



Biodiversity News in Norfolk

No 36 (June 2014)

Photo: Silver Studded Blue at Kelling Heath © Sam Neal

Welcome to our June e-bulletin

The football may not have gone our way, but at least we've had some lovely long, sunny days recently to get out and about in. The other week NBIS was in North Norfolk doing some plant surveys for the Norfolk Species Surveillance Network (see GETTING INVOLVED for more information). Although it was a bit of a cloudy day, we were lucky enough to spot a pretty silver-studded blue butterfly at Kelling Heath (see picture above). The Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative have started their annual Himalayan Balsam bashing along the River Wensum, and the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership are gearing up for their Biodiversity Awards ceremony in July.

In Local NEWS there has been lots of action at Norwich Cathedral as the peregrine chicks fledged. Now is a great time to go and see them as the parents teach the youngsters how to hunt. Further afield, the BTO tagged cuckoos have started making their way south (see SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS), and surveys have shown that England's honeybee numbers have been boosted thanks to the mild winter (see National NEWS).

The first weekend in July is looking like a busy one for wildlife enthusiasts, with an event to celebrate saltmarshes on the 4th July, the Whittingham Great Bug Hunt (supported by NBIS) on the 5th and the Abbey Farm open day on the 6th (see EVENTS).

Have a great month!

SPECIES OF THE MONTH

Many thanks to those of you who have submitted records of Swallowtail butterfly. **Please submit any more sightings of Swallowtail butterfly here:** <http://nbis.org.uk/swallowtail>

Our species of the month for July is the **Bee Orchid (*Ophrys apifera*)**.

When you see it it's pretty obvious how the bee orchid got its name - its flower looks like there is a female bee sat on it! The plant uses this to lure in male bees which then pollinate the flower. To make themselves even more irresistible to their pollinators they give out chemical signals that smell like a female bee!

The bee orchid is very distinctive and now is a great time to go out looking for it. They can pop up on all sorts of grassy places - even on road verges and waste ground, so make sure you keep your eyes peeled!

For more information and to record the Bee Orchid click here:

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



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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-bulletinJune2014.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

Cathedral peregrine update

It's been a busy month for the Norwich Cathedral peregrines. The first fledged on the 6th June <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-27729372> and the fourth on the 10th June <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-27790724>. Sadly the fourth chick to fledge was found dead two days later <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-27835498>. A post-mortem found a crack in one of the bird's neck bones suggesting she had collided with something. It has been suggested that other cities should try and repeat the success of the Norwich Cathedral peregrine project <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-27840978>.

Holt residents make 46,000 blackbird sightings

As seen on the BBC's Springwatch, residents of the Norfolk town have recorded 46,000 sightings of blackbirds as part of a study to see how the birds survive in a suburban environment. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-27724513>

New partnership aims to make Broads and wetlands healthier

The landmark Broadland Rivers Catchment Plan aims to bring together organisations, businesses and people to improve the rivers and waterways upstream of the Broads, as well as where they flow into the sea.

<http://tinyurl.com/qawnzqb>

Much-loved wildlife reserve in Bayfield celebrates 25th anniversary

A wildlife haven celebrates its 25th birthday this month and is marking the occasion with an ongoing project to return the site to its former glory.

<http://tinyurl.com/mjrwmm2>

Spate of bee thefts in Cley, Woodbastwick and King's Lynn

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/spate_of_bee_thefts_in_cley_woodbastwick_and_king_s_lynn_1_3643220

Norfolk Wildlife Trust need YOU to help to save our wildlife

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/we_need_you_to_help_to_save_our_wildlife_1_3625306

Rare sighting of spectacled warbler delights birdwatchers in Norfolk

<http://tinyurl.com/k35crtz>

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National NEWS

England's honeybee numbers boosted after mild winter

An annual survey shows honeybees fared much better in this year's mild winter than the bitter cold of the previous year.

<http://tinyurl.com/n7t2z7s>

Very hungry Asian caterpillar threatens Britain's box hedges

Experts fear it may be on the verge of expanding rapidly across the country after the number of cases doubled in the last 12 months.

<http://tinyurl.com/qcw85he>

Atlas of Dragonflies in Britain and Ireland is published

<http://field-studies-council.org/publications/pubs/atlas-of-dragonflies-in-britain-and-ireland.aspx>

Ash dieback is now 'unstoppable', ecologists warn

<http://tinyurl.com/lg2jvpw>

Invasive harlequin ladybirds 'eating native British cousins'

<http://tinyurl.com/q3cyo5b>

Jurassic Coast Fossil Finder

The Jurassic Coast Fossil Finder showcases the fossils held by museums along the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site. Each fossil has been professionally photographed, some of them as 360 degree rotations. They are presented with a description and fact file of scientific details. It is possible to search in a variety of ways and to display the results in geological order which gives a very visual representation of the nature of the fossil record in this part of the World. <http://jurassiccoast.org/fossilfinder>

More National news here:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/news#June2014NationalNews>

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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>



National Hedgehog Survey 2014 -2015.

As many people are now aware, Britain's hedgehogs are struggling to survive in the 21st Century with increased habitat fragmentation, agricultural intensification, increased traffic volume and climate change being just some of their problems! A key part of designing a conservation strategy for the species is to get a better understanding of the current UK population.

To this purpose, " The National Hedgehog Survey is being conducted by University of Reading and Nottingham Trent University, in collaboration with British Hedgehog Preservation Society and People's Trust for Endangered Species.

They are looking for volunteer recorders in Norfolk, who once registered will be able to collect the necessary equipment from the Regional Co-ordinator Ed Stocker (Norfolk County Council Ecologist) at County Hall, Norwich.

