



Heath regeneration area at Mousehold Heath (see back page) © Tim Holt-Wilson



*Cerceris quinquefasciata*, a BAP priority species (see page 2) © Tim Strudwick



Surveying Arable margin (see this page) © NBIS

## Welcome to issue 8 of the NBIS newsletter

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NBIS is a partnership of organisations including the Environment Agency, Broadland District Council, Natural England, Norfolk County Council, the Broads Authority, South Norfolk Council and North Norfolk District Council.

It is one of a number of Local Record Centres in England and operates a not-for-profit service, recording, managing and interpreting wildlife information for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Norfolk.

## Monitoring project kicks off

Work by NBIS to establish a monitoring programme across sites in Norfolk is well underway.

Part of a Defra initiative, the project focuses on the need for more recording on priority habitats which include lowland dry grassland, lowland calcareous grassland and arable field margins. The project will establish a network of new volunteers from local communities who will record across 60 reference sites in the county, and will use methodology already used successfully for the Norwich Big Bat Project bat survey. The County Recorders will provide invaluable assistance with training.

Biodiversity Information Officer Martin Horlock, who made the successful bid for the funding said, "NBIS is very pleased to be leading this exemplar project for Defra which has brought in funding for equipment and training to help build up recording skills across the county."

Multi-taxa recording will take place at each of the reference sites,

covering: fungi; lichens; bryophytes; vascular plants; beetles; orthoptera; hymenoptera; butterflies and day-flying moths; reptiles and bats.

The project will build on the results from the Breckland Biodiversity Audit and the results will help inform site monitoring across the county.

**NBIS would be very pleased to hear from individuals and groups who would be interested in taking part.**

NBIS is also making good progress with a Defra remote sensing project. Over the summer and autumn months, NBIS staff were involved with 'ground truthing' to verify habitats shown on maps derived from satellite imagery. Over 620 sample locations were checked (175 by going out into the field, the rest from aerial photographs) in the Broads, Thetford Forest, West Norfolk and North Norfolk between Snettisham

# 2012 highlights from the County Recorders

## Bees and wasps

A rare mining bee, *Andrena angustior*, was discovered on Kelling Heath in May 2012 reports Nick Owens. The only previous county record was from 1873 (Mousehold Heath). This small species takes pollen from a wide range of flowers and is similar to the very common *Andrena bicolor*. It is probable that it has been present for a long time at Kelling, but overlooked.

A very rare (Red Data Book)\* parasitic wasp was observed by Nick on soft cliffs near Weybourne and Overstrand on the north Norfolk coast in June 2012. *Nysson interruptus* places its egg onto the prey of its host species (another rare wasp called *Argogorytes fargeii*). This fascinating species has only been recorded in gravel pits in the Yare Valley and on the Isle of Wight in recent times.

\*The IUCN Red list of threatened species

Norfolk County Recorder for solitary bees and wasps (hymenoptera), Tim Strudwick also made some exciting finds in 2012, in spite of the wet and cool weather. No less than 3 new discoveries for the county of species hitherto restricted to the southern-most English counties:

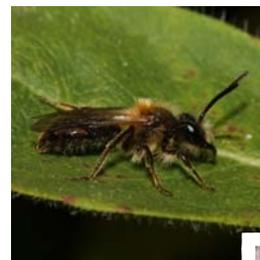
- A spider-hunting wasp, *Auplopus carbonarius* in a sand pit at Strumpshaw Fen;
- The mining bee, *Lasioglossum puncticolle* at East Winch Common (and again at Beeston Common);
- A small colony of *Heriades trunctorum*, a small bee associated with ragwort at Middle Harling Heath.

Tim was also delighted with reports of species rediscoveries:

- The jewel wasp, *Cleptes nitidulus* at East Harling (Geoff Nobes), previously recorded only at Santon Warren in 1986 and

Brundall in 1878

- The BAP priority five-banded weevil wasp, *Cerceris quinquefasciata* which was found at 6 new sites including 3 along the Norfolk coast. With strong populations in Breckland and around Norwich, this rare species is doing better in Norfolk than any other UK county.



