



## Biodiversity News in Norfolk No 19 (October 2012)



Photos: Woodland near Bury St Edmunds that appears to be riddled with *Chalara fraxinea* (Ash Dieback), photos courtesy of Gary Battell (Suffolk CC)

## Welcome to our October biodiversity e-bulletin

Unfortunately the news this month has been dominated by non-native species news, both locally and nationally – obviously the main concern has been the confirmation of the invasive ash dieback in Norfolk; however our concerns are not exclusively with trees pests and diseases, as two new non-native shrimps are on the horizon, one already recorded in Norfolk. The sombre news is not just confined to non-native species in this issue I'm afraid; there are three bird related items: Norfolk's bird of prey persecution record; fears of sharp declines in pink-footed geese; and investigations into lapwing declines in Norfolk and four other counties. However there is plenty of positive news this month: Including the news of the reintroduction of the Fen raft spider into the Broads; record numbers of waterfowl and waders in the Wash and the North Norfolk coast; very impressive results found in the Fen biodiversity audit; and of course the impressive efforts of local volunteer groups. We also have a completely bird themed 'And Finally', which includes Sesame street's Big Bird!

As by way of an introduction, this autumn the NBIS team welcomes Nick Bolton to their team, working as the new District Ecologist, taking over from Dr David White who has been seconded to head the Green Infrastructure programme. Nick has completed his masters in Applied Ecology and Conservation at UEA and has focused his career on protected and endangered species, working with birds, reptiles, amphibians and bats and their habitats, in the UK and worldwide. The role of district ecologist provides ecological advice to local planners to ensure duties towards protected species are fulfilled and to navigate current guidance on legislation to suggest feasible enhancements to increase biodiversity.

**Biodiversity and Countryside Team  
Environment, Transport and Development,  
Norfolk County Council**  
[nbis@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nbis@norfolk.gov.uk)

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-bulletinOctober2012.pdf>  
You can also download past e-bulletins as a pdf here: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/newsletterse-bulletins>

[top]

[Local NEWS](#)

[National NEWS](#)

[GETTING INVOLVED](#)

[SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS](#)

[EVENTS](#)

[AND FINALLY](#)

## Local NEWS

### Ash dieback crisis

*Chalara fraxinea* or Ash dieback has sadly, been confirmed at the Norfolk Wildlife Trust ancient woodland site of Lower Wood, Ashwellthorpe; where as the name suggests ash trees have been present for over 1000 years (<http://www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/Home/News/Ash-Dieback-disease-found-in-NWT-Lower-Wood,-Ashwe.aspx>). This followed earlier confirmed cases in Norfolk by forestry officers that it had now been found in established ash trees in the wider East Anglian countryside at four undisclosed sites, including a woodland, a paddock and two hedgerows to the north and south of Norwich; this after it had been found in recent plantings of young trees supplied from infected nurseries on the continent – including at sites in Suffolk. ([http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/first\\_cases\\_of\\_deadly\\_chalara\\_ash\\_tree\\_disease\\_confirmed\\_in\\_norfolk\\_1\\_1668354](http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/first_cases_of_deadly_chalara_ash_tree_disease_confirmed_in_norfolk_1_1668354); <http://gu.com/p/3bcvc/tw>).

[Read more here for more on the disease nationally and how to identify it in the field.....](#)

### More invasive species news:

New warning over killer shrimp - Anglers and boaters are being urged to help stop a killer shrimp infestation spread: <http://t.co/4J0bFkIN>

Biology of *Dikerogammarus haemobaphes*, the next invasive shrimp on the horizon in the UK: <http://www.springerlink.com/content/0266808j75814118/>

More invasive shrimp! This time the landhopper *Arcitalitrus dorrieni*. First record in East Anglia?: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/53757612@N04/8053879279/in/photostream>

### Fen raft spiders introduced in the Broads

One of Britain's rarest and most spectacular spiders: <http://bit.ly/W7OzmY>; <http://bbc.in/WmcjUt>  
The release near Strumpshaw Fen: <http://tinyurl.com/cz2og23>

### Find out about a bee orchid bonanza & how 23 pairs of volunteer hands made light work to help them - Norfolk coast National Trust

