

NBIS

Norfolk **Biodiversity**
Information Service



Norfolk Biodiversity
Partnership



Norfolk
Non-native
Species
Initiative



Norfolk

County Council



Biodiversity News in Norfolk

No 29 (Sept/Oct 2013)

Photos: Halloween Pumpkin  [Some rights reserved](#) by [Thomas Backa](#) and Humpback Whale  [Some rights reserved](#) by [paulciones](#)

Welcome to our September/October e-bulletin

Hello, we hope you've had a fun Halloween and Bonfire Night, and you've been keeping up to date with the first ever sighting of a Humpback whale off the coast of Norfolk!

For Halloween, our resident cake expert Polly came up with several gory treats, along with a himalayan balsam cake (complete with popping candy seed pods) for a colleague who was leaving: pic.twitter.com/9t3bKIGzFZ.

The colleague in question was Emily Nobbs who has been with us for almost 2 years, starting off as a volunteer. She worked initially on invasive species before also helping to re-map County Wildlife Sites as part of an on-going project. She also covered the Biodiversity Co-ordinator post until the appointment of Anne Casey (see local news). Emily leaves us for a job at Norfolk Wildlife Trust and we wish her all the best.

Due to a busy couple of months we have opted again for a bumper double issue of the e-bulletin. We are now firmly into autumn and the nip in the air suggests that winter is just around the corner. Keep warm everyone!

SPECIES OF THE MONTH UPDATES

Many thanks to those of you who have submitted Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) records over August, September and October. Please submit any more sightings of ***Turdus merula*** here: <http://nbis.org.uk/blackbird>

Our species of the month this month (and since October) is the hedgehog!

The hedgehog was voted "Britain's National Species" after a recent poll organised by the BBC Wildlife Magazine, reflecting its popularity. Hedgehogs however appear to be declining in the UK at the same rate as tigers are globally— at around 5% per year. There may be less than a million left in the whole of the UK. There have been fears recently for hedgehog populations after hot summer weather - Juvenile hedgehogs born too late in the year may not have enough fat on them to survive hibernation this winter, experts warn:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/wildlife/10414964/Fears-for-hedgehog-population-after-hot-summer.html>

PTES and Hedgehog Society have released a free A-Z guide for looking after hedgehogs in the lead up to winter:



<http://www.hedgehogstreet.org>

Please help us learn more about hedgehog populations in Norfolk by sending in your sightings here: <http://nbis.org.uk/hedgehog>

There are plenty of highlights in this e-bulletin, including:

- First ever Humpback whale sighting off the Norfolk coast (Local News)
- Wild Anglia manifesto launched! (Local News)
- 4% gain in Local Sites in Positive Conservation Management (Local News)
- UK Biodiversity Indicators in your Pocket 2013 published (National News)
- How the political parties have fared on Green issues since the 2010 elections (National News)
- Defra launches CAP consultation (Getting Involved)
- First grey seal, Pink-footed Geese and Whooper Swans of 2013/14 season (Species Highlights)
- Sculthorpe Moor Birthday Bioblitz results (over 700 species) (Species Highlights)

Biodiversity and Countryside Team
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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-bulletinSeptOct2013.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

First ever Humpback whale sighting off the Norfolk coast

On 29th October we had the first ever record of a Humpback whale off the Norfolk Coast. This is how the Norfolk Wildlife Trust broke the news via Twitter: "Large whale, suspected humpback seen at Winterton, heading north, seen at 8.10am. On it's way to Cley Marshes?"

The EDP reported on the day with the following article:

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/picture_update_humpback_whale_seen_off_norfolk_coast_watched_from_winterton_horsey_and_sea_palling_1_2940297

The following day the EDP reported the whale's continued presence: "He's back... The Norfolk Whale has been spotted off Winterton again this morning":

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/humpback_whale_spotted_off_winterton_on_sea_in_norfolk_back_for_a_second_day_1_2941823

Could the Norfolk whale make the east coast its home for winter?:

http://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/could_the_norfolk_whale_make_the_east_coast_its_home_for_winter_1_2947521

Caister fishermen share waters with the Humpback whale;

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/caister_fishermen_have_to_share_waters_with_the_norfolk_whale_1_2962943

NBIS get a mention along with County Cetacean recorder Carl Chapman in the BBC News article: <http://bbc.in/HsmdlH>

Keep up-to-date with Cetacean news on the Norfolk Cetacean website: <http://norfolkcetaceans.wordpress.com/>

A warm welcome to our new Biodiversity Coordinator

The Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership has a new coordinator - Anne Casey - who has now been with us for two months. Below she gives us a brief introduction to herself:

"My background is in ecology and national park management. I have been in the UK for a bit over 2 years working firstly in the Lake District on landscape scale partnership working and then with the RSPB in Norwich covering planning issues in Lincs, The Wash and much of Norfolk.

