

Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership
**Community
Biodiversity Awards 2014**

Can you help find
our winners?

We are looking for
outstanding
individuals and
groups that make
a difference for
wildlife and
people in local
communities.

Norfolk Biodiversity
Partnership are
keen to attract
sponsorship for the
Awards. This
provides a number
of benefits in terms
of promotion and
profile in return.

www.norfolkbiodiversity.org
A voice for Norfolk's nature

Biodiversity News in Norfolk

No 32 (Feb 2014)

Welcome to our February e-bulletin

Our unusually stormy weather has continued over the last month, with record amounts of rainfall in some areas. While we may have got off pretty lightly here in Norfolk, both people and wildlife have been badly affected in other counties, and there have been discussions over how a similar situation might be avoided in the future (see NationalNEWS).

Some good news however - Cley and Salthouse Marshes are showing signs of self repair following December's storm surge, potentially saving hundreds and thousands of pounds in repair costs (see LocalNEWS).

Also close to home, the Norwich Fringe Project is appealing for people to come forward and get involved in order to secure its future. The Project has been struggling under funding cuts and is currently trying to find a way forward (see LocalNEWS)

The 2013 Bittern Monitoring Report has shown an increase in booming males in the Norfolk Broads compared with last year. The RSPB are relying on volunteers to continue to monitor the species in 2014 (see SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS).

Finally, Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership are looking for nominations for the 2014 Community Biodiversity Awards. Do you know of an individual, group, business or project that makes a difference for wildlife and their local community? Nominations close on the 25th April 2014 and the awards ceremony will be held in July. If you'd like to nominate someone, see GETTING INVOLVED to find out how.

SPECIES OF THE MONTH

Many thanks to those of you who have submitted Mistletoe (*Viscum album*) records in February. **Please submit any more sightings of mistletoe here: <http://nbis.org.uk/mistletoe>**

Egyptian Goose  [Some rights reserved](#) by [George Rex](#)

Our species of the month for March is **Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*)**.

A small, stocky goose with apricot breast, white wing patch and dark eye patch. Egyptian goose was first introduced into England in the late 17th century. During the 19th century birds became increasingly common on private estates, mostly in south and east England from whence they dispersed to establish colonies elsewhere.

We know the numbers are high in Norfolk, but we need YOUR help to build a more accurate picture of their true distribution. This is especially important for this species, which can become problematic in high numbers. Egyptian goose can compete with other birds for food and territories, and become an agricultural pest.



RINSE (Reducing the Impact of Non-native Species in Europe) is a cross-border European project part funded through the EU's Two Seas Interreg programme and lead by Norfolk County Council. In parts of Belgium the problems associated with Egyptian goose have become so severe that RINSE partners in the area are carrying out field trials to identify the most effective methods to trap the birds. If we leave things as they are in the UK then we could have the same problems very soon! In the meantime you can help us in Norfolk by downloading 'That's Invasive!' - the RINSE smartphone App - and reporting any sightings of the bird to help us stay informed on the status of this emerging threat. Now is a good time to record as Egyptian geese start to breed in late March.

For more information and to record this species click here:
<http://www.nbis.org.uk/egyptian-geese>

To download the RINSE app and start recording this species straight away, please click here:
<http://www.rinse-europe.eu/smartphone-apps>

Biodiversity and Countryside Team
Environment, Transport and Development,
Norfolk County Council
nbis@norfolk.gov.uk

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-bulletinFeb2014.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

Norwich wildlife project in fight for its future

Norwich Fringe Project is appealing for people to get involved to secure its future

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/politics/norwich_wildlife_project_in_fight_for_its_future_1_3343225

Cley and Salthouse Marshes self-repair

Cley and Salthouse Marshes have started to self-repair following December's storm surge

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/cley_and_salthouse_marshes_have_started_to_self_repair_1_3340465