*Andrena angustior*  
(Nick Owens)



*Heriades trunctorum*  
(Tim Strudwick)



*Polytrichum piliferum*  
(Bristly haircap)  
(Robin Stevenson)

## Mosses and liverworts

A winter moss-hunt at East Wretham Heath in the Brecks which includes two remarkable fluctuating meres as well as heathland and other habitats, turned up some interesting finds, reports Robin Stevenson, County Mosses and Liverworts Recorder (West Norfolk):

- *Cololejeunea minutissima* (minute pouncewort) a clean-air epiphytic liverwort, was discovered by Mary Ghullam (County Recorder for Mosses and Liverworts (East Norfolk)) – the 6<sup>th</sup> ever record for Norfolk of this species;
- *Orthotrichum tenellum* (slender bristle-moss), a rarity in Norfolk, was found in quite large quantities at Langmere;
- *Aphanorrhegma patens* (spreading earth-moss), a 'draw-down zone' specialist species, was found by Richard Fisk at Ringmere. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> record from a Breckland mere, and the 6<sup>th</sup> record for Norfolk.

## Events >>

NBIS continues to promote its services through local wildlife events. This season NBIS will be attending:

**18th May 2013 Wild About the Wensum.**

At Pensthorpe 10am–5pm. More information at <https://www.facebook.com/WildAboutTheWensum>

**21st and 22nd September 2013 Sculthorpe Moor Bioblitz.**

More information at [http://www.hawkandowl.org/About\\_us/Events/AllSculthorpeEvents](http://www.hawkandowl.org/About_us/Events/AllSculthorpeEvents)

## Hoverflies and diptera

The highlight of the 2012 hoverfly year for Norfolk Recorder **Stuart Paston** was the sightings of the rare *Volucella inflata* at several sites in the county. On the diptera front, a 'first' for Norfolk was the muscid fly, *Lispocephala brachialis* which was recorded in woodland off Marriott's Way. This species has only previously been recorded at a few sites in western England, Wales and Scotland so its recent occurrence in East Anglia is a surprising development.

## Marine news

Recording by Seasearch divers was hampered by poor weather this year, with onshore winds putting paid to every small boat trip planned and making the water unusually cold and often turbid—making it difficult to see much underwater. Disappointing the disappointing conditions, dives still continues until the end of November report **Dawn Watson** and **Rob Spray**, Norfolk County Marine Recorders. The most interesting find of 2012 was the squirt *Polysyncraton bilobatum*, a new record for the UK. It has since also been spotted in Wales, but like last year's purple sponge, it occurs very frequently all over the chalk and had just been overlooked. The most interesting nudibranchs were *Janolus hyalinus* found in a rockpool at Lowestoft and *Lomantus marmoratus* found just off Weybourne. Both are very rarely recorded for the whole of the UK. Several algae were new to Norfolk including Naccari's hairy weed and Callused drachiella and other 'firsts' for Norfolk included bryozoans and hydroids too.

A total of 246 species were recorded for Norfolk, with more animal groups represented this year than

## Ant research

Norfolk County Ant Recorder **Doreen Wells**, conducted preliminary research in the Thetford Forest Rides at Lynford and at Grimes Graves during the summer of 2012, to learn about the behaviour of the rare workerless social parasitic ant, *Myrmica karavajev* and its association with host species *M. scabrinodis* and *M. sabuleti*. The ant was found in good numbers in pitfall traps in two of the forest rides and in the chalk grassland at Grimes Graves where the host species were nesting.

However it wasn't possible to identify which species was acting as hosts for the parasitic queens of *M. karavajev* so further research will be needed this year. Doreen was the first to identify *M. karavajev* in Norfolk in 2010.

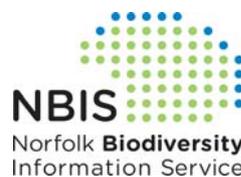
## Molluscs at Thompson Common

A survey of freshwater and terrestrial molluscs from pond substrate at Thompson Common, kindly submitted to NBIS by Chris Glead from a 1996 study, adds to our knowledge of the biology of this important Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). 13 snail species and three bivalve species were recorded.

**Molluscs are an under-recorded group in Norfolk – do you know of anyone who would be interested in becoming the County Mollusc Recorder?**

## New Recorders

**Rob Coleman** is County Recorder for Heteroptera (bugs); **Anne Hickley** is the County Plant Galls Recorder (taking over from Rex Hancy); **Dan Hoare** is County Recorder for freshwater invertebrates. Contact details are available here: <http://www.nnns.org.uk/>



## Local Recording Fund

**NBIS invests in local wildlife recording in Norfolk using monies raised from commercial enquiries. In 2012 we have funded the following:**

- Bumblebees of Norfolk (jointly with NatSoc)
- Geodiversity online database (jointly funded with the Curry Fund)
- Training for marine recorders
- Ant Research at Grimes Graves
- Microscope for the County hoverfly recorder
- Travel expenses for volunteers
- Recorders' evening
- ID guides

We will publish guidance on applying for a grant for 2013 on our website soon. In the meantime, please contact NBIS for further information: [nbis@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nbis@norfolk.gov.uk)