I worked in Victoria, Australia for over 20 years in the conservation and land management sectors. This included managing 200 parks and reserves including Australia's first cultural heritage National Park, working in risk management in parks after bushfires and floods, river and estuary management, marine recreational management and implementing conservation strategies for local government. In addition I was on the Board of Victoria's leading conservation group for many years. I am enjoying being in Norfolk as most of my extended family is here. I am really looking forward to working with the many communities and local groups who are passionate about nature"

Wild Anglia manifesto launched!

4% gain in Local Sites in Positive Conservation Management

NBIS has recently reported to Defra the final figures for the government Single Data List no 160 (previously NI197) - Local Sites in Positive Conservation Management (PCM). Local Sites refers to both County Wildlife Sites and County Geodiversity Sites. You can download the following:

The final totals by district here:

http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/SDL160_2012-13_district_summary.pdf

A map showing the sites in and not in PCM here:

http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/SDL160_2012-13_Results_Map.pdf

Some graphs showing the changes in PCM over time for each district and compared to the targets:

http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/PCM_Trends_2013.pdf

Putting right man's mistakes to help improve biodiversity

Conservation on the River Little Ouse next to the nature reserve near the Thetford headquarters of the British Trust for Ornithology:

<http://www.buryfreepress.co.uk/news/local/latest-news/putting-right-man-s-mistakes-to-help-improve-biodiversity-1-5467075>

North Norfolk 'Ghost Ponds' Project... the story so far!

A team from the University of London plan to dig 3 ponds on farms to examine if wildlife could be revived. Between 20,000 and 30,000 ponds have been lost in Norfolk, but a restoration project could bring new life to open fields.

PDF EDP article at: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/GhostPonds.pdf>

'Managing Britain's ponds – conservation lessons from a Norfolk farm'

An article from October's British Wildlife by Carl Sayer (UCL/River Glaven Conservation Group) et al., featuring the much loved Manor Farm, and all the good work Richard Waddingham has been doing:

http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/BW_ponds_Low_res.pdf

Cley Marshes 'saved'

Norfolk Wildlife Trust have bought 143 acres of salt marsh and freshwater pools - the missing link in an 8km stretch of coastline nature reserve. They secured it thanks to public donations and a £1.5 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Norfolk Wildlife Trust's 'Living Coast' scheme will include a new education centre and facilities for Cley's hundred thousand annual visitors

<http://t.co/5yRdsiJfVz>

New Wensum Way fills 'missing link' in Norfolk Trails network

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/new_wensum_way_fills_missing_link_in_norfolk_trails_network_1_2873135

Fish die after salt tides surge up river towards the Norfolk Broads

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/update_fish_die_after_salt_tides_surge_up_river_towards_the_norfolk_broads_1_2875787

Prince Philip meets conservation volunteers who care for unique Norfolk landscape at Dersingham Bog, near Sandringham

<http://t.co/KdXtBGAMEC>

The Big Tree Plant - application form

A proportion of the Defra Big Tree Plant project is being locally facilitated by TCV, sending trees to communities - The application form is downloadable here: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/TheBigTreePlant.doc>

Recent newsletters/reports:

Report summarising the 6th Form Biodiversity conference

Several local schools attended this conference at the castle museum, where NNNSI and NBIS gave workshops:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Biodiversitydebate2013ConferenceReportV11final.pdf>

Wild Anglia News - September

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

Broadland Catchment Partnership - October Newsletter

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/CatchupOct13final.pdf>

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National NEWS

Biodiversity guidance to support the NPPF

Beta test site here:

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/natural-environment/biodiversity-ecosystems-and-green-infrastructure/>

Learning to talk... about nature - The Green Standard Report

How the political parties have fared on Green issues since the 2010 elections.

<http://t.co/y3H1sHmMcb>

Making Space for Nature: Nature Improvement Areas demonstrate significant gains as first evaluation published

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/about_us/news/2013/180913.aspx

UK Biodiversity Indicators in your Pocket 2013 published

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/biyp>

New rapid methodology for assessing ecosystem services at the site-scale

<http://t.co/54huiL6jNM>

New study points to positive impact of nature on mental wellbeing

ow.ly/pv6mZ

Four out of five UK children 'not connected to nature'

<http://gu.com/p/3jhzk>

Natural disaster: Government's new index reveals huge decline for Britain's most endangered wildlife