To register as a volunteer and / or to ask any questions regarding the survey, please contact the survey coordinator, Emily Thomas by emailing hedgehogsurvey@ptes.org. When contacting us, please ensure that you include your postcode as this will be used to identify the survey square closest to you. Thank you.

For more information please see <http://www.ptes.org/nationalhedgehogsurvey>

Norfolk Bat Survey Is Back

Following last year's success, Norfolk Bat Survey is back! And so far this year, volunteers have collected over 100,000 bat recordings! The survey is very easy to get involved in and doesn't require any prior experience. And the results will be emailed out to you as soon as they've been analysed, so you can find out which bat species have been flying around in your area. You can sign up for a 1km square and reserve equipment online at <http://www.batsurvey.org/>

Have you seen a Turkish crayfish in the Lower Waveney?

If so, Julia Stansfield from the Environment Agency would like to know about it! She says "A few years ago there was a large population of turkish crayfish in the Waveney in the Bungay and Beccles area. There was an outbreak of crayfish plague that seemed to wipe them out but since there have been anecdotal reports that they have started to recover. We would like to build up a picture of current distribution from any sources we can before committing our limited resources to survey effort. Please let me know any sightings."

Please send any sightings to nbis@norfolk.gov.uk and we'll pass them on to Julia.

Invasive bramble alert

The bramble species *Rubus armeniacus* has recently been brought to our attention by Alex Prendergast. It seems to be pretty invasive (it came from Armenia via cultivation in USA and UK gardens as 'Theodore Reimers' or 'Himalayan Giant'), swamping native vegetation (other brambles in particular). Alex keeps finding it and is worried that it is surreptitiously creeping into every corner of the countryside, as despite its size and distinctive features (outlined below) it may be overlooked as just another bramble.

Key features:

- Huge. Bushes to 8-10 feet tall forming extensive patches
- Leaves large too (to 20-30cm across), digitate, white and furry beneath
- Primocanes (non-flowering stems) deeply furrowed, almost hairless
- Flowers pink in large inflorescences
- Fruit large and tasty

We need to find out how far this invasive plant has spread. If you spot it, please record your sightings here:

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

Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society ID Workshops - some places still available!

Species identification workshops include Grasshoppers & Crickets, Bugs & Beetles and Fungi on Wood. For more information, see their website: <http://www.nnns.org.uk/content/workshops>

Urban Invaders Survey

The Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative has launched a new 'Urban Invaders' survey, asking people to record six species of invasive plant found in urban areas. You can record these species online at:

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

Citizen science app hopes to create buzz for bee survey

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-27764163>

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SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

First reported Norfolk glow worms for 2014

Female glow worms (actually bioluminescent beetles, not worms!) can be seen glowing at night during June and July. The first reported glow worm in Norfolk this year was seen on the 12th June at Station Road, Haddiscoe, on a public footpath running parallel with the railway line and the River Waveney.

You can record your Norfolk glow worm sightings on our website at <http://www.nbis.org.uk/Glow-wormSurvey>

Cuckoos on the move

It feels like they've only just got here, but the BTO tracked cuckoos are starting their journey south back to sub-Saharan Africa. Fifteen more cuckoos have been tagged this year, and Chris, the remaining survivor from the class of 2011 is still going strong!

<http://tinyurl.com/mkkvq8j>

Stone Curlew chicks on Brecks fuel hope for successful breeding season

<http://tinyurl.com/lmxkz6r>

Continental swallowtail breeding in UK for first time

<http://tinyurl.com/pa58zvh>

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EVENTS

Celebrating Saltmarshes, Wells Maltings, 4th July 2014, 6pm- 9pm.

FREE event for the public to celebrate the local heritage and the importance of saltmarsh. Local experts will explain about saltmarshes, their wildlife, and the activities which take place on them. Tea and cake provided by the Women's Institute. **Space is limited so email or call the Norfolk Coast Partnership on**

aonb@norfolk.gov.uk or telephone 01328 850530 to book.

Whitlingham Great Bug Hunt, Whitlingham Country Park, 5th July 2014, 9am- 4pm.

Hunt for bugs and other wildlife and help us record as many species as possible within a day! Moth trapping, mammal trapping, lake dipping, fungi forays and more. Organised by the Broads Authority with support from NBIS.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ehpk220ehmqww7r/Bug%20Hunt%20poster%202014.pdf>

Farm Open Day, Abbey Farm Flitcham PE31 6BT, 6th July 2014, 8am- 7pm.

Enjoy circular walks taking you to hill-top views, crops, farm animals and flower-rich meadows. Light refreshments 10am- 5pm in aid of Little Discoverers and picnics welcome. Sorry no dogs. Also, free guided walks at 8am (farmland birds), 10am (earth history), midday (farmland plants) and 2pm (butterflies). No need to book unless bringing a large group. Enquiries to ejc@abbeyfarm.co.uk, 01485 609094.

The Wonder of Birds, Norwich Castle Museum, 24th May - 14th September 2014.

New exhibition open at Norwich Castle Museum, combining art and natural history to explore the cultural impact of birds on humanity. <http://tinyurl.com/lvk25e5>

Norwich Bat Group Events 2014

See the website for more information.

<http://www.norwichbatgroup.co.uk/events/>

Norfolk Wildlife Trust Living Landscapes Events.

Free wildlife events run by Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

<http://tinyurl.com/nvnx9uu>

Events at Sculthorpe Moor Community Nature Reserve.

<http://hawkandowl.org/locations/sculthorpe-moor-community-nature-reserve/>

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AND FINALLY..

Be careful where you leave your shoes: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-27710832>

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