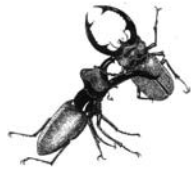


Local Wildlife News



August - December 2010

A news and events
diary from wildlife and
conservation groups in
the Ipswich area

Over 60 local events: wildlife walks,
talks and work parties



Suffolk Community Barn Owl Project
- a great success

© Darin Smith



Suffolk Community Barn Owl Project

by Oka Last



© Alec Hillier

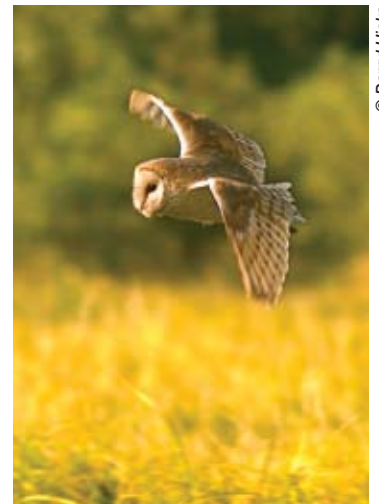
Our barn owl nest box Monitors are out and about climbing ladders and checking barn owl nest boxes this summer/autumn - we anticipate an excellent breeding season this year.

Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Suffolk Community Barn Owl Project has won the Landscape and Biodiversity category in the Suffolk's Creating the Greenest County Awards 2010. The awards are an annual event highlighting how Suffolk's communities, businesses and schools are leading the way on a wide range of environmental areas, from cutting carbon to buying local products to protecting local wildlife.

Through the Suffolk Community Barn Owl Project 700 nesting boxes have been installed and over 1,100 monitored, resulting in a rise of the barn owl population from 100 breeding pairs in 2007 to an estimated 300 pairs in 2009. Over 170 local volunteers are involved in dealing with enquiries, visiting landowners, assisting landowners to install their own barn owl nest boxes, monitoring nest boxes, recording, management and administration. The project is actively involved with local businesses, communities, schools and individuals.

Steve Piotrowski, Project Manager says: "Currently the barn owl population is concentrated in north east Suffolk. Over the next five years we aim to consolidate and increase barn owl densities in east Suffolk and extend its range into the west of the county.

"We have already committed to piloting the construction of barn owl boxes at Hollesley Bay prison as part of a resettlement programme. We will also be pressing for the creation of more rough grassland – ideal habitat for voles on which barn owl feed – through representation on the National Farmers Union's new Campaign for the Farmed Environment."



© Darryl Hicks

The project is leading the way in barn owl recovery, showing other organisations throughout the UK that, for species conservation, huge strides forward can be made by focussing on certain limiting factors (ie few remaining natural nest sites) and acting upon the findings. Through encouraging the development of interconnecting wildlife habitats, as part of the Trust's Living Landscapes campaign, we are also helping barn owl and other wildlife to adapt to climate change

To find out how you can help Suffolk's barn owl please contact SWT's Oka Last on 01473 890089 or visit www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org



© Andrew Smiley



Local Wildlife News produced by Greenways Countryside Project.

Welcome

Local Wildlife News

Welcome to this edition of Local Wildlife News. This newsletter and programme of events and activities has been brought together by the Greenways Project along with key conservation partners in the area. The magazine allows existing groups, and hopefully more in the future, to produce their own 'group pages' - thus passing relevant information to a far wider, but targeted, audience.

We are still very keen to receive any feedback about the publication – good or bad – and look forward to receiving any suggestions for improvements etc.

We are also always happy to receive articles, photographs and local wildlife “snippets” – so please do send in anything which may be of interest.

Mailing lists – Please note

We are aware that some who are members of several conservation organisations may well receive more than one copy of the newsletter. We are very sorry if this is the case, and would be very grateful if you could pass on the spare copy to someone who will appreciate it and contact the Greenways Project on 01473 433995 or greenways.project@ipswich.gov.uk, stating which organisations you are a member of, so that we can ensure that you receive just one in the future (hopefully!).

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Belstead Brook Park Megabash
Sunday November 21st – 10:00am –3:00pm

Come along for a day of winter conservation work in the park:
coppicing - thinning willow - litter picking - creating traditional woodland produce.

Tools, gloves, tea, coffee, biscuits and training provided.
Wear old clothes, stout footwear, and bring a patched lunch if you are staying all day.

For more details contact the Greenways Project on 01473 433995 or email greenways.project@ipswich.gov.uk

Chairman:	David Munday	01473 217310	davidmun@talktalk.net
Secretary:	Wendy Brown	01473 259674	chriswendy@talktalk.net
Treasurer:	Tony Clarke	01473 741083	tonyclarke2@sky.com
Newsletter Editor:	John Ireland	01473 723179	john.ireland49@googlemail.com

We are the Ipswich Local Group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and we offer an interesting range of monthly meetings with guest speakers which usually take place on the third Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm in the hall of St Margaret's Primary School, Bolton Lane, Ipswich. Trust members and non-members are equally welcome. During the summer months we offer a variety of trips, some local, others by coach. Details of these and our monthly meetings can be found in our "Diary" section which follows. New members are always welcome.

Chairman's Letter

New Season

I hope that you, like me, having enjoyed the summer, are looking forward to our new season of monthly meetings which look as interesting as ever ranging from, locally, the Dunwich Forest Project to, worldwide, the Wildlife of Madagascar!

Martin's Meadow

As usual I have had a busy summer volunteering for the Greenways Project, the Ipswich Wildlife Group, and Suffolk Wildlife Trust. For the Trust I help to warden Martin's Meadow at Monewden near Otley.

Martin's Meadow, a SSSI, is one of the few remaining flower rich meadows in Suffolk and consists of three meadows and two orchards. First Church Meadow, the most floristically diverse, has not been fertilised, sprayed or drained for the last 400 years as far as we know! It is home to Early Purple, Green Winged, and Pyramidal Orchids, Twayblade and Yellow Rattle to name a few of the delights to be found. This year in May we counted 3152 Green Winged Orchids in the meadow, quite a sight!

There is a map in the Records Office dated 1656 showing the field layouts in the area with their names and also showing the position of the hedges. Some of these hedges are still on the same line in 2010!

The orchards which we have been gradually restoring, consist mainly of apples, pears and plums. We have grafted cuttings of the old trees on to new root stock with some success and we have added to these by planting with local varieties.

If you are passing at the beginning of September, call in and you will find First Church Meadow awash with *Colchicum Autumnale* - the Meadow Saffron. They are usually at their best about the 10th, but ring me nearer the time if you want an update.



© Steve Aylward

Martin's Meadow looks at its best in Spring and early Summer and again in early September, so do try and fit in a visit.

SWT Website

The website has been re-designed and much improved, is easier to use and is updated regularly. As an example, the "News" section at the time of writing had, a few days before, posted an item intriguingly entitled "Swift Felled by Stray Balloon....." So if you have a moment, do have a browse at www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org.

Harlequin Ladybird

In the 2007 Newsletter I wrote a piece about the Harlequins and what a pest they were becoming. As they are reportedly increasing in our area, I would be interested to here of any problems you have this summer. For more information, or to record your findings visit www.ladybird-survey.org.

Articles

I am sure our Editor, John Ireland, would be pleased to receive short pieces or snippets, photos or sketches, for our next Newsletter. These can be lighthearted, informative, witty, questioning, can be about wildlife, holidays, or any topic that would make an interesting article to share with our members.

50 Years

Just a reminder that in 2011 the Trust is 50 years young and we are looking for suggestions on how the Ipswich Group can celebrate the occasion.

DAVE MUNDAY

Walk in Broaks Wood

by Leigh Williamson

A small enthusiastic group met at Broaks Wood near Halstead one sunny Saturday in May. Simon Leatherdale from the Forestry Commission was our guide on a fascinating walk through this ancient woodland.

Just a few steps into the wood, we saw early purple orchids amongst a patch of bluebells – easy to spot when pointed out, but easy to miss for the untrained eye. A little further down the track we stopped at an area that had been recently cleared of conifers. Then, right on cue, a pair of buzzards put on an acrobatic display just above our heads, making a sound more like a cat in distress, than a bird.

© Darrin Smith



When the 'show' was over Simon explained to us something about the management of the wood over the last 20 years. The area we were standing in was the last 5-acre section to be cleared of conifers, planted in the 1950's. Amazingly, the cleared areas regenerate naturally and quickly into broad-leafed woodland, as we were to see throughout the rest of the morning. This happens by germination from the seed bank left in the soil and from seed blown in on the wind.

As we walked, we passed rare grey poplars and small leaved limes, these being an indicator of ancient woodland. Then quite suddenly we came to the edge of the wood and our elevated position gave us a lovely view down the Colne Valley. Simon knew the spot well as he used to live in the isolated cottage we could see over to our right.

On returning to the woods, we stopped at a pretty bridge over water where golden saxifrage was growing. Here Simon headed off into the undergrowth and soon reappeared with a long straight stick. After carefully straddling the water, he pushed the stick down and down into the mud to a depth of 4 or 5 feet. Simon had first hand knowledge of why this spot is now called Boots' Wallow. A horse called Boots and his rider rode into the mud and got well and truly stuck. The rider made her way to Simon's cottage (aforementioned), to get help to extract the horse which was now deep in the mire. The story had a happy ending though, and that is how the spot got its name.

Simon had lots of interesting anecdotes – another involved the rare Wild Service Tree. We were shown a fine and ancient example. The tree is also called Chequers, this being the name of the berries it produces, which were used in the beer making process in days gone by. This is the origin of the common pub name 'Chequers'. And yes, 'Chequers', the Prime Minister's country retreat used to have several of these trees in its grounds.

This is just a flavour of what we saw on the walk. Above all it was a really enjoyable walk ending with a picnic lunch on thoughtfully placed logs at the edge of the woodland.



© Dave Fincham

The leaf of the wild service tree

Guided walk at Sizewell Belts

by Tony Wilson



Perfect weather and the only cloud in the sky for me was being asked by Pam to write a short account of the day.

Tumbling out of our cars at Kenton car park some 20 members of SWT met up with our pleasant and knowledgeable guide for the walk. Carl Powell is the enthusiastic and hard working warden who made sure that we saw and heard about everything at this wonderful reserve.

We learnt that the site is owned by British Energy, who give financial support to help the SWT who in collaboration with the RSPB look after the reserve. And what a site it is including about 2000 acres of which 500 are farmed with arable crops; the rest comprises commercial forestry, natural woodland and grazing pastures and marshland.

