

Newsletter



'Santon Downham in Autumn Glory' With grateful thanks to Margaret Holland for this stunning photo. [Follow Margaret on Flickr >](#)

Autumn 2019

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SBIS GIS (digital mapping) News

Ecological Networking Project

Some interesting software is available which may be useful in our GIS data analysis and creation of ecological networks:

- a) 'Condatis' is a free tool from the University of Liverpool designed to identify the best locations for habitat creation and restoration, to enhance existing habitat networks and increase ecological connectivity.
- b) Natural England developed the 'National Biodiversity Climate Change Vulnerability Model (NBCCVM)' to assist with climate change adaptation planning by identifying where to target measures to build biodiversity resilience. These measures include 3 of the attributes of ecological networks identified in the 'Making Space for Nature' review as promoting coherence and resilience:

better habitat management; **bigger** patches of habitat; and **joined** up networks of habitat.

GIS map output is produced by both tools. SBIS will be attending webinars on these later in November.

County Wildlife Sites

Six extensions and 8 new sites have been added to the Register; the new sites include 5 ancient woodlands and Blaxhall Heath (which was previously part of Tunstall Forest CWS before its removal due to having SSSI protection), Padley Water and Brandon's London Road Industrial Estate Roadside Nature Reserve (RNR).

Kier Highways have been provided with a Shapefile of RNR sites and will be sent regular updates. This will enable them to more accurately implement no-spray and appropriate cutting regimes on the reserves.

A GIS workflow was run to find the narrowest widths of RNRs. The results can help to highlight those sites which would be dangerous for volunteers to work on.

An ancient woodland analysis found woods on the Natural England Ancient Woodland Inventory which are neither SSSI nor CWS. These can be considered for designation as CWS.

SBIS are continuing to fund Suffolk Wildlife Trust to re-write many CWS citations; so far 65 have been updated in the master database at SBIS.

Supporting Partners

Orchards East work continues with the production of Parish maps for orchard surveyors and the conversion of Suffolk Traditional Orchard Group (STOG) data to Orchards East format.

An updated Black Poplar Records dataset from Sue Hooton, the County Recorder for Black Poplar, was mapped on Google Maps. Sue is now able to edit and update this data via the interactive map, rather than in a spreadsheet. The data can be exported from Google Maps when needed in spreadsheet form.

GIS Users information

We have continued trialling a copy of the latest upgrade to MapInfo, v10.0.3 (64-bit). This version is a major upgrade, with changes to functionality such as layout and legend creation, as well as the user interface. A MapBasic tool had to be re-written and because the new version is 64-bit, the 64-bit Microsoft Access database driver needs to be installed before a write connection can be made to an Access database. Most of the issues are now resolved, and we will be discussing them at a meeting with Suffolk County Council and their Pitney Bowes account manager later in November.

Commercial Data Enquiries

In the last three months over 120 searches have been carried out, including 10 no-charge cross-boundary searches shared with neighbouring record centres.

Other SBIS News

Planners' Update

The bi-annual Planners' Update was published on 30th October and circulated to around 350 people. The East Anglian Planning and Biodiversity seminar (14th November) was already fully booked by this time with an audience of 150 people!

This issue includes the new Wildlife Assessment Check, SuDS guidance, the status of the Suffolk coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy, Suffolk Biodiversity Validation Checklist update, Green Infrastructure articles, how interaction with nature can improve health and the Protected Species focus is the Eurasian Otter.



Eurasian Otter - protected species focus in the Planners' Update.
Credit: Roger Hance

Front page of
the Autumn
2019
Planners'
Update

Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service
Planners' Update

Autumn 2019	Welcome to the SBIS Planners' Update!
Issue 10	We aim to provide accessible information about biodiversity issues in relation to planning. If we can help with training events, fact sheets or in any other way, please do contact us and we'll do our best to provide what you need. Previous Updates are available on the SBIS Planners' Page .
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East Anglian Planning and Biodiversity Seminar 2019
14th November 09:30–15:50, University of Suffolk, Ipswich

This popular annual seminar presents the latest information on biodiversity in spatial planning and development management. We aim to provide practical solutions to support decision-makers, whilst ensuring that legal obligations are met. It provides a much-needed forum for planners, consultees and ecological consultants in East Anglia to exchange ideas.

We listened to last year's feedback and are delighted to welcome speakers on the topics you wanted to know about:

- Key biodiversity issues in planning - Sue Hooton, Assoc. of Local Government Ecologists & Gen Broad, SBIS
- Biodiversity Net Gain in Rivers and Streams - Sarah Jane Scott, Environment Agency
- Suffolk Ecological Network Project - Martin Sanford, SBIS
- Update on District Level Licensing for Great Crested Newts - Gareth Dalglish, Natural England
- Otters and Planning - Simone Bullion, Suffolk Wildlife Trust
- Planning a future landscape with Water Voles - Darren Tansley, UK Water Vole Steering Group
- Bats and watercourses - Julian Diggins, Bat Conservation Trust
- Innovative wetlands: the Ingol Case study and planning for the future - David Diggins, Norfolk Rivers Trust

An overview of the engineering and biodiversity of the SuDS at Bramford
Emma Browning & Michael Hotze, Scottish Power Renewables

To go on the waiting list, please contact Charlotte Robotham/
David White at Norfolk County Council: NET@norfolk.gov.uk

East Anglian Planning and Biodiversity Seminar

This annual event has grown tremendously from its humble beginnings 15 years ago, in response to demand from planners from Local Authorities, charities and other organisations and ecological consultants. Held on 14th November at the University of Suffolk's Waterfront venue, 150 people attended this year to hear presentations about planning and biodiversity issues, along the theme of wetlands, rivers and streams.

The day had a real buzz about it - Local Authority planners chatting with colleagues from the charity sector, face to face meetings between ecological consultants and planners instead of email and all appreciating the opportunity to make personal connections.

The speakers provided innovative and inspiring perspectives on their own areas of expertise. A wet woodland planned into a Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme in Bramford (Scottish Power Renewables); Integrated Constructed Wetland projects using Norfolk's River Ingol as a case study (Norfolk Rivers Trust); Otters, Water Voles and Bats in developments - hazards and enhancement opportunities (Suffolk Wildlife Trust, UK Water Vole Steering Group, Bat Conservation Trust); Biodiversity Net Gain in rivers and streams (Environment Agency); National and Regional updates (Association of Local Government Ecologists and SBIS; Suffolk Ecological Network project (SBIS); and the Great crested newt District Licensing roll out (Natural England). The day was drawn together and hosted in great style by David White from Norfolk County Council. The event is organised by Suffolk Planning Group and Collaborative Members from Essex and Norfolk.



