

Home decorating
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Local Wildlife news

May to August 2022

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





Come and Join us

Become a member of Ipswich Wildlife Group and support our work at local wildlife sites and our activities spreading enthusiasm for the nature all around us

You can just lend us your support or get involved in our activities:

- Learn how to coppice hazel • Help maintain pathways in woodlands and by waterways • Build hibernaculum for amphibians, reptiles and insects
- Create homes for stag beetles and holts for otters • Make nest boxes for bugs, birds and hedgehogs
- Give advice and demonstrations to schools and societies • Promote IWG at local wildlife events

Your membership will help provide valuable influence when we are standing up for local environmental issues

We don't do meetings or annual subscriptions but we will keep you informed of what's going on by email each month.

Just send your contact details to our secretary Leila at iwg@wildipswich.org



Copies of LWN are available at all Ipswich libraries,
at the Reg Driver Centre in Christchurch Park
and from leaflet dispensers at the Stable Block in Holywells Park,
from the Greenways office at the Scout Hall, Stoke Park Drive,
Millennium Wood (Bobbits Lane entrance), Kiln Meadow (Marbled White Drive
entrance), The Sandlings, Rushmere (Bixley Drive entrance) and
Mill Stream, Rushmere (Glemham Drive entrance).

Welcome

by **James Baker** *Editor*

Welcome to the spring and summer issue of Local Wildlife News – once again including some public events and activities after a couple of years of almost none!

This edition, as ever, is full of great news about the achievements of local conservation groups in the wider Ipswich area. Without whom, our local environment, where we live, work and spend our recreational time, would be much the worse for their absence! If you have any inclination to get involved with any of the groups working in the area – now is the time! With two years of Covid measures, and fear about becoming ill when meeting with other people, many of these vital groups are struggling to maintain viable attendances and organisational committees. There are direct references to these problems in some of the articles on the following pages – so please do take the chance to get involved if you can – it needn't be too onerous or time-consuming,

but you will make a direct and noticeable difference to wildlife biodiversity in our wonderful part of the world.

Another theme picked up throughout several of this edition's articles is how our local wildlife is having to adapt to the changing climate. From earlier than usual emergence of butterfly species to new species for our area, heading north as the climate warms – it is very easy to see the very real changes taking place. Sadly, it is also becoming very clear that many of our wildlife species, including once common ones, are struggling to survive with this pressure on top of all the others such as loss of suitable habitat, the industrialisation of agriculture etc.

All the more reason then to support your local conservation groups in whatever ways you can! On behalf of all the contributors, thank you for everything you do and here's to a wildlife-rich summer for us all.



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Printed by The Five Castles Press Tel 01473 718719

Paper produced from well-managed forests certified by the Forest Stewardship Council

The opinions expressed in Local Wildlife News are not necessarily those of the Greenways Project.

Would you like to meet new people and give something back?

Wendy Brown *Secretary, Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group*

The Ipswich Group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust provides a focal point for members of the Trust in the town and its surrounding villages and to help more local people discover the wonders of our county's plants and animals. .

The main way we do this is through events - in the summer a lovely

programme of walks and trips and for the rest of the year informative and entertaining talks and slide shows. We also raise money to support the work of the trust from plant sales and raffles to open gardens.

If you have a little spare time and want to give something back, and meet new people, we would

love to hear from you.

We are always looking for additional people to volunteer in various ways – writing short articles about wildlife topics that will be of interest to people in the Ipswich area, helping plan and run events and fundraising, taking photos, donating good quality raffle prizes or

just helping with the administration of the group. Maybe you have an interesting garden that you'd be willing to open for a morning next year?

So, if you'd like to give something back to Suffolk's wildlife, please do get in touch with me or speak to one of the committee members at an upcoming event.

Stripy Spiders spotted in Ipswich

Sheila Roberts *Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group*



Ipswich Group Newsletter

Chairman: (Vacant)

Secretary: Wendy Brown 01473 259674
browncandw@gmail.com

Treasurer: Tony Clarke 01473 741083
tonyclarke@2309hotmail.co.uk

We are the Ipswich Group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. We offer an interesting range of monthly meetings with guest speakers. 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 "Dates for your Diary" section or on the website, www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org.

I saw my first ever wasp spider at an open day at the Priors Oak Butterfly Garden near Aldeburgh a few years ago. It was hard to believe this large black and yellow arachnid, sitting in a web with a lightning bolt symbol woven in silk across the centre was even a real thing.

Like many others, I patiently queued to get a better look at the beautiful creature wishing I'd bought my proper camera.

So imagine my surprise in

late summer last year when I was peering at the border in front of my greenhouse to see if the nerine buds were pushing through to discover that my modest suburban garden in Ipswich had its very own female wasp spider.

For three days she sat, apparently motionless in the middle of the web. On the fourth I noticed a grasshopper all wrapped up in silk. The next time I looked I could hardly believe my luck – overnight she had created a beautiful pale brown urn – home presumably for her eggs. A few days later she'd vanished. Perhaps a snack for a brave bird or the hedgehogs that visit the garden.

I saw on twitter that someone else had also found one on the open space near Spring Wood in south west Ipswich.

Wasp spiders are a Mediterranean species and were not recorded in this country until the 1920s. They have gradually extended their distribution and are now found as far north as Derbyshire. Is this another example of how our climate is changing I wonder?



© Sheila Roberts

Colourful splodges might just be worth a second glance

Sheila Roberts *Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group*

With lockdown rules and a growing awareness of the damage driving to far-flung nature reserves is doing to our earth, I have over the past couple of years discovered a new-found admiration for the natural world on my doorstep.

Instead of scampering from hide to hide at Lackford Lakes or viewing the glories of orchids at Winks Meadow, I've learnt to slow down, to watch the seasonal changes from week to week on my familiar local patch and pay more attention to the little things.

One of those little things I've begun to notice is the lichens. OK, they aren't the fist-sized clumps you see dripping from the branches on an ancient hawthorn in Devon but we do have plenty of lichens around Ipswich if you look carefully.

Storm Eunice gave me one opportunity for a closer look around Kiln Meadow and Ashdown Plantation on my daily strolls. Branches wrenched from their trees delivered all sorts of lichen-encrusted twigs down to a handy eye level. And I'm sure we're all familiar with lichens on old gravestones – over time completely obscuring the lettering with their olive and grey coating.

Once you get your eye in you see lichens all over the place – even in quite built up areas. Take a closer look at the kerb stones in your street, or on lesser-used tarmac paths or concrete paving. Those grey blobs aren't all long-discarded chewing gum. Many are lichens. Likewise



© Sheila Roberts

concrete lamp posts - those yellow blobs which look like someone's gone astray with the paint used for double yellow parking lines are probably lichens.

So what is a lichen? At school I was taught that they are actually two organisms, a fungus and an algae that have come together to form a new body in a symbiotic relationship. Seems straight forward enough I thought. But I started to look into them a little further and I learnt they are actually at the cutting edge of our scientific understanding of the natural world and are far from a simple plant taking advantage of a host. They are diverse, beautiful and stunningly resilient.

Here are just a few things you might not know about them:

- They have been exposed to the extreme temperatures and radiation of a journey through space - and survived.
- They cover up to 8% of the earth's surface and the

most ancient lichens are thought to be around 9000 years old.

- Where they live on trees, they are not parasites – they have no roots, take nothing from the host and make all their own food through photosynthesis.
- By examining their DNA, researchers are beginning to discover that they aren't just a symbiotic relationship between algae and fungi but that some species include yeasts and bacteria in the same organism – presumably all playing a part in its survival.
- Lichens play an important role in breaking down bare rock to release the elements which eventually become soil. For example, they are early colonisers of land affected by volcanic eruptions.
- Lichens have been used as a natural dye for hundreds of years – even Harris Tweed owes some of its distinctive colours to these humble organisms.

