



# Biodiversity News in Norfolk

No 45  
(June 2015)

Photo: Ox-eye Daisies near Binham © Darren Oddy

## Welcome to our June e-bulletin

Temperatures are rising and we've been promised a (long awaited!) heat wave. What better time to get out and about to enjoy the gorgeous Norfolk countryside? There has been much excitement in the office this month at the discovery of a Lizard Orchid – the first to be spotted in Norfolk for sixty years! The exact location of the flower has to be kept secret for its own protection, but see SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS for more details.

Sir David Attenborough was in Norfolk this month, to open a new conservation and education centre on the Norfolk coast (see Local NEWS). The winner of the National Bird Vote has also been announced – see National NEWS to find out which species was crowned the winner.

The River Wensum Partnership are drawing up a new strategy, and they want your input to help shape it. See GETTING INVOLVED to find out how you can help them. Finally, if you're heading to the Norfolk Show this year, have a fabulous time. While the Biodiversity Team won't be there this year, our colleagues from Norfolk Trails and a number of other wildlife organisations will be, so make sure you go and check out their stands!

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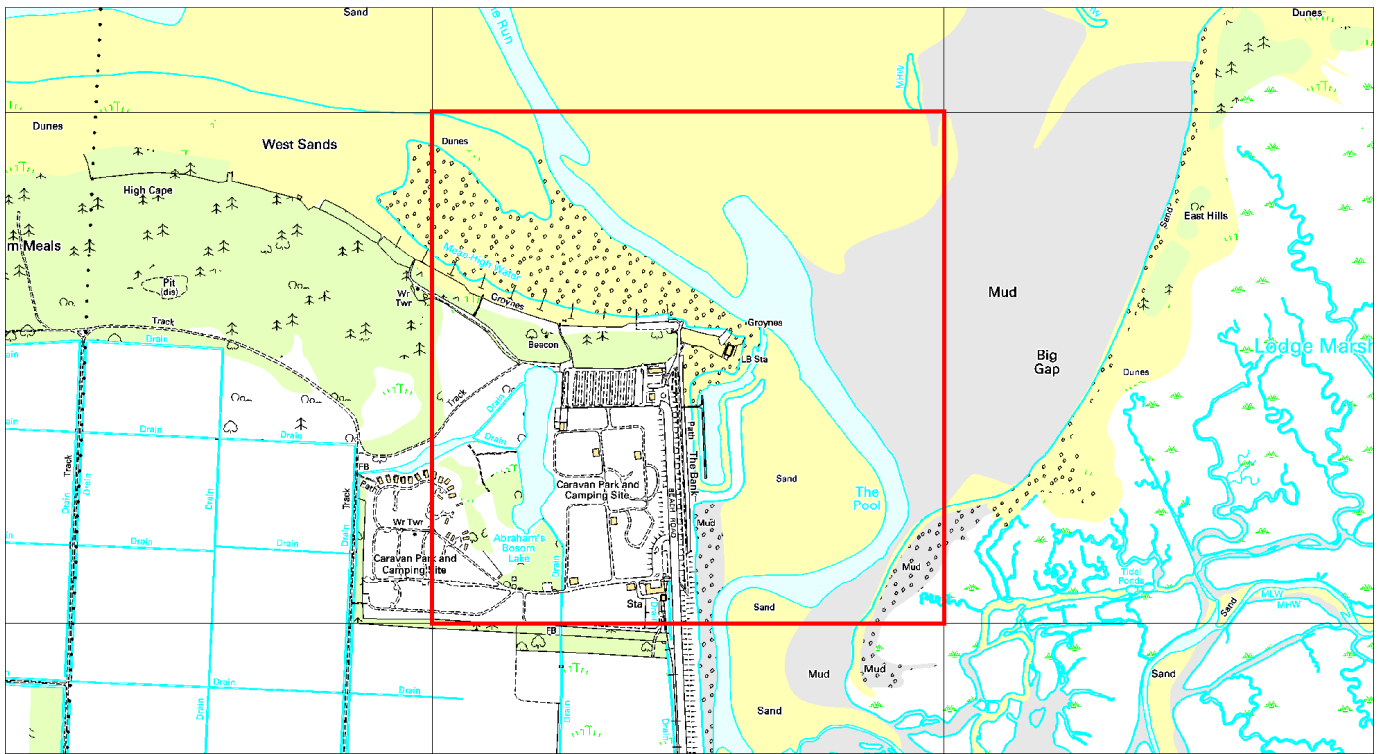
### GRID SQUARE OF THE MONTH

