‘The Round Moat’ – Report (2025/26 Season)

Summer of 2025 - good breeding season within The Round Moat.
There are now 15 nest boxes on site (incl 2 x woodcrete boxes)–.
10 were used by Great Tit/Blue Tit, 2 boxes unused & one box used by roosting birds (lots of droppings in the box).
Despite a few failed eggs & some chicks that didn’t fledge; I would estimate the total number of Great Tit & Blue Tit young would have been in the region of 60-70….a great success rate for such a small habitat.

There are many other birds that continue to build natural nests– Blackbird, Song Thrush, Robin, Wren, Treecreeper, Goldcrest, Wood Pigeon, Stock Dove & no doubt many more that go unnoticed!

Other wildlife within TRM:
insects, butterflies, moths, dragonfly/damselfly, mammals, fungi
I update my findings on the Friends of The Round Moat Facebook group on a regular basis, with a spread sheet showing species since monitoring began in 2021.

In August 2025 the picnic bench received damage, The Chequers kindly donated some lengths of wood from old seating to help with repairs.

Litter picking was conducted throughout the seasons…..mostly historical (disturbed by footfall) & rubble continues to be removed as it surfaces.

In September 2025 Box Tree moth was recorded in the Moat for the first time! It’s an unwanted species that has decimated Box hedging. I have found the moth in other parts of the village.

October 2025: Honey fungus was seen on old tree stumps

National Nest Box Week (annual event held in mid Feb) I was approached to hel a couple of members of the brownies to make bird boxes. Once finished, they were sited numbered 4 and 16, increasing the total to 16.
Both boxes were used in 2026 breeding season, Blue & Great Tit young were seen. Photographs were forwarded to their parents & when the nesting season was over, the nests from their boxes (having first treated the nests)were handed to the brownies to see what materials the birds used.

In May 2026 Cuckoo sighting in TRM (from a reliable source)
There was also further damage to the picnic bench which was repaired.

The unprecedented heatwaves during the Summer of 2026, there was very little monitoring within TRM except watching bird box activity.

October 2026 - Work Party to carry out a few jobs before the Winter months…..
Clearing larger branches from the water course (to be used to build wildlife habitats at a later date)
Litter picking – two large bags filled (mostly historical)
Removal of brick/rubble
Reducing nettles by hand pulling to keep paths open.
Scything a dedicated area that is to be sown with a wildflower mix (to improve biodiversity)
Wash/clean picnic bench

In October 2026 the nest boxes were cleaned out.
In total 10 boxes were used by Great/Blue Tits.
Box 10 contained 6 deceased Blue Tit chicks
Box 12 contained 6 failed eggs

I would estimate that in excess of 50 young Great/Blue Tits fledged.....A really good number considering the extreme heat of the Summer.

November can see fungi species – Wrinkled Peach fungus (a Red Listed species) is fruiting well.....3 sites so far.
Another fungus “Flame Shield” has been discovered this season – quite rare!
Fire Rug Inkcap was found last season and it seems to have fruited this season.

With the newly formed Biodiversity Group, it is hoped that biodiversity will improve within TRM & in other parts of the village.

Tree work takes place by contractors, as & when required.
Some limited Ivy reduction would help to open up the canopy in some areas but it is also an important species at this time of year providing berries for Thrush species.
Ivy bees have only just stopped feeding on the nectar from the flowers.
Treecreeper/Wren often nest behind Ivy stems!

The Round Moat has dealt well with the extreme heat of 2026.
It is an ever changing environment & with planned work, it will hopefully increase the species that either live or visit there, making it a better place for them and us.

Bob Steed (November 2026)