dole Wood (LWT) Bluebell Open Day - 14th May.
- University of Lincoln herbarium mounting for all students (drop in) with NHM —1st May
- Young botanists 18-15 plant mounting with NHM - 2nd May, Horncastle
- Plant Mounting at Revesby estate (open to all) - 11th June
 - Lincolnshire Show 19th-20th June

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



Lincolnshire
Wildlife Trust