Left to right: Michael Hotze & Emma Browning (Scottish Power Renewables), David Diggins (Norfolk Rivers Trust), Jan Collins (Bat Conservation Trust), David White (Norfolk County Council), Sarah Jane Scott (Environment Agency), Simone Bullion (Suffolk Wildlife Trust), Sue Hooton (Association of Local Government Ecologists), Martin Sanford (SBIS), Gareth Dalglish (Natural England), Darren Tansley (UK Water Vole Steering group), Gen Broad (SBIS). Photos: Hamish Jackson

Catchment scale Restoration on the River Blyth

Alice Wickman, Suffolk Wildlife Trust

From the estuary, which enters the North Sea at Southwold, to the non-tidal tributaries that wind their way through towns, villages and farmland, the River Blyth is a beautiful feature of East Suffolk. However, sections of the river suffer from run off from input from nearby land, as well as historic modifications that affect the way it flows through the landscape.

Suffolk Wildlife Trust is working in partnership with the Environment Agency to tackle these issues on a catchment-wide scale on the River Blyth. This two-year, Water Environment Grant funded project will see seven sites across the catchment restored and work is already underway.

The first stage of the project, completed in October, saw a section of the river improved with log jams and flow deflectors which help vary the flow and reduce sedimentation, improving the habitat for fish and river invertebrates. Further upstream, leaky log jams were installed to help slow the flow during heavy rain.



Installing a flow deflector on the River Blyth © Alice Wickman



A flow deflector on the River Blyth © Alice Wickman

The restoration work will continue over the winter with riverside tree planting across the catchment. The occasional riverside tree will further improve the river habitat by providing shelter for fish and invertebrates, creating shade, regulating water temperatures and controlling the growth of in-channel vegetation, which will improve the flow. A team of volunteer River Wardens will be helping with this, as well as conducting regular monitoring of the river.



A log jam on the River Blyth © Alice Wickman

If you have any questions about the project or would like to get involved, please contact Alice Wickman, River Blyth Catchment Advisor at Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Phone: 07826897009 Email: Alice.wickman@suffolkwildlifetrust.org.

Felixstowe Community Nature Reserve - an Exciting Year Ahead!

Adrian Cooper, FCNR

Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve has big plans for 2020! Top of our list is the priority to grow the area of our community nature reserve so that it's bigger than ever before. Already, the total area of all the small green spaces which are worked on by our members is larger than a full sized football pitch! We hope to achieve this exciting growth by educating, encouraging and empowering local people to develop even more of their wildlife-friendly spaces.

Alongside our main priorities, we will also work with new friends in the local area, such as those from the Felixstowe Swift Group, to support their quest to help swifts while they fly around our local area in the summer.

Working with local young people has always been high on our priority list. In 2020, we will focus our attention on supporting the #iwill campaign which encourages 10 – 20 year olds to become more active in their communities.

In 2020, we will share more data, analyses and maps with friends who we met through our membership of the National Biodiversity Network – the UK's largest network of conservation groups. We also hope to work alongside other friends who we met through our role as a case study in the Department of the Environment's Year of Green Action.

Our Citizen Science Group also continues to share their fantastic work with an ever-widening network of colleagues, mainly through the European Citizen Science Association. There are also exciting plans to work with citizen scientists from all over the world through the We Observe project. More news on that work will follow!

2020 will see us working with an expanding network of local artists, photographers and musicians whose creativity is inspired by their love of wildlife and their support for our plans. It is always a great pleasure to share this amazing work through our social media pages and to then receive encouraging feedback from all over the world.

To learn more about the work of Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve, please visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/felixstowecommunitynaturereserve

Challenges and Choices 2019

Consultation overview

21st October 2019

The Environment Agency launched a consultation in October seeking everyone's views on the challenges our waters face and the choices we all need to make to improve and protect this precious resource. The responses to this consultation will help shape the future approach to the management of the water environment and be used to update the existing river basin management plans in 2021. [Go to the consultation](#) >

The Challenges and Choices consultation seeks views on:

- ⇒ the challenges that threaten the water environment
- ⇒ how we can work together to manage our waters
- ⇒ who should pay

This is supported by our 'Small Changes, Big Picture' films which are available now on [Environment Agency TV](#). We are encouraging the promotion of the consultation and films as widely as possible.

Consultation audience and approach: Challenges and Choices has been shaped by 6 key principles:

- designed for everyone to get involved
- addresses the biggest current and future challenges facing the water environment
- focuses on what can be done about these and the choices we have
- contains a range of content including films, infographics and links to more detailed information
- provides the most up-to-date technical position on key areas of work
- asks a range of questions – from those designed to give the public a voice, to detailed questions on specific policy issues
- takes a layered approach to allow everyone to access the level of detail appropriate for them (see figure below)

Content: The consultation will address the biggest challenges facing the water environment. It is an online consultation and will present each challenge as a specific page:

- climate and biodiversity crisis
- changes to water levels and flows
- chemicals in the water environment
- invasive non-native species
- physical modifications
- plastics pollution
- pollution from abandoned mines
- pollution from agriculture and rural areas
- pollution from towns, cities and transport
- pollution from water industry wastewater

Each challenge page has a film, a brief overview with infographics and links to more detailed information on the challenge. It also contains information and questions on who pays, catchment partnership working and information on the river basin planning process.

More detail is also be provided on the following pressures and issues: nitrate, phosphorus, faecal contamination, fine sediment, Natura 2000 and drinking water protected areas.

[Further information >](#)

The closing date for receipt of your comments is 24th April 2020.

For more information contact your local Environment Agency catchment co-ordinator or email RBMPConsultation@environment-agency.gov.uk

Film Title	Link
Small Changes, Big Picture Trailer	Small Changes, Big Picture Trailer
Managing Water in Our Environment	Managing Water in Our Environment
Climate Crisis	Climate Crisis
Changes to Water Levels and Flows	Changes to Water Levels and Flows
Chemicals in the Water Environment	Chemicals in the Water Environment
Invasive Non-Native Species	Invasive Non-Native Species
Physical Modifications	Physical Modifications
Plastics Pollution	Plastics Pollution
Pollution from Abandoned Mines	Pollution from Abandoned Mines
Pollution from Agriculture and Rural Areas	Pollution from Agriculture and Rural Areas
Pollution from Towns, Cities and Transport	Pollution from Towns, Cities and Transport
Pollution from Wastewater	Pollution from Wastewater

Autumn work party at Sutton

Caroline Markham, GeoSuffolk

The first Suffolk Coast & Heaths (SCH) AONB Work Party of this winter was on October 17th – the early date requested by GeoSuffolk with Autumn tasks needing attention at Rockhall Wood SSSI. There are several exposures of Coralline Crag here and GeoSuffolk previously refreshed the Quarry pit with an excavator funded by Natural England. The SCH AONB Work Party cleared a 10m buffer in front of the face from grass and nettles, prior to sowing with grass seed for easier maintenance. The ‘Rock Bed’ can now be seen clearly at the top of the improved exposure – it was quarried here in Victorian times for building stone and river wall construction.

