



Biodiversity News in Norfolk

No. 9 (December 2011)

Photos - Left: Marston Marshes in winter (© Copyright [Adrian S Pye](#) and licensed for reuse under this [Creative Commons Licence](#)). Right: Grey seals in the snow at Horsey gap (© Copyright [Evelyn Simak](#) and licensed for reuse under this [Creative Commons Licence](#).)

Welcome to our December biodiversity e-bulletin and merry Christmas!!

It has been a somewhat shorter time since the last e-bulletin, due to the festive season. There has been, however, much going on in the conservation world; including a record year for grey seal pup births on the Norfolk coast, the GNDP successfully bidding for a Defra bio-offsetting pilot, and very exciting finds in a Brecks invertebrate survey.

This year has been a very full on and testing year. It has included very significant government biodiversity announcements, such as the first environment white paper in 20 years (Natural Environment White Paper), the National Ecosystem Assessment and the new Biodiversity Strategy for England. The most significant government report was Sir John Lawton's 'Making space for nature' - this not only influenced government policy in the aforementioned reports, but also has led to the setting-up of significant Defra pilots, such as the Local Nature Partnerships, Nature Improvement Areas and Bio-offsetting. In Norfolk huge amounts of excellent conservation and biodiversity work has taken place; such as the ground breaking Brecks and Broads biodiversity audits.

Looking forward to 2012 - NBIS, NBP and NNNSI are involved in a number of hugely exciting projects that could make 2012 a year to remember. Not only are we in early stages regarding a potential Local Nature Partnership, but as announced in the Local News section below, we are leading the GNDP bio-offsetting pilot.

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.

If you'd rather not receive this in future, please email us at nbis@norfolk.gov.uk, and we'll remove you from our circulation list.

Merry Christmas

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Local NEWS

The GNDP is successful in its bid to become a Defra bio-offsetting pilot

In December Defra announced that the Greater Norwich Development Partnership was successful in its bid to become a pilot area for biodiversity offsetting. Biodiversity offsets are conservation activities designed to deliver biodiversity benefits in compensation for losses as a result of development. It is hoped that by using offsets, compensation actions will be more effective than currently and will be used in a strategic manner to help create wider ecological networks and green infrastructure. The other pilot areas are Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull; Essex; Devon; Doncaster and North Nottinghamshire. Lessons from the pilot areas will be used to develop national guidelines.

Enjoy a winter walk... and help protect local wildlife

NBIS promotes online surveys in County Council's "Your Norfolk" magazine:

<http://www.norfolkpublications.org.uk/yournorfolk/default.aspx?aID=11>

If you see **ANY** wildlife over winter, please record your sightings in our online survey:

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

Holt Lowes heathland protected by Dartmoor ponies

Dartmoor ponies are the latest recruits to a team protecting a Norfolk heathland of international importance:

<http://t.co/HNwO7Me9>

Warning over Norfolk's wildlife habitats

A review of EU habitats directives to assess their impact on the nation's prospects for commercial growth has outraged East Anglia's conservation community:

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/warning_over_norfolk_s_wildlife_habitats_1_1150519

Planting begins on two new community orchards in South Norfolk

Planting has begun to create two new community orchards in south Norfolk following the donation of new saplings as part of National Tree Week:

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/planting_begins_on_two_new_community_orchards_in_south_norfolk_1_1142877

E bulletin Reader Survey

Please complete our reader survey for this bulletin!

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/e-bulletin-survey>

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National NEWS

Bitterns booming in UK quarries

Quarries are providing a safe haven for rare bitterns to nest and breed, helping them to make a resounding comeback in this country: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/news#bitternUK>

Badger cull (to stop bovine TB) to be trialled in England

Badger culling will be tried out in two areas of England in the new year in an attempt to tackle bovine TB in cattle:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-16183926>

Hen harrier facing second extinction, warns RSPB

Four nesting pairs successfully raised young in English uplands – the lowest population since their reintroduction in 1960s: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/dec/08/hen-harrier-second-extinction>

Butterflies: 72% of UK species in decline

Almost three quarters of UK butterfly species have declined in abundance over the past decade:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-16054895>

Threat to biological recording course

The School of Biosciences at University of Birmingham has recently announced that it will cease to host biological recording and species identification programmes. Read more:

<http://www.facebook.com#!/pages/Biological-Recording-at-BHAM-needs-you/156737367761523>

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GETTING INVOLVED

Norfolk appeal to address butterfly decline

Families across the region are being urged to play their part in addressing a long-term decline in butterfly numbers. A new survey by wildlife charity Butterfly Conservation and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology reports that 72pc of species have suffered declines in the past 10 years:

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/norfolk_appeal_to_address_butterfly_decline_1_1148361

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SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

Survey finds exciting Brecks inverts at Cranwich 'ditch'

NBIS provided funding for Geoff Nobes to survey for bees and wasps at the Cranwich 'ditch'. From 13 visits over the summer the following were found: 42 species of solitary wasp; 68 species of solitary bees; and 9 species of social bees. Of these 23% have national rarity or scarce status.

Geoff also surveyed Thompson village pond which is a CWS and probable pingo. He found 55 species of water beetles, 30% of which have national rarity or scarce status.

Blakeney Point sees a 'meteoric' rise in grey seals

The population of grey seals on the Norfolk coast has seen a "meteoric" rise, with a record number born this year:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-16214694>

Operation Osprey lands at Ranworth

Seventeen years after the majestic osprey was introduced as a breeding bird to Rutland Water in Leicestershire it is generating an estimated £750,000 a year to the tourism economy. NWT hopes that ospreys could be encouraged to breed in the Broads, helping to boost tourism in the area.

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/operation_osprey_lands_at_ranworth_1_1150531

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EVENTS

19th May 2012

Wild About the Wensum

Popular annual conservation event at Pensthorpe. Further details available from:

Kirsty.willingham@pensthorpe.com

21st July 2012

Glad about the Glaven

Event celebrating the local area and appreciation of the environment to be held at Holt Hall. Further details available from: fakenhamlearningcommunity@fakenhamhigh.norfolk.sch.uk

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AND FINALLY..

London 2012 christmas mystery: hunt on for mystery 'goose-killer' near Olympic Park!

- Witness says a large predator is lurking in river Lea
- Experts speculate it could be an alligator or a python

Full article: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2011/dec/14/london-2012-mystery-goose-killer>

.....**MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM NBIS, NBP and NNNS!!!!**

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