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## Norfolk BAP celebrates its tenth anniversary



Hickling Broad (Credit: Keith Waldron)

**It is now ten years since the launch of the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan in 1999. As the Biodiversity Partnership looks back over the achievements and progress of the last decade, there is much to celebrate.**

Over 60 Species and Habitat Action Plans have now been prepared and brought into implementation. Biodiversity has been increasingly “mainstreamed” into county and district-level strategies, policies and plans. A Biodiversity Project Fund has been in operation for over five years, and now provides crucial support for small but high priority activities identified in the different action plans. But most importantly of all, many species and habitats

are showing clear signs of recovery.

Despite these encouraging trends, Norfolk’s biodiversity continues to face a broad array of serious threats, including large-scale development, invasive alien species and climate change. The need for a clear and up-to-date Biodiversity Action Plan has never been more important, and the Partnership will continue to build on the experience and strength of its members to ensure that the BAP remains an effective catalyst for conservation action.

*Gerry Barnes,  
Chairman Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership*

*“I’m delighted and proud of how the Biodiversity Partnership has grown and developed over the past 10 years. I was involved in the early days with colleagues from Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, RSPB, Norfolk County Council and local authorities.*

*In reflecting back on those times, the commitment and enthusiasm of those involved to make things happen stands out, particularly at a time when resources (both time and money), and sometimes understanding of the importance of biodiversity, were hard to find. This commitment and enthusiasm was matched by others who volunteered their time and effort as the Steering Group and Working Group were strengthened and the network of those involved widened significantly.*

*A look at the Partnership website now shows just how far this joint working has developed in the delivery of biodiversity on the ground. The strength of the Partnership places it well to make a significant contribution to the challenges faced by Norfolk’s biodiversity. I wish the Partnership well for the future.”*

*Keith McNaught, Former Chair of the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership, 1999-2005*

# Welcome

Welcome to the 2008/9 Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership update. To improve circulation and reduce costs, we are using e-mail to distribute copies to many of you. Please let us know what you think! We do hope you'll be able to help us develop this bulletin to include more news from Partnership members—we'd be delighted to hear your ideas.

As well as celebrating the many successes of the past decade, the Partnership has already started to prioritise work for the future. There are so many challenges ahead. We want to engage with a wider audience and to build our information base. We need a strong funding platform and new initiatives focusing on the extended list of UK priority habitats and species. In essence, we are seeking to expand our partnership and to ensure it is 'fit for purpose.' Please follow our progress on the Partnership website—[www.norfolk-biodiversity.org](http://www.norfolk-biodiversity.org)

*Scott Perkin, Co-ordinator  
Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership*

If you have any problems accessing this document in electronic format, please do get in touch and we'll do our best to help.



*Working to conserve, enhance and restore Norfolk's biological diversity*

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## Topic Group Chairs

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## Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative

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## BAP supported by the Biodiversity Project Fund

The Partnership was pleased to be able to continue operating its Biodiversity Project Fund in 2008/09. The Fund is used primarily to help support the implementation of the Habitat and Species Action Plans, and is a critically important mechanism for translating the BAP into action. Grants totalling over £31,000 were provided to projects identified by the Topic Groups, leveraging in an additional amount of nearly £100,000 of conservation finance from other sources. The following ten projects were supported:

- Assessment of the Status of Crucian Carp in North Norfolk
- Biodiversity Survey of the Cut-off Channel
- Brecks Biodiversity Audit
- Broads Mink Management Project
- Conservation of the Grey Carpet Moth in the Brecks
- Identification of Important Arable Plant Areas
- Monitoring Land Management and the Flora and Fauna of Ditch Systems in the Thurne Catchment
- "Wild about the Wensum"
- Survey of the Brecks Pine Hedges
- Wash Rivers Crayfish Survey: Phase 1 (Scoping)

Project reports will be shared with the respective Topic Groups and posted on the biodiversity website once available.

## New members

**Anglian Water and the University of East Anglia have recently become formal members of the Biodiversity Partnership, bringing total membership to 21.**

The two organisations bring a wealth of knowledge, expertise and experience to the Partnership. Anglian Water, for example, has developed a company BAP, played a key role in the Water for Wildlife programme and been actively involved in special projects such as the re-introduction of the pool frog; it is the first corporate member of the Partnership. UEA is actively involved in cutting-edge research on biodiversity, ecology, landscape history and climate change, eg, through its School of Environmental Sciences, the School of History and the School of Biological Sciences.