We learnt that even the conifer plantations, though still farmed commercially, are now being inter-planted with broad leaved trees. Some of Sizewell Belts is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is rich in rare plants; for this reason further developments at the power Station are not believed to be a threat to the site. We walked through and beside lovely wooded areas with the air full of the song of birds.

The thick new leaf cover of the trees made identification difficult for all but those with a good knowledge of bird song. Nevertheless the birders' tally crept up - of the more obvious birds we watched a single heron beat an escape across the marches, a greater spotted woodpecker dipped its way across the sky and swallows swooped. We emerged on to the more open areas of

“the Belts” - the name is thought to have derived from the way the drainage channels leave broad, drier strips or belts of land. The marshy ground was surprisingly dry underfoot and soon the botanists were busy finding, admiring and photographing some choice and rare plants and flowers.

Our search was constantly distracted by the colourful, brilliant red and blue damselflies and the dragonflies. In particular, we were attracted to spectacular Broad Bodied Chasers, Four-spotted Chasers (actually they have 8 spots), and the large Norfolk Hawker. The botanists enthusiastically spotted and photographed Southern Marsh Orchids, Bogbean, Flowering Sedge, Common Lousewort and others.

A sharp eyed member of the party interrupted proceedings at one time by spotting a distant fox which was anxiously quizzing us before moving on. The more timid of us kept our eye on the herd of cattle and large Charolais bull grazing at the edge of the Belts and were relieved to learn that Carl does not let them across the ditch to graze the marshes until August.

In discussion and answering questions Carl informed us that he often saw otters, water voles, and several species of deer which of course cause considerable damage to young trees. He showed us an otter run out of one of the drainage ditches and he told us a lot about the work of managing the site.

Altogether this was a truly memorable tour in superb weather and in good and knowledgeable company. Thank you Carl and Pam.

Events August 2010 to January 2011

All meetings, unless otherwise stated, will take place in St Margaret's School Hall, Bolton Lane, Ipswich at 7.30 pm
Entrance £2, includes tea or coffee

Saturday 7th August at 2.30pm
Visit to Suffolk Horse Centre with Nigel Oakley

This is a great opportunity to visit Rede Hall Farm where Nigel (who spoke to us in December) keeps his Suffolk Punches. Rede Hall Farm is situated on the A 143, about 8 miles SW of Bury St Edmunds. Follow the signs to Ickworth and keep straight on. Grid Ref. TL 804 576

No need to book. Donation £3. Contact Pam Ireland (01473)723179

Wednesday 15th September at 7.30pm
Dunwich Forest Project by Dayne West

This large scale innovative partnership project with the Forestry Commission aims to create 640 acres of grazed broad-leaved woodland (aided by ponies) from the presently existing conifer plantations. This will increase biodiversity and provide an area with greater visitor enjoyment. Dayne is the manager and a passionate enthusiast for this project, which will take 20 or 30 years to complete.

Wednesday 20th October at 7.30pm
Climatic Change and other Human Impacts on the Antarctic by Prof. Peter Convey

Peter has worked for the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge for many years, and pays frequent visits to the Antarctic. He is therefore well placed to observe the changes which are occurring not only to the ice sheets, but also the marine and terrestrial wildlife. Climate Change is considered by many to be one of the greatest threat and challenge to life on this planet. Peter will be the one to throw light on your concerns.

Wednesday 17th November at 7.30pm
Mystery of Colour in Nature and the Rainbow by Gerald Jenkins

In this illustrated talk Gerald will consider the colour of flowers and plants and how nature produces them, and what the difference is between the colours of butterflies and flowers. He will consider what causes the colours of the rainbow, and what is curious about the colour indigo. You can also learn, amongst other things, how we perceive colour, and what causes colour blindness.

Wednesday 8th December at 7.30pm
Wildlife in Close-Up in the Jungle by Nick Woods

Nick has shown us his magnificent photos on a number of previous occasions, and this time his subjects are the tiny things he has observed in jungles all around the world. Little fungi, flowers, and insects, often unnoticed by the casual observer will be displayed in glorious detail. This is our Christmas meeting so enjoy a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie too.

Wednesday 19th January at 7.30pm
Creating Community Owned Wildspace by Grenville Clarke

Grenville, a previous chairman of the SWT, helps co-ordinate the creation of community owned Wild Spaces in this country, areas owned and run by groups of local people who want to make their own nature reserves.

A full listing of all Groups' events can be found from page 20



Ipswich Wildlife Group

Chair: Dave Munday 01473 217310

Vice Chair: Ray Sidaway 01473 259104

www.greenlivingcentre.org.uk/iwg

Ipswich Wildlife Group is a registered charity, relying entirely on volunteers, that promotes interest in, and conservation of, wildlife and habitats in and around Ipswich. We seek to inform and educate the local communities of Ipswich about the wildlife and habitats that can be found in the area, and the issues affecting them, as well as involve local people in practical wildlife conservation. We carry out practical conservation tasks, bid for grants to improve wildlife and green areas around Ipswich and work closely with the Greenways Project, Friends of Belstead Brook Park and other local groups with similar aims.

Now the Beanpole Festival is over!

The 13th beanpole festival was held successfully at Northgate Allotments on the 25th April. Despite the best efforts of the Spring Wood Volunteers to give us a tough challenge we sold 50% more beanpoles and peasticks than last year making over £500 for IWG.

The Beanpole Festival is held on Northgate Allotments as we have a demonstration area there where gardeners can see how to grow their own beanpoles by creating small coppice woodlands. Most Saturday mornings a small group of volunteers meets up to look after what has now become a beautiful pocket nature reserve on previous waste ground. Tasks include coppicing the woodland areas and looking after the small meadow, hedges and orchard. We are also establishing a rustic garden woodcraft demonstration area. This winter we hope to create a stumpery along with fellow allotment holders.

As well as practical workers and rustic woodworkers we are also looking for people who can do the filming and editing to help us put together YouTube videos on rustic work projects.

If you want to get involved with the rustic heart of Ipswich

contact Geoff Sinclair on 01473 327720 for details.

Beanpoles?

Have you wondered what these beanpoles and pea sticks are and where they come from? Well wonder no more! They are hazel and they come from Spring Wood and are the product of the intrepid group of volunteers who do the coppicing come rain or shine (or snow!) during the winter months.

Coppicing is carried out in Spring Wood for two main reasons, firstly to maintain a traditional woodland practice that has been carried out here for centuries, and secondly to prevent the growth reaching the electricity wires that unfortunately cross the wood.

Coppicing lets the light into the area and this allows the dormant seeds of for examples Bluebell, Wood Anemone, and Primroses to flourish and give a delightful display in Spring.

If you fancy a visit, Spring Wood is in the Pinewood area with a car park in Bobbits Lane. Map reference TM 145 414, or visit this map online: <http://www.multimap.com/s/yzEJH3wq>

Spring Wood Celebration 2010

Gerry Donlon

The Spring Wood 2010 celebration was a huge success for all involved.

A dry morning gave way to a heavy shower in the afternoon, but that did not deter any of the crowd from enjoying the splendid occasion. It was estimated that over one hundred people attended. It was great to see so many children enjoying themselves at various activities, the toad trail, the bug hunts, and the brilliant mud face making. What a sight it was to see Jason leading his beautiful horse Mooney dragging logs from the wood. The two guided walks were very educational and so well attended. The woodland crafts displays grabbed the attention of many of the onlookers, young and old alike.

The RSPB and Ipswich Wildlife Group information stands did a good 'trade'. We also had the terrific and renowned Lagabag Morris performing seasonal dances throughout the day, inviting the audience to take part in the final dance. To see so many of the public joining in at an Ancient Wood was, for me, a fitting end to the day.

With all the positive feedback we received, and enquiries as to whether it would be an annual event, I have no doubt that the day was a big success.

So I wish to thank everyone who helped organise the celebration and took part; the Ipswich Wildlife Group, the Greenways Project and so many more.

Thanks to Tetley for lending us his walkie-talkies to help with the car parking, and to Mike and Sean for using them expertly preventing any traffic jams!

Thanks to IPC for the loan of the gazebo of which the RSPB volunteers were grateful when the shower came, also the many members of the public who stayed behind and helped to tidy up - a true reflection of the community spirit we have here in Ipswich. And finally, Hooray for the Ipswich Wildlife Group as they have decided to hold another celebration next year!

I hope by then IBC will have come to their senses and saved Kiln Meadow (Belstead Brook Park) from development. I hope to see you all there again in 2011.



Ipswich Wildlife Group

Save Kiln Meadow

In case you haven't heard, the IBC executive decided to sell Kiln Meadow, Belstead Brook Park, on 13th July, for the development of 170 houses.

In the run-up to the Executive Meeting on 13th July we gathered support from all sections of the community.

All local wildlife groups are now actively supporting the campaign, including the local RSPB, Suffolk Naturalist's Society, Suffolk Amphibian and Reptile Group and of course SWT. Ipswich Community Radio gave Ray the space to talk about the issue, and from this the FaceBook site really took off and now has 358 members. From the emails pouring in to my laptop, it's clear that all local conservationists were furious at Ipswich Borough Council's decision to sell Kiln Meadow.

The executive meeting itself was described by one observer as 'a disgrace and an insult to the people of Ipswich'. We had some speakers on our behalf - notably Dr Simone Bullion of SWT, but our speakers were given limited time and not allowed to speak afterwards to refute some of the misleading, not to say incorrect, statements being put about by councillors and officers. Their questions were not addressed. The interim ecological report was not available until the day before. This is possibly illegal. This interim report stated that it had barely started toad surveys, and that surveys wouldn't be complete until Autumn. Russell Williams was unable to clearly and consistently differentiate counts by volunteers from surveys by experts, and Bobbitts Lane from Kiln Meadow. Of the executive, only Cllr Lockington spoke against the proposal - her bravery, honesty and commitment to principle in overwhelming contrast to the misleading, confused, and ill-informed attitudes shown by the rest. But she wasn't even given the opportunity to vote against the proposal. It seemed about as democratic as North Korea.

As regards the main legal principle which we have argued, NERC Act 2006, IBC's legal officer's opinion is that 'a duty to preserve and enhance biodiversity' is 'weak', and therefore IBC can ignore it and take the £6M.. She is also the person who investigates complaints against them. Democratic? Independent?