So next time you are out for a stroll, why not slow down and have a closer look at the colourful splodges on twigs, stones, posts and paths. And marvel how something so easily overlooked is actually still creating a great deal of excitement in the scientific community.



© Sheila Roberts





Evening Talks Diary

You are invited to join us exploring some of Suffolk's finest wildlife reserves

The Ipswich Group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust has a year round programme of events that are enjoyable, sociable and a great way of learning more about the plants and animals of our county and beyond.

In the summer, the group holds a series of tours of nature reserves. These are open to everyone – you don't have to be a member. We do please ask you to pre-book for all of the walks and tours by emailing m.eke@btinternet.com. For each one, please note, these will be outdoors on uneven terrain with little or no shelter so please wear appropriate clothing and footwear, bring a drink and your sunscreen. Sorry – please leave your dogs at home.

Wednesday 11th May 2022

Carlton Marshes SWT nature reserve. Burnt Hill Lane Carlton Colville NR33 8HU Arrive 10.30am Suggested donation £3 for tour payable on the day.

Guided tour with SWT Warden around the reserve which has a lovely combination of reedbeds, lowland fen and grazing marsh offering varied birdlife, dragonflies, butterflies and orchids. After the tour, participants can buy refreshments at the new Visitor Centre which has full facilities or bring a packed lunch. In the afternoon, there is the option of further unaccompanied walks around this fascinating site.

To book a place please email m.eke@btinternet.com

Wednesday 22nd June 2022

Hen Reed Beds SWT nature reserve, off A1095 Halesworth Road Southwold IP18 6SH. Note – this walk will start and finish in the car park of the Old Hall café. Arrive 10.30am. Suggested donation £3 for the walk payable on the day.

Guided tour with SWT Warden around the reserve - mainly reedbeds and coastal inlet/river mudflats and marshes. Various birdlife (including perhaps even the resident bittern, kingfisher and waders), also dragonflies and scenic views across the Blyth estuary.

After the tour there will be the opportunity to sit together and enjoy tea and cake or lunch at the Old Hall Café which has full facilities.

After lunch there is the option of further unaccompanied walks around the reserve.

To book a place please email m.eke@btinternet.com

Wednesday 13th July 2022

Bonny Wood and Combs Wood SWT reserves - guided tour with SWT Wardens Arrive Bonny Wood at 10.30am. Suggested donation £3 for walk.

Bonny Wood Barking Road Barking Tye IP6 8HP Free parking at Barking Village Hall IP6 8HT with a 20 minute walk to the wood.

Bring your own packed lunch (we are hoping to get access to village hall for toilets). Then 5 mile drive to Combs Wood IP14 2EH park at Church Cemetery car park for afternoon guided tour. Both reserves are noted for birdlife, many rare butterflies and dragonflies and beautiful woodland flowers.

To book a place please email m.eke@btinternet.com

Wednesday 10th August 2022

Orford Ness National Trust Reserve Quay Street Orford IP12 2NU Cost £20. Must be booked and paid for in advance by 31st July.

Places limited so early booking advised. Our boat departs from Orford Quay at 10am. Park in one of the public car parks in Orford – note cash required for machines.

Exclusive three hour guided tour with the warden of this internationally important coastal nature reserve. This special tour includes the ferry crossing, an extensive tour around the island on a trailer towed by a tractor allowing access to all parts of the spit including some areas normally off limits to visitors.

As well as a chance to see the fantastic wildlife this site offers, you will be able to find out more about its fascinating and sometimes mysterious military past.

Packed lunch recommended as there is no opportunity to buy refreshments on the Ness although there are toilet facilities.

To book – please email m.eke@btinternet.com with details of how many tickets you would like and he will send you details of how to pay and answer any questions you may have.

Wild Cocktails

Lucy Shepherd *Wild Learning Officer, Suffolk Wildlife Trust*

Over the past years, Suffolk Wildlife Trust's project in Ipswich has engaged with thousands of children, teens and families through different events, activities, and school sessions in the town's green spaces. It is often however, adults who have fewer opportunities to take part compared to the younger generation, often only engaging in activities alongside children that they are accompanying.



Wet your Whistle with Wildlife

This led to an idea and to a new programme of activity called "Wet your Whistle with Wildlife". This programme is for young adults aged 18 – 35 years who are invited to join me to explore Ipswich's urban wildlife through a range of

different activities, this also provides an opportunity for adults to meet new people within the town and to socialise. The 18 – 35 age range is an underserved group and providing this programme of activity is helping Suffolk Wildlife

Trust to reach out to young adults, to inspire them about wildlife, and provide a social opportunity, something which is largely missing in the town.

One of the most popular session types within this



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programme of activity are our Wild Cocktail sessions. At these events we explore green spaces as day turns to dusk learning about what can be responsibly and sustainably foraged to make delicious cocktails. As we wander, we identify different forageable finds before sampling some different drinks, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, that can be made with nature's bounty. As night falls, we enjoy our drinks whilst taking in the sounds of the park's nocturnal wildlife with bats flying overhead.

These sessions have received much support over the past couple of years, and we are excited to be expanding these sessions where we will be hosting our Wild Cocktail evening and hosting sessions where all adults can join us on some evenings too.

These sessions will be kicking off in June with several across the summer, and new this year, some in the autumn and winter too. If you would like to join me on one of my sessions, check out our suffolkwildlifetrust.org website for all my sessions in Ipswich and follow us on Instagram on @swtipswich and @Suffolk Wildlife Trust in Ipswich on Facebook.

Away days for staff groups

James Baker *Manager, Greenways Countryside Project*

Over the years, we have regularly received the help of groups of staff from local companies and organisations with work on our nature reserves.

Apart from helping us to get tasks completed, it is always rewarding to work with groups of different people and to learn about their day-to-day work, as they get the chance to learn about what we do and how countryside sites are looked after. In recent months, since Covid and the steep rise in the



GREENWAYS
countryside project

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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, Babergh District Council, East Suffolk Council and the local community.



Suffolk County Council staff at Sroughton Nature Reserve

numbers of people working from home, the opportunity for teams to get together in a safe and different environment has proved more popular than ever.

During March 2022 we were very grateful for the help of two groups of Suffolk County Council highways staff, who toiled away on the first stretches of our Sroughton river path construction project. In total, around 30 person days of help were given and some of the team had particular skills and experience that proved very useful. It was interesting to learn that quite a few of the team were meeting in real life for the first time, and they all agreed that networking in this way was hugely helpful to them as well as us!

Also in March, we had a team of BT staff working in Belstead Meadows, helping to clear some scattered scrub that has gradually been reducing the open meadow area to the detriment of wildflower species. Although a relatively small group, they managed to achieve a vast amount of work as well as hopefully also enjoying the day!

Path re-surfacing at Sutton Hoo

During February, our regular volunteers were occupied carrying out some path surfacing work for the National Trust at Sutton Hoo, – improving the path from the visitor centre to the new viewing tower next to the mounds. Working at this incredibly historically significant site was a treat for our volunteers (despite the very hard work moving tonnes of aggregate each day!), and helped to generate the necessary income required to keep the Greenways Project funded.

In all, around 450 metres of path were re-surfaced and rolled to hopefully provide an all-weather fully accessible route. More than 40 tonnes of aggregate were used, which was a lot of shovelling and barrowing!

