



Biodiversity News in Norfolk

Issue 5 (August 2011)

Red Underwing (Credit: Brian Jones)

Welcome to our August biodiversity e-bulletin

Firstly this month we would like to welcome a new member to the Biodiversity Team. Dave White has joined us as the new District Ecologist, working one day a week for Broadland and the remainder for NCC on planning matters. Dave brings with him a wealth of experience on ecology and planning, and adds a valuable applied dimension to the data management skills of NBIS. If you would like to contact him regarding his new position and how he could help your district, contact Martin Horlock (martin.horlock@norfolk.gov.uk)

This month's highlights include:

- The results of the Seaweed East project, including a species of sponge discovered off the Norfolk coast, which is new to the UK and possibly to science. (See local news and species highlights).
- NBIS have launched a second moth survey of the year. We need your help to find three moth species - Red Underwing, Large Thorn and Figure of 8. Submit your records on our website or by email (see getting involved).
- The much anticipated England Biodiversity Strategy has just been launched by Defra (see National News).

If you find this bulletin useful or can think of something that would improve it, please let us know. You can use this very simple "Doodle poll" to let us know what you think (it's very quick and straightforward to complete - and doesn't involve any registration, plus your answers can't be viewed by other participants): <http://doodle.com/r5an6c36czehtc6t>

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.

If you'd rather not receive this in future, please email us at nbis@norfolk.gov.uk, and we'll remove you from our circulation list.

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[top]

[Local NEWS](#)

[National NEWS](#)

[GETTING INVOLVED](#)

[SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS](#)

[EVENTS](#)

[AND FINALLY](#)

Local NEWS

Seaweed secrets revealed

Scientists taking part in the first ever survey of seaweed to span the length of the East Coast of England have discovered a variety of species new to the region, including a sponge never before seen in the UK, The Wildlife Trusts can reveal. Whilst exploring this under-surveyed section of the UK's coastline, the Seaweed East team discovered the unidentified purple sponge. It is not yet clear if the species, found during dives off East Runton in Norfolk, is new to science.

See the full press release here: <http://www.northseawildlife.org.uk/news-and-events/seaweed-secrets-revealed/>

Also there are a couple of videos here: <http://www.northseawildlife.org.uk/news-and-events/seaweed-surveyor-videos/>

The Facebook site is here: <http://www.facebook.com/northseawildlifetrusts>

Burlingham Woods wins Sylva award

Burlingham Woods has been successful in winning the Royal Forestry Society's Excellence in Forestry Awards Sylva Trophy 2011. Gerry Barnes, Environment Manager for Norfolk County Council, said: "Amongst the many positives that have come out of the project is the engagement with the local community. A real community spirit has grown up around how the woodland is managed and developed...". You can read some of the judges' comments and background to the Burlingham Woods project here:

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

Himalayan balsam featured on Look East

Mike Sutton-Croft, Coordinator of the Norfolk Non-Native Species Initiative, was interviewed about Himalayan balsam in the Broads.

See the interview at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-14591969>

Geologist ground-truthing north-east Norfolk geosites

Thanks to funding from Natural England via the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership (<http://www.norfolkdiversity.org>), geologist Martin Warren (www.norfolk.org.uk) has completed work on a review of 23 geodiversity sites/features in north-east Norfolk. These include sites significantly overlapping with biodiversity interest, such as County Wildlife Sites. This continues the programme of work on a ground-truthing survey of sites and features listed in the Norfolk Geodiversity Audit. For more details, visit the news item on the Norfolk Geodiversity Partnership's website: <https://sites.google.com/site/norfolkgeodiversity/news>

New field guide to the geology of north-east Norfolk

A new description of the internationally important geology of north-east Norfolk is now available on the following website:

<http://www.norfolk.org.uk/geology/geoindex.html>

Norfolk and Suffolk submit a joint bid to create a Local Nature Partnership (LNP)