So where are we? Just to re-cap:-

IBC have sold Kiln Meadow, without proper surveys, with no advice from any competent wildlife authority (normally SWT). They say the developer is aware of the issues - but they have been given incorrect information by officers, without any expert advice. As reported on Radio Suffolk, John Carnall stated their belief that the toads only use Kiln meadow for migration **but without surveys, they have no idea where they live, sleep, feed and hibernate. So how can the developer possibly take account of them?**

Clearly, environmental law is weak and does not offer adequate protection for our wildlife. Natural England are supposed to stop this destruction, but they will do nothing. Please ask Natural England what happens when, as in this case, a public body apparently flagrantly defies the NERC Act, refuses to discuss wildlife with anybody, and allows the likely destruction of a toad population of national significance - 6,889, at the last count, on Bobbitts Lane? The answer seems to be that a small local wildlife group (IWG) with about tuppence ha'penny (1p in new money- ed) in the bank, made from selling hazel coppiced beanpoles, is expected to make a legal challenge to a local authority with pound signs for eyes and a developer at it's elbow with very deep pockets.

BUT WE FIGHT ON

We are angry, we are committed, we have some strong allies: we fight for our wildlife on all fronts - and we need you to help:-

- Please write/email to the local press to make sure everyone knows what the issues are. If anybody says 'what about the £6m?', we say, IBC could have avoided the problem if they'd done the surveys in 2009 - **as they promised** - and taken advice from SWT. A suitable solution could have been found.
- Contact Babergh district council, or councillors if you live in Babergh. BDC have environmental policies, including not allowing development on a proposed County Wildlife Site, and Kiln Meadow is a proposed County Wildlife Site. But the developer will put Babergh under pressure. Make sure that they don't succumb to this pressure.
- Does anybody have memories of the use of Kiln Meadow going back twenty years or more? If so, please email me at j.jousiffe@hotmail.co.uk as one of our supporters is looking at possible legal action via another route
- Those who attended the executive meeting, please let me have your observations to build up the case against IBC

So do something, don't do nothing, don't leave it to everyone else - otherwise there will be no wildlife left in Ipswich for future generations to enjoy as we have. Gulliver was overwhelmed by the Lilliputians, We, all together, can beat IBC over this issue and protect the toads.

IWG, a small local wildlife group, will be starting the judicial review process.

Jen Jousiffe



GREENWAYS
countryside project

Stable Block, Holywells Park, Cliff Lane, Ipswich IP3 0PG Office: 01473 433995 greenways.project@ipswich.gov.uk
www.greenlivingcentre.org.uk/greenways

The Greenways Countryside Project exists to protect and enhance the countryside, landscape and open space across an area of about 100 square kilometres in and around the town of Ipswich, and home to around one quarter of the population of Suffolk, for the benefit of wildlife and local people. The Project relies on volunteers to complete much of its practical conservation work. The Greenways Project is a very successful and well-established partnership between Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and the local community.

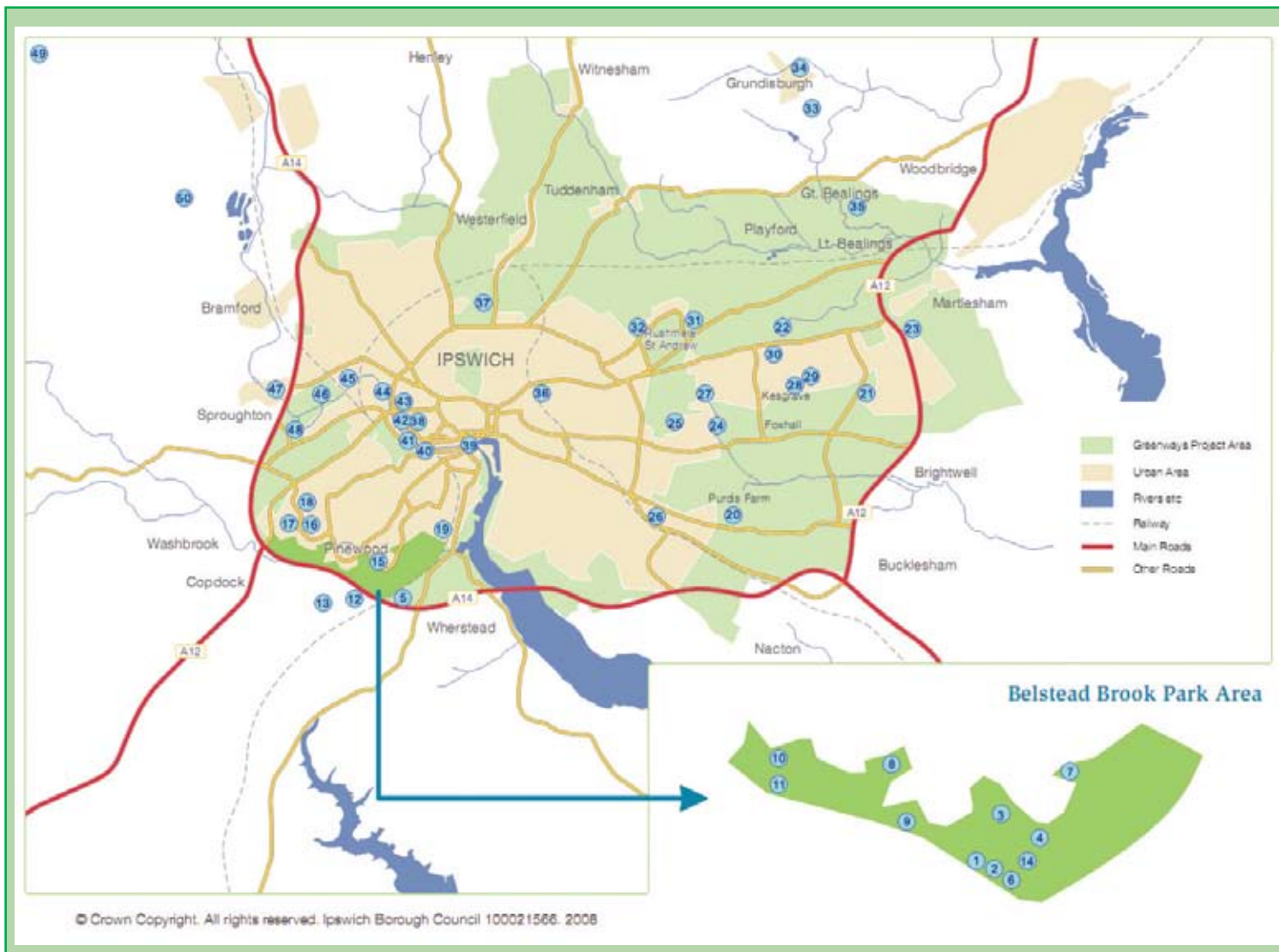
2009/10 Annual Report

The map shows the sites where the Project and its volunteers have carried out practical management work between April 2009 and March 2010. Much of the work is routine maintenance of both wildlife habitats and facilities to increase the enjoyment by local people. Wildlife habitats cared for include woodlands, heathlands, meadows, ponds, reedbeds, scrub, and hedges. Management work for visitors has included

maintaining and improving paths, removing litter and dumped rubbish, installing rustic seats, new information boards and cleaning existing ones, and building new paths, boardwalks and bridges.

There are a few case studies which give more details of work on a handful of our sites – if you would like further details about other sites or any aspect of the Project’s work, please contact the Project office.

Greenways Project Area Map



Key Achievements

- The Project received funding from the Haven Gateway Growth Point Partnership for improvements to the River Gipping corridor and Belstead Brook Park (BBP).
- The funding, to be spread over two years, totals about £175,000 for the River, and £164,000 for BBP.
- As part of the above funding, a new River Ranger started work in October 2009, working hard to maintain and improve the river and its environs (see Case Study)
- 1431 days of volunteer effort supported across over 50 sites.
- Award of funding from 'Access to Nature' – a Big Lottery Fund operated by Natural England to CSV for a joint Project with Greenways. The new project will focus on engaging with people who do not traditionally get involved in nature conservation and their local green spaces. The Access to Nature grant will fund two officers, training for volunteers, publicity of volunteering opportunities and considerable on-site enhancements to paths, signage and other infrastructure. The grant from NE is for about £365,000 over three years.

- Continued to support the BBC Radio Suffolk "Don't be a Tosser" anti-litter campaign, including a clean up at Spring Wood and the annual Rivers Clean Up in September.
- Commented on five major planning applications likely to have an adverse impact on wildlife or people's enjoyment of green space.
- Launch of "Local Wildlife News" magazine – bringing together news, articles and events programmes from at least ten different local conservation organisations in one, full colour, publication, with a distribution of 3500 copies.
- Provided opportunities for three groups of staff from local businesses to carry out improvements on our sites, along with countless placement opportunities to individuals from a very wide range of backgrounds.



© Greenways Project

List of sites

Belstead Brook Park

- 1 Spring Wood (LNR)
- 2 Millennium Wood (LNR)
- 3 Bobbits Lane Meadows (LNR)
- 4 Ashground Plantation (LNR)
- 5 Bobbits Lane – upper area
- 6 Butterfly Ride
- 7 Stoke Park Wood (LNR)
- 8 Ellenbrook open space and Playing Field
- 9 Thorington Park open spaces
- 10 Belstead Meadows
- 11 Belstead Lower Meadows (CWS)
- 12 Thorington Hall Farm area
- 13 Belstead Heath
- 14 Bobbits Lane Allotments

Southern fringe

- 15 Netley Close open space
- 16 Belmont Road Wood
- 17 Belmont Road open space
- 18 Pinewood Community Centre
- 19 Maidenhall Allotments (Community Garden)

Eastern Fringe

- 20 Purdis Heath (SSSI), Purdis Farm
- 21 Martlesham Heath (SSSI)
- 22 Sinks Valley (SSSI), Kesgrave High School.
- 23 Martlesham Common (CWS)
- 24 Mill Stream (LNR), Rushmere St Andrew
- 25 Sandlings, (LNR), Rushmere St Andrew
- 26 Warren Heath (CWS)
- 27 Farthing Wood, Kesgrave
- 28 Long Stroops Pond, Kesgrave
- 29 Cedarwood Green, Kesgrave
- 30 Legion Green, Kesgrave
- 31 Chestnut Pond, Rushmere St Andrew

Northern Fringe

- 32 Rushmere Cemetery
- 33 Grundisburgh Millennium Meadow
- 34 Lyttleton's Meadow, Grundisburgh
- 35 Kiln Farm Meadow (CWS), Gt Bealings
- 36 Former St Mary's Convent site, Woodbridge Rd.
- 37 Fonnereau Way

Western Fringe and the River

- 38 Alderman Canal (LNR)
- 39 River Path – Stoke Bridge
- 40 River Path – Princes St to West End Rd
- 41 River Path – West End Road
- 42 River Path – West End Rd to Handford Rd
- 43 River Path – Handford Rd-Yarmouth Rd
- 44 River Path – Yarmouth Rd to Riverside Road
- 45 River Path – Boss Hall
- 46 River Path – ex-Sugar Factory
- 47 River Path – A14 to Sproughton
- 48 Churchman Way

Wider Area

- 49 Priestley Wood (SSSI), Barking
- 50 Valley Farm Meadow (CWS), Lt Blakenham

My work experience

by James Sinclair

Hello, my name is James I am fourteen years old and for my year ten work experience I chose to go and work with the Greenways conservation group. The reason I chose Greenways was because I have been involved in some of their workdays before and I really enjoyed them, also in my opinion being outside and working near stunning rivers and woods is over a million times better than what my friends are doing for their work experience, in supermarkets and offices. Normally each day was spent clearing the paths of the River Gipping. Even though that doesn't sound very exciting, I enjoyed it immensely.