## Launch of Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative



**The Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative was launched in 2008 by the Partnership to promote the prevention, control and eradication of invasive, alien species.**

It seeks to do this by:

- Collating and monitoring data on the distribution and spread of non-native species in the county;
- Developing action plans to address the species of most urgent concern;
- Facilitating control and eradication projects at high priority sites;
- Promoting awareness of the risks and impacts associated with non-native species.

The Initiative has been established under the umbrella of the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership and works through a stakeholders' forum comprised of representatives from over 20 organisations.

It is financially supported by the Broads Authority, the Environment Agency, Natural England, Norfolk County Council and the Water Management Alliance.

**For further information about NNNSI, please visit [www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies](http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies) or contact [Michael.sutton-croft@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.sutton-croft@norfolk.gov.uk)**

## Biodiversity Highlighted in Local Area Agreement

The Partnership's longstanding involvement with the Local Area Agreement was rewarded by the inclusion of two biodiversity-related indicators in the final agreement.

The first is National Indicator 197 on local sites, which assesses the proportion of County Wildlife Sites and Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites in "positive conservation management". The second is a local indicator on ecological networks developed by the Partnership; this measures the amount of habitat restored and re-created

through three major agri-environment schemes (Higher Level Stewardship, the English Woodland Grant Scheme and the County Council's Countryside Grant Scheme), which corresponds to the Norfolk ecological network map.

Ambitious targets have been set for both indicators, and – together – they should help to raise the profile of biodiversity in the county significantly.

## Community Biodiversity Awards

**Eight local groups received awards from the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership at a special ceremony held on 24 September 2008 at the Assembly House in Norwich.**

The 'Community Biodiversity Awards' are given out each year to recognise local community groups that are making an outstanding contribution to wildlife in the county. The awards this year were presented by Steve Scott, Regional Director of the Forestry Commission, and were given to:

- The Acle Lands Trust, which received the Site Award for its woodland conservation and management work at Damgate and Roman Woods;
- The East of England Apples and Orchards Project (EEAOP), which received the Education Award in recognition of its pioneering efforts to raise awareness of the region's rich - but highly threatened - traditional fruit and orchard heritage;
- The Southrepps Common Trust, which received the Local Group Award for its outstanding efforts to conserve and manage a river valley site of national and European importance; and
- Lucy Whittle, who received the Individual Award for her dedication to the conservation



Community Biodiversity Award winners (Credit: Charles Greenhough)

and enhancement of the biodiversity of Kenninghall.

Four Honourable Mentions were also awarded, to the following:

- Dennis, Sally and Rachel Long, in recognition of the creation of Long's Wood - the largest community woodland in Norfolk (Site Category)
- Dersingham Primary School, for the development of its outstanding wildlife area (Education Category);
- The Bergh Apton Conservation Trust, in recognition of its valuable conservation work at Valley Marsh and Church Plantation in South Norfolk (Local Group Category)
- Bill Flynn, for his efforts to manage and restore threatened habitats on Bawdeswell Heath (Individual Category).

## New Look

**Over the last year, the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership has been running a logo design competition with the Norwich University College of the Arts (NUCA).** The aim was to develop a new and more modern looking logo for the Partnership, which would provide a clear, local identity. The winning design was recently adopted by the Partnership's Steering Group.

Members felt that the new design was eye-catching and innovative, and were particularly impressed by the creative way in which different examples of flora and fauna had been incorporated into the lettering.

The new logo was the joint creation of students Ben Hutchinson and Lindsey Green, who are both studying for their BA (Hons) degree in Graphic Design at NUCA. Speaking about the competition, they said: "Working on this project together was a positive experience for both of us. It allowed us to think creatively



and to collaborate as a team. ... We hope we have produced a logo which is attractive and succeeds in conveying a sense of the Partnership's work."

The new logo will now be used in all the Partnership's promotional materials.

## Natural Neighbours

**Norfolk's local communities are making a real difference for biodiversity - that was the clear message from "Natural Neighbours", Norfolk's first community biodiversity conference, held in Norwich on 7 March 2009.**

Over 90 delegates - mainly from community groups - heard some inspiring examples of ambitious environmental projects that bring local people together. These can be hard work, but they can also create significant benefits for biodiversity, improve accessible green spaces and be lots of fun. Delegates heard about innovative community projects being implemented by the Bergh Apton Conservation Trust, Friends of the Rosary, North Norfolk Community Woodland Trust, Norwich Environmental Weekenders (NEWS) and the Kenninghall Lands Trust.