Rockhall Wood is also home to GeoSuffolk’s Pliocene Forest and, ten years on, many of the larger trees require little attention. However more recently planted specimens were cleared of grass and mulched by the AONB Work Party in preparation for the winter. The Pliocene Forest now has 200+ specimens drawn from around the world. Refugees from the Ice Age, these never returned to Britain but are represented in the fossil pollen of Suffolk’s 4 million-year-old Coralline Crag.

The SSSI is on private land, but a footpath passes by on the north side and, as well as placing our two information panels here, GeoSuffolk prioritises keeping the north face, which is visible from the footpath, clear – a task also undertaken by the AONB Work Party on October 17th.

Thank you to the Work Party volunteers for helping this part of our beautiful AONB.



AONB volunteers working in the Pliocene Forest



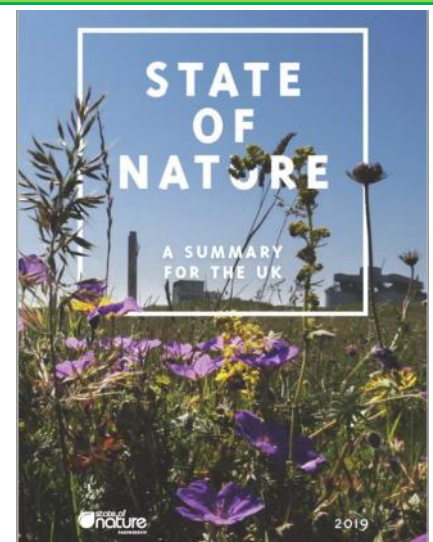
The newly cleared Quarry pit. Photo Barry Hall

State of Nature Report 2019

The State of Nature 2019 report shows how human impacts are driving changes in the UK's wildlife. The reports pool data and expertise from 53 nature conservation and research organisations, a wide partnership rarely seen in wildlife conservation. The report presents an overview of how the country's wildlife is faring, looking back over nearly 50 years of monitoring to see how nature has changed in the UK, its Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories. SBIS data (via the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway) is an essential part of the information that this report is based on.

[View the report on the NBN website >](#)

For an analysis of the results, take a look at the [British Trust for Ornithology's blog on their website >](#)



Suffolk Roadside Nature Reserves Update

Holly Emmens, Suffolk County Council

September is the time when most of our RNRs get their annual cut. This allows for a long growing season for protected plants, so that they are allowed to flower and set seed for the following year.

The thatch of cuttings then needs to be removed from the verge to prevent nutrient enrichment, which hampers the growth of wildflowers and decreases species diversity. Most wild flowering plants thrive on nutrient poor soils, and any excess in nutrients give more sturdy plants and grasses a competitive advantage.

We are extremely grateful to have a network of dedicated volunteer wardens across the county who help to manage Roadside Nature Reserves by keeping an eye on them and reporting any issues, and some wardens are also able to rake up the cuttings.

In order to make sure that we do not ask anybody to rake an unsafe verge, we have re-visited the risk assessments for all of the RNRs and updated the health and safety rating for each of them. For some, on fast roads with a narrow width of verge to stand on, traffic management will need to be put in place to enable them to be worked on safely. For others, the verge is wide enough to stand on and safely rake up cuttings.

Some of our RNRs are on very busy roads, such as Coddensham No.143 (the Coddensham A14/A140 roundabout) and they are not safe for anybody to visit, or rake.

Suffolk Highways are kindly funding the traffic management this year, and now it is just a matter of coordinating it all!!

We will also re-issue the factsheets with the new health and safety advice, and we are lucky to be joined by a new volunteer in the team who will help with producing them.



Man orchid at Wattisham Photo: Stuart Read



Adders-tongue fern at Long Melford Photo: Stuart Read



Sulphur clover and Pyramidal orchids on a Roadside Nature Reserve near Hawstead. Photo: Ben Heather

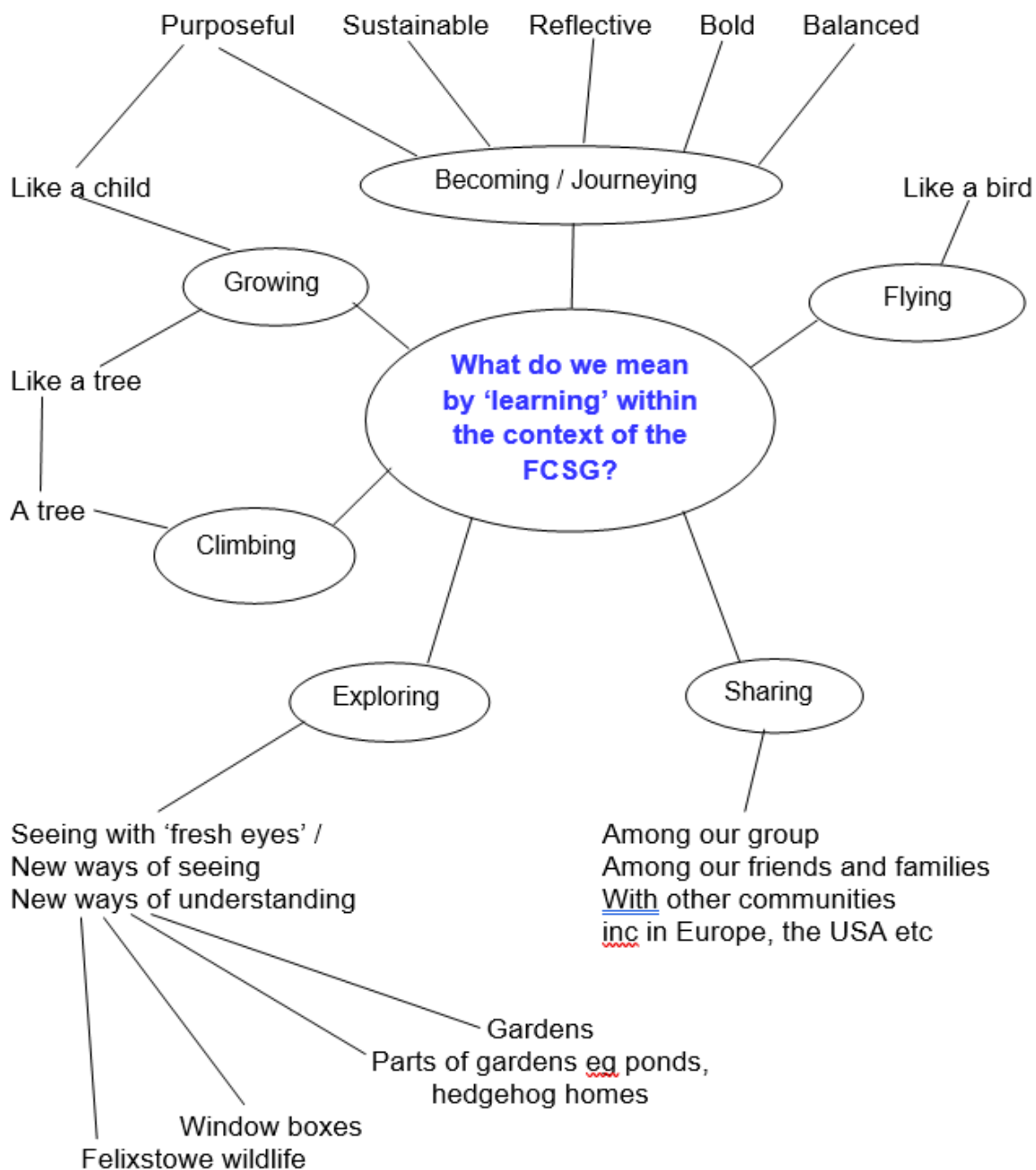
If you'd like to get involved with the RNR project or to find out more about the role of a volunteer warden, we'd love to hear from you! There are many RNRs out there without a warden and any help that you could offer - even if it is just keeping an eye on things - would be really appreciated.