The Greenways project is a vital part of restoring and maintaining walkways and paths of the English countryside encouraging people to go outside and much more. Over the two weeks that I have been there I have learned lots of new things like new plants and insects and I have seen a lot of sites that I didn't even know existed. I have also learned how important projects like Greenways are to help people access the countryside and learn more about the outdoors. I also found out how important the little jobs are like litter picking and hedge trimming, before I worked at Greenways I didn't realise how big a problem litter was, and that if we didn't have people like the volunteers that help at Greenways how much of the landscape it would ruin.

I really enjoyed my time at Greenways the people there were nice and I would like to say thank you to all of them and if I ever had the chance to do it again I most definitely would.

2009/10 Annual Report *continued*

Case Studies

Chestnut Pond, Rushmere St Andrew



© Greenways Project

The Project worked with Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council to improve the pond for wildlife and local amenity. Following some tree surgery works to allow access for a large digger, and to reduce the amount of leaves falling into the pond, the water was pumped out to facilitate de-silting. A vast tonnage of silt was removed and spread on a neighbouring field, with rubbish, rubble and branches being removed first. It was hoped that the dredging would help alleviate flooding problems in the area, but the pond is at the lowest point in the area and thus water collects there with no real escape! As the water settles down, it is hoped that a wider range of wildlife will be able to thrive on the site and that the very high population of ducks and geese can be reduced by discouraging artificial feeding.

River Ranger

After many years of trying to attract funding to fund a Ranger post to concentrate on maintaining the river path and associated green spaces, we now have such a Ranger in place (from October 2009 until March 2011 at least). The river corridor has benefited hugely, with a vast improvement in the routine management – path cutting, litter and rubbish removal, maintenance of infrastructure and a greater level of involvement from local people..



© Peter Scotcher

Bobbits Lane Meadows wetland works

With grant funding from the Haven Gateway, the very important wet meadow site was improved in the autumn. A large tracked digger spent several weeks on the site, deepening ponds and ditches to increase the habitat quality for amphibians, birds, otters and water voles amongst others. Volunteers helped to install new water control structures to maintain water levels in dry conditions. The spring toad migration to the breeding ponds this year saw nearly 7000 toads moved across Bobbitts Lane by the toad patrol volunteers.

Belstead Brook Park access improvements



© Greenways Project

Volunteers helped to construct over 100m of raised timber boardwalk (once again with funding from the Haven Gateway) through Ashground Plantation. The surrounding woodland floods regularly in the winter, but walkers can now (except in high flood!) pass through the area without getting wet. 650 metres of path in Bobbitts Lane Meadows have been widened and resurfaced with local aggregate; and a further 1500m of path has been laid in Belstead meadows along stretches that previously became very wet and muddy in the winter.

How to get involved

If you would like to be involved in any way with the work of the Greenways Project, or would like any further information about the Project, its aims and its work, please contact the Project on 01473 433995, or email greenways.project@ipswich.gov.uk
Some further information can be found on our web pages at:
www.greenlivingcentre.org.uk/greenways

Access to Nature

by Becky Marley

The Greenways Countryside Project and CSV Media Clubhouse are very happy to announce a new project called Access to Nature. This is a three-year project funded by the Big Lottery, through Natural England, and will work at a number of sites across Ipswich.

The project is about connecting people with their local natural environment and, although the project is open to all, it specifically aims to introduce the benefits of the natural world to people who have not had the opportunity or the interest to experience it before.

We will do this in a number of ways including:

- through consultation whereby people can input to decisions about greenspaces near to them.
- by creating ways for people who have previously not had an interest in the environment, such as using photography, film and other media, and fun leisure activities such as night walks and bug hunts.
- through getting involved in the hands-on management of the space by doing practical conservation volunteering.
- opportunities for volunteers to access accredited and non-accredited training in both conservation and media subjects.

We will be introducing people to the beautiful areas that Greenways and their volunteers already care for, as well as working to improve some of the small, neglected green spaces in other areas.

The ultimate aim is that by the end of the project we will have created a legacy of motivated people across communities who realise the value of their local natural environment and have the tools and training to continue caring for it.

Throughout the project there will be a number of events, large and small, that you may like to be involved in. The annual River Cleanup will be happening again this year, on Sunday 22nd August. Location is to be confirmed but the divers will be working somewhere on the town centre stretch of River Gipping, with other locations for land-based litterpicking and conservation activities. We want another fantastic turnout for this year so please put the date in your diary, tell your friends and families, and let us know if you can be involved! We will be sending out more information when details are confirmed.

We will also be looking for volunteers to help with our community engagement events – helping to set up and manage the events, helping with activities, tasters and workshops, and talking to people about all the benefits of being connected to nature! If you have an interest in helping out in this way, please let us know and we can keep you informed about opportunities.

If you would like to know more about the project, or to get involved, please contact Becky on 01473 418014 or bmarley@csv.org.uk, or talk to Steve at Greenways on 01473 433995 or greenways.project@ipswich.gov.uk

Greenways Countryside Project River Ranger

I have been working in the post since October 2009. The post and improvements projected for the river corridor, from Stoke Bridge, Ipswich to Sproughton Bridge, are funded by the Haven Gateway.

I have greatly enjoyed the work and hope that improvements in the river corridor through increased day-to-day management are evident to all those living near the river and using the numerous river paths and cycleways.

In the next nine months until closure of the Haven Gateway funding (31st March 2011) this will enable us to:

- Produce a new leaflet promoting and showing the river paths and green spaces along the river corridor
- Introduce signage to encourage and aid people using the River Path

- Improve paths and access opportunities in Alderman Canal Local Nature Reserve
- Introduce updated Interpretation Boards

Sadly, this will not address all the needs of the river corridor and the Greenways Project have been seeking further funding and planning agreements as opportunities arise, to further improve the river corridor. Recent examples include seeking to gain path improvements (increased width, improved surfaces and softer green boundaries) at the new Tesco's at Grafton Way and the Coopers BMW site at West End Road (behind which the River Path and River Gipping flow).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers and staff who have assisted in all the hard work so far completed. And if you have not already done so, get out and explore the river path!

Peter Scotcher



Ipswich Local Group

Membership Secretary: c/o 19, Marlborough Road, Ipswich, IP4 5AT Email: chrisc.courtney@yahoo.co.uk
www.rspb.org.uk/groups/ipswich

Belonging to RSPB Ipswich Local Group is a great way to meet friendly, like-minded people in your area, while learning more about birds and other wildlife.

Ipswich RSPB Local Group is open to everybody living in and around Ipswich, who shares an interest in birds and other wildlife.

From September through to April, our monthly indoor talks and occasional film shows are held at Sidegate Primary School, Sidegate Lane, Ipswich. Speakers, ranging from conservation professionals through to writers and photographers, present on a wealth of wildlife themed topics. (Usually 2nd Thursday of month @ 7.30pm).

Throughout the year, our field leaders escort groups to many of the best local spots for birds and other wildlife. Beginners are always welcome, and tips on correct identification are readily on hand if you need them, to help you get the best out of the day!

Our newsletter the 'Orwell Observer', is published three times a year and includes a range of articles and photos, news of recent group activities, plus updates from nearby RSPB reserves.

Run by volunteers, the Ipswich Local Group is a great

way to have fun, meet new like-minded people, as well as if you choose, the opportunity to get further involved in the work of the RSPB.

Group membership, (distinct from RSPB membership), is £3 a year, (£1 for under 16s).

Members receive the newsletter, the annual indoor and outdoor events programme, plus reduced admission rates to indoor talks. (£1.80 instead of £3.00 for non concessions). Alternatively, a further discount is available through the purchase of a season ticket, rates for which, inclusive of annual membership and all 8 indoor meetings are :- £14 adults, /£12 over 60s, /£8 under 16s.

In addition we offer a FREE e-membership which provides regular news of the group through receipt of an electronic edition of the 'Orwell Observer' three times year.

For further information or to download a membership form please see our website or write to the Membership Secretary.

Over-wintering Blackcaps in the UK – evolution in action

by Chris Courtney

Did you spot any blackcaps in your garden or local patch during the last winter? Despite the severity of the weather I had at least six reports from Ipswich Local Group members of blackcap sightings in gardens and on feeders over the period, and I personally had a male singing in my garden between the 16th and 18th of February.

In fact, it is only really since the late 1950's and early 1960's that Blackcaps have occurred in the UK during winter at all, with most records traditionally coming from the warmer south and southwest. Increasingly however, it has become clear, that the vital link in this phenomenon is the provision of food supplied by us humans, widely available in the UK during winter, at a bird-table or garden feeder near you!

Ringling recoveries and other research has determined that most of these over-wintering birds are from populations breeding in Germany and central Europe and work conducted by Professor Dr. Peter Berthold of the Max Planck Institute for Ornithology has furthermore

discovered, that these birds have developed to form a distinct genetic group and may well prove to provide a fascinating insight into evolution in action.