The day also included a series of workshops, covering topics such as funding, biodiversity surveys, volunteers, publicity and pond management. In addition, speakers from the Big Lottery Fund and the Veolia Environmental Trust described a wide variety of funding

opportunities and Lord Peter Melchett of the Soil Association gave a colourful, entertaining and forceful presentation on the importance of organic growing to biodiversity.

The conference was organised by Marya Parker of BTCV on behalf of the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership and Communities and Nature BAP Topic Group. The speakers and workshop leaders generously volunteered their time and the event was free to participants thanks to funding from the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership, Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk Council, Norwich City Council, The Paul Bassham Charitable Trust, The Courtyard Farm Trust and Brigadier and Mrs Phelps Charitable Settlement.



Peter Melchett addresses the conference (Credit: Philip Haynes)

## Annual Biodiversity Forum 2008

**Outdoor learning can enhance children's educational attainment, improve emotional development, increase confidence and strengthen social skills. This was the message that participants heard at this year's Annual Biodiversity Forum on 2 October 2008.**

Over 100 delegates took part in the Forum, which was organised around the theme of 'biodiversity and outdoor education'. Amongst other topics, participants heard about national initiatives such as the Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto; Froglife's innovative

activities with young offenders; the County Council's Environmental and Outdoor Learning Programme; and the inspiring approaches to outdoor learning being used by the Forest School at Whitlingham in Norwich.

The day also featured a special exhibit called 'Conservation Counts'. This was put together by Norfolk Wildlife Trust, and sought to communicate information about the county's biodiversity statistics by using grains of barley (see picture).

In total, the Trust estimated that over 3,000,000 grains were used in the display!



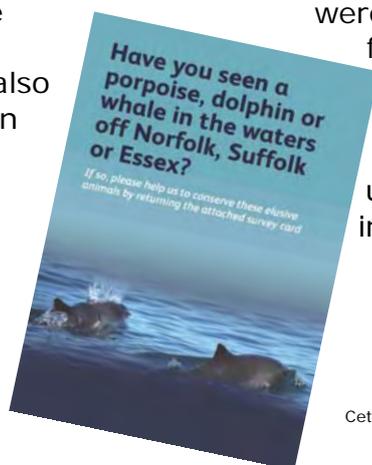
Historical change in the area of woodland in Norfolk represented by grains of barley (Credit: David North)

# Topic Group Updates

## COASTAL TOPIC GROUP

(Chair, John Sizer, National Trust)

**A survey of coastal BAP habitats has been completed** for the non-SSSI sections of the Great Yarmouth Borough Council coast; it is hoped that this will lead to recommendations for new coastal County Wildlife Sites in this area. An identification card covering a range of cetacean species that may be seen off the East Anglian coast has been completed. Copies have been distributed through Sea Watch and through Eastern Sea Fisheries network and feedback about the project has been positive. The Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk Biodiversity Partnerships are also collaborating on the production of regional marine BAPs for seagrass and commercial marine fish. The Topic Group has also discussed a proposal from RSPB to designate little tern as a Local BAP species and will be making recommendations to the Steering Group regarding this species.



Cetacean recording card

## ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS GROUP

(Chair, Reg Land, Norfolk Wildlife Trust)

**One of the most significant areas of work undertaken by the Group was the development of the Local Ecological Networks Indicator** which measures the area of land entered into Higher Level Stewardship, English Woodland Grants Scheme and Norfolk County Council's Countryside Conservation Grants Scheme for habitat restoration or creation and which contributes to the agreed ecological network map for Norfolk.

The indicator shows that in Norfolk during 2007/8, 748 hectares of habitat were restored or created in addition to 45 km of hedgerow and nearly 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of pond habitat.

Site visit: Farmland Topic Group  
(Credit: Scott Perkin)



## COMMUNITIES AND NATURE

(Chair, Paul Holley, Norwich City Council)

**Highlights of the year were the Community Biodiversity Awards, and the Natural Neighbours Conference** which have feature articles in this newsletter.

The Topic Group also supported the 'Wild About the Wensum' event on 17th May 2008, and was represented at the Garden Design event at the Forum, Norwich on 25-26th April 2008 and 'Wild About Norfolk' on 6-7th Sept 2008. Several Species Action Plans (SAPs) were reviewed by the group, including plans for song thrush, sandy stiltball and bats.

In addition, individual Topic Group members and their organisations have undertaken a wide range of projects and initiatives of their own.