**26th June—27th June 2012 - Norfolk Show**  
Norfolk Showground

**13th—19th May 2013 Strumpshaw Fen recording week.**  
More information at <http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/s/strumpshawfen/events.aspx>

**12th October 2013 Wild About Norfolk**  
Easton College 10am—4pm  
More information at [www.wildaboutnorfolk.co.uk/wildaboutnorfolk/](http://www.wildaboutnorfolk.co.uk/wildaboutnorfolk/)

**Contact:** Norfolk  
Biodiversity Information  
Service (NBIS),  
Environment, Transport and  
Development,  
County Hall,  
Martineau Lane,  
Norwich.  
NR1 2SG

**T** 01603 224458  
**E** [nbis@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nbis@norfolk.gov.uk)  
**W** [www.nbis.org.uk](http://www.nbis.org.uk)

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and Weybourne). The results were reported back to consultants Environment Systems who are managing the project. The pilot project will deliver detailed mapping for the study areas, which includes the ability to differentiate priority habitats (Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and Annex 1 (of the European Habitats Directive) habitats). Results will help with the development of a national framework for the use of Earth Observation for biodiversity-

related work. The pilot will also acquire and interpret ultra-high resolution data which will allow the identification of condition features within case study sites. At the end of the pilot, Environment Systems will work on mapping the remainder of Norfolk to produce a full habitat map for the county which will be invaluable for forthcoming mapping projects such as identifying potential opportunities for ecological networks and Green Infrastructure.

## News in Brief

### Mousehold Heath Earth Heritage Trail

An interpretive trail has been launched which focuses on the links between the geology, landscape and biodiversity of the Heath. Supported by the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership, Norwich City Council and the Geological Society of Norfolk, the Trail provides 18 points of interest and incorporates new geological exposures which provide windows into the inside story of the Heath (which is the remnant of a glacial outwash plain). Trail website available at: [www.norwich.gov.uk/Environment/ParksAndOpenSpaces/WoodlandsHeathsAndMarshes/MouseholdHeathTrail/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/Environment/ParksAndOpenSpaces/WoodlandsHeathsAndMarshes/MouseholdHeathTrail/Pages/default.aspx). Trail leaflet available at: <https://sites.google.com/site/norfolkgeodiversity/news/mheht>

NBIS continues to assist the Norfolk Geodiversity Partnership with mapping of geological sites across Norfolk.

### District Ecologist

Nick Bolton ([nick.bolton@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nick.bolton@norfolk.gov.uk)) is the new District Ecologist part funded by NBIS, as David White ([david.white.etd@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:david.white.etd@norfolk.gov.uk)) has stepped into a role as Norfolk Green Infrastructure Co-ordinator for the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP). Nick provides advice for district authorities in the county that do not currently employ an ecologist: Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council currently make use of his expertise. NBIS is still working closely with David on the Norwich biodiversity offsetting pilot and on plans to link and expand green infrastructure across the county.

### Norfolk Moths website recognised with CPRE award

Norfolk County Moth Recorder, Jim Wheeler, was delighted to pick up a Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) award for the Norfolk Moths website [www.norfolkmoths.co.uk](http://www.norfolkmoths.co.uk).

### RINSE develops recording 'app'

A new App is currently being developed by the RINSE (Reducing the Impact of Non-native Species in Europe) project that will enable users to report sightings of invasive non-native species in seconds! The App is being developed by the NatureLocator team at the University of Bristol, who have already released several successful Apps to record wildlife sightings, including PlantTracker and Leaf Watch. Mike Sutton-Croft, RINSE Technical Co-ordinator, said: 'We are excited to be working with the NatureLocator team on this important and ground-breaking new project. Their wealth of experience in this area means that we can produce something fresh and new, with many more features and a much slicker user experience than any other App of this type. It will enable users to report sightings of invasive animals, as well as plants, which is something that no other App currently allows you to do.' The App is scheduled to launch in April 2013 and will be available for iPhone and Android based devices.

### Single Data List (SDL) 160 (previously NI 197) reporting

NBIS reported on biodiversity indicator SDL 160 to Defra in September, producing figures for the proportion of local wildlife sites (County Wildlife Sites) under positive conservation management for each of the districts in Norfolk. Top of the districts was Norwich City Council, with 79% of its 29 sites under favourable management. Breckland council also did very well, with 66% of their 418 sites in positive management; the other districts weren't far behind. Download a map and further information about the audit here:

[http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/SDL160\\_2011-12\\_Results\\_Map.pdf](http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/SDL160_2011-12_Results_Map.pdf)  
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