



Biodiversity News in Norfolk

No 69
(October 2017)

Hawthorn berries, near to Rockland St Mary
cc-by-sa/2.0 - © Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk/p/5569799

Welcome to our October e-bulletin!

It may be getting chillier but Norfolk is still beautiful as ever. Many **EVENTS** are coming up including important Bug Sorting Workshops to get involved with.

In **Local NEWS** rare sighting of a Basking shark spotted off Cromer and in **National NEWS** new British beetle found in Scottish forest. However in **International NEWS** there has been an alarming decline in flying insects in Germany.

Not enough to hear from us once a month? Follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/NorfolkBiodiversityInformationService/>) and Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com/NorfolkBIS>).

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. Our data protection policy can be found on our website at <http://www.nbis.org.uk/privacy-policy>.

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 2017!

**Natural Environment Team
Community and Environmental Services,
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Please do email us at 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-BulletinOct2017.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

Winter is coming - first seal pup of the season born at Blakeney Point

England's largest grey seal colony welcomes earliest pup yet at the start of the pupping season.

<https://tinyurl.com/yatzjpgg>

Guide to best places to see autumn leaves in colourful glory

Explore Norfolk's woods and forests and enjoy the autumn colour. <https://tinyurl.com/y82r2ma8>

'Rare' North Sea shark sighting off Norfolk coast

12ft basking shark spotted off Cromer. It is rarely found in the North Sea. <https://tinyurl.com/yclveqlz>

Anger over Gorleston tree poisoner

More than 10 trees, centuries old appear to have had holes drilled into them and then filled with poison at Koolunga house, Gorleston.

<https://tinyurl.com/ybablxj7>

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National NEWS

Believed extinct diamond spider turns up

The Diamond spider presumed extinct for almost half a century was found on heathland in Clumber Park in Nottinghamshire during ecological monitoring.

<https://tinyurl.com/ya95z4xy>

New native British beetle found in ancient Scottish forests

Pogonocherus caroli, a rare native beetle has been found in ancient Caledonian forest. This beetle has eluded entomologists until now, hatching later in the year.

<https://tinyurl.com/y77gtxlv>

British birds evolve bigger beaks to use garden feeders

This report studied great tits from the 1970s to the present day. It compares great tits in the UK with the Netherlands, in the latter birdfeeders are less widely used.

<https://tinyurl.com/y8tjmwhg>

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International NEWS

Finding nemo? We may be losing him, says climate study

Under threat due to warming waters bleaching the coral, upon which the clownfish rely.

<https://tinyurl.com/ybhwjpgn>

Penguins starving to death is a sign that something's very wrong in the Antarctic

<https://tinyurl.com/y87orhdf>

Alarm over decline in flying insects in Germany

It has been suggested that their flying insects have decreased 75% in 30 years. <https://tinyurl.com/y7tjn7fb>

More news here:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/news#Oct2017NationalNews>

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GETTING INVOLVED

Norfolk's Freshwater Study Group Meetings

Are you keen to learn more about freshwater life?

If you are an enthusiastic beginner or have some experience of investigating the wealth of freshwater life in the county, then the Norfolk Freshwater Study Group meetings could be for you. Meetings take place every third Thursday of the month in the study centre at the Wheatfen Nature Reserve, Surlingham from 19:00 onwards. The focus is typically on invertebrate samples from ponds, dykes, broads and rivers, though they are happy to be side-tracked by anything aquatic! There is a range of microscopes, equipment, identification guides and a vast store of knowledge available to share and use. These meetings are an ideal opportunity to increase your identification skills and understand more about freshwaters.

If you would like to come along and see what is available, please contact Dan Hoare: daniel.j.hoare@gmail.com

Volunteer in a beautiful environment and gain Woodland Management and Horticultural skills at Holt Hall

Help with conservation work on the grounds or lend a hand in the walled garden. Holt hall is an environmental and outdoor learning centre. The next open gate dates are on the 9th and 10th December. Please contact at 01263 713117, www.holthall.org.uk or holthall@educatorsolutions.org.uk

Hedgehog Hibernation

As hedgehogs are starting to hibernate, visit Hedgehog Street for advice supporting hedgehogs in your garden:

<https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/>

Help Record Parasitical Mistletoe on Oaks

Mistletoe has a wide range of hosts including oaks. Oaks with parasitical mistletoe are still quite rare. Can you help collect the records for Norfolk? If you find any mistletoe, contact NBIS at nbis@norfolk.gov.uk

The Brecks Earth Heritage Trail is now open

Want to try a new Trail? Full of prehistoric wildlife with 90 million years of geological history, the Brecks Earth Heritage Trail is one of Britain's great natural areas to explore. Please visit for more information

<http://www.breakingnewground.org.uk/earthheritagetrail/> or download the Earth Heritage Trail Map app.

National Plant Monitoring Scheme

The National Plant Monitoring Scheme (NPMS) is a new habitat-based plant monitoring scheme designed by BSBI, CEH, Plantlife and JNCC. The aim is to collect data to provide an annual indication of changes in plant abundance and diversity. Thanks to volunteers, there is a very good understanding of changes in the populations of birds, butterflies and bats. Plants are the foundation of habitats and ecosystems, but currently we do not have a good measure of changes in plant populations across the country. Anyone who is interested in nature can participate! For more information, visit <http://www.npms.org.uk/>

Calling all eco heroes!