## FARMLAND

(Chair, John Ebbage, Natural England)

**The Farmland Group had a productive year with the production of an action plan for Barbastelle bats** (the first bat action plan for the county), and the revision of the Hedgerow Habitat Action Plan and the Corn Bunting Species Action Plan.

A number of innovative projects were also supported, including activities aimed at: identifying "Important Arable Plant Areas" in the county; surveying and developing management plans for several BAP species along the Cut-off Channel (eg, turtle dove and grizzled skipper); and producing a hedgerow database, GIS layer and advice leaflet. In July 2008, the Farming and Biodiversity Practitioners' Forum met at Burlingham Woods to look at issues such as the creation and management of woodlands on former arable land and the provision of interpretation and access.

# Topic Group updates

## HEATHLAND

(Chair, Heidi Thompson, Norfolk County Council)

The group has responsibility for overseeing the action plans for two rare species of ground beetle, *Ophonus laticollis* and *Harpalus froelichii*. Following a specially-commissioned survey of *Ophonus laticollis*, the Topic Group was able to provide Natural England with useful feedback on HLS prescriptions. Results were also fed into the planning system to ensure populations are safeguarded from development associated with the Thetford growth point.

The Heaths Forum (comprised of practical heathland managers) has enjoyed two visits - one to Grimston Warren to look at the impressive heathland restoration work being carried out by Norfolk Wildlife Trust, and one to Mousehold Heath hosted by Norwich City Council to look at the trials and tribulations of managing heathland within an urban setting.



Norfolk Hawker (Credit: Peter Neal Taylor)

## WATERBODIES

(Chair, Chris Stracham, Environment Agency)

Following inspirational talks from Daniel Piec of Froglife and Dawn Isaac from the Million Ponds Project, the Waterbodies Topic Group started work on a Norfolk Pond Habitat Action Plan (HAP), development of which will be led by Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

Other plans are also in draft, including one for the Norfolk hawker dragonfly (led by Pam Taylor of the British Dragonfly Society). The plan for floating water plantain was formalised.

Recent meetings included interesting presentations on the ecology and conservation of stoneworts from Stephen Lambert and conservation of crucian carp from Carl Sayer and Gordon Copp.

## WETLANDS

(Chair, Andrea Kelly, Broads Authority)

The Wetlands Topic Group has been focussing on the adaptation of wetlands to climate change. Habitat opportunity mapping completed by the Broads Authority and the Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service has helped to identify area-based conservation projects which form part of the Broads Biodiversity Action Plan. Surveys of grazing marsh have been initiated by the group, which is also set to deliver Species and Habitat Action Plans on: bittern, reed bunting, grazing marsh and crane. The group is delighted that many other projects involving wetlands are underway across the county, including the fen restoration project (led by NWT), Gaywood restoration project (led by Water Management Alliance) and the pingo project (also led by NWT).



Grazing marsh dyke (Credit: Scott Perkin)

## WOODLANDS

(Chair, Gerry Barnes, Norfolk County Council)

The Woodlands Topic Group was delighted when walks created through newly planted woodlands around Burlingham and Acle won a 2008 Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) award for access to the countryside. Awards are made to outstanding projects which preserve and enhance the unique character and heritage of Norfolk.

Other highlights include completion of a Norfolk deer parks survey; provision of grants for surveying bryophytes in orchards (from Natural England) and the initiation of a survey of pine hedgerows in the Brecks. Databases on pollarded trees and hedges have been completed, and many successful events have been held including a woodland masterclass, guided walks and apple days, and wet woodland workshop. The launch of Woodfuels East is also noteworthy.

# Coming Up

## Wash Week

1—9 August, various venues around the Wash

## Planning and Biodiversity Seminar

10 September, Long Stratton

## Presentation of the Community Biodiversity Awards

24 September, Assembly House

## Wild about Norfolk

3rd October 2009, Acle High School,

## Norfolk Biodiversity Forum – “Celebrating Ten Years of the Norfolk BAP”

1 October, Norwich

## Plum and Apple Days

Banham, 11 October

## Scott Perkin

### Biodiversity Co-ordinator

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Foxley Wood (Credit: Keith Waldron)

The Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership is generously funded by the following organisations:



## Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership

Anglian Water | Breckland Council | British Trust for Ornithology | Broadland District Council | Broads Authority | Environment Agency | Forestry Commission | Great Yarmouth Borough Council | King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council | Natural England | Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service | Norfolk County Council | Norfolk Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group | Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society | Norfolk Wildlife Trust | North Norfolk District Council | Norwich City Council | RSPB | South Norfolk Council | University of East Anglia | Water Management Alliance

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