<http://bit.ly/SNpBFA>

### Neither Suffolk nor Norfolk come out very well in RSPB report

A RSPB report has labelled Suffolk as one of the worst counties for birds of prey persecution. The east of England is named as the region with the third highest number of reported crimes against birds of prey, with Suffolk and Norfolk both noted as counties with high levels of persecution <http://tinyurl.com/bqqepat>

### Fossil roadshow turns up treasures - including a second Happisburgh handaxe

<http://tinyurl.com/9jmyb4j>

### Record numbers of birds used Britain's wetlands during severe 2010/11 winter

At the top 5 sites WeBS volunteers counted 1.2 million waterfowl and waders. These five most important sites are The Wash, Ribble Estuary, Morecambe Bay, North Norfolk Coast, and Thames Estuary: <http://bit.ly/VtFZjd>

Community spirit revives award-winning wildlife site at Boughton Fen: <http://t.co/gZ01Zga2>

### Conservation knows no boundaries – as ties between Iraq and Norfolk show

<http://gu.com/p/3bbbc/tw>

### Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) fears number of pink-footed geese flocking to Snettisham, Holkham and Wells-next-the-sea are falling sharply

<http://tinyurl.com/buxwoby>

## **Lapwing decline is investigated in five counties**

Scientists have been investigating why the lapwing is still in decline in five of the south's counties despite efforts to protect the bird's habitats. The Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) has announced it is studying 120 arable sites in Hampshire, Dorset, Wiltshire, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk in conjunction with the RSPB

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-19978941>

## **Group bids to improve Norwich's Woodlands Park**

<http://tinyurl.com/c88qbxc>

## **The Biodiversity Project fund contributed to the Fens biodiversity audit, the final report is here:**

[http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Fens Biodiversity Audit\\_FINAL report 24.10.2012\\_small.pdf](http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Fens Biodiversity Audit_FINAL report 24.10.2012_small.pdf)

## **The final Defra/BTO report on spatial decision support tools is available at:**

NBIS (representing NCC) was involved in this at an early stage.

[http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Exploring\\_The\\_Future\\_Final\\_Report\\_Oct\\_2012\\_WC0794.pdf](http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Exploring_The_Future_Final_Report_Oct_2012_WC0794.pdf)

## **RSPB job vacancy**

The new EU LIFE funded Heathland Project Officer post for the Brecks, North-West Norfolk and Suffolk Coast is now being advertised. The Farmland Project Officer will also be advertised soon and will be on the RSPB website.

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/vacancies/details/327402-project-officer-heathland>

## **A £400,000 siphon linking the Wissey with the Cut-Off Channel will make it easier for eels and sea trout to travel to and from their spawning grounds**

The pipeline, near the waterworks at Stoke Ferry, also bristles with hi-tech sensors, which can tell when a tagged fish passes through it. More than 100 eels, trout and coarse fish have been tagged with tiny transponders, as part of an Environment Agency Research project.

<http://www.nationalanguillaclub.co.uk/blog.html> and go to 'August 30, 2012' section.

## **First RINSE project newsletter now available**

[http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/RINSE\\_Issue1\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/RINSE_Issue1_FINAL.pdf)

## **EDP article on Farm Conservation, their first anniversary and the their work in preserving wildlife on the region's farms**

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/FarmConservationEDP.pdf>

## **EDP article about the winners of the 5 categories in this year's Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership's annual community awards**

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Peoplewhoprotectourgreenspaces-EDP15thseptember.pdf>

## **NCC's archaeology team at Gressenhall, featured on BBC2's Prehistoric Autopsy**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00xfrmw>

[[TOP](#)]

## **National NEWS**

### **Very sad news - The Grasslands Trust is closing down**

<http://www.grasslands-trust.org/news/grasslands-trust-statement>

### **Is 2012 the year of the squirrel? Garden BirdWatchers recording them in twice as many gardens as in previous years**

<http://tinyurl.com/8eqes9a>

### **Some non-native invasive species articles and news floating around on twitter this month:**

Review shows serious problems with common belief that encouraging eating of invasives is sensible solution - Conservation Letters - May 2012

<http://bit.ly/KfDCuD>

Invading crayfish success down to appetite and disease

<http://planetearth.nerc.ac.uk/news/story.aspx?id=1169>

**Striking stowaway! Fera entomologists identify African grasshopper from London airport**

<http://www.fera.defra.gov.uk/showNews.cfm?id=576>

**The impacts of non-native species on UK biodiversity and the effectiveness of control - Journal of Applied Ecology** - First published online Dec 2001