To find out about RNRs near you, see our interactive map [here >](#) Email holly.emmens@suffolk.gov.uk for info.

Felixstowe's Citizen Science Group was created by members of Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve in April 2018. Early in 2019, members of Felixstowe's Citizen Science Group decided they wanted to improve. They wanted to learn more, and to work better as a group. In other words, they wanted to become a 'learning organisation'.

That sounds great, but what is a 'learning organisation'? The word 'learning' means many things to many people. Our first step in becoming a 'learning organisation' was to decide what we meant by that term. So we talked. We threw ideas around. We drew diagrams. Then we drew more diagrams! It was a thoroughly enjoyable way to begin our journey into understanding what a learning organisation might mean for us. Eventually, we produced a spray diagram which presented an overview of the many different perspectives which we have on 'learning'. See Fig 1 below:

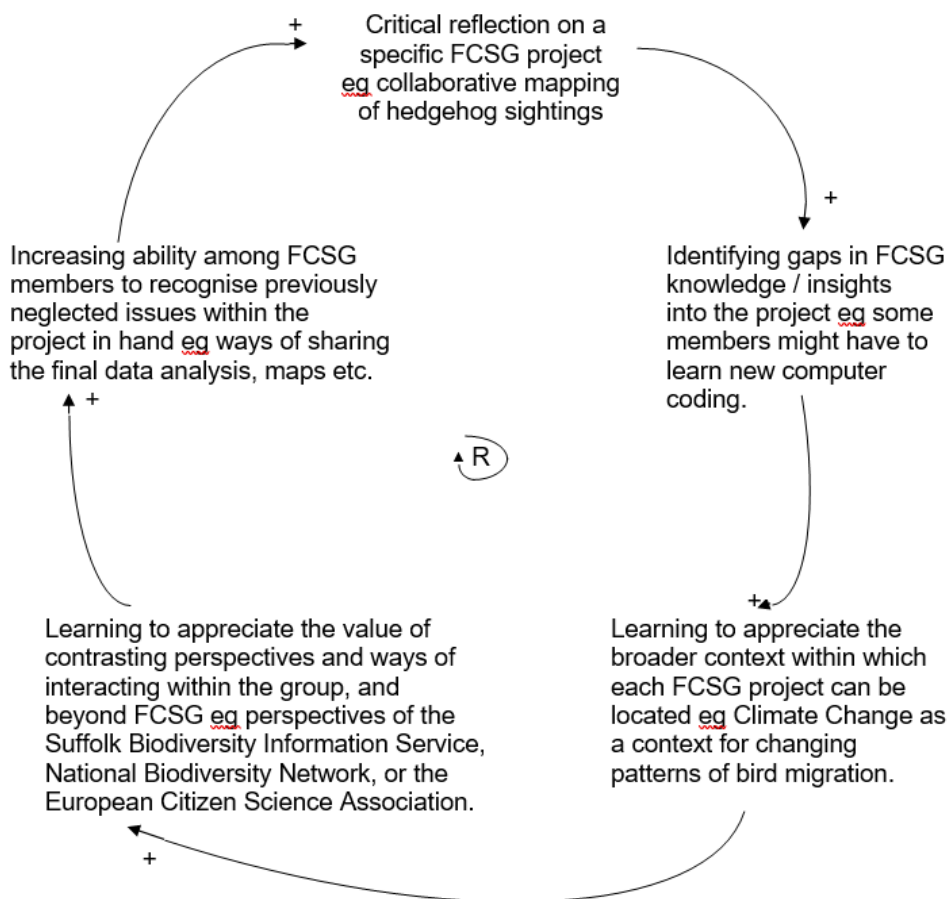
Fig 1: Spray diagram of ideas summarising our understanding of 'learning'



Every month, we intend to re-visit this spray diagram to see how it can be developed. For now though, we use it to define 'learning' as a journey of exploration.

One of the great things about being a community-based citizen science group is the fact that our members can bring so many different ways of thinking about the challenges we choose to face. So, it was fascinating to learn about loop diagrams and how they can help us to define 'learning organisation'. Fig 2 below is what we came up with. To read it, start at the top. FCSG is the initials for Felixstowe's Citizen Science Group. Critical reflection means we think hard about what we do. We challenge our deepest assumptions about what we might think is 'right' or not-so-right for us. Then, just follow the arrows. The + signs show how progress round the loop diagram adds to our learning and reflection. Each time we move round the circle, we think more deeply and critically about what we are doing. New insights become clear. New ways of presenting our work are learned. Overall, it is another set of steps toward our ultimate goal of becoming a learning organisation.