In response to the Natural Environment White Paper, Norfolk and Suffolk have submitted a joint application to create a "Norfolk and Suffolk Local Nature Partnership." The application builds on the collaboration and well-established ties which already exist between the Norfolk and Suffolk Biodiversity Partnerships. Amongst other objectives, the new LNP will seek to build close ties with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and to promote a more co-ordinated approach to the management of shared natural areas, such as the Brecks, the claylands and coastal/marine biodiversity. A decision on the outcome of the application is expected towards the end of September. More information about Local Nature Partnerships can be found at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/natural/whitepaper/local-nature-partnerships/>

Brecks to Bid for Nature Improvement Area (NIA) Status

One of the striking features of the Natural Environment White Paper was the announcement of a national competition to create 12 Nature Improvement Areas (NIA). These are intended to deliver landscape-scale biodiversity conservation, and to take forward the recommendations contained in Sir John Lawton's recent report, *Making Space for Nature*. At a well-attended stakeholders' meeting on 20 July, organised by the Brecks Partnership, there was a consensus that the Brecks should apply for this special NIA status. The first stage application is to be submitted by 30 September. More details about the NIA competition can be found at:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/funding/nia/default.aspx>

[\[TOP\]](#)

National NEWS

England Biodiversity Strategy launched

The new and much anticipated England Biodiversity Strategy (Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services) was launched last week. Download the strategy at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2011/08/19/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020/>

Conservation groups call for urgent recovery plan for English wildlife

Government plans announced in the England Biodiversity Strategy will not do enough to save wildlife species threatened with extinction, conservationists have warned: <http://t.co/EpSkfJH>

All Party Parliamentary Group on Biodiversity launched

The newly created APPG on Biodiversity was launched at an event at Portcullis House on the 19th July. The Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership was represented at the event by Gerry Barnes in his capacity as Chair of the Partnership. You can read the July news and policy briefing from the APPG at the following:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/APPG%20Biodiversity%20News%20%26%20Policy%20Briefing%20-%20July%202011.pdf>

UK animals back from the brink of extinction

Habitat protection, hunting controls and captive breeding have led to significant successes for Britain's threatened species: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/blog/2011/aug/18/uk-animals-back-brink-extinction>

New study released on global species numbers

The natural world contains about 8.7 million species, according to a new estimate:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-14616161>

Species shifting their home range an average of 17km per decade away from the equator

Animals and plants are shifting their natural home ranges towards the cooler poles three times faster than scientists previously thought: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-14576664>

Climate change will hit genetic diversity

Probable loss of 'cryptic' variation is a challenge for conservationists. Climate change represents a threat not only to the existence of individual species, but also to the genetic diversity hidden within them, researchers say. The finding promises to complicate assessments of how climate change will affect biodiversity, as well as conservationists' task in preserving it: goo.gl/fb/DZKVv

Kew unveils native flower seed bank

A new 'hub' will provide seeds and scientific advice to groups helping to protect and restore wildflower meadow habitats:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2011/aug/17/kew-native-seed-hub>

Natterjack toads on top 10 list of species that could become extinct in next 20yrs

Some of Britain's best-loved animals, including the red squirrel, Scottish wildcat and hedgehog, could become extinct within 20 years, a report has warned: bit.ly/nRfrVw

Otters are back – in every county in England

Return of otter shows English rivers are healthiest for 20 years, says Environment Agency:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/aug/18/otters-return-british-rivers?intcmp=122>

Killer shrimp top UK waterways' least-wanted list

"Killer shrimp" are among the worst alien invaders of Britain's waterways, which officials say are costing billions of pounds to tackle: ind.pn/pHuGxh

IEEM publish report on ecological skills gap

The report collated information from literature, surveys, interviews and workshops involving practicing ecologists and environmental managers at all stages of their careers, as well as other stakeholders, employers and graduates: <http://bit.ly/oCBYrh>

Nature conservation organisations' response to the closure of the BBC Wildlife Fund

The fund has raised £3m for conservation in the UK and overseas and brought together a large number of environmental and development NGOs in support: t.co/98aQtF6

[\[TOP\]](#)

GETTING INVOLVED

NBIS launches Autumn Moth Survey

NBIS needs your help to find three moth species: Red Underwing; Large Thorn; and Figure of 8. You can submit your records to our second moth survey of the year on our website or by email: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/MothsAutumn2011Survey>

NNNSI Broad Sweep Survey reminder!