Scrub management for Ipswich Golf Club (Purdis Heath)

During the winter months, we were engaged by the Ipswich Golf Club to help with their very active conservation management of this fantastic course. Over the years the club has won numerous awards for their wildlife conservation work around the course and the site has essentially become a vast nature



Resurfacing at Sutton Hoo taking shape



Conservation management at Ipswich Golf Club

reserve, bordering Purdis Heath Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Bixley Heath SSSI and various other green spaces, all forming part of the high value ecological network of the area.

Our work on the course was concentrated around four main areas where removal of gorse and small

trees was required to maintain the open heathland habitat – all part of their Countryside Stewardship agreement with Natural England – designed to maximise the wildlife biodiversity of the site. It was a pleasure to work with the conservation greenkeeper, Neil Sherman, and learn so much about the site and the huge range of species recorded there.



The Beeches school Sunshine Garden

The Beeches school, Whitton

Our volunteers have finished a make-over of the 'Sunshine Garden' at the Beeches primary school in Whitton in recent months, with work including: replacing a failed pond with a new one; establishing several log habitat piles; installing rustic seats and more formal seating for classes; wildflower seeding; hedge planting and moving a shed!

The old pond had been built above ground, but had collapsed. In digging the new pond, we realised why the original was above ground – there were the remains of several air-raid shelters under the garden area, which made digging impossible! The new pond was thus a little smaller and in a different location to that planned! The school was originally built just before the Second World War, so presumably the shelters were built at the same time.

Fortunately much of the other work was more straight-forward, and the resulting garden (next to the canteen building) is now complete and ready for use by the school as the weather improves.

Spring Wood Pond and flooding in Kiln Meadow

Regular visitors to Belstead Brook Park and Kiln Meadow in particular may well have noticed a section of flooded path in the middle of the reserve since last summer. The flooding has meant that the main path through the Meadow has been all but impassable, so we have been trying to work out why this has happened and how to solve it!

The water comes from the stream through Spring Wood, which forms a pond at the Wood's northern edge, before previously entering a pipe passing under Kiln Meadow and out into the Belstead Brook.

About 10 years ago, the pond in the Wood suddenly dried up with all the stream's water disappearing down a hole in the bottom of the pond. Attempts at that time to discover where the water was going were inconclusive and when a volunteer in waders accidentally put his foot in the 'hole', the pond started filling up quite quickly so everyone got out sharpish! Ever since then, the water in the pond has diverted along the ditch at the edge of the Wood and flowed across part of Kiln Meadow until it apparently dissipated (or evaporated). We can only assume that part of the stream's flow was still entering the drain, as last

Continued from page nine

summer, the flow across Kiln Meadow increased considerably and flowed much further, thus flooding the main path.

This winter, we used a large excavator to de-silt the pond and look for the 'hole', in an attempt to re-establish and control the flow of water into the piped drain, and thus alleviate the flooding of the path. After considerable digging and pumping of water, no exit hole could be found, and so a different solution was required!

In an attempt to encourage further evaporation of the water, whilst maintaining the wet grassland and create new habitat, we dug two new ponds within Kiln Meadow – which so far, at the time of writing, seem to have done the trick of preventing the path flooding! That said, it is early days and I won't be surprised if the problem returns in times of high rainfall – so other solutions may still be required!

Please bear with us if you're visiting Kiln Meadow and find a wet path! But do look at the new ponds, as they are likely to be teeming with life – especially dragonflies and damselflies, as these groups seem to love newly created ponds!

Hedge planting in Rushmere St Andrew

During the winter months, our regular volunteers planted two new mixed species native hedgerows for Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council, as part of their re-wilding plans. The new hedges are at the Broke Hall playing field (Salehurst Road) and adjacent to Woodbridge Road (next to Foxwood Ceramics).

These hedges will provide new habitat for birds, invertebrates and small mammals amongst other species and help to increase the biodiversity of their immediate surroundings and the Parish as a whole. The Broke Hall playing field hedge has also had a 'Treebilee' oak tree planted as part of the celebrations of the Queen's platinum jubilee, and this will be celebrated with the burying of a time capsule at a public event on Saturday 14th May – where Greenways and Ipswich Wildlife Group will be providing the opportunity for children and families to make bird boxes, bug homes and hedgehog houses.



Spring Wood Pond



New, native hedgerow planted in Rushmere St Andrew

Flowers, trees and bees

Yvonne and Andy *Friends of Holywells Park*

The *Primula Elatior*, better known as the Oxslip, is the County Flower of Suffolk. We have been fortunate enough to be able to plant some of these delicate Spring flowers in the Orchard at Holywells Park. The seeds were gathered from a Suffolk woodland and propagated by a member of the IBC Wildlife Rangers team. We look forward to seeing these little gems in flower next Spring.



Oxslip - Primula Elatior

For the first time in two years, we have managed to prune the orchard on the Park. This took place in February by our Wednesday morning volunteers. It has been necessary to remove some pear trees which were obviously not suited to the conditions and had not borne fruit for many years. The old stumps were dug out leaving spaces for some new additions of apple

trees at some time in the future. We will be looking for varieties that are local to East Anglia.

We are hopeful that we will be able to open the orchard to the community in the summer holidays for picnics for all. With this in mind, we are working on getting the Willow Tunnel pruned and re-woven. This has always been a favourite

for children and adults alike. For a while, we have tried to extend the tunnel, but the tree cover above it has restricted our efforts. However, due to the winter winds, some of the shading trees have fallen near the tunnel. These have been cleared and this will now allow more light to reach the feature so we will be able to extend it.



Re-weaving the willow tunnel

Talking about the winter winds and storms, Eunice brought down a Sweet Chestnut tree on our Top Bar Hive in the apiary. The beekeepers and volunteers were devastated to see the damage. However, upon investigation, although the hive appeared to be flattened, the bees were still alive and flying. The Wednesday volunteers, all donned in bee-suits, set about removing the tree from the hive and temporary repairs were made. Fingers crossed....!

Holywells Volunteers have been working alongside the Park Rangers clearing holly which has grown prolifically and taken over some of the footpaths. We have really enjoyed being able to support this type of work in the wider area of the Park.

Puzzle time! We get visitors in the orchard (animal kind!)...Footprints can be

very difficult to identify.... Any suggestions on this footprint?



Urgent, temporary repairs to the bee hive



Friends of Holywells Park

The Group aims to work in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council to improve and promote the Park.

Contact: fohpi@ipswich.gov.uk

www.holywellspark.org.uk

[facebook.com/holywellsparkipswich](https://www.facebook.com/holywellsparkipswich)

IWG on TV

Colin Hullis *Ipswich Wildlife Group*



Martin, Colin and James in the hot seat.

For the first time, as far as anyone remembers, IWG were featured on the news on BBC TV.

This was back in February when a reporter/cameraman from BBC East visited us when we were working with Greenways on Kiln Meadow. What had grabbed their attention was our Wildlife Homes work producing 750 bird box kits for Suffolk Wildlife Trust



coinciding with National Bird Box Week.

We were able to show the whole process from cutting planks from pine tree trunks with the Greenways mobile saw mill to constructing boxes with hammer and nails.

The filming took a couple of hours and featured close-up shots of the saw mill at work and interviews with James Baker,

Martin Cant and myself, where we emphasised the sustainability aspect of using locally sourced wood and volunteer labour.

This was a great opportunity to publicise the Group and it certainly spread the word far and wide judging by the tremendous reaction we have had from those who were tuned in to watch.



Secretary Leila Matata

iwg@wildipswich.org www.wildipswich.org
[Facebook@IpswichWildlifeGroup](https://www.facebook.com/IpswichWildlifeGroup)

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.

