

## Biodiversity and sustainability

The University of Exeter recognises the importance of contact with nature, for staff, students and visitors to its sites.

The University wants to raise the awareness of biodiversity and sustainable practices to help promote both formal and informal learning about the link between a healthy environment and a quality balanced ecosystem.



# Hoopern Valley

## Streatham Campus

The Valley consists of a series of man-made ponds that are subject to sympathetic management to encourage wildlife.

A one-metre strip at the pond edges is left uncut to support amphibians and small mammals and birds, providing them with an area in which they can safely move up and down the water's edge by reducing the risk they have of being exposed to predators.

The mixed vegetation around the areas of standing water includes Willow and Alder trees and marginal plants such as Bulrush and branched Bur-reed. These provide an excellent habitat for a range of waterfowl which regularly nest and raise their young in the Valley.



**Coot** (*Fulica atra*) A cousin of the moorhen, the coot has a distinctive white beak and 'shield' above the beak which earns it the title 'bald'. It patters noisily over the water before taking off and can be very aggressive towards others.



**Branched Bur-reed** (*Sparganium erectum*) A perennial, growing to a height of about 1.5m, which is found by still or slow-flowing water. Its leaves and corm die back over the winter and are replaced from the tip of the remaining rhizome. The leaves which begin to grow in April are very markedly keeled.

## Other habitats

Ecologists have identified 16 habitats on the Streatham Campus which sustain a wide range of plants, invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals.

- These are:
- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Amenity Grassland            | Semi-improved neutral grassland                          |
| Bare ground                  | Semi-improved grassland (poor)                           |
| Buildings                    | Standing water   |
| Hedgerows                    | Swamp  |
| Introduced scrub             | Tall ruderal   |
| Running water                | Woodland (broadleaved, mixed and coniferous plantations) |
| Scattered trees              | Woodland.  |
| Scrub                        |  |
| Semi-improved acid grassland |  |

The University's 300-acre estate includes a registered botanical garden and a National Collection of Azaras, which are evergreen shrubs and small trees native to South America.