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1046/j.1365-2664.2000.00538.x/full>

**Bad weather hits British honey production**

<http://t.co/7dROIFEH>

**Flying ant day 'a summer myth', scientists say**

<http://t.co/fw1392E1>

**Declines in ground beetle biodiversity found in UK**

<http://t.co/MPnlnLz1>

**Scientists say billions required to meet conservation targets**

<http://t.co/aF8fWRf1>

**Biodiversity data gaps 'need bridging' to meet global targets**

<http://t.co/q7hHRMJD>

**The brunette squirrel revealed as Britain's little known fourth variety**

<http://t.co/Oirz2DkX>

**Jays hit by acorn shortage**

<http://t.co/34LUYLqP>

**Stunning new biodiversity maps show where to prioritize conservation - Saving Species website - 5 September 2012**

<http://savingspecies.org/2012/stunning-new-biodiversity-maps-show-where-to-prioritize-conservation/>

**More National news here:**

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/news#October2012NationalNews>

[\[TOP\]](#)

## GETTING INVOLVED

**Please be aware that Ash dieback should be reported!!**

NBIS and NNSI are now partners in the AshTag app, which was speedily launched last week to collate reports of the infection (<http://gu.com/p/3be8n/tw>). The press release can be found here:

[http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/ASHTAG\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/ASHTAG_FINAL.pdf).

The app can be downloaded, or you can report a sighting of the disease here: <http://www.ashtag.org/>

**This autumn will there be a flood of great crested newt records from ecological consultants?**

Please contact NBIS to send your records to your local records centre: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/contact-details>

**Please let UK Ladybird Survey know if harlequin ladybirds begin to arrive indoors**

<http://www.ladybird-survey.org>

[pic.twitter.com/L6cZhdYY](http://pic.twitter.com/L6cZhdYY)

**Fancy doing some citizen science? Want to help scientists chart deforestation in the Amazon?**

<http://forestwatchers.net/> is out now, give it a go...

**Bringing the Landscape to Life! Win £50!**

<http://wp.me/p2dUHS-8b>

## Website calls on people to become 'bat detectives'

A website is calling on citizen scientists to help researchers monitor and record Europe's bat population.

<http://bbc.in/UF2Ogm>

## Have you tried the BGS mobile apps?

View a geological map of Britain, search and zoom to a location.

<http://fb.me/2knY7nYTz>

## Mini Mammal Monitoring!

The Mammal Society needs volunteers to get involved and help survey small mammal populations in the UK

<http://www.mammal.org.uk/node/65>

## A new app has been launched for nature lovers to explore the north Norfolk countryside

[http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/new\\_app\\_launched\\_for\\_nature\\_lovers\\_to\\_explore\\_north\\_norfolk\\_countryside\\_1\\_1676691](http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/new_app_launched_for_nature_lovers_to_explore_north_norfolk_countryside_1_1676691)

## Check out <http://naturalsurroundings.org.uk/> - Local communities in North Norfolk getting involved in great stuff!

## Biodiversity Recording week- Strumpshaw Fen RSPB reserve

In late July this year specialist recorders were invited to Strumpshaw Fen for a week of concentrated species recording and this resulted in an impressive total of 1057 species.

So the RSPB would like to give you advance notice of the 2013 biodiversity recording week which will run from Monday 13th May through to Sunday 19th May. Once again they will be providing access away from normal visitor routes to many parts of the reserve. On the final two days we will also be running a programme of public workshops, guided walks and other activities which on Saturday 18th will be adult-oriented and on Sunday 19th aimed at the whole family.

If you think you would like to come, would like further information or have any special requests then please let Ben Lewis (Assistant Warden) know: [Ben.Lewis@rspb.org.uk](mailto:Ben.Lewis@rspb.org.uk)

They are also happy to provide access to recorders at other times, so if you would like to visit any parts of the RSPB Mid Yare Reserves at any time then please get in touch.