Wildlife Homes with IBC Rangers

Over the past few months we have teamed up with the Wildlife Rangers from Ipswich Borough Council at some of their events.

These events, held around Ipswich parks, aim to involve children and parents in wildlife activities including tree and wildflower planting and bird box making and painting. Martin and myself were involved at these events and enjoyed helping the youngsters make their box and watch the paint fly.



Gerry, Kristy and Martin ready with the boxes

St Mary's Care Home, Holbrook

We have been asked by Kristy Smith manager of the Care Home, if we could help her make their gardens more wildlife friendly. Initial contact was through IWG committee member Gerry Donlon who had previously visited St Mary's at a storytelling event.

We have so far surveyed the gardens for opportunities for various wildlife habitats that include birdlife, amphibian and reptile sites and areas for wild flowers. Several bird boxes for blue tits, great tits and robins have been installed on trees and in hedges, bug boxes on walls and an area sown with wild flower seeds. We also intend to create a reptile hibernaculum with much natural rotting wood from around the garden.



Martin installing another wildlife home

Planting the new and clearing the old

Stephen Corley *Chairman Portal Woodlands Conservation Group*

A big "thank you" to the Suffolk Tree Warden Network who kindly donated 80 saplings of various wildlife friendly hedge species, which had been grown by the Woodland Trust. We planted these to create a hedge along one of the perimeters of the woodlands.

We at last surveyed our bird boxes which had been left alone for two years due to COVID-19. Quite a few had become rotten and unusable beyond repair. Fortunately, the 1st Martlesham Scouts had been making some boxes as a project during lockdown, and had three spare to donate to us. After a lick of wildlife-friendly protective paint, these were fitted to replace some of the lost ones. We were very pleased that 80% of the usable boxes had been occupied at some point over the two years, some multiple times. We were honoured to also have another memorial bird box donated. This was for Sandy, the partner of Bill, who already had a bird box in his name. These two boxes are now close together in trees by the pond.

Over winter we felled branches of a sycamore tree that had become weakened from rot, and needed to be felled before it became dangerous. Storms Dudley and Eunice in February caused some disruption for us. A few trees were blown over and lots of branches were broken. Our volunteers quickly cleared the worst and opened up blocked paths. We had to postpone one of our work mornings due to the winds making it unsafe for volunteers to work. The following week things were much calmer. We were able to trim down the hedge along the A1214, to encourage it to thicken up and let more light into the woodlands. Just in time before Spring and the start of the bird nesting season.



Replacement bird box



Making tree safe



Hedge planting



Portal Woodlands Conservation Group

Enquiries: Martlesham Parish Council
01473 612632 pwcg.onesuffolk.net
or email pwcg.martlesham@gmail.com
The PORTAL WOODLANDS CONSERVATION GROUP is dedicated to conserving the woodlands west of the Suffolk Police HQ and alongside the A1214 encouraging the local wildlife to thrive while preserving historical sites of interest and inspiring people to enjoy the nature surrounding them. Volunteers meet each month to work on a variety of projects and everybody is welcome to join this friendly group. All required training and necessary tools are provided.

Volunteer Work Mornings

(all ages welcome - no need to book)
Meet at the Education Area
from 10.00am – Noon.

Saturday 21st May, Sunday 19th June,
Saturday 16th July.
No work morning in August.

Please bring your own gloves, refreshments and, if possible, tools. Please visit <https://pwcg.onesuffolk.net/volunteer-work-mornings/> for full details of how we are operating our volunteer work mornings post-covid. For more details of the Group's events, and to check for date changes, please go to: <http://pwcg.onesuffolk.net/> or join our members' Facebook Group by messaging Duncan Sweeting

Christchurch Park Bird Report

Philip Murphy *Friends of Christchurch Park*

Period November 2021 to February 2022.

Undoubtedly the most unexpected sighting during this period involved a Barn Owl which was seen by several observers as it flew along the Mayors' Walk before heading off towards the Upper Arboretum on January 13th.



Friends of Christchurch Park

Chair: Peter Gray 07709 634161

Membership Secretary: Robert Fairchild
01473 254255

www.friendsofchristchurchpark.co.uk

Follow us on Facebook@Christchurch Park and

Twitter@ChristchurchPk

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 £10 you can join in Friends activities all year round, including Illustrated talks and discussions, Guided Park walks and Practical conservation work. You will also receive an informal seasonal newsletter.

This is, not surprisingly, the first site record of Barn Owl but the fact that it flew from the direction of the town centre makes its origins somewhat circumspect. Mabel, the park's famous Tawny Owl, has not been reported since May 2021 but a Tawny Owl



Barny

was heard calling in the Upper Arboretum on February 1st and 14th.

The park remains a principal site for Mandarin Ducks in Suffolk; monthly maxima during this period were November – 24, December– 26, January – 31 and February – 24. Other water fowl records of interest involve two pairs of Little Grebes by late January on Wilderness Pond where a female Teal, present on January 7th and 8th, is probably the first site record since September 1977. A Cormorant roosted at Wilderness Pond, perched on a branch near the top of an oak tree on the pond's main island, during the nights of November 2nd/3rd and November 4th/5th.



Mandarin Duck

Any wader in or over Christchurch Park is noteworthy. A Common Snipe flying over on December 29th is probably the site's first record this century, and the next day a dog flushed a Woodcock from the woodland on the eastern side of Wilderness Pond.

The Round Pond was frozen on January 21st and amongst the Black-headed Gulls standing on the ice was a colour ringed adult (white ring marked with 2T2 in black).



Woodcock

Enquiries with the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) revealed that it had been ringed as a chick near Frederikshavn in northern Denmark on June 21st 2009. It was back at Frederikshavn on May 18th 2011 (breeding?) before being seen in the Netherlands on March 17th 2013 and then almost nine years later on the Round Pond. Black-headed Gulls have been known to live in excess of 30 years.

Common Buzzards are now being seen regularly over the park, a situation that would have been unthinkable as recently as ten years ago. The highest total was four on January 7th; on December 6th one was seen on the former croquet lawn – perhaps it was searching for, and feeding on, earthworms which is, somewhat surprisingly, a regular habit of this large raptor. There were regular sightings of Sparrowhawk but we have had no reports of a

Kestrel for about two years.

At least six Siskins were noted on February 14th coming down to drink from the stream which flows into the northern end of the Wilderness Pond. Wintering Blackcaps are now of increasingly regular occurrence in Britain; one was heard in subsong in shrubbery at the Bolton Lane entrance on December 10th and a female was noted on the dense hedgerow just north of Wilderness Pond on February 11th.

A small bat, probably one of the pipistrelle species, was seen flying around over the Lower Arboretum just after midday on February 11th, a still and very mild day.

With Spring approaching rapidly, the park's first Lesser Black-backed Gull of the year was on Wilderness Pond on February 25th – ducklings beware!



Little Grebe

What has it come to?

Reg muses on the current state of our local birdlife

Reg Snook

Perhaps most people who venture into our countryside, nature lovers or even birdwatchers, are unaware of the two most significant changes that have taken place in our bird world.

However, some of us have been noticing that there has been a dramatic loss in the numbers of our songbirds. Many of our once common birds are now on a so-called red list meaning that they are endangered. There are so many species that have alarmingly decreased, it being particularly noticeable in Christchurch Park – for example, song thrush, greenfinch, swallow etc – the list goes on. It is difficult to see how these birds will ever regain their former status. For those of us who were around half a century or so ago, it is shocking to realise that many of these once common species may tragically disappear for good. In my early days, song thrushes were so common that it is hard to believe that this bird no longer visits my garden and very rarely our Park. It is frightening!