© Chris Courtney



Ipswich Local Group

Blackcaps occur in large numbers across much of Germany, and for the past few decades two groups have emerged with distinct migratory strategies. In autumn the first, 'traditional' group flies southwest to Spain and Portugal, while a more recent smaller population flies west-northwest to the UK.

These two populations, although breeding side by side in the same habitats do not interbreed due to the fact that the UK wintering birds (having a shorter migration route) arrive back at the breeding sites earlier than their Iberian wintering counterparts. This is giving them an evolutionary advantage in their being able to secure the best breeding territories and may also be assisting them with maintaining synchronization with peak availability of invertebrate food species, which most frequently now occurs several weeks earlier, as a result of climate change.

Resulting from a series of innovative experiments in the early 1990s Professor Berthold proved that chicks originating from these two populations would always fly in the same direction as their parents, (i.e. either southwest or west-northwest), even when raised in identical environments. This suggested that a genetic mechanism may be responsible, which theory was further substantiated when in a subsequent experiment he discovered that the offspring of a mixed Iberian/UK pair migrated in a direction roughly half way between the other two population's trajectories.

Another biologist Gregor Rolshausen, from the University of Freiburg has shown that individuals from the two populations may be successfully identified by means of mitochondrial DNA sequencing around 85% of the time. In fact Iberian birds are more genetically distinct from the UK birds, breeding in the same area of forest than they are from other blackcaps 800km or more to the east.

Physically, the UK wintering birds tend to have shorter primaries, resulting in rounder wings, (a typical characteristic of sedentary or short distance migratory species). In addition the UK birds have relatively longer and narrower bills, most likely due to the more generalist feeding habits they have developed as a result of utilizing seeds and fat from gardens in winter, whereas Iberian birds show a tendency to longer primaries and have shorter, broader bills, favouring the fruits and olives that constitute a significant proportion of their winter diet.

Differences in colouration are also starting to emerge, with UK birds displaying a warmer browner hue to the mantle and bill colour as against the greyer tones of the Iberian population. It is thought that this may help individuals to recognize and associate with their own population types.

Remarkably these changes have emerged over just 30 generations during some 50 elapsed years. Rolshausen like Berthold attributes these changes to the provision



© Rob Baldwin

of artificial food sources in the UK during winter. It is the availability of this food supply which has underpinned the survival of these individuals, thereby enabling evolution through favourable natural selection to take place in those individuals possessing the particular genetic mutations that resulted in a west, north west migratory trajectory.

This is one of the few studies to demonstrate how human activities – in this case the provision of food to wintering birds – can be a sufficiently powerful mechanism to result in the creation of reproductive barriers among animals that live in the same place. These blackcaps are also testimony to the extraordinary pace at which the first few steps toward speciation can take place. Although in some ways this is simply a more indirect version of the kinds of animal breeding programmes, such as in pigeons and doves, that Darwin himself observed in detail when fashioning his ideas.

Whether in this case, these agents will eventually result in the creation of a new species, remains an open question. Presently, the conditions would appear to be in place, but a shift in human activities or a change in other environmental factors may yet alter future conditions, thereby setting up an entirely new range of evolutionary challenges for blackcaps.



© Ulyesters | Dreamstime.com



© Matt Berry

Friends of Holywells Park

Contact Peter Scotcher 01473 463860 or peterscotcher@btinternet.com
The Group aims to work in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council to improve and promote the Park.

With its unique character, woodlands, ponds, streams, slopes, meadows and formal areas The Friends Of Holywells Park believe Holywells Park to be the best park in Ipswich.

The Friends Group have had a busy few months. The picture shows some members with the IBC Park Ranger, Joe out in late winter planting about 70 native shrubs and trees in a section of woodland previously dominated by sycamore before their felling. Trees planted included oak, ash, hawthorn, hazel and birch.

Other practical work done by the Friends Group has concentrated on the Holywells Park Orchard where the Friends have tidied, pruned, controlled horsetail and desilted a pond (again back in late winter).

The Friends Group have held several events; an Easter Event on a very wet day in April which thanks to the spirit of volunteers and our many undaunted visitors went well. Besides many other children's activities and games and



© Peter Scotcher

refreshments, children made mud faces on a wall. Some of which still remain.

Other events included a wildflower walk featuring the extensive stands of bluebells at their very best and a Scarecrow's Tea Party. This combined three events: Orchard Blossom Day, Tea in the Orchard and Scarecrow Day. About 25-30 families made 35 wildly different scarecrows and all had fun.

Cliff Lane Toad Tunnel by Peter Locke

The Friends of Holywells Park fought long and hard for a toad tunnel to be built under Cliff Lane at the bus stop just below Oulton Road. That was five years ago. This year the Conservation Group within the committee decided that there should be some form of monitoring to ascertain whether the tunnel was being successful in its purpose – i.e. to allow the safe migration of amphibians between their terrestrial habitats in Landseer Park and their breeding grounds in the water bodies of Holywells Park on both legs of their annual migration to spawn. I attended at various times on 11 suitable evenings between March 16th and 28th for periods from 25

minutes to an hour and a quarter for nearly nine hours. Toads will only move in certain weather conditions – damp or raining, overcast and more than 6°C.

In the earlier part of the period, some casualties were found level with the five-bar gate despite chicken wire being fixed to the bottom. These unfortunate animals were obviously finding their way through the pedestrian gap. Others were intercepted and placed either on the other side of the road or at the head of the funnel with the hope that I might observe them using the tunnel. However, it is thought that toads move at maybe 50m per night and therefore many hours of patient observation would be needed to see this happen. Some ran the gauntlet from the Rivers Estate in the vicinity of Oulton Road although the tunnel could never have resolved this. Others seemed to emerge mysteriously through brick walls and close-fitting fences from their old hibernation areas at the northern corner of Drayman's Way. In the latter part of the period, many were found dead at the bottom of Cliff Lane level with the canal gate and the old cottage. They were returning lower down towards their summer habitat that existed before Drayman's Way was built, and had missed the safety of the guiding walls up to the tunnel. In all, 22 amphibians were assisted in crossing the road and 27 were found dead including one newt.



© Matt Berry

The toad tunnel during construction, 2004

Careful “walk/drive-throughs” were undertaken until April 7th without any sightings of amphibians on the road.

Conclusions

- It was frustrating not to prove that the tunnel was definitely being used.
- The relatively small numbers I observed could be for various reasons including:
 - (i) the majority of the colony are using the tunnel;
 - (ii) the colony is now so small that what I observed represents the last vestiges following the construction of Drayman’s Way (certainly very little spawn was seen in Holywells Park this year). In the year before Drayman’s Way was built and before the tunnel, the Holywells Park Toad Patrol assisted over 400 across. The year after, this figure had dropped to about 40.
- Thought must be given to modifying the guide walls at the top and bottom to minimise road casualties.
- Elsewhere in Ipswich, nearly 7,000 toad crossings were recorded this year at Bobbit’s Lane - this colony is threatened by housing development (www.greenlivingcentre.org.uk/iwg/skim.htm). It seems that amphibians prefer thick, tussocky, rough grass for winter hibernation and summer habitat, in preference to woodland. Kiln Meadow, Bobbits Lane, for example, has reverted to grassland from arable and has not been cut for 15 years. Work has been done in the Landseer link woodlands in the past to thin sycamores and improve amphibian habitat. Thought must be given to habitat management in the New Meadow and Orchard, Old Orchard, Landseer link and even Landseer Park to create woody glades and grasslands managed on very long rotations.
- Work will continue to improve habitat and to help numbers recover, both for the toad (now a Biodiversity Action Plan species) and other amphibians. Perhaps more resources can be put into monitoring next year?



© Tim Kenny

Friends of Christchurch Park

Secretary: Ann Snook 01473 251037 Membership Secretary: Robert Fairchild 01473 254255

Events/Meetings: David Routh 01473 255680

The sole purpose of the Friends Group is to help look after the Park for the public good, and to promote its welfare. Anyone who shares this aim is welcome to join. For a small annual fee of £5 you can join in Friends activities all year round, including Illustrated talks and discussions, Guided Park walks & Practical conservation work. You will also receive an informal seasonal newsletter.

When one considers the numerous public activities that take place in Christchurch Park, together with the many people who come to enjoy them, it seems unimaginable that the Park has such a diversity of wildlife. Luckily, Christchurch Park is large enough to be able to absorb all of the events such as the Music Day, the Mela event, the Car Rally, the Proms and the Scouts’ extravagant firework display without the Wildlife Reserve and the Wilderness Pond being affected too much. Our Park, situated as it is in the centre of Ipswich, comes under a great deal of pressure, not only from the organised events, but also from its usage by the general public. On a hot summer’s day one only has to walk through the tree-lined avenues to see the enjoyment that this green oasis gives to the people of Ipswich.

Wildlife certainly does survive. However, for many creatures life in the Park is somewhat restricted and at times extremely hazardous. Take for instance the Wilderness Pond. The good news is that the fish stock has increased tremendously since the pond was drained and renovated. The bad news is that the water birds are finding times difficult. Of a population of two dozen Canada Geese only three goslings survived. The number of adult Mallards is reasonably high but, again, very few ducklings were reared. It is a similar story with the Mandarins and Moorhens. The reason why? The large predatory gulls. Because of the ever-increasing

population of Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, which nest on the rooftops of the buildings in Ipswich, predation is rife.

The Wildlife Reserve is being updated. The collaboration between the Friends of Christchurch Park and the Park Rangers is a happy coalition. Our thanks go especially to Park Ranger Laura for her contribution and advice with the renovation. New fencing has provided more protection for the wildlife and, with the introduction of new bird and bat boxes, this area is now more accommodating. The response from the public has been encouraging with large numbers of people enjoying our two morning bird walks. The severe and prolonged winter weather was thought to have decimated our smaller songbird population but, somewhat surprisingly, numbers of Wren, Long-tailed, Blue, Great and Coal Tit, Goldcrest, Treecreeper and Nuthatch seem to have held up well. However, the numbers of predators continue to thrive, particularly Carrion Crow, Magpie, Jay and Grey Squirrel. Our star pair of Sparrowhawks raised three young last year. They are nesting again this year.

Christchurch Park therefore remains a wonderful place to visit not only for entertainment and relaxation but also to study and enjoy its wildlife. Let’s hope we can maintain this happy balance of interests.