Many thanks to all of you who have submitted records of our Species of the Month over the last couple of years. We are trying something new for 2015 – grid square of the month. Each month we will highlight a 1km grid square somewhere in Norfolk, and ask you to help record as many species as possible from within that grid square. At the end of the year we will see which grid square has the highest number of records submitted. **Of course you can still submit records from other areas of Norfolk as usual on our All Species survey:**

<http://nbis.org.uk/AllSpeciesSurvey>

Thanks to all of you who submitted records for our Grid Square of the Month from the Apr-May e-bulletin.

For June, our Grid Square of the Month is **TF9145 in Wells-next-the-Sea.**



This square is found at the end of the bank as you walk out from Wells-next-the-Sea towards the beach. It includes the end of the bank, part of the beach, a section of the estuary, the caravan park and boating lake and the start of Wells Wood.

You can submit your records at <http://nbis.org.uk/TF9145>

It doesn't have to be a rare or unusual species – recording common and widespread species are just as important. From blackbirds to oak trees, hedgehogs to ladybirds, let's see how many species can be recorded within the grid square!

Remember, trespassing is a crime, so only go to areas accessible to the public.

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Please do email us at [nbis@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nbis@norfolk.gov.uk) if you have any news or events that you would like us to feature in the next or coming issues. And do feel free to forward to anyone you feel would also be interested.

You can download this e-bulletin as a pdf here: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/E-BulletinJun2015.pdf> You can also download past e-bulletins as a pdf here: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/newsletterse-bulletins>

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## Local NEWS

### High praise from Sir David Attenborough at conservation and education centre launch

Sir David praised the crucial conservation work of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust at a celebration of a new coastal education

centre and protected marshland <http://tinyurl.com/nmod2ax> However, just days later, a path opened by Sir David had to be shut when a protected oystercatcher decided to nest on it <http://tinyurl.com/gcceu2>!

### **Sprowston woodland to be named after miller's family**

Plans for Harrison's Wood include making the area more accessible by creating additional cycling and walking trails <http://tinyurl.com/nh9dg3d>

### **The Norwich cathedral peregrine chicks have fledged**

<http://tinyurl.com/ntn3bmf>

### **Titan the turtle dove helps scientists with fight to stop its decline**

An avian jetsetter from Suffolk has helped scientists shed light on the migration mystery surrounding the UK's fastest declining bird <http://tinyurl.com/ghahraj>

### **UEA researcher's delight as she tracks down elusive rabbit**

A rare rabbit has been tracked down, held and photographed in Vietnam by a researcher from the University of East Anglia <http://tinyurl.com/oew6juy>

### **Potential for greater access to 'secret' Norfolk Broads but concerns for wildlife**

An ambitious scheme to create access to nine Broads currently closed to the public have been revealed <http://tinyurl.com/nrj7c33>

### **Rare bird spotted at Blakeney**

A bird which has only been seen a handful of times in the county has made an appearance on the north Norfolk coast <http://tinyurl.com/p5k5d5l>

### **Spot the birds nesting in a tractor engine**

Staff at WWT Welney were surprised to find a pair of pied wagtails and their four chicks tucked into the engine of the reserve tractor <http://tinyurl.com/ps4unhv>