With birds of prey it is a different story. There was a

time in my life that to see a sparrowhawk was a 'red-letter' day. I never saw a red kite in Suffolk and buzzards were also a rarity. Now it is difficult when driving along, for instance the A12, through our county not to see both these species including perhaps a 'spar'. A visit to RSPB Minsmere, or indeed Suffolk Wildlife Trust reserves on our coast, you will undoubtedly see not just a single but several marsh harriers and, if you are lucky, would you believe, a sea-eagle. In my youth the numbers of marsh harriers at Minsmere was never more than three.

So the state of the bird population can be summed up thus. Song birds, nearly all species, are struggling some being in a perilous state whilst most species of birds of prey are holding their own with some doing exceptionally well. Reintroduction has provided the opportunity for us to see regularly species of birds of prey that we would never have dreamt of in our county but this comes with a warning. When is enough enough? To see hundreds of red kite coming down

to a feeding station is a bit worrying. When will there be, for different reasons, too many red kite, too many sea eagles and too many ospreys? Feeding stations are all very well but this is not the answer to the real problem – loss of habitat.

A bird of prey gliding overhead is a wonderful sight. The view of a sea eagle is breathtaking. The sound of



Red Kite

© Colin Hullis

a song thrush belting out its albeit repetitive song, fills the heart with joy. The same can be said for blackbird, mistle thrush and obviously the nightingale and whilst it is glorious to watch majestic birds of prey the loss of the dawn chorus would surely sadden us all.

There will no doubt always be pigeons, both 'woodies' and feral. I watch flocks of wood pigeons leave Ipswich early in the morning to feed on the fields to the north of our town. They return to roost just before dusk. Ferals spend the day on my neighbour's roof waiting for their daily handout! There is locally a winter roost of 40 to 50 crows. As for magpies...! As I am writing this in February



at least three pairs of magpies are already busy nest-building in my neighbourhood. Each pair will raise six young. No hope therefore for our blackbirds and dunnocks in my neck of the woods.



Common Buzzard in flight over Ipswich

© Colin Hullis



Song thrushes now so rarely seen or heard

© Colin Hullis

Spring 2022 Butterflies

Julian Dowding Secretary, Suffolk Butterfly Conservation



© James Corton

A pristine, fresh Small Tortoiseshell photographed late March by Suffolk Recorder James Corton



Butterfly Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Membership Secretary
01379 643665

www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk
email: butterflies@sns.org.uk

Butterfly Conservation is dedicated to saving wild butterflies, moths and their habitats throughout the UK. All Butterfly Conservation members who live in Suffolk are automatically members of the branch and receive our newsletter, the Suffolk Argus, three times a year. The Suffolk branch is run by volunteers and we would be very pleased to hear from you if you would like to get involved.

As I write, this warm week (March 21st-27th) has led to mass emergences of many UK butterfly species. Butterflies flying now, are making of the most of the warmth to imbibe nectar from the variety of early flowers available.

In the wild, trees like Sallow

and Blackthorn are blooming. Comma, Red Admiral, and Peacock are fluttering high amongst the blooms. At ground level Brimstone, Small Tortoiseshell and others are visiting Common Dandelion, Cowslip and Primrose.

If you're fortunate enough to have nettle beds, watch for Small Tortoiseshell laying batches of pearly green eggs on the undersides of young nettle leaves, sometimes as low as 2"-6" above the soil. March is not too early. This species has two broods and prefer short nettles, so you may cut them after the new brood have emerged towards the end of July, in order to offer yet more fresh growth. Be careful though, because Comma, Red Admiral and Peacock also commonly use them, so check first for any caterpillars or pupae still on the plants.

A really good place for spring species is around hay piles. Butterflies take advantage to bask in the heat generated by decomposing plant matter and reflected sunlight.

Caterpillars and eggs are also waking up and getting ready. Many 'grass feeders' will be munching on their way to

adulthood now. Think of the browns of summer and golden skippers. White-letter Hairstreak and Purple Hairstreak will also be on the move, hatching from their overwintering eggs, and sitting on or in leaf buds in Feb. The WLH feeds on the flowers of Elms, and then moves onto the leaves. They will already be deep within the beautiful pink flowers. PH use Oak. Like WLH, they bury first into the developing bud where they are hidden from predators and then take up feeding on leaves.

It's worth looking at the Suffolk Butterfly Conservation Sightings page too. www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk/ sightings and also submitting your own records there. This is updated tirelessly by SBBC webmaster Richard. It can be more detailed than Twitter. A quick look reveals that Small White was seen early too and if we're thinking of climate change, it's also worth noting that Holly Blue has already been recorded. These are normally flying from April. These really are strange times and if we get more bouts of good weather, it won't be long before Speckled Wood, Orange Tip, Green Hairstreak and Common Blue are flying.



Two recent Twitter butterfly posts:

Will Brame, "This has to be the most butterflies I've seen during March at Landguard: 2 peacocks, 3 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Commas. Spa Gardens: 4 Small Tortoiseshells, 2 Peacock, 2 Comma."

Kevin, "This Red Admiral was my fourth species in two days around the perimeter of Martlesham Police HQ. A Peacock then became number 5."

Around May Bank Holiday, if it's warm, check Buckthorn bushes for egg laying female Brimstones. These are much paler than the bright yellow males (already on the wing).

Suffolk Butterfly Conservation are always keen to hear from people who would like to do more for butterflies in the county. We're also looking for people to join the committee to bring new ideas to the fore. If interested, please get in touch through the contacts page.

Coppicing, clearing and whippy bits

Ann Havard *Friends of Belstead Brook Park*



Fuel for the bonfire on Kiln Meadow



Chloe cutting poles to support the dead hedge

You really can't beat a Megabash at the end of the year! In the cold of the winter the December 2021 bash in Kiln Meadow encouraged 14 people to help out during the day.

Of course if you provide baked potatoes with cheese cooked on the bonfire then you will

definitely have a happy band of helpers! Nothing really tastes better than food cooked outside after a hard days work. And cutting down blackthorn and dragging oak trees to the fire certainly counts as hard work.

Despite the rain in January, 11 people turned out to help with coppicing in Spring Wood. Unfortunately the rain did eventually stop play a bit early but nevertheless hazel trees were cut and processed into bean poles, pea sticks, hurdle making whippy bits, different length stakes for general gardening, with anything else either going in the dead hedge or for fire wood.

Obviously coppicing is a great morning out as 14 people were out meaning that lots of coppicing in Spring Wood

again took place and also lots of processing into 8 foot bean poles, 6 and 4 foot garden stakes and pea sticks. Plenty of stakes to hold up the dead hedge were made with the bill hook. Long whippy bits (a technical term!) were also kept to one side to be used to create a woven hedge for the National Trust.

The birds were in good voice and the bluebell shoots very evident in Spring Wood, when eight of us returned in March for one last time this season to help with more coppicing and processing.

Don't forget that a walk in Spring Wood is a must in Spring to see the sea of bluebells in this beautiful Ancient Wood. By coppicing in a rotational manner, the air and light get to the woodland

Friends of Belstead Brook Park
www.wildipswich.org
Email: fobbp@wildipswich.org
Friends of Belstead Brook Park (FoBBP) was set up in 2002 to help look after the 250 acres of informal country park on the south-western fringe of Ipswich. The group runs practical work parties, helps raise funds for improvements and acts as 'eyes and ears', passing information back to the Greenways Project.

floor resulting in a boost for ground flora.

Exciting News! Spring Wood Day is back on Monday 2nd May with music, walks in the Wood, woodland crafts and of course refreshments.



