



# Biodiversity News in Norfolk

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(May 2016)

Photo: Tawny mining bee at Sheringham Park © Lizzy Oddy

## Welcome to our May e-bulletin

It may not be ideal bee weather outside as I write this, but the Great British Bee Count 2016 has begun. Find out how to take part in GETTING INVOLVED and get counting!

There are quite a number of 90<sup>th</sup> birthdays this year, including the Queen, David Attenborough (see National NEWS) and the Norfolk Wildlife Trust (see Local NEWS).

There has also been plenty of drama surrounding the peregrines at Norwich Cathedral this month – read more about it in SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS.

Finally, if you are interested to read about what the wider Norfolk County Council Environment Team (including Norfolk Trails and Historic Environment Service, you can find the latest newsletter (and subscribe to it) at <http://tinyurl.com/hootrgq>

Happy reading!

Don't forget, you can submit your wildlife records online at <http://nbis.org.uk/AllSpeciesSurvey> or email them to us at [nbis@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nbis@norfolk.gov.uk)

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 in 2016!

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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-BulletinMay2016.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

### **RSPB given £1m to extend wildlife haven in Norfolk Broads**

The RSPB have purchased land equivalent to 100 football pitches, just off the Norfolk Broads alongside Breydon Water and Berney Marshes <http://tinyurl.com/jg7u63z>

### **New arrivals on Weeting Heath**

Nest cameras allow a closer look at the stone curlews of Weeting Heath – and they've just hatched two chicks <http://tinyurl.com/hcfczwp>

### **New woodland near Sprowston is opened to the public**

The picturesque Harrison's Wood, east of Sprowston, is made up of numerous pathways and is home to a variety of bird species <http://tinyurl.com/h9c8gcp>

### **Pollution 'unlikely' to have killed whales which stranded on Norfolk beaches**

Experts discuss post mortems into 3500 stranded whales carried out by the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme, since it was launched in 1990 <http://tinyurl.com/hqcmt4v>

### **New poll released to mark the start of the Great British Bee Count shows almost 50% of people asked could not identify a honeybee**

We may often think of ourselves as a nation of bee lovers, but a new survey suggests a striking lack of knowledge when it comes to telling your honeybee from your bumblebee, and other species <http://tinyurl.com/jjae6o7>

### **Riverfly Census raises concerns over pollution in the River Wensum**

New concerns have been raised over the health of the River Wensum after it was ranked bottom of a national survey of invertebrate life along protected watercourses <http://tinyurl.com/zvkd25a>

### **Revealed: Leopards, a lynx and wild boar all being kept on private properties in Norfolk**

<http://tinyurl.com/zy2w635>

### **Art exhibition set up to celebrate 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Norfolk Wildlife Trust**

A new exhibition, education area, and trail which celebrates the diversity and wonder of Norfolk's countryside has opened in the city centre <http://tinyurl.com/zomgzmb>

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## National NEWS

### **Sir David Attenborough: tributes paid as he turns 90**

Tributes have been paid to the renowned naturalist and broadcaster as Sir David turns 90 <http://tinyurl.com/jfywyaf>

### **Kew report makes new tally for number of world's plants**

Scientists have estimated that there are 390,900 plants known to science <http://tinyurl.com/jv82z69>

### **Illegal wildlife trade campaign enlists tourists**

Conservationists have launched a global campaign asking the public to help tackle the illegal wildlife trade <http://tinyurl.com/h89472e>

### **Spectacular bearded vulture spotted for first time in UK**

Spotted soaring over the Severn estuary and moorland in Devon. If confirmed as a wild bird it will be the first of its species to be found in Britain <http://tinyurl.com/hmardvb>

## Amazon and eBay hosted ads for banned invasive species

Unregulated traders are using the sites to sell some of the world's most invasive plants, with potentially devastating impacts on ecosystems <http://tinyurl.com/hfosrb9>