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## **National NEWS**

### **New campaign sees thousands set to abandon creature comfort and go wild outdoors**

Thousands signed up to the Wildlife Trusts '30 Days Wild' challenge and pledged to do something wild every day for a month <http://tinyurl.com/pkqfd3o>

### **Goldfish helping to kill off frogs by spreading 'devastating disease', scientists warn**

Stocking ponds with non-native species puts the amphibians at greater risk of deadly ranavirosis <http://tinyurl.com/nhuagn7>

### **Roadside verges 'last refuge for wild flowers'**

More than 700 species of wild plants – almost half of the native flora of the British Isles – are found on road verges, according to study <http://tinyurl.com/pqvqt6f>

### **Automated cameras record Serengeti life**

Hundreds of thousands of images of animals going about their daily lives have been caught on automatic cameras in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania. This allows scientists to observe natural behaviour, free from human disturbance <http://tinyurl.com/ohx23np>

### **Last hedgehogs in central London 'survived by learning to avoid roads'**

Small population in Regents Park is clinging on and appears to have learnt to keep clear of the busy roads that are one of the main causes of their decline <http://tinyurl.com/ondmumo>

### **Robin wins vote for UK's national bird**

More than 224,000 people cast their ballot in the National Bird Vote with robin taking 34%, followed by barn owl and blackbird <http://tinyurl.com/npwqp4n>

### **Oslo creates world's first 'highway' to protect endangered bees**

Norway's capital is creating a route filled with flowers and 'green roofs' to protect endangered pollinators essential to food production <http://tinyurl.com/pg5t9ll>

## Wild beaver gives birth in England

<http://tinyurl.com/q5vhfez>

## The value of Local Environmental Records Centre on the NBN Gateway to recorders

<http://tinyurl.com/pkky5my>

## More National news here:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/news#Jun2015NationalNews>

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## GETTING INVOLVED

### NBIS needs YOU!

NBIS are continuing to develop their Multi-taxon species monitoring initiative known as the Norfolk Species Surveillance Network (NSSN), launched in 2013.

They are expanding this network of reference sites and the recording on them, hence needing as many of you as possible to volunteer to monitor species change across Norfolk. They are looking for individuals or local parish/conservation groups to get involved. No previous experience of the methodology is necessary, just a passion for wildlife.

Each volunteer/group will adopt an important local site for wildlife, either from our list of sites or a site of their own, if they have landowner permission. Volunteers will be expected to visit the site several times throughout the year and record as many or as few species groups as they can. Some species groups are typically under recorded and NBIS would like to target these.

They will provide equipment, support and training in the methods.

Develop your ID skills with wildlife identification training days for specific species groups, running throughout the summer to boost your skills and confidence.

To sign up to the initiative, please click here: [Sign up to Volunteer for the Norfolk Species Surveillance Network](#)

Or visit our website: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/SpeciesSurveillanceNetwork>



### Sign up now for the Norfolk Bat Survey

The Norfolk Bat Survey ([www.batsurvey.org](http://www.batsurvey.org)) returns this year for its third year running, with plans to be even bigger and better. The survey, which uses automated bat detectors to record the presence and activity of bats, needs the help of volunteers willing to put out detectors.

Over the past two years the project was able to survey 786 1-km squares (about 15% of Norfolk), and received over 600,000 high-quality recordings of bats, making this one of the largest projects of its type in the world. The aim is to increase survey coverage to 25% of Norfolk and add to existing knowledge in neighbouring Suffolk. With your help, we can do this.

Last year there were more people wanting to take part in some parts of the county than there were detectors to support, so you need to be quick in expressing interest, and reserving your 1-km square to survey. You can do this via [www.batsurvey.org/sign-up](http://www.batsurvey.org/sign-up). After selecting a 1-km square (or squares if interested in covering more than one square), you will be given a web link to a site where you can reserve a detector to use from the most convenient Bat Monitoring Centre to you. If in Suffolk, you can sign up through our Projects in Suffolk page [www.batsurvey.org/projects-in-suffolk/](http://www.batsurvey.org/projects-in-suffolk/). Please note that this survey requires three different points, ideally at least 200-metres apart, to be surveyed on consecutive nights within a 1-km square.