A stand of hazel fit for coppicing ...



... and after the cut, ready to grow again

The Green Light Trust

Chris Keeling *Suffolk Bird Group Projects Officer*

The Green Light Trust is an established and successful environmental education charity which uses the Power of Nature to transform lives. Since its formation in 1989 the Trust has helped thousands of people, both children and adults from diverse and challenged backgrounds, using nature to build health and hope through conservation projects at locations around East Anglia.



© Peter Foster

Preparing for work on Rushmere Common



Enquiries:

info@suffolkbirdgroup.org

www.suffolkbirdgroup.org

Twitter: [suffolkbirds1](https://twitter.com/suffolkbirds1)

SBG is the Group for people interested in the birds of Suffolk, providing a network and a voice for birdwatchers in the county.

Green Light Trust volunteers are clearing gorse scrub on Rushmere Common, but the days of 'scrub bashing' belong in the past. Scrub is an important wildlife habitat and if managed properly can form a living fence around more vulnerable habitats, creating safe, sheltered areas for butterflies and reptiles. The Green Light Trust is keen to undertake scrub management in a way that creates a mosaic of heather and acid grassland,

opening clearings in the gorse scrub rather than wholesale scrub clearance. But we need to undertake baseline surveys to record and monitor species across the site and identify which areas can be opened up or cut back, while monitoring and recording changes as the work progresses.

The call for volunteer surveyors first went out in 2020, but as we all know the Covid restrictions made getting out and about and joining projects a real challenge

for many of us. We are still looking for volunteers for Spring 2022, but please note the contact details for the Green Light Trust have changed. So if you have already tried to contact the Trust and haven't heard back, please don't be discouraged and do try again.

If you can help with bird surveys, butterfly transects or moth trapping evenings please e-mail Peter Foster at the Green Light Trust at peter@greenlighttrust.org and/or

Dave Pearsons representing the Suffolk Bird Group at davepearsons204@btinternet.com.

The Covid pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of all of us to mental health issues and the importance of nature in healing and restoring our sense of wellbeing. This is an opportunity for SBG members to help people of all ages and backgrounds engage with nature, while at the same time enhancing wildlife habitats around Ipswich. We really hope you can spare some time to support the Green Light Trust in developing the links between people and nature, while restoring our fractured heathland habitats. We look forward to hearing from you.

As SBG Projects Officer I have agreed to act as liaison between the SBG and the Rushmere Heath Project. Please can I ask that you copy me in when contacting Peter Foster or Dave Pearsons so that we can coordinate surveys and survey data. We need to ensure that management - including scrub clearance - is targeted appropriately and that Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service records are regularly updated.



© Peter Foster

Clearing gorse on the Common

Spring in the Dales

Friends of the Dales Local Nature Reserve

*There is
always lots
going on at
the Dales*



A recent work party task was putting a fence around one of the ponds.



A cold wind but several butterflies were out and about sunning themselves.



Wildlife seen around the reserve in March: Lots of frogs and spawn, toads on the other side of the pond and a fantastic long-tailed tit nest. Also a Chiffchaff, slow-worm and many butterflies and bee's.



There's a bit of storm damage on site with lots of small debris on main footpath needs clearing. The IBC arborist team on site, making safe some dangerous trees.



Friends of the Dales

The Dales is a small Local Nature Reserve situated off Dales Road in Ipswich.

For details of the Friends Group please contact secretary Kaye Roberts kayefotdsec@virginmedia.com or find us on Facebook by searching Friends of the Dales

Lots of Spring flowers out on site....loads of snowdrops.

*Always worth a visit -
The Dales LNR off Dales Road.*

The Birds and the Trees

Sarah Kilshaw Ipswich Borough Council Wildlife Rangers

With Spring on the horizon, our team ran an action-packed fortnight of February events, in keeping with National Bird Box Week and Ipswich Tree Week.



IPSWICH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Wildlife Rangers

Office : 01473 433998

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.

These events took place across a variety of the town's green spaces with the first week focusing on building wildlife homes and then, during half term, planting trees. There was some serious digging

involved to bury the root balls of the 200 larger specimens - standing in at 3 - 5m tall, the majority were over 100kg in weight. These consisted largely of disease resistant elm, wild cherry and crab apple and, on sandier soils, rowan and silver birch. We then planted a more diverse mix of species (whips) in our five new pop up "Miyawaki" Woodlands at Chantry Green, Castle Hill Rec, Sherrington Road Rec, St Augustine's Rec and Whitehouse Park.

These are the first experimental Miyawaki Woodlands to be planted in Ipswich, a technique that sees trees planted more densely in hopes to absorb more carbon per m². Although somewhat a plantation, these woodlands have still been selected with a good diversity of native species that will provide good nectar and forage for wildlife. With field maple, hawthorn, blackthorn, and buckthorn, complemented by species such as honeysuckle, dogrose and hazel, some have had supplementary seeding with wildflower mixes for



The beginnings of a Miyawaki woodland

instant impact. Over the next 10 years, the woodlands will be managed on rotation, the wood will be retained as habitat, or used as products ie beanpoles, to keep the carbon "locked".

Following on from the experimental theme, the wildlife team also tested some new bird box painting events, which were well received throughout national bird box week. The team loved seeing the very brightly coloured designs at our events at Christchurch Park, Alexandra Park, Braziers Meadow and Chantry Park. Many of the boxes were taken home with their designers and installed within the gardens of Ipswich, whilst those without suitable gardens, left their boxes to be installed by the wildlife team around Ipswich's Parks. Two probable locations will be Alexandra Park and Bridge Wood – a fitting choice, with the wood for the nest boxes having been harvested and milled by The Greenways Project and Ipswich Wildlife Group from trees removed

in the restoration project at Bridge Wood.

The team also created a new wildflower strip on the hill at Gippeswyk Park, overlooking the town. It will be a great place for a picnic when the flowers bloom in the summer.

The Team would like to thank everyone who came along and volunteered their time to plant trees, seed the wildflower area and build bird boxes, we couldn't have done it without you. Special thanks go to our dedicated Wildlife Team Volunteers, Ipswich Wildlife Group, Ravenswood Wildlife Group, The Greenways Project, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Ipswich Borough Council's Waste Team and all the Councillors who came along to help at all our events.

We can't wait to see the flowers in bloom, the bird boxes chirping with the sound of baby birds and watching our wonderful new Miyawakis grow.

© Sarah Kilshaw



Home decorating

Yellow Warning for Pintail

Tim Kenny *Leader, RSPB Ipswich Group*

Our indoor and outdoor meetings are back in full swing and you can find out what we are up to on our website rspb.org.uk/groups/ipswich. We'd love to see you at one of our outdoor events, which are free of charge, or at an indoor meeting.

With our AGM approaching (it may well have been and gone by the time you read this) we are appealing for people to come and join our committee, as some of our longest-standing volunteers are standing down at the end of the year. In common with so many charitable enterprises that rely on volunteers to keep them running, we are seeing an ongoing Covid-related drop in attendances at our indoor events, with a consequential reduction in income. If you have always wished to get involved with the running of a local conservation charity, please get in touch with me on 07887 770942, we'd love to hear from you.



Early morning at Levington Creek



Pintail Drake at Levington Creek

In February we had a walk around Levington Creek, which took place during the run of severe storms we had. To coincide with the tide, we started at 1100, but with a yellow weather warning for high winds starting at 1200, we had to cut the trip short. One interesting effect of the weather was that many wild ducks that would normally stay right out at the water's edge came right into the creek where it was more sheltered. Amongst these was that most handsome of wildfowl, the drake pintail. With his slim rakish build, the eponymous pin tail and chocolate brown head, this might not be the rarest bird in the world during the winter, but it is a sight guaranteed to cheer the soul.

