



The nature reserve is located on the site of what used to be the mining village of Douglas Water. The miners' rows were demolished following subsidence caused by mining, and the people moved to Rigside, but following the decline of the coal mining industry in the 1960's the area was left to degenerate. Local residents got together in 1994 to clean up an area of flooded mining subsidence known locally as Loudon Pond, and turn it into a community nature reserve.

The reserve is now the only locally accessible green space where people from the local area and beyond can enjoy the outdoors.

These days, the Loudon Pond Volunteer Group try keep the nature reserve accessible to visitors but still nature friendly, we plant native trees and flowers, and try to encourage wildlife with bird and bat boxes. Our main ambition is to ensure that the reserve will be connected to other local and regional footpaths, instead of Rigside and Douglas Water always being bypassed and isolated from the countryside that surrounds us.

Each year, before bird nesting starts, some of our volunteers performed the job of taking down the bird boxes to clean them out and put them back to be used again in Spring. In winter, parts of the nature reserve are flooded by the Douglas Water as it overflows and spreads out across its flood plain, but the Wild Garlic and Snowdrops survive and flower every year.

Last summer, some children playing in the reserve noticed something different flying near the small dipping pond, their Mum took some photos and we found out that they were a Common Darter Dragonfly and a Large Red Damselfly. They might not sound very exciting, but it shows that we have a good natural environment in the nature reserve.

Unfortunately, the water in the pond looks quite grey at the moment, it is fed from the Ponfeigh Burn and we fear that it is being polluted from groundwater, upwelling from the disused coal mines, then entering the burn at the bridge on the road into Douglas Water. We have reported this to South Lanarkshire Council, who have reported it in turn to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, but they don't seem to be doing anything so we have obtained funding to have the water tested. Hopefully we can clean up the water once we know what is in it, so that it can attract and support even more wildlife.

Our latest project is to discover more about the wildlife that visits the nature reserve, we will install trail cameras to see what animals walk amongst the trees, and share the images on the making Rigside Green Group page. We will use bat detectors to see what flying animals visit the nature reserve, and hopefully we will be able to bat walks so that other people can see them.

The Loudon Pond Volunteer Group is always looking for volunteers to support our work, and we also need more trustees for the charity, we want to make the most of the nature reserve. You don't need any experience, we welcome people with new ideas and enthusiasm to make YOUR Nature Reserve a great place for nature to thrive and a great place for everyone to visit.