A gentle reminder to those of you who have seen non-native species in the Broads area to submit your records to the Broad Sweep Survey. You can submit your records online here: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/BroadSweep2011>

More information about non-native species can be found here: <http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies/>

Have you entered the Big Wildlife Garden competition yet?

To make your garden greener, go to: <http://t.co/A3qyarJ>

The Big Bat Map has now been launched for European Bat Weekend

Make sure you check it out and log your sightings: <http://ht.ly/6agk2>

The Big Tree Plant funding scheme

The next deadline for applications to the Forestry Commission's Big Tree Plant funding scheme is 5th September: t.co/E8wNHxY

Get involved in UK Ladybird Survey

Very high numbers of 7-spot ladybirds and harlequin ladybirds have been reported to the UK Ladybird Survey. Check out the survey and learn how to get involved: <http://www.ladybird-survey.org/>

[\[TOP\]](#)

SPECIES HIGHLIGHTS

A new colony of natterjack toads to be set up in Norfolk

Norfolk Wildlife Trust has transferred more than 800 natterjack tadpoles from the RSPB's headquarters near Sandy in Bedfordshire to their reserve at Grimston Warren: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-14644496>

Ponds to boost rare species at Sutton Fen

Work on a scheme to improve one of Norfolk's top wildlife sites, RSPB's Sutton Fen reserve near Stalham, is poised to begin next month: http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/ponds_plan_to_boost_rare_species_at_sutton_fen_1_990495

Sowerby's beaked whale found beached at NWT Holme Dunes

The whale was found on 15th August. Sadly, the whale was unable to be saved and had to be put to sleep. This is only the third sighting of a Sowerby's beaked whale in Norfolk: <http://www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/Home/News/Sad-end-for-rare-whale-at-Holme.aspx>

Booming success story at Hickling

Growing numbers of visitors to the Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT) reserve are experiencing the thrill of hearing and glimpsing the elusive bittern for the first time: <http://t.co/GGylGrn>

[\[TOP\]](#)

EVENTS

27th August (14:00)

Swafas Swale Community Orchard – Celebrating the Orchard's first summer

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Swaefas%20Swale%20Community%20Orchard.pdf>

30th/31st August

Training course available locally - wildlife conservation practical task leadership

Attached flier for a 1-day training course to be held in North Norfolk just after the bank holiday weekend at the end of August:

<http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Leadership%20Training%20Course%20Flier.pdf>

4 September (12:00 to 16:00)

Fair on the Yare, Claxton Manor

Contact: Jackie Swan swan711@btinternet.com

20th September (17:30 to 19:00)

The NRP Annual Public Lecture: Environment, Politics and Policy

Lecture by Professor Sir John Lawton, Chair of the Norwich Research Park Science Advisory Board:

http://www.nrp.org.uk/events_view.php?event_id=1437

9th October (11:00 to 16:00)

Banham Apple Day, The Banham Barrel, Banham

Apple identification. Bring along your apples for pressing.

15 October

Wild about Norfolk

Easton College, nr Norwich

Contact: Catherine Greenhough catherinegreenhough@hotmail.com

23 October (10:00 to 16:00)

Gressenhall Apple Day, Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, Gressenhall, Dereham

Apple identification and tasting.

8th and 9th November

The Barn Owl Trust is running a one-day Barn Owl Ecology, Surveys and Signs course.

The course is primarily aimed at planners and ecologists but is relevant to anyone who comes across barn owls as part of their work.

Download the poster here: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/BOESS%20poster%20Nov%202011.pdf>

Download the application form here: <http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/BOESS%20Application%20form%20Nov%202011.pdf>

[\[TOP\]](#)

AND FINALLY..

A strange footprint appeared on Lizzy's computer, under her desk. Is this a new species?!



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

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

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