The female, like the majority of other ducks, is more subtly plumaged to provide camouflage whilst incubating her eggs, a process which the male takes no part

in. This enables him to sport his bright, flamboyant colours in order to attract a mate. The female pintail sports the same slim build and a shorter tale, and helpfully in winter the pintails tend to go around in pairs, making identification of the females slightly easier.

As I write this, spring is here. Suburban rooftops are resounding to the song of the male blackbird, woodlands ring to the tunes of robins and dunnocks, and the insistent chant of the chiffchaff, shouting his name in the treetops, provides a soundtrack to our daily lives. With so much else going on in the world, the natural world is becoming increasingly important as a healing balm to our mental health. Forest bathing is something I heartily recommend to anyone, and if you have a woodland within walking distance, it's free of charge!



Ipswich Local Group

Group Leader Tim Kenny
Tel 01394 809236
ipswichrsblocalgroup@yahoo.com
www.rspb.org.uk/groups/ipswich

Ipswich RSPB Local Group is for everyone interested in birds and other wildlife in the Ipswich area and beyond. Come along to our indoor talks, held monthly between September to April at Rushmere St Andrew Church Hall, get out and experience nature first hand on one of our regular field meetings. Three times a year you will receive the 'Orwell Observer' magazine. Membership costs £3 per year (£1 for Juniors). For more information see the Events Diary in this magazine, visit our website or email as per details above.



Woodland walks highly recommended

Snippets

Look up for Swifts *Colin Hullis*

This is the time of year to look up for Swifts. They, along with their hirundine neighbours (Swallows and Martins), are gracing our skies after their flight from Africa to raise their new families here. Swift numbers in the UK are falling each year but there is growing awareness of the need to help by providing nesting boxes on our houses and public buildings. Go to the websites of Suffolk Bird Group and Suffolk Wildlife Trust for lots of information.



Picket Hamilton Fort, Ravenswood *James Baker*

Near the Tump at Ravenswood, on the former Ipswich airfield, one of the WW2 Picket Hamilton Forts was revealed during the housing development and was left out for all to see. Recently, Greenways carried out some repairs to the structure following damage sustained during its removal, to prevent further damage and litter being dumped inside. We also installed a new information board about the 'fort' on behalf of the Wildlife Ranger Team. An interested local resident and historian, Mark Nicholas, suggested the board to explain the fort's history and designed it too!



Riverside willow pollarding *James Baker*

The pollarding (cutting trees back to allow them to regrow, above the height of grazing animals) of willow trees along Suffolk river valleys has been traditional for centuries, and in the Sroughton Nature Reserve, we've been continuing this tradition over the last few winters. This form of management tends to produce very gnarly growth around the crown of the tree which in turn provides opportunities for a wide variety of invertebrates as well as holes and cavities suitable for nesting birds and sheltering bats etc. Each winter, a proportion of the willows are pollarded, so they are all re-cut on a cycle of around 5 -10 years.



Beanpoles and peasticks

There is always a ready supply of these poles and sticks for use in your garden or allotment plot. Cut and processed by the IWG Spring Wood monthly work party volunteers from the hazel stands in the ancient wood, all proceeds from sales go to IWG funds. To place an order go to Ipswich Wildlife Group Facebook page.



Wild Eunice

The trail of destruction left by Storm Eunice in February created loads of extra work for volunteers in Groups throughout the town - not least for our neighbour at the IWG allotment plot whose new polytunnel ended its short life on our dogwood hedge.



Spider egg sack and spiderlets!

Val Sherwen

During the Martlesham Common megabash event, this egg sack/nest was found on some of the gorse being cleared and upon carefully opening, dozens of tiny 'spiderlets' were found inside! Needless to say, they were carefully re-housed in standing gorse and others were avoided! We're not sure of the species - maybe someone knows?



Events Diary

MAY

Monday 2nd May 2pm SPRING WOOD DAY

Join Greenways, Ipswich Wildlife Group, Friends of Belstead Brook Park and others who host this free celebration of Spring Wood, with woodland tours, woodland crafts, music, refreshments and fun at the events area in Kiln Meadow, Pinewood. See Ipswich Wildlife Group Facebook page or Greenways social media for details.



Wednesday 11th May 10.30am Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group GUIDED TOUR

Carlton Marshes SWT nature reserve. Burnt Hill Lane Carlton Colville NR33 8HU. Guided tour with SWT Warden around the reserve which has a lovely combination of reedbeds, lowland fen and grazing marsh offering varied birdlife, dragonflies, butterflies and orchids. In the afternoon, there is the option of further unaccompanied walks around this fascinating site.

To book a place please email m.eke@btinternet.com

Saturday 14th May Friends of Christchurch Park DAWN CHORUS WALK

Leader Philip Murphy 07904 470614 contact for details.

Saturday 14th May 9.30am RSPB Ipswich Group FIELD MEETING

Boyton RSPB reserve for waders and spring birds, Meet at Banter's Farm Boyton. 2 hours 2-3 miles TM387475. Walking easy. Leader Stephen Marginson.



PLEASE NOTE:

Due to restrictions concerning coronavirus (COVID-19) and the uncertainty surrounding this at the time of production, please check with the organisers of the events listed to see if they are still going ahead.

Saturday 21st May 10am Portal Woodlands Conservation Group VOLUNTEER WORK MORNING

All ages welcome - no need to book. Meet at the Education Area. Please bring your own gloves, refreshments and, if possible, tools. Please visit pwcg.onesuffolk.net/volunteer-work-mornings/ for full details of how we are operating our volunteer work mornings post-covid. For more details of the Group's events, and to check for date changes, please go to: pwcg.onesuffolk.net or join our members' Facebook Group by messaging Duncan Sweeting.



Sunday May 22nd 7am Suffolk Bird Group OUTDOOR EVENT

Eastbridge - Off The Beaten Track. Meet at Eastbridge. Leave Eastbridge on the Minsmere road and park beside road just before the sharp right into Minsmere itself. Long walk possible. Map Ref: TM452666. Leader David Walsh. Tel. 07947 051223.

Tuesday 31st May 10.30am RSPB Ipswich Group MIDWEEK WALK.

Rushmere Common. Meet Heath Road entrance. Leader Stephen Marginson.

JUNE

Wednesday 15th June 7pm RSPB Ipswich Group FIELD MEETING

Nightjar evening at Upper Hollesley Common, Meet at upper car park 7pm for heathland birds or 10.30pm for nightjars. TM35547. Date and time to be confirmed, check website or email smarginson@btinternet.com

Friday June 17th 7pm Suffolk Bird Group EVENING WALK

Minsmere RSPB Reserve. Meet at the Reserve car park at 7pm for evening walk ending with Nightjars on the heath. Leader Paul Gowen. Tel. 01473 311263.

Sunday June 19th 8am Suffolk Bird Group OUTDOOR EVENT

Lakenheath Fen RSPB. Meet at Reserve centre car park at 8am. Map Ref: TL719863. Leader: David Walsh Tel. 07947 051223



Sunday 19th June 10am Portal Woodlands Conservation Group VOLUNTEER WORK MORNING

All ages welcome - no need to book. Meet at the Education Area. Please bring your own gloves, refreshments and, if possible, tools. Please visit pwcg.onesuffolk.net/volunteer-work-mornings/ for full details of how we are operating our volunteer work mornings post-covid. For more details of the Group's events, and to check for date changes, please go to: pwcg.onesuffolk.net or join our members' Facebook Group by messaging Duncan Sweeting.