<http://ind.pn/1af4EOg>

ALERC Conference report

Read the report on the ALERC annual conference which took place on 16th October

http://nbn.org.uk/News/Latest-news/ALERC-annual-conference-report.aspx?utm_source=eshot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NBN%20eNews%20October%202013

New qualification for professional ecologists

CIEEM is delighted to announce the very first Chartered Ecologists qualification, which will provide a professional industry benchmark.

http://nbn.org.uk/News/Latest-news/New-Qualification-for-Professional-Ecologists.aspx?utm_source=eshot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NBN%20eNews%20October%20

UK's wild bird population continues to decline

<http://bit.ly/16RaM0b>

Flying ant survey results revealed as part of Society of Biology 24-hr lecture - dispelling myth of "flying ant day" <http://bbc.in/16ZUBQg>

BTO Breeding Bird Survey data helps track the fortunes of nine species of British mammal

http://www.birdwatch.co.uk/channel/newsitem.asp?cate=_14865

British butterfly numbers bounce back following warm summer

<http://t.co/iqpm2Lz63e>

Water voles 'decline by a fifth'

<http://t.co/1Qdrxajnz>

Defending UK from foreign species costs £26 per person

<http://t.co/lgNYu1d9Si>

Potentially deadly predatory Asian hornets with vicious sting heading towards Britain

<http://t.co/KJ6dlyKLMx>

Invasive alien species threaten urban environments

<http://t.co/c73MZENoBM>

More National news here:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/news#SeptOct2013NationalNews>

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GETTING INVOLVED

NBIS are still looking for volunteers to join our species monitoring project. We are specifically looking for people interested in recording Bryophytes and Fungi. More at <http://www.nbis.org.uk/SpeciesSurveillanceNetwork>

Defra launches CAP consultation

Information on the consultation is available at:

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/communications/cap-consultation>

From this you will see that the RDPE Delivery team at Eastbrook will be running a consultation event in Cambridge on November 20th at 10.00 am. More details can be found on the RDPE website:

<http://rdpenetwork.defra.gov.uk/activities/all-activities/cap-consultation-local-workshops>

The Orthoptera recording scheme in Britain has created some new online ID resources for Grasshoppers and Crickets The two new free identification guides, which can be downloaded at www.orthoptera.org.uk/recording/index.php?q=node/1035.

UK Ladybird Survey

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

Project Wildthing

On 25th October 2013 Thunderclap launched a massive new film-led social change movement reconnecting kids with nature: <http://t.co/ivmV85MKrE>

Barn Owl Online Survey

Includes ID information page

<http://www.barnowlsurvey.org.uk/>

Watch Bird ID workshop videos, to help develop your bird ID

Common Shanks

http://www.bto.org/about-birds/bird-id/bto-bird-id-common-shanks?dm_i=IG4.1RQEL.BJMT2W.6B8XV.1

Asian hornet information sheet - GB non-native species secretariat

Report any sightings of the Asian Hornet

<http://t.co/CtWdcPOb6m>

Join in slugwatch and help prevent the 'killer' Spanish Slug via citizen science

<http://ow.ly/pMLAY>

The BTO needs helpers for the winter thrush survey

Why not take part, it's fun and you will be helping birds!

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/winter-thrushes>

PTES and Hedgehog Society have released a free A-Z guide for looking after hedgehogs in the lead up to winter <http://www.hedgehogstreet.org>

New AIDGAP guide to winter tree ID out now

field-studies-council.org/publications/pubs/winter-trees-a-photographic-guide-to-common-trees-and-shrubs.aspx

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SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

Sculthorpe Moor Birthday Bioblitz a massive success!

Over 2000 records representing at least 722 species were recorded over the weekend of 21st and 22nd September at the Hawk and Owl Trust's Sculthorpe Moor Community Nature Reserve (<http://hawkandowl.org/sculthorpe/birthday-bioblitz-2013/>). There were many firsts for the site and some particularly rare Fungi. See the results on our online recording section of the NBIS website and an official species list and totals subsequently totted up:

http://www.nbis.org.uk/sculthorpe-moor-birthday-bioblitz_ResultsMap

http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/SculthorpeMoor2013BioblitzSpecies_MinusDataset.xls

First ever Humpback whale sighting off the Norfolk coast

On 29th October (last week) the first ever record of a Humpback whale off the Norfolk Coast was sighted. For more information, see the Local News item above. NBIS got a mention along with cetacean recorder Carl Chapman in the BBC News article: <http://bbc.in/HsmdlH>

Keep up-to-date with cetacean news on the Norfolk Cetacean website: <http://norfolkcetaceans.wordpress.com/>

Norfolk Coast National Trust reports first grey seal of 2013/14 season

And here it is..1st grey seal pup of 2013/14 season born on Blakeney Point taking a light nap!:

pic.twitter.com/D8MJccPLU

Swans, geese and other migrants return for the autumn spectacular

Firsts of the season:

Birdline East Anglia reported the first two returning Whooper Swans turning up on the same day at Welney WWT on 13th September and the First Pink-footed Geese returning from the summer in Iceland at Holkham Freshmarsh NNR and Titchwell RSPB on 9th September.