Fig 2: Reinforcing loop learning cycle



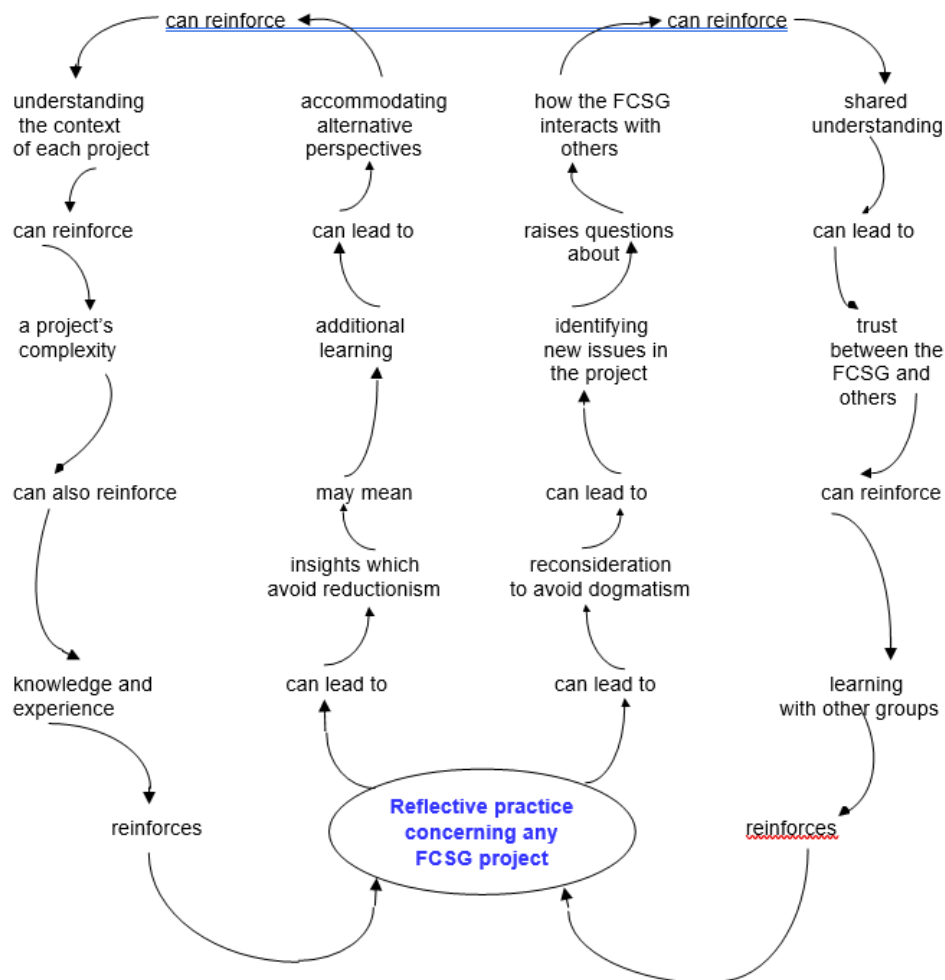
Taken together, these first two diagrams show that, as a community-based organisation, our learning is done together. No one feels isolated from the process. Everyone is involved. We even split up into small groups of no more than seven people so individual members feel more relaxed to share their views than they would in a larger meeting. In those small groups, everyone's views are anonymously recorded and then fed back to the main group by a small-group leader.

One of the best features about our citizen science group is that we have members from many different backgrounds – and not just science! Some of our most insightful members are those who have studied Eastern Philosophy. It is they who so often challenge our most fundamental beliefs about what citizen science is, and how best we can go about doing it! It is also those individuals who often help the rest of us to cut through the multiple perspectives which we have in our group, alongside the multiple ways in which members express themselves, and the further multiple ways in which we establish boundaries, and challenge other boundaries in our thinking.

Another great advantage of having members who have a background in Eastern Philosophy is their ability to remind others who might be impatient for results to slow down. To quote the wisdom from one of our members “Slower is faster in the end” In other words, don’t rush your work. Be slow and patient. Reflect! Talk. Share.

Time for another diagram! See Fig 3 below. This one combines a lot of ideas into a single picture. To read it, you should start from the oval shape at the bottom of the diagram. You can then take one or both loops. The great thing about this diagram is the way it takes us – step by step – through the process of gaining new insights. It challenges us to avoid simplistic ideas i.e. reductionism. It also teaches us to challenge old ideas which might not be what we want any more – i.e. dogmatism and reductionism. Once again though, the object is to thoughtfully move round each element of the cycle, talking with others, reflecting and learning how to do what we do better. ‘Better’ is always what *we choose to define as better*. In doing so, we are making more steps forward in our journey toward becoming a learning organisation.

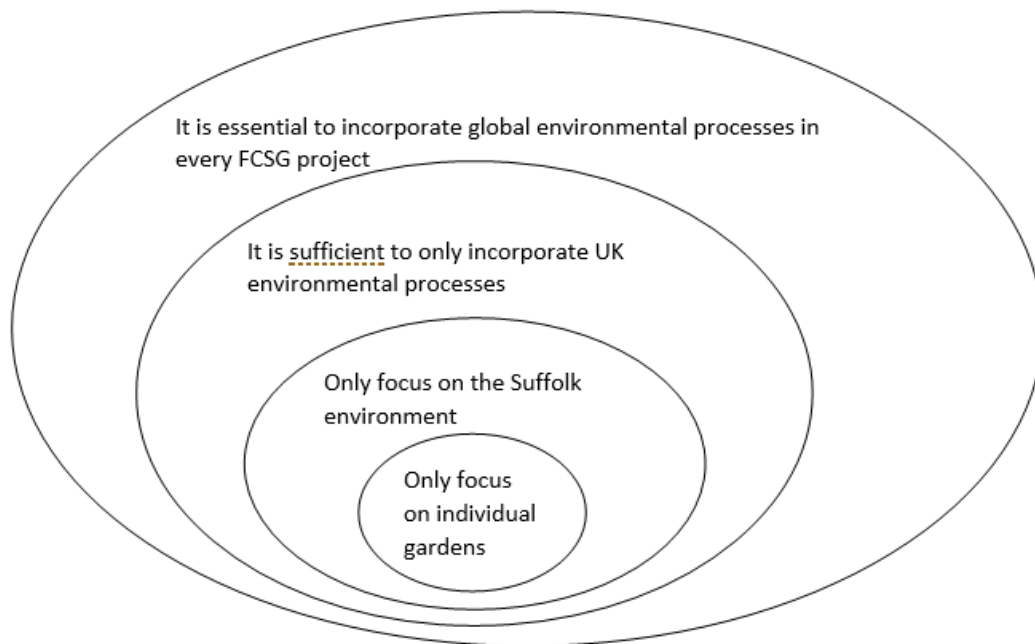
Fig 3: Causal-loop diagram embedding reflective practice in the FCSG learning cycle



With so many lively and enthusiastic members, it is no surprise when friendly disagreements arise. So far, they have not caused us any difficulty. The way we resolve those discussions is to try and work with one suggestion. Then we try it another way.

A good example of living with contrasting perspectives is in the way some of our members choose to define the aim of our citizen science. For some members, they only want to focus on small areas to habitat such as single gardens or allotments where they want to do their citizen science. Others prefer to do their scientific sampling from across our town. Another set of members look at connections between our local habitats and the part of south east England where we live. Finally, there are others who make their ecological / citizen science connections across a global stage. We can therefore offer another diagram to show how those apparently contrasting ways of thinking can all nest together. See Fig 4 overleaf.

Fig 4: Systems map of the main boundary judgements expressed among FCSG members



Each month, we re-visit these diagrams. We’ve drawn them up on large sheets of paper and we attach them to the wall of our meeting room so we can reflect upon them. Each small group is encouraged to go round each of the cycles in each diagram, and to share back to the main group what insights we have arrived at. There’s always something new and valuable to learn and develop.

So, are we a learning organisation yet? At the moment, we’re not sure. Undeniably, we think we’re on the right road, and doing the right thing. When the majority of our members agree that we are truly a learning organisation, that will be the point when we would say we have arrived – or at least arriving! Meanwhile, the journey is richly rewarding, completely fascinating, often humbling, and frequently fun.

We are therefore happy to share this road which we are on with other community organisations to encourage others to become learning organisations too!

