

Your local wildlife news



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BRADFIELD WOODS

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**Giles
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Woodlands
Warden



**Joanne
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Wild
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**Bradfield Woods -
Suffolk Wildlife Trust**

Arger Fen

The seasons have brought unparalleled richness to Arger Fen. Will Cranstoun says now is the time to look out for snipe, barn owl and the first signs of spring.

Arger Fen continues to surprise and delight visitors through the seasons. Whilst the spring boasts carpets of bluebells, the summer has seen fantastic swathes of woodland flora burst into bloom; ranging from pink campion, greater stitchwort, foxgloves, vetches and orchids. As result there have been good numbers of pollinators buzzing about the rides and wider open areas of the reserve. The eastern ex-arable land in various stages of early succession are indicative of the varying soil types and conditions. The area known as Kingsland is now showcase to a great deal of emerging

scrub that will be valuable habitat for breeding migrant birds, cover for reptiles and a source of nectar and fruit for whole host of wildlife.

With welcome rains through autumn filling up many of the ponds and replenishing cracked soils, we have witnessed one of the best seasons for fungi across the entire reserve. Arguably the most numerous and easily recognisable being parasol, sulphur tuft and fly agaric. As the seasons progress into winter look out for snipe and barn owl flying over the Pecks Piece with roe deer hiding along hedgerows.

Bradfield Woods

Whether the sun is shining, or the rain pouring, Jo Atkins explains why there is never a better time to go into the woods.

We had a few schools visit us last autumn. It's a shame that we don't get more, as it's a lovely time of year to be outside and what an amazing autumn it was for fungi and spindle berries! Autumn and winter seems to be the time to study the Stone Age in schools and fortunately we offer a Stone Age day in the woods where children can experience a taster of what life was like millennia ago. We make a camp in which to live for the day, make paints with natural pigments to do some 'cave' painting, find out what we can eat in the wood and what we can use as medicine, and we scrape deer skin (to make clothing) and we make useful cordage from lime bark. I have such fun on these days, so if you know any schools that might be interested, please send them over to Bradfield Woods.

Our Wild Tots group is going from strength to strength, we even have a few

grandparents bringing their grandchildren to play. The little ones love being out in the woods, even on very wet days and we can warm up in the centre, drink hot chocolate or have a fire, if it's particularly cold. In 2020 we are also running Wild Tots sessions, and family activities on Pikes Meadow.

Over the last few years we have also grown our woodland craft courses. We added shrink pots and blacksmithing to the list last year. In 2020 we have 25 courses including spoon carving, herbal medicine, rake making (Bradfield Woods used to provide wood for the nearby rake factory so it's great to be able to keep the tradition of rake making alive), pole lathe turning and bowl carving. New for this year is our evening class in green woodworking, six evenings learning different techniques essential for green woodworking, and we're also hoping to have an axe forging course!

Your most local reserves

Black Bourn Valley ● Bonny Wood ● Bradfield Woods

Bulls Wood ● Combs Wood ● Mickfield Meadow

Directions & maps

suffolkwildlifetrust.org



STOWMARKET WILDLIFE GROUP NEWS

Stowmarket Wildlife Group is part of Suffolk Wildlife Trust's county volunteer network. Led by local Trust members, the group organises events, talks and wildlife activities and raises money for the Trust, to help safeguard our wild and beautiful county.

WHAT'S ON

Wednesday 26 February 7.30pm

Talk: BROCKS AND FOULMARTS

The Essex Weasel Family.

Wednesday 29 April 7.30pm

Talk: HEDGEROWS, HERBS AND MEDICINES

Suffolk plants used for food and medicine.

Saturday 16 May 10am

Talk: TALES OF THE RIVER BANK

A riverside walk in Stowmarket.

Wednesday 24 June 7.30pm

Talk: WASPS

There's more to wasps than just being picnic spoilers.

Wednesday 30 September 7.30pm

Talk: BUGS ON THE MOVE

How insects and other invertebrates use signals to find food and mates.

Wednesday 28 October 7.30pm

Talk: BRITISH OWLS

An overview on the five species of owl in Britain plus urban owls.

Wednesday 25 November 7.30pm

CELEBRATION 15

A special evening to celebrate our 15th anniversary.

Talks are held at the Village Hall, Church Road, Stowupland IP14 4BQ. Entry £2.50.
Walks – booking is essential
For full description of events, visit suffolkwildlifetrust.org/events

CELEBRATION

During 2020 our group is celebrating its 15th anniversary. Over those years, our core team has changed and developed, but always reflects how deeply we all care about wildlife and the environment and of Suffolk in particular. This has also been mirrored in our choice of subject and speaker for our evening meetings.

Our 15th year will be no less busy and interesting, culminating in an evening of celebration in November. We would like to invite you to share your wildlife experiences through whatever medium you prefer. There will be our eagerly anticipated, fun wildlife quiz, cake, and even the Mayor has been invited! A celebration of Suffolk wildlife that we can all celebrate.

A HAPPY ENDING

In our last newsletter we featured a story of a special encounter when Judith and Steve Thompson discovered an injured otter cub near the River Rattlesden in Stowmarket. The cub was rescued by the RSPCA and taken to the RSPCA East Winch Wildlife Centre on the night. This was then cared for by Dave Webb, UK Wild Otter Trust in North Devon, until it was old enough and healthy enough to be released back into the wild. While in rehab this otter cub bonded so well with another otter of a similar age that the two were released together into the River Rattlesden where the first cub was found abandoned.

YOUR LOCAL WILDLIFE GROUP CONTACTS

NEWS & EVENTS

John Thompson
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swtstowmarket@gmail.com

VOLUNTEER WORK PARTIES

Combs Wood

Keven Boyce
01449 676610

Bonny Wood

Peter Holborn
01449 736683

MAGAZINES

Delivering your Suffolk Wildlife magazine by hand saves the Trust thousands of pounds each year. We always welcome extra volunteer deliverers. If you would like to help, please contact:

Hella Crosby

01449 721226
or

Nic Martin

Membership Manager
01473 890089
membership@suffolkwildlifetrust.org

If you would like to have a copy of the current newsletter or programme, these can be downloaded from: suffolkwildlifetrust.org/wildlifegroups or by emailing us on swtstowmarket@gmail.com

Volunteer locally

- Reserve work parties are a great way to enjoy your local reserves. Call Will or Giles for details.
- How about helping with events or exploring nature with children? Chat to Jo Atkins.
- Or join the Stowmarket Group team. Go along to any of the group events or give them a call.