Tens of thousands of birds take to the skies in Snettisham Spectacular:

Over 50,000 wading birds have been seen flying over the Snettisham nature reserve to find new feeding grounds

<http://t.co/66zQqSBWwG>

You can view a gallery of the spectacular at Snettisham here: <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/nature/tens-of-thousands-of-birds-take-to-the-skies-in-snettisham-spectacular-8806746.html?action=gallery>

Norfolk grassland's just the ticket for this rare cricket

A colony of great green bush crickets has been found living by the Old Bedford River, on the Norfolk - Cambridgeshire border: http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/norfolk_grassland_s_just_the_ticket_for_this_rare_cricket_1_2903492

American Signal crayfish found in River Nar

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-24724476>

Ant 'babysitters' help man in boosting rare butterfly numbers at Kelling Heath

http://www.edp24.co.uk/mobile/news/ant_babysitters_help_man_in_boosting_rare_butterfly_numbers_at_kelling_heath_1_2797288

The so-called 'knopper' galls are shaped like naked walnuts!

<http://t.co/lAWnGQMVWH>

October 6 sightings: "Chat-tastic!"

Bird sightings on Lakenheath Fen

<http://t.co/gp5UOoQo5d>

Photo Gallery: Playful otters in Thetford

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/photo_gallery_these_playful_otters_have_been_making_a_real_splash_1_2499233

Wasp spider found on RSPB Lakenheath Fen nature reserve

<http://t.co/3ybAd0MDMX>

Sparrows making a comeback

Watch ITV news video on vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/76055962>

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EVENTS

University of Oxford online short-courses:

Taught online over five weeks, these part-time courses offer excellent training opportunities for those working full-time or wishing to study at their convenience:

Data Analysis in Ecology: Statistics for Ecologists and Field Biologists running **30th October to 4th December 2013**. *This module is designed to enable students to improve their ability to display ecological data, and to use descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse the results from field surveys. The course introduces students to the use of the following software: QED statistics and R.*

For full details please visit: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/est and contact us on +44 (0)1865 286952 or est@conted.ox.ac.uk

One day training course on bats and woodland management

10:00 am until 4:00 pm on Thursday November 14th 2013

The course fees are £90, refreshments and biscuits will be provided and participants are required to bring their own lunch. The course is specifically designed for those who work in arboriculture or conservation who would like to add to their Continuing Professional Development by learning about bats, trees and the law, or who are working towards a Natural England Bat Licence.

The course venue is near Stradbroke Suffolk and will include a visit to a semi-natural woodland.

More information see the website: <http://www.anglianecology.co.uk>

Dusk walk to view spectacular Rook & Jackdaw roost

Sun 17th Nov 2.30pm - Buckenham Corvid Roost

BOOKING ESSENTIAL: <http://southyarewildlife.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/sywg-corvid-event.pdf>

The Open University has developed a new, free, online course - Introduction to Ecosystems:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/ecosystems>

The first start date for this course is **18 November 2013**.

The course description says: "Using case studies, you will come to learn how knowledge of ecosystems leads to understanding of their individual importance, and how they can be preserved. You will also make use of iSpot to help explore the wild species in your area. This university-level course is intended for those with an interest in natural history, conservation or the environment, and does not require any previous experience of studying these subjects. It is free of charge and can be studied from anywhere in the world."

The ecosystems course is part of a range of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) set up with the FutureLearn project: <https://www.futurelearn.com/>

Leadership Training Course covering the requirements of leading practical projects

TCV – 2 Day course, **Tuesday 3rd and Thursday 5th December 2013**

Course venue: TCV offices, Royal Oak Court, Norwich, NR1 3ER. To book or ask any questions please contact Mark Webster, The Conservation Volunteers, Royal Oak Court, Norwich, NR1 3ER. m.webster@tcv.org.uk 07843 069 567.

Course fees: FREE to members of TCV Community Network groups, all others £25.00 plus VAT in total for the two days. Tea and coffee will be provided.

See the flyer here: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/LeadershipTrainingCourseOutline.pdf>

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AND FINALLY..

Mysterious hum keeping people up all night could be mating fish!

<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/nature/mysterious-hum-keeping-people-up-all-night-could-be-mating-fish-8900747.html>

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

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