Felixstowe's Citizen Science Group is featured in the October edition of the [European Citizen Science Association newsletter](#) > See our [New Facebook page](#) >

SNS Conference: On the Verge of Success - *What does a successful verge look like?*

Suffolk Naturalists' Society

Date: 29th February 2020, 09:30 –16:40 **Venue:** [Wherstead Park, Ipswich](#) >

The conference will bring together those working to enhance and protect roadside verges from a variety of organisations including County Councils, charities and businesses. The aim is to share best practice principles and encourage debate on how verge management can be improved nationally for the benefit of all wildlife. We are delighted to welcome speakers from Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils, Lincolnshire and Norfolk Wildlife Trusts, Peakhill Associates, Butterfly Conservation, the People’s Trust for Endangered Species, Plantlife, Buglife and Highways England.



Sulphur clover and Pyramidal orchids. Credit Ben Heather

Topics: *Plantlife’s road verge campaign; Hazel dormice on road verges: B-lines and road verges; Suffolk parish Roadside Nature Reserve Pilots; Roadside verges in Norfolk; Defending and extending the UK’s road verge network for biodiversity; the Importance of soil fertility or lack of it; From verge grass to fuel – a possibility to make conservation pay?; Enhancing biodiversity along the strategic road network in East Anglia. There will be a Q&A session with the speaker panel at the end of day. [Tickets available on the SNS website](#) >*

Bees Under Siege in Suffolk

Catherine Jones, Buglife

Population declines and threats to insect species have been widely reported in the national media in 2019, recognising the importance of insects, particularly bees, to our fabulous landscape and to sustainable food production. Earlier this year, on World Bee day - 20th May 2019, Buglife and WWF published 'Bees under siege from Habitat loss, Climate change and Pesticides', a report on the status of bees in the east of England. The east of England has nationally important populations of a number of bee species including Moss carder bee (*Bombus muscorum*), Red-shanked carder bee (*B. ruderarius*), Shrill carder bee (*B. sylvarum*), Sea aster colletes (*Colletes halophilus*, pictured) and Margined colletes (*C. marginatus*). Here we focus on Suffolk: the species of bee lost, threatened, and of conservation concern; the threats and recommended conservation action to prevent further losses.

The 'Bees under siege' report analysed data for 228 species of bee recorded across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Herefordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The report found that 17 species have been lost from the east of England, 25 species are threatened and a further 31 species are of conservation concern. Species are considered 'lost' when they have not been recorded in the region since 1970.

Of the 17 species lost from the east of England, 12 species have been lost from Suffolk, including five species that are now extinct in Britain and one species that is now extinct in England (shown in Table 1). 'Threatened' bees are those recorded in only one to ten 2km squares since 1990 and bees 'of conservation concern' are bees recorded in only 11-20 2km squares since 1990. Of the 25 bee species that are considered threatened in the east of England, five species have been lost in Suffolk but still occur in other counties in the east of England (shown in Table 1). There are 16 additional threatened species of bee in Suffolk including three species of carder bee (*Bombus spp.*) and the Sea aster colletes (*Colletes halophilus*, pictured) found in the mosaic of habitats associated with the coastline. Of the 31 species of bee in the east of England that are considered 'of conservation concern' 27 are found in Suffolk including three Mining bee *spp.*, two Flower bee *spp.*, five Furrow bee *spp.*, six Nomad bee *spp.*, two Blood bee *spp.* and three Dark bee *spp.* (for full details please see the full report available from the weblink below).

Table 1: Status of bee species previously recorded in Suffolk from 'Bees under siege from Habitat loss, Climate change and Pesticides' report.

Bee species	Status	Comments
Barham mini-miner (<i>Andrena nana</i>);	Extinct in Britain	
Pale-tailed mining bee (<i>A. tridentata</i>);	Extinct in Britain	
Cullum's bumblebee (<i>Bombus cullumanus</i>);	Extinct in Britain	
Shiny-gastered furrow bee (<i>Lasioglossum laeve</i>);	Extinct in Britain	
Square-spotted mourning bee (<i>Melecta luctuosa</i>),	Extinct in Britain	
Cliff mason bee (<i>Osmia xanthomelana</i>).	Extinct in England	
Long-fringed mini-miner (<i>A. niveata</i>),	Lost from Suffolk	Found in Essex
Tormentil mining bee (<i>A. tarsata</i>)	Lost from Suffolk	Found in Norfolk
Grooved sharp-tailed bee (<i>Coelioxys quadridentata</i>),	Lost from Suffolk	Found in Cambridgeshire
Long-horned bee (<i>Eucera longicornis</i>),	Lost from Suffolk	Found in Essex and Norfolk
Dull-headed blood bee (<i>Sphecodes ferruginatus</i>),	Lost from Suffolk	Found in Cambridgeshire and Essex

Bees face a range of interacting threats including habitat loss, climate change and pesticides (and other pollutants). Habitat loss, including habitat fragmentation and degradation, is probably the most important factor. We can all make a difference by protecting, and appropriately managing, existing habitat - and creating, and restoring, additional habitat that provides food, nesting and overwintering resources for our bees.

Due to the diversity of habitats in Suffolk, particularly the coastal habitats, there are important populations of three threatened *Bombus spp.* and two threatened *Colletes spp.* present e.g. at Orford Ness, Dunwich and Lowestoft. There are 'soft' (easily eroded clay, chalk and sand) cliffs, sand dunes and grasslands along the coastline providing forage and nesting sites for bees. Minimal disturbance to these sites is often the preferred approach however low-intensity grazing and scrub clearance may be beneficial. It vital that sand dunes, maritime cliffs, sea walls, grazing marsh and saltmarsh are protected and managed to maintain the resources they provide these threatened, and other bee species, to prevent further losses of bee species in Suffolk and potentially reduce the threats to bee species that are threatened or of conservation concern.

Buglife have been involved in a number of pollinator initiatives protecting, creating and managing habitats for pollinators, both in the east of England with the recent Urban Buzz project Ipswich and the Shrill carder bee recovery project, and nationally with the B-Lines project (details available from our website, see weblinks below). The UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS) Citizen Science 'FIT' counts (Flower-Insect Timed counts) and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust Bee walks provide opportunities for everyone to get involved in monitoring bees and other pollinators. The Bees, Wasps and Ants Recording Society (BWARS) provide a national recording scheme for bees (and wasps and ants) and Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service provides the local county based recording scheme for Suffolk.



Sea aster mining bee © Nicholas Vereeken

I would encourage everyone to get involved in monitoring and recording the wild bees locally and in creating and managing habitats for bees, and other pollinators. Together we can protect bees from the threats to their habitats in Suffolk.

Web links:

[News >](#)

[B-Lines >](#)

[Bee walks >](#)

[Full report >](#)

[UK PoMS FIT counts >](#)

[BWARS >](#)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Buglife thank WWF for their support in the production and promotion of the Bees Under Siege report, and everyone who helped by providing data and commented on the report.