Reg Snook



Suffolk Ornithologists' Group

Membership Secretary Bill Stone, 27 Draymans Way, Ipswich, IP3 0QU www.sogonline.org.uk

SOG is the Group for people interested in the birds of Suffolk, and provides a network and a voice for birdwatchers in the county. The Group is administered by Suffolk birdwatchers for Suffolk birdwatchers, keeping them in touch with what is going on and with each other. Through the Group's Council, SOG has good links with other naturalist and conservation organisations in the region.

The Suffolk Community Barn Owl Project (SCBOP) is a joint project between SOG and Suffolk Wildlife Trust. SCBOP has been a great success in providing nest boxes for the barn owl across the county. Several groups, farmers, landowners and local communities have worked together to help this beautiful bird of the Suffolk countryside. SCBOP recently won an award in the Greenest Community section, within the Landscape and Biodiversity category run by Suffolk: Creating the Greenest County, who work with local communities and businesses to reduce their carbon footprint and enhance their natural environment. The annual awards celebrate and highlight excellent environmental achievements.

SOG is the Group for people interested in the birds of Suffolk, and provides a network and a voice for birdwatchers in the county. The Group is administered by Suffolk birdwatchers for Suffolk birdwatchers, keeping them in touch with what is going on and with each other. Through the Group's Council, SOG has good links with other naturalist and conservation groups in the region.

SOG organises an extensive programme of field meetings, an opportunity for members, young or old, novice or expert, to see birds, and to share camaraderie with fellow enthusiasts. Indoor meetings are held at Holiday Inn, London Road, Ipswich with quality speakers entertaining members with slides and stories, both local and from around the world.

The Group's bulletin, 'The Harrier', published quarterly, keeps members in touch with what's going on - stories about birds, conservation, reserves, and people.

SOG organises and promotes surveys and projects on the birds of Suffolk, with an opportunity for members to participate. SOG is also able to support worthwhile projects through bursaries.

Membership of SOG is open to anyone with an interest in the birds of Suffolk. Rates are £13 for singles and £15 for families. A joint membership with SNS is available for £26 for singles and £30 for families representing a saving of £2 on combined membership rates and entitling



Portal Woodlands Conservation Group

Enquiries: Martlesham Parish Council 01473 612632

The Portal Woodlands Conservation Group was formed as a working group of Martlesham Parish Council in November 1999 to conserve the woodlands which lie west of the Suffolk Police HQ and alongside the A1214. Volunteers meet each month to work on a variety of projects. These have included planting trees & hedges, repairing Second World War structures, creating wildlife habitats and involving local schools and organisations in conservation. Anybody is welcome to join this friendly group. Training and tools are provided.

As the ground started to warm up, we saw the first signs of spring and an end to the cold weather and dark evenings. There was a lot of activity in the woods, with our feathered friends busy preparing their nests for their offspring. The trees started to awaken and buds appeared. The flowers looked beautiful, the wood violets, daffodils and primroses gave us a ground canvas of colour, followed shortly after by the vibrant bluebells. While the bright greens of the new leaves complimented the bare bark of the trees. Nature does colours so well!

It was a wonderful time, new life, new growth and new adventures. Why not take an adventure yourself and share in the wonder of this lovely little woodland, or

join us on our Volunteer Work Mornings. Where is the wonderful little corner of woodland I hear you ask; our little woodland is situated west of the Suffolk Police HQ and alongside the A1214. See the map at <http://tinyurl.com/39at2u9>. Parking is at the Martlesham Control Tower.

For more information about PWCG and its activities, please access our website at www.martlesham.org.uk/portalwoodlandsgroup, or if you have any questions please email us at pwcg@martlesham.org.uk or phone Martlesham Parish Council on 01473 612632

Jocelyn Cook

Wildlife and Education Rangers

Office : 01473 433993 park.rangers@ipswich.gov.uk Stable Block, Holywells Park, Cliff Lane, Ipswich IP3 0PG
The Wildlife & Education Rangers are responsible for the management of wildlife areas within the town's parks and other green spaces. As well as carrying out practical management, the team runs an events programme and works with many local schools to engage and inspire the public about the wildlife Ipswich has to offer.

Bourne Park Barn Owl Project

Ipswich Borough Council Wildlife and Education Rangers with the sponsorship of Barnes Construction are working on a project to encourage barn owls to breed within the boundaries of Ipswich. We are linking with the Suffolk Community Barn Owl Project's ongoing work across the county to provide suitable artificial nesting sites and habitats for barn owls.

Bourne Park was chosen as the most appropriate site as barn owls have already been spotted in the area. Bourne Park is relatively low in conservation value and has benefited greatly from the addition of a large area of long grassland and barn owl boxes. Future small mammal surveys and nest box monitoring will measure the success of the project. In addition to this we have improved public access & recreation in the area by replacing a footbridge, put in extra seating areas, installed interpretation boards and maintained wide mown paths.

The Rangers consulted over 2,000 residents who lived nearby. It was a very valuable exercise in identifying any issues or concerns people had about the project. Another positive outcome was that we had many people expressing an interest in volunteering in the Park.

The project was launched on the 22nd September 2009. The day began with falconer, Kathy Bole from the Raptor Trust giving a talk about owls to a group of children from Halifax Primary School. She brought along three owls, including a barn owl for the children to look at. We then walked through the soon-to-be long grass area whilst I explained to the children the importance of rough grassland in providing habitat for the barn owls main prey, the field vole (*Microtus agrestis*). This led the group to the tree surgeon, Paul Jackson who was in the process of installing two barn owl boxes. As Paul was

doing this, Steve Piotrowski of the SCBOP spoke to the children about barn owls and their nesting habits.

The launch was a great success and we plan over the next three years to complete the project and hopefully get barn owls breeding on the site.

Since the project launch, the school children have been

doing watercolour paintings, classroom displays and even a presentation in their school assembly. With the funding provided by Barnes Construction the Rangers are able to go on specialised small mammal ID courses. This means that we will be able to do environmental education activities focussing on small mammals and owl pellet dissection. We are also going to develop an activity pack so schools can go to the site independently to learn about barn owls and their habitat requirements. The Rangers also ran an event in early August with a local falconer focussing on barn owls. Members of the public were be able to watch and learn all about barn owls and about the barn owl project.

The next step in the barn owl project is to gain more involvement from members of the public. We have done a number of talks to libraries across the town making people aware of what is happening in the Park. Our poster cases are also proving to be an excellent addition to the Park. People regularly get in touch with us about the information provided in the cases and they give us invaluable information about the species they have seen. We are also in the process of putting the reedbed and grassland into Higher Level Stewardship through Natural England. We will then receive payments for managing the areas in an environmentally sensitive way.

If you would like to get involved with this project or further conservation work being carried out in Bourne Park please get in touch with the Rangers on (01473) 433994.



© Laura Whitfield



© Laura Whitfield

Laura Whitfield, Ipswich Borough Council



Local Wildlife News Snippets



© Sherie New

A Nightingale sang in the Old Cattle Yard

16th April 2010. Nightingale singing from scrub near Princes Street Bridge (the road bridge over the river to Ipswich Railway Station). Subsequent encounters suggest its territory (assuming it to be just the one bird) extends east and west through the scrub belt either side of Princes Street on the north side of the river and into a small patch of scrub on the south side of the river. On one occasion I even managed to see it - not the easiest of feats, for aside from their song, nightingales are highly secretive. It achieved some fame when the Evening Star ran an article on it. I last heard it singing on the 19th May and wonder whether it attracted a mate and bred. Much of the scrub west of Princes Street Bridge is part of the Old Cattle Yard site, one of the public green spaces along the River Path and nightingales seem to visit year after year.

Peter Scotcher (Greenways River Ranger)

Ipswich Rock Garden

Growing on the brick paving of the Old Cattle Yard (River Path between Sir Bobby Robson Bridge and Princes Street Bridge) is a veritable rock garden of small plants adapted to the harsh sun-baked, well-drained and thin soil habitat. Here I have found field madder, biting stonecrop, common storks-bill and common cornsalad. Exposing some of the bricked area as a historic feature I have decided to manage the remainder as an important, although somewhat depauperate, habitat. Close-by on slightly thicker soil, birds-foot trefoil and its predator, the common blue butterfly exist.

Peter Scotcher

Ipswich and District Natural History Society

Formed in 1924 the Society's objective was, and still is, to encourage the study of Natural History and Conservation by arranging meetings, lectures, exhibits, excursions and by the keeping of records. The late Francis Simpson, prominent local botanist and author of 'Simpson's Flora of Suffolk', was for many years a very active member of our Society. In the winter months, from October to April, we meet in the Oddfellows Hall, High Street, Ipswich for monthly lectures and our field meetings are arranged throughout the year. A newsletter is produced twice a year.

For more details please contact Janet Eley, Secretary, on telephone 01473 785557

Banded demoiselles



© Dave Fincham

1st July. Quite a wildlife spectacle at the Sugar Beet Weir on the River Gipping just outside Ipswich. (TM136446). On a hot summer's day, a quiet river scene was transformed by the flight of a single male banded demoiselle damselfly. Suddenly the airspace a few centimetres above the water was a mass of flashing blue/black wings as 30-40 male banded demoiselle damselflies all took to the air in a giant flurrying jostle moving across the water. Then quiet again as all took to perches in riverside vegetation before another flurry of flight.

This section of the Gipping just outside Ipswich is terrific for all manner of wildlife.

Peter Scotcher

Events Diary

Sunday 1st August 11:00am – 4:00pm Greenways Project A RIVER FOR ALL

Come and enjoy a wide range of activities for all the family on the banks of the river. We're hoping to offer boat trips, canoeing trials, cycling and opportunities to find out about the river and its history and wildlife. For location and further details please ring or watch local press. Details from **Peter Scotcher 01473 433995**

Wednesday 4th August 10:30am – noon IBC Rangers MUDDY GOOD FUN

Discover what lives beneath the black ooze of the Orwell estuary and why so many birds visit it. Be prepared to get muddy as we dig through the ooze looking for the creatures. Don't forget to bring your wellies. Child - £2/Adult - £4.

Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Thursday 5th August 1:00pm – 3:00pm IBC Rangers Chantry Park MINI-BEAST SAFARI

Children go on a minibeast safari, carefully collecting some minibeasts and playing minibeast games. They learn to examine the animals carefully and to use magnifying pots. Meet in front of the Mansion (Hadleigh Rd Entrance) in Chantry Park. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Saturday 7th August 2:30pm SWT Rede Hall Farm VISIT TO SUFFOLK HORSE CENTRE WITH NIGEL OAKLEY

This is a great opportunity to visit Rede Hall Farm where Nigel (who spoke to the Ipswich SWT group in December) keeps his Suffolk Punches. There may be a chance to see them in harness and pulling a plough and the colt foal born earlier this year. Rede Hall Farm is situated on the A 143, about 8 miles SW of Bury St Edmunds. Follow the signs to Ickworth and keep straight on. Grid Ref. TL 804 576. No need to book. Donation £3. Details from **Pam Ireland 01473 723179**

Sunday 8th August 10:00am – 1:00pm MCG Martlesham WORK PARTY

Join the Martlesham Conservation Group on Martlesham Heath SSSI today for their regular work party. Meet at the Douglas Bader pub. Details from **Phil Smith 01473 625630**

Sunday 8th August 10:00am – Noon RSPB Melton BIRDING WALK

River Deben, Melton to Woodbridge for migrant waders and other birds. Meet at Melton Riverside car park at 10.00hrs. 2hrs. 2miles. TM287503. Details from **Stephen Marginson 01473 258791**

Wednesday 11th August 1:00pm – 3:00pm IBC Rangers Christchurch Park NATURE DETECTIVES

Learn more about wildlife. Join the Rangers and explore the secret life of mini-beasts, scavenge like a squirrel and look for other exciting wildlife. Meet at Reg Driver Centre, Christchurch Park. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Thursday 12th August 1:00pm – 3:00pm IBC Rangers ART IN THE PARK

Join the Rangers for an afternoon of art in the park. Design your own animals and pictures. Use your imagination to create your favourite animal from various materials. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Sunday 15th August 10:30am IWG & FoBBP Spring Wood WORK PARTY

Join Ipswich Wildlife Group and the Friends of Belstead Brook Park as we pull bracken and clear bramble in the wood today. Meet at the stepped entrance to the wood. Details from **Greenways on 01473 433995**

Wednesday 18th August 11:00am – 12:30pm IBC Rangers TEDDY BEAR BUG HUNT

Become detectives of the natural world and discover the micro world of the mini-beast. We will be looking under logs and leaves, in bushes and trees to learn about these fascinating animals. Bring along teddy to share a picnic when all the hard work is done. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Wednesday 18th August 12:30pm – 1:15pm Greenways Bourne Park & Bobbits Lane WILDLIFE WALK

See the extensive wetland habitats of the Belstead Brook - south-Suffolk's largest reedbed and the recently re-worked wet meadows beside Bobbits Lane. Also see barn owl boxes in both sites as part of a project to encourage the owls back to Ipswich. Details from **James Baker 01473 433995**

Thursday 19th August 1:00pm – 3:00pm IBC Rangers Christchurch Park BUILD A BUGALOW

Using natural materials, build homes for the insects that need somewhere to sleep over the winter. Meet at the Reg Driver Visitor Centre, Christchurch Park. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Sunday 22nd August 10:00am – 3:00pm Greenways/CSV RIVER CLEAN UP

Location is to be confirmed but the divers will be working somewhere on the town centre stretch of River Gipping, with other locations for land-based litterpicking and conservation activities. Details from **Steve Pritchard 01473 433995**

Wednesday 25th August 8:00pm – 10:00pm IBC Rangers Christchurch Park BAT WALK

Learn about British Bats, how to identify them and where best to find them. The Rangers will take you on a guided walk around the Park. Long sleeves and insect repellent are advisable if you're prone to being bitten by midges! Meet outside the Reg Driver Centre, Christchurch Park. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Thursday 26th August 8:00pm – 9:30pm IBC Rangers Holywells Park PARK IN THE DARK

Join the Rangers for an evening of entertainment in Holywells Park. Learn all there is to know about bats and moths whilst experiencing the atmosphere of the 'park in the dark'. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Thursday 9th September 7:30pm RSPB Sidgate Lane TALK: NORWAY & FINLAND, A NORTHERN JOURNEY COVERING BOTH SUMMER AND WINTER SEASONS

This illustrated talk by Bill Coster, photographer and magazine contributor, is hosted by the RSPB local group at Sidgate Lane Primary School, Sidgate Lane. Ipswich RSPB group Members £1.80, non-members £3.00. Details from **Chris Courtney 01473 423213**

Saturday 11th September 10:00am – 12noon Greenways DISCOVER YOUR RIVER WALK The Countryside: Sproughton village to Boss Hall Road, Ipswich.

Meet at Sproughton Church. Guided tour: wildlife, history and other points of interest. Please book by previous day – just so numbers can be kept to a reasonable number. If too many people apply, I'm happy to arrange another walk. Booking Essential **Peter Scotcher: 01473 433995**

Saturday 11th September 10:00am – 12 Noon NATURE WATCH CLUB Martlesham

Nature Watch is a club mainly for 5-10 year olds, to come into the woods with their parents or guardians to enjoy organized nature projects, develop conservation skills and work towards awards under the RSPB Explorer Award Scheme. To find out more details and book a place for 2010, please send an email to naturewatch.pwcg@martlesham.org.uk. Details from **Duncan Sweeting 01473 612632**

Sunday 12th September 10:00am – 1:00pm MCG Martlesham WORK PARTY

Join the Martlesham Conservation Group on Martlesham Heath SSSI today for their regular work party. Meet at the Douglas Bader pub. Details from **Phil Smith 01473 625630**

Tuesday 14th September 10:00am RSPB Holywells Park Midweek BIRDING WALK

A walk round Holywells Park (including Conservation Area). Lasts approx 2 hours. All welcome. Meet at the Stable Block off Cliff Lane (TM176432). Details from **Kathy Reynolds 01473 714839**

Wednesday 15th September 7:30pm SWT Bolton Lane Talk: THE DUNWICH FOREST PROJECT

This illustrated talk by Dayne West, is hosted by the Ipswich group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust at St. Margaret's School Hall in Bolton Lane Admission £2.00. Details from **Dave Munday 01473 217310**

Saturday 18th September 9:00am – 11:00am NATURE EXPLORERS CLUB Martlesham

Nature Explorers is aimed at young people aged 10 years or older, to come into the woods with their parents or guardians to enjoy organized nature projects and develop practical conservation. To find out more details please send an email to naturewatch.pwcg@martlesham.org.uk. Details from **Duncan Sweeting 01473 612632**

Saturday 18th September 10:00am - Noon PWCG Martlesham Heath WORK PARTY

Come along and lend a hand at today's Portal Woodlands Conservation Group work party in the woodland. Meet opposite the Police sports field entrance in Portal Avenue. Details from **Duncan Sweeting 01473 612632**

Sunday 19th September 10:00am RSPB Felixstowe FIELD MEETING

This trip will be led by Tim Kenny, and will cover the major migration watching sites at Felixstowe. The walk will start at Golf Road and cover the Brackenbury and Cobbolds Point areas. Depending on what is around in the Golf Road area we will then move on to Landguard Nature Reserve. 2-3 miles. Lasts approx 3 hours. All welcome. Details from **Tim Kenny 01473 285218**

Sunday 19th September 10:30am IWG & FoBBP Spring Wood WORK PARTY

Join Ipswich Wildlife Group and the Friends of Belstead Brook Park as we pull bracken and clear bramble in the wood today. Meet at the stepped entrance to the wood. Details from **Greenways on 01473 433995**

Wednesday 22nd September 12:30pm – 1:15pm Greenways Belstead Brook Park NATURE'S HARVEST

A visit to Thorington Hall Farm to look at hedgerow food for wildlife and include tasting of local apples and juices from our orchard. Details from **James Baker 01473 433995**

Saturday 25th September 10:00am – 12noon Greenways DISCOVER YOUR RIVER WALK The Town: Boss Hall Road to Stoke Bridge

Meet at Sproughton Church. Guided tour: wildlife, history and other points of interest.

Please book by previous day – just so numbers can be kept to a reasonable number. If too many people apply, I'm happy to arrange another walk. Booking Essential **Peter Scotcher: 01473 433995**

Saturday 9th October 10:00am – 1:00pm FoBBP Belstead Brook Park WORK PARTY

The Friends of Belstead Brook Park will be working on conservation and access tasks today somewhere in the park – contact us to confirm the details.

Details from **James Baker 01473 433995**

Sunday 10th October 10:00am – 1:00pm MCG Martlesham WORK PARTY

Join the Martlesham Conservation Group on Martlesham Heath SSSI today for their regular work party. Meet at the Douglas Bader pub. Details from **Phil Smith 01473 625630**

Thursday 14th October 7:30pm RSPB Sidgate Lane TALK: CARIBBEAN ODYSSEY – TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

This illustrated talk by Colin Kirkland, tour leader, sponsored by Birketts Solicitors is hosted by the RSPB local group at Sidgate Lane Primary School, Sidgate Lane. Ipswich RSPB group Members £1.80, non-members £3.00.

Details from **Chris Courtney 01473 423213**

Sunday 17th October 10:00am – Noon PWCG Martlesham Heath WORK PARTY

Come along and lend a hand at today's Portal Woodlands Conservation Group work party in the woodland. Meet opposite the Police sports field entrance in Portal Avenue. Details from **Duncan Sweeting 01473 612632**

Sunday 17th October 10:30am IWG & FoBBP Spring Wood WORK PARTY

Join Ipswich Wildlife Group and the Friends of Belstead Brook Park clearing a coup in the wood today in preparation for the coppicing next month. Meet at the stepped entrance to the wood. Details from **Greenways on 01473 433995**

Tuesday 19th October 10:00am RSPB Pipers Vale Midweek BIRDING WALK

A walk around Pipers Vale. Lasts approx 2 hours. All welcome. Meet at the Car Park at the Vale Entrance (TM178419). Details from **Kathy Reynolds 01473 714839**

Wednesday 20th October 7:30pm SWT Bolton Lane TALK: CLIMATIC CHANGE AND OTHER HUMAN IMPACTS ON THE ANTARCTIC

This talk by Prof. Peter Convey of the British Antarctic Survey, is hosted by the Ipswich group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust at St. Margaret's School Hall in Bolton Lane Admission £2.00. Details from **Dave Munday 01473 217310**

Saturday 23rd October 10:00am – 12 Noon NATURE WATCH CLUB Martlesham

Nature Watch is a club mainly for 5-10 year olds, to come into the woods with their parents or guardians to enjoy organized nature projects, develop conservation skills and work towards awards under the RSPB Explorer Award Scheme. To find out more details and book a place for 2010, please send an email to naturewatch.pwcg@martlesham.org.uk.