## Organise your own whale and dolphin watch next year

If you are interested in organising a cetacean watch in your area during the National Whale and Dolphin Watch in the week 27th July to 4th August 2013 next year, please let [danielle.gibas@seawatchfoundation.org.uk](mailto:danielle.gibas@seawatchfoundation.org.uk) know. Please see the poster here:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/NWDW2013.pdf>

[\[TOP\]](#)

## SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

### Fenland Black Oak: 5000-year-old tree found in Norfolk.

The trunk of a giant oak tree, thought by experts to be more than 5,000 years old, has been unearthed in a field in Norfolk. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-19722595>

**110 fruiting bodies of Sandy Stiltball fungi counted in the Ipswich Road RNR by NBIS** (well Lizzy Carroll to be exact) <http://www.arkive.org/sandy-stiltball/battarrea-phalloides/>

### Chris the Norfolk tagged Cuckoo is now in the Congo!

Chris, Tagged at Santon Downham, Norfolk on 1 June 2011 has had the latest signal received on 28th October 2012 and is now in the Congo; after flying over Sicily, Libya, Niger, Chad and the Central African Republic after leaving mainland Europe. Follow his migration on the BTO website: <http://www.bto.org/science/migration/tracking-studies/cuckoo-tracking>

**NNSI had a recent sighting of Sacred ibis over Norfolk. Has anyone else seen it? One to keep an eye out for, it's causing big problems in France**

**Larch ladybird from Norfolk - a beautiful brown ladybird**

[pic.twitter.com/67cy39XU](http://pic.twitter.com/67cy39XU)

## **Sickle medick and annual knawel rediscovered at Barnham Cross Common**

The former was last recorded in 1997 and the latter in 1979. There was also abundant Breckland pansy present during a recent casual survey by Tim Pankhurst of Plantlife. Sickle medick and annual knawel are two of the target plants in a major new project to re-establish 13 target Breckland plants formerly known from the site. The Plantlife project hopes to go ahead using WREN funding. More to follow when the application has been submitted.

[\[TOP\]](#)

## **EVENTS**

### **9th November - Turf Pond Workshop (Broads Authority)**

Sutton Fen, 10:30-14:30

Details: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/TurfPondWorkshop2012.pdf>

### **20<sup>th</sup> November – Implementing the Green Deal: Engaging Businesses Consumers and Boosting Local Growth**

Westminster 11 am – 3.30pm

Key issues will include: legislation; empowering businesses; consumer-protection; partnerships; information-mapping and more.

Details from [Louise.mcgough@westminster-briefing.com](mailto:Louise.mcgough@westminster-briefing.com) 020 7593 5738

### **23<sup>rd</sup> November NBN Conference: “Biological Recording – Fit for Purpose?”**

The Royal Society

The Sir John Burnett Memorial Lecture, 2012 “Making Space for Nature – the importance of biological recording” will be delivered by Sir John Lawton. Free entry for NBN members, £40 for others (until 21<sup>st</sup> September).

<http://nbn.org.uk/Events/Events-and-Training/Seminars-and-conferences/NBN-Conference-2012.aspx>

### **28th November - Protecting our most precious resource: delivering the Water White Paper**

Central London 10am – 4.30pm

<http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/CK28-PPE3.php>

### **29th November - Business and Biodiversity : Engaging with Business to Improve Nature Locally**

Westminster, London 10am - 3pm

email [Louise.McGough@westminster-briefing.com](mailto:Louise.McGough@westminster-briefing.com)

[\[TOP\]](#)

## **AND FINALLY..**

### **World's greatest birdwatcher sets a new record – then hangs up his binoculars**

<http://t.co/OAfIMy6W>

### **Birdwatching barbers spy on Norwich Cathedral peregrines**

A barbers' shop is offering customers a feather cut with a difference - the chance to watch birds while they wait.

Hiz-Hair in Tombland, Norwich, has set up a telescope so they can watch peregrine falcons nesting on the spire of nearby Norwich Cathedral: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-20084942>

### **American Bird Conservancy "Bird of the Week", October 12th 2012 - Big Bird (Sesame Street)**

[http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/botw/big\\_bird.html](http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/botw/big_bird.html)

If you wish to be removed from this mailing list, please email us: [nbis@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nbis@norfolk.gov.uk)

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/](http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/); [www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies](http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NorfolkBiodiversityInformationService](http://www.facebook.com/NorfolkBiodiversityInformationService) ; [www.facebook.com/NorfolkInvasives](http://www.facebook.com/NorfolkInvasives)

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/NorfolkBIS>; <http://www.twitter.com/NorfolkNNSI>

Please consider the environment before printing this email