Green Print Forum Beach Watch Event

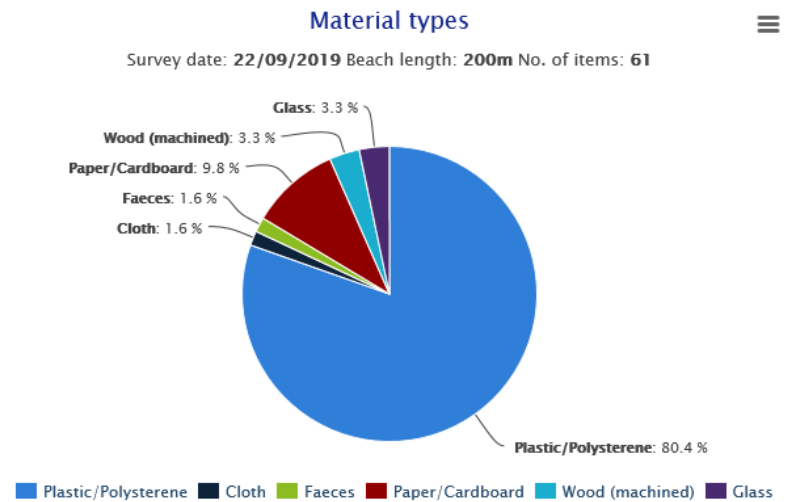
Daniel Wareing, Green Print Forum

A total of 11 of us turned out to clear and survey the marine litter on Southwold beach north of the pier on 22nd September, including a family of seasoned Beachwatchers from Ipswich and an inspiring couple who were in Suffolk on holiday and who do a beach clean every time they have a holiday by the seaside.

We were pleased to see so little litter on our transect, in particular relatively few plastic fragments and no plastic pellets at all. If it had not been for a mass of tangled netting and rope - a significant hazard for marine wildlife - we would have removed much less than the **1.96KG** of litter gathered from the transect. The pie chart below shows the composition of the litter we found here and the full data can be seen [here >](#)



Fabulous volunteers supporting Greenprint Forum's Beachwatch survey



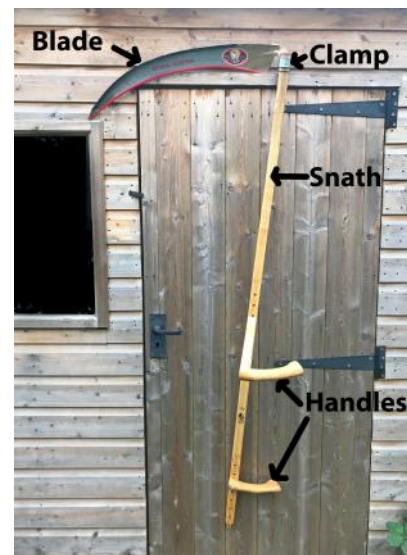
One Man Went to Mow

Julian Dowding, Butterfly Conservation

Over the past few years, I'd seen 'proper scythes' being used and was intrigued by their effectiveness. Colourful wildflower meadows managed this way to cut hay for livestock, still attracted innumerable butterflies, moths, bees and other invertebrates. I also became aware of a new wave of interest growing rapidly across the UK for this method of maintaining wildflower meadows and it would appear that some people in the UK are beginning to think that perhaps the old methods are the best. There are even scything competitions held in the UK and Europe where people can learn more about this ancient technique (arising from the Bronze and Iron Ages) and see their effectiveness, particularly alongside petrol driven bar mowers or brushcutters.

With the catastrophic decline in UK wildflower meadows and wanting to do something to address the sad state of affairs, I needed no more convincing and went out and got some Austrian scythes from a UK supplier. These are beautifully crafted, lightweight, easily assembled with ash snaths and handles, and steel blades which can be peened, tempered and honed to produce a fine cutting edge. They come in different sizes

to suit any individual's height and each handle is also adjustable for a comfortable working position. Once I'd coated the wooden parts with linseed oil, mainly for protection against moisture, I quickly taught myself the basics and set about mowing. Even so, I was keen to have instruction from somebody well acquainted with scythes and so my son and I booked training and bought a few more scythe kits from Richard Brown, an instructor based in Norfolk who has been using scythes for many years. Soon after, a group of 12 of us assembled at some meadows in Ipswich where Richard gave some tips on how to get the best out of the scythes. There's very little that can go wrong with scythes and they are much cheaper and simpler to operate than petrol driven machines.



For me, one of the mysteries was knowing whether the blade was sharp enough, because sharpening is integral to scything as it has to be done every 5-10 minutes in the field.

I needn't have worried because in no time at all, Richard had all of us sharpening proficiently with the little whetstones which come with each scythe set. It takes barely a minute to do this and get mowing again. We were also taught some Tai chi, since using a scythe well has a lot to do with posture, balance, and flexibility and it soon becomes a very natural motion. After basic tuition and lunch, we moved to a meadow and within an hour, we'd cut 2/3 of an acre. The quiet swish of the blade moving through vegetation and leaving a neat windrow is very relaxing and the work gives a gentle 'all body' work out. One of the things which I really noticed was the freedom scythes give you even while working. You can also talk to people because it's so quiet, and you're not cut off from the rest of the world with personal protective equipment such as gloves, helmets and goggles which are by contrast needed when as using heavy machinery.

Many of the trainees recognised that hand scythes would give them the opportunity to cut areas that they never before would have dreamed possible with petrol machinery, in particular because scythes are so light and manoeuvrable and also because they offer such an enjoyable way to work. In fact, some were so taken by the experience that they immediately bought their own scythes.

A small group of us have been scything meadows for a couple of years now, and we're thrilled with the results, especially in seeing more wildflowers and more invertebrate life than would have been the case using machines. One notable insect which appeared in Ipswich this summer on one such meadow, was the melanic form of the Large Garden Bumblebee *Bombus ruderatus* var. *harrisellus*. It's a Priority Species which is new to Ipswich, rare in Suffolk and in serious decline nationally. As its name suggests, it's a large bee and has a predilection for flowers with deep nectaries, such as the Viper's Bugloss the Ipswich specimen was seen on.

If you'd be interested in attending a day's scything course in Ipswich in either spring or late summer 2020, please contact me at julian.dowding@ntlworld.com Scythes will be provided for the day, so that all you need to bring is lunch and liquids. Max group size 12.



Bee on Viper's bugloss in a scythed meadow.

The Latest News from Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Carlton Marshes Reserve

Ellen Shailes, SWT Broads Warden

Following a £4 million grant from the National Lottery last spring, work is well underway at Carlton Marshes, where 1,000 acres of wetland habitat is being created.

The torrential rain we saw in early October has completely transformed Peto's and Share Marsh. Now all the pools, scrapes and dykes that have only recently been finished are full of water. This mix of bare, wet mud and shallow water across nearly 400 acres has already attracted up to 400 teal, 100 plus lapwing as well as great white egret, snipe and greenshank, to name a few. As the autumn moves into winter the birds should keep on coming. With many paths still closed across the reserve until next year, the best place to get a good view is probably the pumping station along the River Waveney.