## Pizzly or grolar bear: grizzly-polar hybrid is a new result of climate change

Grizzly bears in Alaska and Canada are moving north as their environment warms, bringing them into contact with polar bears located on the coastline <http://tinyurl.com/j3sg4tw>

## Major fishing deal offers protection to Arctic waters

Leading seafood suppliers, including McDonalds, Tesco and Birds Eye say suppliers won't expand cod fisheries into pristine Arctic region <http://tinyurl.com/jyrgtpe>

## Wildlife shows not reflecting reality of natural world – Springwatch presenters

BBC's Chris Packham says nature reserves are becoming 'a bit like art galleries' while Martin Hughes-Games raises concerns about conservation <http://tinyurl.com/zbd9jfe>

## More National news here:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/news#May2016NationalNews>

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## GETTING INVOLVED

### Wildlife Recorders of Tomorrow

There's a piece missing... we need your help to build up a picture of The Brecks' wildlife!

The Brecks is an important area for wildlife both in a UK and international context. However, many of the species records come from a few well recorded designated sites, with recording often done on an ad hoc basis making detecting changes over time difficult.

Led by NBIS, this project will establish a network of volunteers recording wildlife throughout the Breaking New Ground Landscape Partnership Scheme area (a project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund).

Whether you're a complete beginner or a seasoned surveyor, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved, with lots of support and training.

Pop along to an introduction session to find out more about the project. There will also be a variety of species ID courses and photography workshops on offer.

The project will operate at 3 levels:

- Beginner: provide training and encouragement to those new to recording wildlife.
- Species surveillance: help people take the next step into more serious recording of sites. This will allow a number of important sites in the Brecks to be monitored and will also help to ensure sustainable long-term monitoring of sites where work is taking place as part of other Breaking New Ground projects. Data collected will feed into the Norfolk Species Surveillance Network.
- River corridor survey – Little Ouse headwaters to Brandon: A non-native species survey of the Little Ouse river, from its headwaters at Redgrave and Lopham Fens to Brandon.

Whether you are an individual or part of a community group, if you are interested in getting involved, please email [nbis@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nbis@norfolk.gov.uk)

More details at <http://tinyurl.com/ppr7mdg>

**To book onto an introductory session to Wildlife Recorders of Tomorrow please go to <http://tinyurl.com/nek3zq7>**



### The Norfolk Bat Survey is back

Bat for its fourth year, the Norfolk Bat Survey aims to build on its previous successes in recording bats across as many 1km squares across the county as possible. Detectors book up quickly, so head to the website now to find out more and avoid disappointment! <http://www.batsurvey.org/norfolk/>

### Nominate someone for an NBN award

Nominations for the 2016 NBN UK awards to celebrate biological recording and information sharing are now open. Find out more here: <http://tinyurl.com/hgwxzbh>

### Join the Great British Bee Count

Download the free app and help to monitor the British bee population. The survey runs from 19<sup>th</sup> May – 30<sup>th</sup> June. Find out more here: <http://tinyurl.com/onc3hvw>

### RSPB asks for help to track rare harriers as they make return to UK

Just seven pairs of Montagu's harrier nested in this country last year and the RSPB is reaching out to the public to help keep track of the bird and identify where it nests this year <http://tinyurl.com/gqyu3ym>

## Help search for the Silver Colonel soldierfly

This is a scarce species that has been recorded quite widely but many of the sites have not had records submitted for quite some time. Found on wetland sites this species mainly flies in May, so you'll need to get your skates on! Full details of where to find it and how to identify it can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/hpqvys3>

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## WildWalk of the Month

WildWalks are new way to record local wildlife. Enjoy a WildWalk in your local landscape and make a note of the wildlife you spot to upload afterwards to the WildWalks website ([www.wild-walks.org](http://www.wild-walks.org)).

There are a good variety of walks on offer to encourage you to explore the local countryside or urban green space, with a range of distances and formats from circular strolls to longer distance trails. And you can even create your own.