Meet the million-year-olds

Human footprints found in Norfolk are the oldest ever seen outside of Africa

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/archaeology/news/the-millionyearold-family-human-footprints-found-in-britain-are-oldest-ever-seen-outside-of-africa-9114151.html>

Rare chalk river habitat explored at North Creake open day

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/rare_chalk_river_habitat_explored_at_north_creake_open_day_1_3303309

Plans to develop Fakenham's 'hidden gem' into a nature reserve

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/plans_to_develop_fakenham_s_hidden_gem_into_a_nature_reserve_1_3250741

Norfolk appeal launched for information about shot buzzard

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/news/362562-norfolk-appeal-launched-for-information-about-shot-buzzard->

Pensthorpe wildlife reserve counts growth in endangered species

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-25884260>

National Character Areas in Norfolk:

Natural England is currently coming to the end of a project that has been revising the full set of profiles for England's 159 National Character Areas (NCAs).

The purposes of NCAs profiles are to

- Provide information of the natural and cultural features that shape landscapes.
- Identify opportunities to enhance the distinctive landscape qualities.
- Enable people and organisations based within particular landscapes to work together for the best interests of the natural environment.
- Create awareness of the greater benefits associated with planning conservation initiatives at a landscape scale.

All published NCA profiles can be accessed on Natural England's website at:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/nca/default.aspx>

Those currently available for Norfolk are: The Fens; North West Norfolk; North Norfolk Coast; Central North Norfolk; The Broads; Mid Norfolk & The Brecks.

NCAs for North East Norfolk & Flegg and South Norfolk & High Suffolk Claylands will be published over the next few months.

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National NEWS

The environmental impact of the winter floods

UK weather: floods could have devastating environmental impact as animals drown or die from lack of food

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uk-weather-floods-could-have-devastating-environmental-impact-9132299.html>

What effect might the wet weather have on invertebrates? <http://www.buglife.org.uk/blog/matt-shardlow-ceo/flooding-and-bugs-%E2%80%93-what-are-impacts>

Some are calling for beavers to be reintroduced to better control river flooding in the future

http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/jan/29/beavers-dam-flooding-owen-paterson?CMP=tw_t_gu

Britain's elusive species revealed... but many people have never even seen a

hedgehog

Nightjar and pine marten among Britain's most elusive species

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/feb/13/britain-most-elusive-creatures-david-attenborough>

Sir David Attenborough Report: millions have never seen common native animals like hedgehogs and rabbits

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/wildlife/10635214/David-Attenborough-report-millions-have-never-seen-common-native-animals-like-hedgehogs-and-rabbits.html>

Early blackbirds catch worms before winged rivals, study finds

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthnews/10612269/Early-blackbirds-catch-worms-before-winged-rivals-study-finds.html>

The Big Bumblebee Discovery: large scale citizen science!

http://www.ceh.ac.uk/news/news_archive/big-bumblebee-discovery-citizen-science_2014_07.html

Jaw-dropping wild guest visits garden during RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/news/362465-jawdropping-wild-guest-visits-garden-during-rspb-big-garden-birdwatch>

Obituary for The Hon. Vincent Weir

Sad news reached me this morning that The Hon. Vincent Weir passed away over the weekend after a long illness.

He has been pivotal since forming www.vwt.org.uk in 1975 in providing serious funding for many national wildlife organisations such as British Butterflies, Amphibian and Reptile conservation and many others.

He also regularly visited North Norfolk studying otters, and funded the early otter releases via the Otter Trust, which have directly led to the recovery of this species, although, unfortunately, his name may not be prominent or well-known these days.

I owe a very great debt of gratitude to this man and the VW Trust for funding some of the important Norfolk Bat Group conservation projects in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s where the group secured 24 of the best Norfolk bat hibernation sites as their millennium project.