Details from **Duncan Sweeting 01473 612632**

Saturday 23rd October 10:00am - 4:00pm RSPB Holywells Park FEED THE BIRDS

Find out about the many things that you can do in the garden to help birds through the winter and the rest of the year. Children's activities, sales stalls and garden wildlife information. Follow the signs from the Stable Block, Holywells Park.

Details from **Chris Courtney 01473 423213**

Saturday 23rd October 11:00am – 2:00pm FoHP APPLE DAY

Come and celebrate Apple Day with the Friends of Holywells Park in the Holywells Park Orchard. Family fun with traditional games, things to make, lunch-time refreshments, sing along, stories and (hopefully) pumpkin carving. Take part in the making of apple juice from the Orchard's apples and try some. FREE event, donations accepted for refreshments etc. Follow signs from the Stable Block, Holywells Park, Cliff Lane, Ipswich. Details (weekdays) from **Peter Scotcher 01473 433995**

Sunday 24th October 10:00am – 4:00pm Greenways & CSV Alderman Canal WORK PARTY

Join a work party and assist in winter management work at Alderman Canal Local Nature Reserve. Work likely to include improving access, coppicing or reedbed management. We'll provide gloves, tea, coffee and biscuits. Meet at Bibb Way (off Sir Alf Ramsay Way, Ipswich) TM154444. Details (weekdays) from **Peter Scotcher 01473 433995**

Wednesday 27th October 10:00am – Noon & 1:00pm – 3:00pm IBC Rangers Christchurch Park FEED THE BIRDS

Join a Ranger to make wildlife feasts to keep birds fit and healthy through winter. Have fun making fat balls for your garden birds and make your own feeders from recyclable materials. Meet at Reg Driver Visitor Centre, Christchurch Park. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Thursday 28th October 10:00am – Noon IBC Rangers Christchurch Park SEED GATHERING

Join the Rangers as we stroll around Christchurch Park collecting nuts, berries, haws, hips and sloes from native trees and shrubs. Then we will go back to the visitor centre to plant them in pots to take home. Meet at Reg Driver Visitor Centre. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Thursday 28th October 7:30pm SOG Holiday Inn, Copdock Talk: The Gambia – SEARCH FOR THE CROCODILE BIRD

This illustrated talk by Bill Baston is hosted by Suffolk Ornithologists group at the Holiday Inn, London Rd, Ipswich. Admission: SOG members £2, non-member £3. Details from **Adam Gretton 01473 829156**

Thursday 11th November 7:30pm RSPB Sidegate Lane TALK: THERE SHE BLOWS – BRITAIN'S DOLPHINS, WHALES AND SEABIRDS

This illustrated talk by Ian Rowlands, Wildlife tour leader and lecturer, sponsored by Alder Carr Farm, Needham Market is hosted by the RSPB local group at Sidgate Lane Primary School, Sidegate Lane. Ipswich RSPB group Members £1.80, non-members £3.00. Details from **Chris Courtney 01473 423213**

Saturday 13th November 11:00am – 1:30pm IBC Rangers River BIRD WATCHING RIVER CRUISE

A fantastic opportunity for any wildlife enthusiast to see some of the 63,000 waders and wildfowl that winter on the Orwell Estuary Special Protection Areas within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Hot food will be served on board. Don't forget your binoculars! Please telephone for further information and ticket prices. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Sunday 14th November 10:00am – 4:00pm Greenways & CSV Alderman Canal WORK PARTY

Join a work party and assist in winter management work at Alderman Canal Local Nature Reserve. Work likely to include improving access, coppicing or reedbed management. We'll provide gloves, tea, coffee and biscuits. Meet at Bibb Way (off Sir Alf Ramsay Way, Ipswich) TM154444. Details (weekdays) from **Peter Scotcher 01473 433995**

Sunday 14th November 10:00am – 1:00pm MCG Martlesham WORK PARTY

Join the Martlesham Conservation Group on Martlesham Heath SSSI today for their regular work party. Meet at the Douglas Bader pub. Details from **Phil Smith 01473 625630**

Tuesday 16th November 10:00am RSPB Bourne Bridge Midweek BIRDING WALK

A walk from Bourne Bridge to the Orwell Bridge. Lasts approx 2 hours. All welcome. Meet at the Bourne Park Car Park (Bourne Bridge Entrance - TM161419). Details from **Kathy Reynolds 01473 714839**

Wednesday 17th November 7:30pm SWT Bolton Lane TALK: MYSTERY OF COLOUR IN NATURE AND THE RAINBOW

This illustrated talk by Gerald Jenkins, is hosted by the Ipswich group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust at St. Margaret's School Hall in Bolton Lane Admission £2.00. Details from **Dave Munday 01473 217310**

Saturday 20th November 9:00am – 11:00am NATURE EXPLORERS CLUB Martlesham

Nature Explorers is aimed at young people aged 10 years or older, to come into the woods with their parents or guardians to enjoy organized nature projects and develop practical conservation. To find out more details please send an email to naturewatch.pwgc@martlesham.org.uk. Details from **Duncan Sweeting 01473 612632**

Saturday 20th November 10:00am - Noon PWCG Martlesham Heath WORK PARTY

Come along and lend a hand at today's Portal Woodlands Conservation Group work party in the woodland. Meet opposite the Police sports field entrance in Portal Avenue. Details from **Duncan Sweeting 01473 612632**

Sunday 21st November 10:00am – 3:00pm Greenways, IWG & FoBBP Belstead Brook Park MEGABASH

Join the Greenways project, Ipswich Wildlife Group and the Friends of Belstead Brook Park for a day of coppicing and other conservation tasks in and around the Belstead Brook Park nature reserves. Meet at the Bobbits Lane car park. Details from **Greenways 01473 433995**

Thursday 25th November 7:30pm SOG Holiday Inn, Copdock TALK: THE BIGGEST TWITCH – A RECORD OF 4341 SPECIES IN A YEAR

This talk by Alan Davies & Ruth Miller is hosted by Suffolk Ornithologists group at the Holiday Inn, London Rd, Ipswich. Admission: SOG members £2, non-member £3. Details from **Adam Gretton 01473 829156**

Saturday 4th December 10:00am RSPB Boyton FIELD MEETING – BOYTON MARSHES AND BUTLEY RIVER: WADERS, WILDFOWL & RAPTORS

This trip will be led by Stephen Marginson and will meet at RSPB Boyton, Banters Barn Farm car park. 3-4 miles. Lasts approx 3-4 hours. TM387475. Details from **Stephen Marginson 01473 258791**

Wednesday 8th December 7:30pm SWT Bolton Lane TALK: WILDLIFE IN CLOSE-UP IN THE JUNGLE

This illustrated talk by Nick Woods, is hosted by the Ipswich group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust at St. Margaret's School Hall in Bolton Lane Admission £2.00. Details from **Dave Munday 01473 217310**

Thursday 9th December 7:30pm RSPB Sidgate Lane CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING AND TALK: THE OUTER HEBRIDES

Come along for the social evening and enjoy the finger buffet as well as the talk by Jeremy Mynott, lifelong birder and author. Sponsored by Ipswich Microwave Centre and hosted by the RSPB local group at Sidgate Lane Primary School, Sidgate Lane. Ipswich RSPB group Members £1.80, non-members £3.00. Details from **Chris Courtney 01473 423213**

Saturday 11th December 10:00am – 1:00pm FoBBP Belstead Brook Park WORK PARTY

The Friends of Belstead Brook Park will be working on conservation and access tasks today somewhere in the park – contact us to confirm the details. Details from **James Baker 01473 433995**

Sunday 12th December 10:00am – 1:00pm MCG Martlesham WORK PARTY

Join the Martlesham Conservation Group on Martlesham Heath SSSI today for their regular work party. Meet at the Douglas Bader pub. Details from **Phil Smith 01473 625630**

Tuesday 14th December 10:00am RSPB Christchurch Park MIDWEEK BIRDING WALK

A walk around Christchurch Park. Lasts approx 2 hours. All welcome. Meet at the Soane Street entrance (TM165448). Details from **Kathy Reynolds 01473 714839**

Sunday 19th December 10:00am - Noon PWCG Martlesham Heath WORK PARTY

Come along and lend a hand at today's Portal Woodlands Conservation Group work party in the woodland. Meet opposite the Police sports field entrance in Portal Avenue. Details from **Duncan Sweeting 01473 612632**

Sunday 19th December 10:30am IWG & FoBBP Spring Wood WORK PARTY

Join Ipswich Wildlife Group and the Friends of Belstead Brook Park in coppicing and processing hazel in the wood today. Meet at the stepped entrance to the wood. Details from **Greenways on 01473 433995**

Wednesday 22nd December 10:00am – Noon IBC Rangers Bridge Wood FESTIVE STOMP

Wrap up warm for a walk through Bridge Wood. Leave the hustle and bustle of Christmas for a stroll around this Ancient Woodland in Suffolk's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Learn about some festive plants, and enjoy some tasty mulled wine with a mince pie. Child - £2/Adult - £4. Booking Essential **Rangers 01473 433994**

Regular Events

TUESDAYS 9.30am Greenways CONSERVATION WORK PARTY

Meet at the Stable Block Holywells Park to visit one of over 40 sites around Ipswich for a day's practical task. Contact **01473 433995**

THURSDAYS 9.30am Greenways CONSERVATION WORK PARTY

Meet at the Stable Block Holywells Park for a day's practical tasks along the banks of the River Gipping. Contact **Peter Scotcher 07736 826054**

MOST FRIDAYS 9.30am Greenways CONSERVATION WORK PARTY

As well as Tuesdays, the Greenways Project, has a smaller but just as welcoming group of volunteers most Fridays. Meet at the Stable Block, Holywells Park from where we travel to one of our sites around Ipswich for a day's practical task. Contact **01473 433995**

MOST SATURDAYS 10.30am - 1pm IWG Northgate Allotments WOODCRAFT & WILDLIFE

Get involved in coppicing and woodland skills at the Wildlife area. Call **Geoff Sinclair** to confirm dates **01473 327720**

SECOND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH 8pm 'Green Drinks' Dove Inn, Ipswich DRINKS AND CHAT

Join us at the Dove Inn for a drink, a chat and a bit of networking with other environmentally-minded people. Look out for the 'Green Drinks' sign on the table. All welcome. Details from **Steve Prichard on 07724 004272**