September and early October is the best time to look out for Osprey on migration to Africa, with a couple seen recently flying over Carlton. The best local spot is the Blythburgh estuary where osprey were seen for about 8 days this September. These intertidal habitats are perfect for osprey feeding up before migration. Another beautiful migrant you might see on the marshes and by the coast at this time of year is the wheatear. They can be seen hopping along the ground picking up insects, the females with orange colouring and the males blue and grey.

Trail cameras put out on the reserve to record otter activity have caught footage of an unusual river mammal. A grey seal at the pumping station along the Waveney! These cameras have revealed the presence of another mammal which hasn't been seen before on the reserve, the badger. There hadn't been any signs of badger recorded at Carlton Marshes until recently. Other signs that badgers have moved in include a torn-open hornets nest, that I found recently in a grass tussock at Sprat's Water.

Along with the habitat creation work being finished, the 5 new hides across the reserve are nearly complete, with only a few finishing touches left to add. Standing on the newly constructed 360-degree platform was particularly impressive today, as the recent rain has filled up the scrapes and flooded most of the dykes. From this raised position along the Share Marsh track you are now surrounded by water on every side. You can see another one of the new hides if you head down to Sprat's Water. The tower hide is nestled in the tree line there, 5 meters above the ground. We hope visitors will experience amazing views of barn owls, short-eared owls and Marsh Harriers from this location.



Grey seal caught on trail camera at SWT Carlton Marshes



360 platform at SWT Carlton Marshes

Contact:

Ellen Shales at ellen.shales@suffolkwildlifetrust.org for information about volunteering across the Suffolk Broads reserves or Barry Bradnum at waveneyvalleygroup.swt@gmail.com for information about Waveney Valley Wildlife Group



Share Marsh John Lord aerial composite

C-Side Project Update October 2019

The NERC funded C-SIDE project is aiming to produce a study of saltmarsh carbon storage and other factors. This will provide practical guidance for coastal managers and inform shoreline policy to safeguard carbon storage in the intertidal zone.

Holly Emmens (SCC) and Gen Broad (SBIS) have contributed samples from the Benacre and Dunwich saltmarshes.



October summary

- 97 surveys have now been completed
- Over half of all target salt marshes done
- 485 soil samples are now in the lab
- Still accepting samples after October!

Image: S. Lowe (Northumberland)

Image: W. Manning (Essex)

Image: C. Ladd (Milford Haven)

A big thank you to all our volunteers

Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB - Conservation Work Days

Neil Lister

Being outside in the fresh air with a practical task to keep your mind occupied is satisfying beyond compare. Come along to one of our work parties and give one of our wonderful national landscapes a boost! You may find yourself spending time on a magical heathland, in a cosy woodland or on the open coast.

We offer regular conservation work days in the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its 'wider project area' from October through to April. If you register as a volunteer (email: neil.lister@suffolk.gov.uk) we will notify you when conservation work days are happening.

The current programme of conservation work days can be viewed [here >](#)

We sometimes work on projects with community and corporate volunteers, so you may be working alongside such groups. Training is offered, for example in First Aid, wildlife identification, should you be interested. You work for as long as you wish and at your own pace.

Knowledge of landscape, heritage, wildlife and conservation is **not** essential, as you can learn as you go along.

Contact: Neil Lister, Countryside Projects Officer
Tel: 01394 445218 neil.lister@suffolk.gov.uk

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Care for the
Suffolk Coast & Heaths
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Conservation days from Oct to April



We would love to hear from you!
Work outdoors in the beautiful Suffolk Coast & Heaths
Our Volunteers are a valued resource, enabling us
to carry out important work for the landscape and
environment we would otherwise be
unable to achieve

TO SIGN UP!
E MAIL: neil.lister@suffolk.gov.uk
PHONE: 01394 445225
www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org

ADDRESS: SUFFOLK COAST & HEATHS
DOCK LANE, MELTON, WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK
IP12 1PE



SVEN's 'Wild in the Stour Valley' Family Day (Back by Popular Demand)

Emma Black, Dedham Vale AONB & Stour Valley Project

Last June SVEN (Stour Valley Education Network) ran a very successful free family fun day at the Mill Acre Boating Lake in Sudbury. Over 300 people attended throughout the day enjoying a range of outdoor activities that brought families together to learn about nature and the outdoors.

This year the event was even more successful with over 400 people attending. There were 17 outdoor learning providers running lots of fantastic free activities such as pond dipping, minibeast hunts, kayaking, foraging, wildflower walks, natural arts and crafts, goat and chick petting, leaf and rock identification plus much more. A quiz on the book 'The Lost Words' by Roger MacFarland linked all the activity stands which meant everyone got a chance to see all the activities on offer and have a go. The winner of the quiz won a copy of the book.

This event is part of a programme of outdoor learning family activities which the SVEN organisations run every year. SVEN have also just reprinted the Stour Valley Discovery Factsheets, SVEN partner directory and produced another factsheet on River Management. Visit the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley website to download the activity programme, factsheets and [watch a short film of the Wild in the Stour Valley event >](#)





Sharing information about Suffolk's wildlife

Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service is the One-Stop-Shop for biodiversity information in Suffolk. Operating as an independent and objective centre for biodiversity data we collate, manage and mobilise species and site information for the benefit of Suffolk's wildlife as a whole.

News [SBIS website >](#)

Events [SBIS News / Events >](#)

Funding Opportunities Check out the SBIS web page to see if any of these funds can benefit your conservation or community wildlife project. [SBIS News / Funding >](#)

Project Fund We have a small Project Fund available to individuals and communities for research, habitat enhancement or to benefit Suffolk species. Please contact Gen Broad if you're looking for funding for your project.

We welcome species records from the public. You can make a valuable contribution to wildlife conservation - why not try out [SuffolkBro online](#)? It's easy and fun!

All records are verified via iRecord and our County Recorders and then added to our database for Suffolk (currently 4.27 million). Species records help us to understand the distribution and patterns of Suffolk's wildlife as well as informing the conservation activities of key partners and the planning process.

Follow us on Twitter [@Suffolkbis >](#) Like us on [Facebook >](#) Share photos on [Flickr >](#)

Newsletter Publication dates : Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter.
Deadline for Summer 2019 newsletter articles: **Friday 7th February 2020.**

If you'd like to share the work that you or your organisation / group is doing to protect biodiversity in Suffolk, please send your article (with photos) for inclusion in the next newsletter to Gen Broad. Contact details below.

**Thank you to our readers for supporting this newsletter,
all feedback is welcome!**

Contact Us

Martin Sanford (SBIS Manager) email: martin.sanford@suffolk.gov.uk, tel: 01473 433547

Gen Broad (Biodiversity Officer) email: gen.broad@suffolk.gov.uk, tel: 01473 264308

Jane Mason (GIS Officer) email: jane.mason@suffolk.gov.uk, tel: 01473 433571