I recall being phoned by him one Friday evening, when I was in the bath (only an occasional event!), in reply to my urgent request for funds to secure a chalk tunnel bat hibernation site. The cheque for what was a considerable sum of money on those days arrived on my doorstep on the Monday morning. No forms to complete, no fuss, no questions, just 100% solid support. How very, very different to the way things are these days!

Thank you Vincent Weir - the UK world of wildlife: otters, butterflies, bats and herptiles owe you one HUGE debt.
John Goldsmith - 17 February 2014

More National news here:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/news#Feb2014NationalNews>

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GETTING INVOLVED

NBIS are still looking for volunteers to join our species monitoring project. More at

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

The search is on for Norfolk's wildlife heroes!

Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership is looking for nominations for the 2014 Community Biodiversity Awards. They are looking for outstanding individuals and groups that make a difference for wildlife and people in local communities. Nominations must be made by April 25th 2014. For more details and the nomination form please see <http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/communityprojects/biodiversityawards.aspx>

National Harvest Mouse Survey

The National Harvest Mouse Survey is looking for volunteers. For more information and how to get involved please see http://www.mammal.org.uk/harvestmouse_survey

Hedgehog Street 2014 Hibernation Survey

Hedgehog Street needs your help to collect hedgehog records from 1st February until 31st August 2014 See <http://www.hedgehogstreet.org/pages/hibernation-survey.html> for more details.

Final call for artwork Inspired By Birds - closing date 28th Feb!

If you are an artist living in East Anglia and your work is inspired by birds, then you are invited to submit your

work for the fourth Norwich Castle Open Art Show 'Inspired By Birds'. <http://bit.ly/IQHw15>

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SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

Bittern Breeding in 2013

A summary of the results of the 2013 Bittern Monitoring Programme, co-ordinated by the RSPB, showed that there was an increase in the number of confirmed booming males up to 120 boomers recorded at 60 sites, compared to 106 boomers at 53 sites in 2012. Booming numbers in the Norfolk Broads recovered well from a dip in 2012, and booming was reported at three new sites (no previous records since annual monitoring began in 1990).

For 2014, the RSPB (in conjunction with Natural England) requests that the many volunteers, conservation site staff and landowners continue to monitor sites for booming males and breeding attempts as for 2013. To report any observations this season, or to request a copy of the survey methods and recording forms, please contact Simon Wotton at simon.wotton@rspb.org.uk

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EVENTS

Norfolk Rivers Trust River Catchment Community Event, Saturday 8th March 2014. Snettisham Village Hall (River Ingol).

Join the Norfolk Rivers Trust for a day learning about your local river, the wildlife it supports and how we can work together to solve the threats it faces. Come for the day or just pop in for five minutes. For more details see: <http://www.norfolkriverstrust.org/2013/11/river-catchment-community-events.html>

East of England Bat Conference, Saturday 29th March 2014. Ipswich.

This is a day event for bat workers and bat enthusiasts who live in Eastern England or who are members of bat groups in the region. For more details and to book see <http://bats.eventhq.co.uk/east-of-england-bat-conference>

Upcoming events at Sculthorpe Moor nature reserve.

<http://hawkandowl.org/events/categories/sculthorpe/>

Coming up soon...

Wild About the Wensum will be back at **Pensthorpe** on **Saturday 26th April 2014** - make sure you put the date in your diaries!

<http://www.pensthorpe.com/events/2014/1/wild-about-wensum-2014/>

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AND FINALLY..

The male Norwich Cathedral peregrine brings his mate the equivalent of an early morning cup of tea on Valentines Day! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XiRbFkUV8U&feature=youtu.be&a>

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Your comments about this bulletin are appreciated - please complete our survey at:

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

Webpages: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/> ; www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/ ; www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NorfolkBiodiversityInformationService ; www.facebook.com/NorfolkInvasives

Twitter: [http://www.twitter.com/NorfolkBIS](https://www.twitter.com/NorfolkBIS); [http://www.twitter.com/NorfolkNNSI](https://www.twitter.com/NorfolkNNSI)

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