

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.



Taddiforde Valley

Streatham Campus

The Taddiforde Valley consists of a series of man-made ponds constructed during the 1960s and 70s, to mimic natural watercourses. The ponds are fed by the Taddiforde Brook and its tributaries. The area is managed sympathetically, with fallen branches left in some areas to promote roosting points for birds. Habitat piles have also been left in selected areas to provide wildlife with sources of food, shelter and hibernation sites.

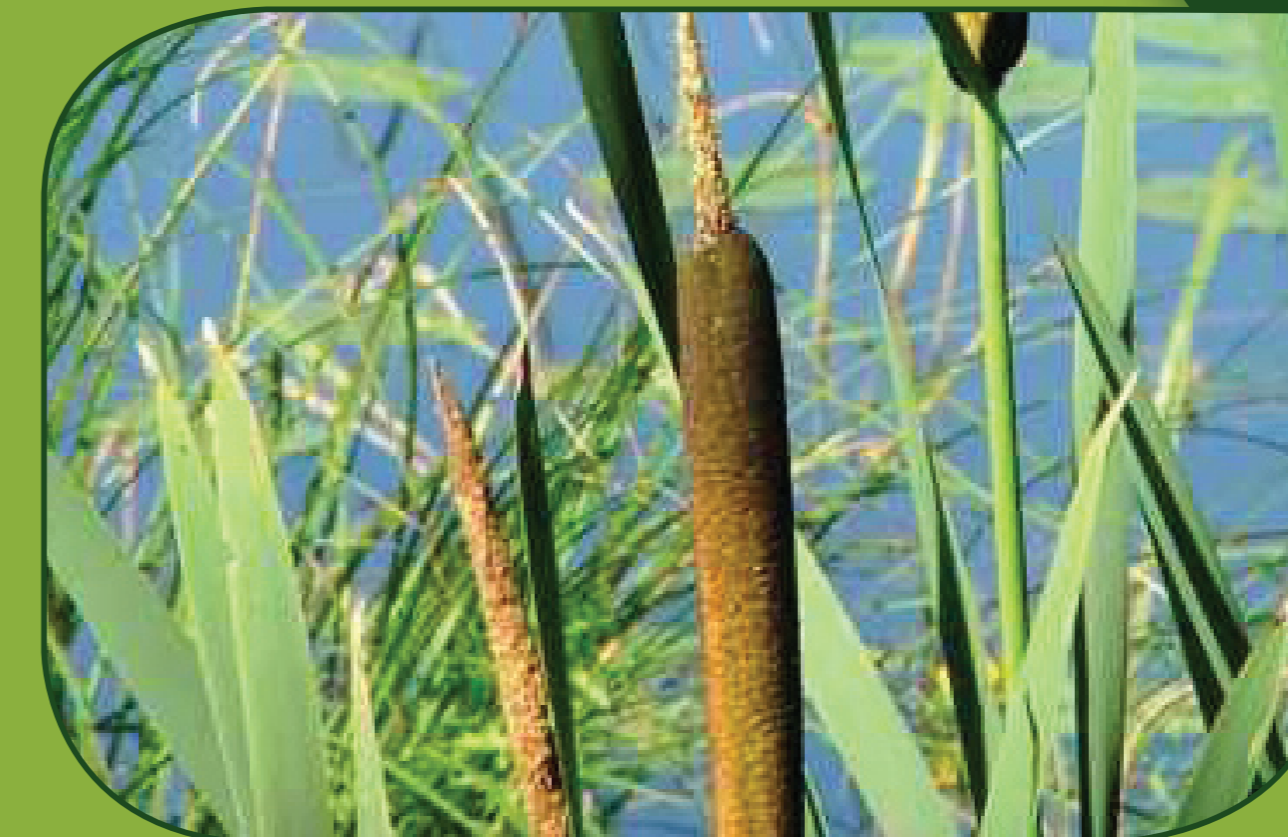
Amphibians such as Toads and Newts utilise the habitats provided in the valley.

There are also records of the site being used by Dormouse, Hedgehog and Water Vole, priority species in the local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

The watercourse has plant species such as Watercress, Pond Sedge, Lesser Water Parsnip and Lesser Reed Mace, along with several water-dependent insects.



Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) The little egret is a small white heron with attractive white plumes on crest, back and chest, black legs and bill and yellow feet. It first appeared in the UK in significant numbers in 1989 and is now a common site on the estuaries of Devon and Cornwall.



Lesser reedmace (*Typha angustifolia*) Also known as the lesser bulrush, this is a tall, robust aquatic plant with slender, lance-shaped, grey-green deciduous leaves. Many insects hibernate inside the stalks of this plant and become a useful winter food source for birds.

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.