Schools, businesses, local food producers, community groups and individuals are being invited to enter the Norwich and Norfolk Eco Awards, which celebrates and rewards environmental excellence across the city and county. Shiitake mushroom growing, car sharing and food recycling were just some of the winning projects at last year's awards, which are run by Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council. You can read about last year's winning eco projects [here](#), maybe you know of a cycling group or otherwise that might fit the bill! Please visit www.eco-awards.co.uk for more information and to apply. Open until the 1 December 2017.

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SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

New LBJ in the reeds

Fungus recorders have LBJs (little brown jobs) too, groups of drab fungi with a justified reputation of being tricky to identify. Brittlestems (*Psathyrella* spp.) are such a group; few people seek them out and finding one usually elicits a collective groan. There are nearly 100 on the British list – and now there is one more.

In February 2017, the paucity of larger fungi encouraged Yvonne Mynett to take a good look at one she collected in a reedbed at Watermill Broad, Cranwich. Under the microscope she noticed just a hint of pink along the gill edge, enough of a feature, when combined with others, to lead her to *Psathyrella thujina*. This identification was subsequently confirmed by mycologists at Kew. The fungus grows on dead reed fragments and is known from North America and over much of Western Europe but is always considered rare.

Unfortunately, no photograph was taken of the fresh specimen in Norfolk but Geoffrey Kibby has painted a likeness based on other published images for the debut of *P. thujina* in the July 2017 edition of *Field Mycology*, and has kindly allowed its use here.



Painted by Geoffrey Kibby, July 2017, *Field Mycology*

Thanks to Tony Leech for this piece.

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EVENTS

Bug Sorting Workshop NO.3

Come along and learn about invertebrate families and help sort specimens into those families - by doing so you will help really important UEA research into management for important invertebrates in the Brecks!

Sign up today to as many dates* as you like:

At Dragonfly house

We have 5 weekday dates (1st, 2nd, 8th, 15th and 22nd November) in Norwich that you can book here:

<https://tinyurl.com/ybkfy8bd>

We have weekend sessions (Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th December) in Norwich that you can book here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y72uqbv4>

We have weekend sessions (Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd December) in the Brecks that you can book here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yab8dhkx>

*Please note if you wish to attend more than one date (which we encourage you to do), you will need to book each date separately.

Orchards East- Norfolk Launch, Saturday 4th November 2017, 10.00 -15:00, The Green Britain Centre, Swaffham, Norfolk, PE37 7HT

Orchards East is an exciting new environmental and cultural project covering six counties in the East of England – Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

Three year project to research, conserve and promote the region's orchards, their legacy and their future.

Sign up to the Norfolk launch and learn about the project and how you can get involved in volunteering to survey Norfolk's traditional orchards, amongst other orchard related activities.

This is a FREE event but **booking is required**.

If you would like to find out more about the project or come along to the launch, please book a place by contacting: gen@orchardseast.org.uk or visit <https://www.uea.ac.uk/orchards-east>

Marvellous Mosses

Led by county bryophyte recorder Mary Ghullam, explore Norfolk's largest ancient woodland and take a closer look at these fascinating - if often overlooked - primitive plants.

Wednesday 8th November 2017, 13:00, Weavers Way car park, Station Road, Briggate, NR28 9QX (TG316276)

Friday 10th November 2017, 11:15, Foxley Wood, Themelthorpe Road, Foxley, NR20 4QR, TG049229

<http://norfolknaturalists.org.uk/wp/events/>

NT Workshop- ferns and their allies, Saturday 11 November 2017, 10:30-15:30, National Trust - Sheringham Park, Visitor Centre, Wood Farm, Upper Sheringham, NR26 8TL

Learn how to tell Lady-ferns from Male-ferns and Hard-ferns from Soft Shield-ferns with local expert Bob Ellis and National Trust Ranger Mary Ghullam. Learn about the unusual life-cycle of the fern and identify different species, both through examining specimens in the classroom and through exploring the ferns growing in Sheringham Park.

Booking essential: <http://norfolknaturalists.org.uk/wp/events/>

'The History of the How Hill Trust', Tuesday 14th November 2017, 19:30-21:30,

St. Andrew's Hall, Eaton, NR4 6NW

Illustrated talk by Simon Partridge, Director of the Trust.

<http://norfolknaturalists.org.uk/wp/events/>

CPD Training course: Basic bat Awareness & Bat Scoping Training Days

It is a full day of training specifically designed for anyone working with trees, such as tree surgeons, estate and woodland managers, conservationists or ecologists. Successful participants will gain the necessary skills to complete initial scoping surveys and secondary non-specialist surveys as recommended in the British Standard BS 8596:2015 Surveying for bats in trees and woodland - Guide.

Final Session: Friday 24th November 2017

To get the application form and book <https://www.anglianecology.co.uk/>

Dragonflies and other wildlife distractions of Madagascar, Tuesday 12th December 2017, 19:30,

St. Andrew's Hall, Eaton, NR4 6NW

Illustrated talk by Dr Pam Taylor. With festive refreshments.

<http://norfolknaturalists.org.uk/wp/events/>

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AND FINALLY.. From white deer to loved-up puffins: 10 of the UK's most stunning wildlife sights

<https://tinyurl.com/yajurwk5>

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