

# TOPOGRAPHY

## SITE (47) MILLPOOL COLLIERY POOL

GRID REFERENCE: SP 003 939  
WMCC HABITAT SURVEY: SP09SW 83  
STATUS:  
LOCAL PLAN AREA: Charlemont  
OWNER: Sandwell M.B.C.  
AREA: 1ha  
DATE OF SURVEY: 11th July 1988

## SUMMARY

A large pool on the site of a former colliery which has since been landscaped and turned into Public Open Space. It has a well developed fringe of marginal vegetation and is important for local species of water fowl.

## LOCATION AND ACCESS

Millpool Colliery Pool is located halfway between West Bromwich and Wednesbury at Hateley Heath. Access is off Rydding Lane at two points and also from Hydes Road, which border it to the west and north. To the south and east is a large area of sports fields associated with the Menzies High School, Millfield Special School and the Hill Top High School Annexe.

## TOPOGRAPHY AND LAND USE

The pool is situated in a hollow and is broadly oval-shaped trending north west-south east. The inflow is at the south eastern end and outflow at the north western. The brook is culverted in pipework at both ends.

The surrounding slopes appear to have been regraded when the former colliery area was reclaimed to Public Open Space. These slopes appear to have been reseeded and planted with standard staked trees and whips. Immediately south of the pool is a large, flat expanse of close mown grassland used for sports pitches.

There is some tipping of domestic refuse on the surrounding slopes. Also, the pool appears to be fished very occasionally as evidenced by the trampling of vegetation and the occurrence of litter.

Apart from Sandwell Valley and Sheepwash Lane, Sandwell lacks large areas of open water, so this is an important local resource. It is well used by local residents for walks and dog walking, and its potential for education is obvious.

## HABITATS

Open Water. The pool is large, being almost 1ha, and has a fringe of emergent vegetation. Presumably, the pool was in existence during the colliery's heyday, though it now appears to be larger. The water itself has been colonised by growths of fennel-leaved pondweed and curled pondweed, particularly near the outflow. Floating mats of broad leaved pondweed also occur.

Emergent/Marginal Vegetation. A dense fringe of marginal vegetation has colonised the pool. This is dominated by reedsweet grass, with occasional patches of reedmace, common spike rush, great willowherb, hemlock water dropwort, branched bur-reed and hard rush. In the north east corner, two large crack willows overlie the vegetation.

Water Quality. This appears to be very poor. The water has a brown, murky appearance, particularly close to the inflow. Here there was also a noticeable smell of sewage effluent. Small patches of oil film were present on the surface water, especially close to the inflow.

## FAUNA.

Records refer only to species seen at time of survey.

Mute swan, moorhen, coot and mallard, the latter two breeding, were seen at the time of survey. Large numbers of house martins were noted feeding on insects over the open water.

Meadow brown butterflies were feeding amongst the emergent vegetation and common blue damselfly was also seen. The weather was cool and cloudy - not ideal for sampling the insect fauna.

## MANAGEMENT.

Emergent Vegetation. Lengths of reedsweet grass could be cleared (leaving other species in situ) to improve diversity. Suitable species for replanting would be yellow flag iris, soft rush, hard rush, lesser pond sedge and water plantain.

Scrub. The pool would benefit from a larger area of scrub to provide structure and more seclusion for other types of wildlife such as birds and insects. Planting goat willow, common osier, crack willow and alder in the area where two crack willows already exist would provide this.

Water Quality. To help wildlife more directly water quality needs to be drastically improved; pollutants need to be prevented from entering the water, both chemical and suspended solids.

To improve and focus local interest and school use, interpretation facilities could be provided along with pond dipping platforms to ease access to the open water. Its potential in these areas is obvious.



#### 9.21 Mill Fields Pool

This is an excellent feature of some 1500 square metres with a deep border of reed, nettle and bull rush. There is also considerable plant growth on the surface. There are no islands and the perimeter path is well back from the water edge fringe. The outlet is grilled but the inlet pipe on the far side of the pool is wide open!

#### Recommendations

The distant outlet pipe should be grilled to prevent inviting access.



9.21 MILL FIELDS POOL, more excellent edge treatment