### River Wensum Partnership Strategy consultation

The partnership exists to make the most of the stretch of the River Wensum which runs through the heart of Norwich. They are running a consultation to ask for views on the proposed strategy area and objectives, which will feed into an



action plan. The consultation is open until 24<sup>th</sup> July <http://tinyurl.com/omla6kn>

## National Meadows Photography competition

As part of the 'Save Our Magnificent Meadows' project, Plantlife and their project partners have launched a meadow photography competition. Find out more details and how to enter here: <http://tinyurl.com/pwksyaa>

## New Norfolk Wildlife Trust survey to be launched...

In July, Norfolk Wildlife Trust will be launching a new citizen science survey. They will be asking people to submit their sightings of:

- Grass Snake
- Himalayan Balsam
- Water Vole

Keep an eye on their website for more details: <https://www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk>

## County Wildlife Site of the Month

County Wildlife Sites are often little-known sites of importance to wildlife. While not protected by law they are taken into account during the planning process. Some of them are privately owned and do not allow public access. However there are many which you can go and visit.

The County Wildlife Site for this month is... **Marram Hills!**

An extensive 94 hectare coastal site which stretches from Eccles on Sea down to Waxham. The County Wildlife Site includes the foreshore and dunes as well as adjacent landward areas of scrub, fen and grassland.



Marram grass dominates the coastal sand dune grassland, whilst other species present include retharrow, lady's bedstraw, sea sandwort and sea bindweed.

There is dense scrub and woodland present in places along the ridge, including blackthorn, oak, white poplar and bramble.

To the north of Waxham Hall, behind a hedge, is an area of swamp and neutral grassland. Common reed and common couch co-dominate the area, with other species present including lady's bedstraw, ribwort plantain, black knapweed and field horsetail.

If you visit Marram Hills, NBIS would love to know what species you spot there – let us know at <http://www.nbis.org.uk/AllSpeciesSurvey>

Photo: Marram Hills near Waxham © [Richard Humphrey](#) and licensed for [reuse](#) under this [Creative Commons Licence](#)

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## SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

### Lizard orchid spotted in Norfolk for the first time in 60 years

Spotted by butterfly enthusiast Andrew Brown to the north of Norwich, the flower has caused quite a buzz among wildlife experts in the county.

<http://tinyurl.com/nk5u8y7>

### Numbers show threatened bittern is booming again

One of the UK's most threatened birds, the bittern, is returning to England and Wales, according to conservationists

<http://tinyurl.com/pdgabc7>

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## EVENTS

### Royal Norfolk Show – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> July, Norfolk Showground

While the Biodiversity Team won't be attending the Royal Norfolk Show this year, our colleagues in Norfolk Trails, along with a number of other wildlife and conservation organisations, will be there so make sure you go and say hello!

<http://tinyurl.com/p4qc5tp>

### South Norfolk on Show – 5<sup>th</sup> July, 11am-4pm, South Norfolk Council Offices, Long Stratton

See what makes South Norfolk such a fantastic place to live, work and visit. Over 100 stalls and exhibitors, children's entertainment, walkabout performers and much more. NBIS and NNNSI will be there! Free entry.

<http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/leisure/7488.asp>

**Wild About Acle – 11<sup>th</sup> July, 10am-1pm, Acle Library**

Join Norfolk Wildlife Trust for a fun packed wildlife morning of guided walks, a wildlife trail and wild craft activities. Free entry. <http://tinyurl.com/qhj4zvb>

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**AND FINALLY..**

**Forget eagles and albatrosses - oystercatchers are favourite birdies at this Norfolk golf course.**

<http://tinyurl.com/pvbpg4e>

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