Our WildWalk of the Month is... **Thetford Munzee Trail!**

This trail lets you explore the heritage-rich town of Thetford – and you should be able to spot plenty of wildlife on the way. Wildlife in urban areas is often less recorded than species in the countryside, but it is just as important! Find the official route description [here](#) and the recording sheet and route map to print off [here](#).

Jot down any wildlife you spot on your walk and log your sightings on the WildWalks website when you get home – find the link at [www.nbis.org.uk/breckswildwalks](http://www.nbis.org.uk/breckswildwalks)

*WildWalks in the Brecks has been organised by NBIS working with Norfolk and Suffolk Wildlife Trusts and British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). All of the WildWalks for the Brecks can be found under The Brecks (for Norfolk) and Suffolk Brecks (for Suffolk) living landscape drop downs.*



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## SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

### A new ant for Norfolk

County ant recorders Doreen Wells says 'The first record for Norfolk has been recorded for the ant *Lasius sabularum* from pitfall traps laid in 2015 in the Stanford Training Area, as part of a data monitoring project for this Breckland grass heathland site. *Lasius sabularum* is a small yellow ant which is more often found in parks and gardens, but also in agricultural land and meadows. It is a social parasitic ant and nests are founded by queens taking over a nest of the more common ant *Lasius niger* and probably other *Lasius* species.'

### Drama for the Norwich Cathedral Peregrines

Once again, the Norwich Cathedral peregrines are keeping us on our toes with plenty of drama playing out over the past few weeks. Mid-month the protective parents saw off buzzards and red kites to protect their four chicks <http://tinyurl.com/h63t2se>. The chicks were ringed by the Hawk and Owl Trust and one of them was treated for an infection <http://tinyurl.com/qt69zun>. Things seemed to be going well, however an intruding female arrived and started harassing the chicks' mother who has since apparently left the area <http://tinyurl.com/hf8k4zh>. It was feared that this could be bad news for the chicks, but so far the male peregrine seems to be doing an excellent job as sole provider for his growing offspring <http://tinyurl.com/h9u9rat>.

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## EVENTS

### Little Ouse Wildlife Recording Festival, 18<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016, various locations along the Little Ouse

A week of walks, workshops, recording challenges and activities for all ages and abilities. Further information including full details and how to book will be available from <http://www.nbis.org.uk/littleouse> very soon. See

<http://tinyurl.com/z8juxss>

### **Upcoming Nature Talks Presented by Norfolk Wildlife Trust, various dates and locations**

Upcoming events include talks from Nick Acheson, Mike Dilger and Simon King. Book your place via the NWT website <http://tinyurl.com/j77ttwz>

### **Go Wild for Scarning Water Meadows, 2<sup>rd</sup> July 2016, 11.00 – 16.00, Scarning Water Meadows**

Fun packed wildlife day run by Norfolk Wildlife Trust. Guided walks, pond dipping, minibeast hunting, crafts and more. Get involved in their Bioblitz, as they try and find over 200 animal and plant species on the site. Free event, no need to book and suitable for all ages <http://tinyurl.com/jg292ul>

### **Farm and Wildlife Day, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2016, 7.00 – 18.00, Abbey Farm, Flitcham**

Circular and guided walks, bring a picnic, refreshments available 10am – 5pm in aid of 'Little Discoverers', a local group supporting children with motor learning difficulties and delayed development. Also moth identification and sale of organic produce.

All walks free of charge, no need to book unless bringing a large group <http://tinyurl.com/h97ng3o>

### **Bees of the Brecks – Summer Brecks Heath Loving Bees, 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> July 2016, 10.00 – 16.00, Cranwich Heath**

A weekend course designed to help you identify, record and conserve bees. The course leader is Steven Falk, one of Britain's leading experts in insect conservation and pollinators. This course focuses on summer-flying bees who like sandy Breck heath and forest ride habitats.

Free event but booking essential. For more details and to book see <http://tinyurl.com/zcqezrg>

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## **AND FINALLY..**

**Large Hadron Collider on paws after creature chews through wiring** <http://tinyurl.com/gqtb728>

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