Wednesday 22nd June 10.30am Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group GUIDED TOUR

Hen Reed Beds SWT nature reserve, off A1095 Halesworth Road Southwold IP18 6SH. Guided tour with SWT Warden around the reserve - mainly reedbeds and coastal inlet/river mudflats and marshes. Various birdlife (including perhaps even the resident bittern, kingfisher and waders), also dragonflies and scenic views across the Blyth estuary. After lunch there is the option of further unaccompanied walks around the reserve. To book a place please email m.eke@btinternet.com



Tuesday 28th June 10.30am RSPB Ipswich Group MIDWEEK WALK

Christchurch Park. Meet at Soane Street entrance. Leader Stephen Marginson

JULY

Wednesday 13th July 10.30am Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group GUIDED TOUR

Bonny Wood and Combs Wood SWT reserves - guided tour with SWT Wardens Bonny Wood Barking Road Barking Tye IP6 8HP. Free parking at Barking Village Hall IP6 8HT with a 20 minute walk to the wood. Bring your own packed lunch (we are hoping to get access to village hall for toilets) Then 5 mile drive to Combs Wood IP14 2EH park at Church Cemetery car park for afternoon guided tour. Both reserves are noted for birdlife many rare butterflies and dragonflies and beautiful woodland flowers. To book a place please email m.eke@btinternet.com



Saturday 16th July 9.30am RSPB Ipswich Group FIELD MEETING
Landguard Nature Reserve and SSSI Felixstowe for birds and flora. Meet at Landguard Fort car park. TM285320, 2 hours 2-3 miles. Walking easy. **Leader Stephen Marginson**

Saturday 16th July 10am Portal Woodlands Conservation Group VOLUNTEER WORK MORNING

All ages welcome - no need to book. Meet at the Education Area. Please bring your own gloves, refreshments and, if possible, tools. Please visit pwcg.onesuffolk.net/volunteer-work-mornings/ for full details of how we are operating our volunteer work mornings post-covid. **For more details of the Group's events, and to check for date changes, please go to: pwcg.onesuffolk.net or join our members' Facebook Group by messaging Duncan Sweeting.**

Sunday 17th July 9.30am Suffolk Bird Group SHORT WALK

Bradfield Woods. Meet at Bradfield Woods car park. Map Ref: TL935581. **Leader: Gi Grieco. Tel. 07951 482547**

Tuesday 26th July 10.30am RSPB Ipswich group MIDWEEK WALK

Freston for River Orwell. Meet at Freston Hill upper car park on B1056 TM174400. **Leader Stephen Marginson**

AUGUST

Wednesday 10th August 10am Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group GUIDED TOUR

Orford Ness National Trust Reserve Quay Street Orford IP12 2NU Cost £20. Must be booked and paid for in advance by 31st July. Our boat departs from Orford Quay at 10am. Exclusive three hour guided tour with the warden of this internationally important coastal nature reserve. As well as a chance to see the fantastic wildlife this site offers, you will be able to find out more about its fascinating and sometimes mysterious military past. **To book – please email m.eke@btinternet.com**

Sunday 21 August 10am Suffolk Bird Group SHORT WALK

River Deben, Melton. Meet at Riverside car park, Melton. Map Ref: TM288503. **Leader Gi Grieco 07951 482547**



Nest boxes, firewood and beanpoles for sale

Ipswich Wildlife Group have a ready supply of boxes for birds, bugs, bats and hedgehogs and bean poles and pea sticks for your garden. All are made by IWG members from recycled timber and wood resulting from our woodland conservation work.

Take a look at the IWG Facebook page or at the website www.wildipswich.org where there is more information and prices. All proceeds go to Ipswich Wildlife Group, a registered charity.

Regular Events

THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH 10am - 1pm SPRING WOOD WORK PARTY

Join Ipswich Wildlife Group and Friends of Belstead Brook Park for a morning of work in the wood. Meet at the field gate at top of bridleway in Kiln Meadow. Parking in Marbled White Drive. **Details from Gerry Donlon 07733 968481**

TUESDAYS 9.30am Greenways CONSERVATION WORK PARTY

The Project's largest weekly work party – carrying out a wide range of practical tasks across the 50 or so sites that we manage. For all Greenways work parties, volunteers need to be registered via a short informal induction prior to joining us – please contact us for further details. Work party runs from 10am to about 4pm. **Contact greenways.project@ipswich.gov.uk or call 01473 433995**



EVERY TUESDAY AND FRIDAY 10am - 11.30am SWT Wild Learning WILD TOTS
Outdoor adventure and play for children aged 18 months – 5 years in Holywells Park. £4. **Please book at suffolkwildlifetrust.org or 01473 890089.**

WEDNESDAYS 10am Friends of Holywells Park HOLYWELLS PARK WORK PARTY
Join our small team of volunteers doing valuable work around the Park. **Contact Andy Smuk for details 01473 728907**

SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH Friends of The Dales WORK PARTY
Contact Kaye Roberts kayefotdsec@virginmedia.com



THURSDAYS 9.30am Greenways CONSERVATION WORK PARTY

A smaller group than on Tuesday, but operates in the same way – please see details above for Tuesdays Work Party

THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH 7 – 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

FRIDAYS 9.30am Greenways CONSERVATION WORK PARTY

Another opportunity to work on the 50 or so sites managed by the Project – please see the details above for Tuesdays Work Party

EVERY FRIDAY 9.30am Ipswich Wildlife Group/Greenways BOX KIT MAKING

Come and join in making the kits for bird, hedgehog and insect habitat boxes for our Wildlife Homes project. Only the most rudimentary of woodworking skills needed. Thorington Hall Barn, Bobbitts Lane, Ipswich. **More information from Martin Cant 07858 436003 martin.cant@ntlworld.com**



FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH 10am - 1pm Ipswich Wildlife Group RIVER WORK PARTY

A joint work party with the River Action Group along Alderman Canal and the River Gipping, maintaining footpaths and making these splendid waterways areas to be proud of. Usually meeting at Bibb Way alongside Alderman Road recreation ground, but please get in touch to confirm location **More information from James Baker 07736 826076**

FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH 10am Butterfly Conservation WORK PARTY (October to March)

More information from Helen Saunders helens919@gmail.com

EVERY SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH 10am - 12pm SWT Wild Learning WEEKEND WILDLIFE CLUB

For children aged 6 – 10 years in Holywells Park. Join our wildlife-themed club to explore the park, learn about wildlife, meet new friends and earn awards as you go. £4. **Please book at suffolkwildlifetrust.org or 01473 890089.**

EVERY SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH 1pm - 3.30pm SWT Wild Learning YOUNG WARDENS

For teens aged 11 – 16 years in Holywells Park (and other Ipswich locations). £5. **Please book at suffolkwildlifetrust.org or 01473 890089.**

SECOND SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH 10am - 1pm Friends of Belstead Brook Park CONSERVATION WORK PARTY

Come and join us for a morning working in the fresh air. **For further details visit our website: wildipswich.org/fobbp or email fobbp@wildipswich.org**

MOST SATURDAYS 10.30am - 1pm Ipswich Wildlife Group Northgate Allotments WOODCRAFT & WILDLIFE

Get involved in coppicing and woodland skills at the Wildlife area. **Call Geoff Sinclair to confirm dates 07860 595376**

LAST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH

10am - 1pm Ipswich Wildlife Group WILDLIFE ALLOTMENT

Come and lend a hand to help create our wildlife friendly plot. **More information from Colin Hullis 07979 644134**