

Newsletter Winter 2018/2019

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Can you name this plant photographed on a verge in West Suffolk?

See p. 12 for the answer



Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service News

SBIS GIS (digital mapping) News

MapInfo training and support was carried out for staff and volunteer placements at Suffolk Coast & Heaths and Dedham Vale AONBs. We have also been supporting the Suffolk Tree Warden Network (STWN) with data and mapping for their Spring Forum and AGM, "Working Together for Trees", which will be hosted by the East Suffolk Tree Warden Group on Sunday 28 April at Ufford. The Suffolk Tree Warden Network (STWN) is a voluntary organisation set up to care for the trees and hedgerows of Suffolk. Further information can be found on the Suffolk Tree Wardens website >

STWN also helped with locating "missing" Suffolk Hedgerow Survey SCDC Parish files - these have now been moved from cold storage to SCDC's Melton offices until SBIS relocates to The Hold, where all the Hedgerow Survey files will be stored together. Advice was given for Wardens recording veteran trees - the Ancient Tree Inventory website > is the best place to view existing records and log new records and includes a Recording Guide and species ID. SBIS data has been sent to the ATI database, and our database is updated with ATI records each year.

The analysis to find County Wildlife Sites with SSSI designation has been completed and these doubly-designated sites, or parts of sites, are being removed from the Register- these areas will retain protection as SSSI. Any non-SSSI remnants of large sites are being assessed for retention as "new" CWS, and site visits to them are planned for the coming months.

Work continued for Orchards East, particularly with transferring the Suffolk Traditional Orchards Group (STOG) survey database into Orchards East format. This is a large piece of work which is expected to continue for several months and will be carried out largely by our part-time member of staff, Andy Mercer.

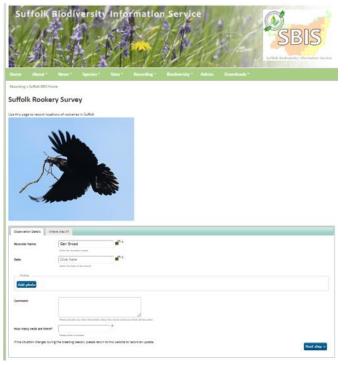
Jane Mason attended a UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) training course which covered the classification codes, habitat survey, data capture and mapping, and a methodology for translating Phase 1 survey data into the new UKHab classification and GIS standard. Further information about the new classification can be found on the UKHabitat Classification Working Group website>

After a relatively quiet December, commercial data searches have increased again, with over 100 searches having been completed in the last 3 months.

SBIS Recording News

SBIS is working with Suffolk Bird Group to record rookery sites in Suffolk, so we have now added a page to our website. If you know of a rookery near you, please do submit the details (including photographs) here >





'Only rain down the drain' in Yellow Fish campaign Chloe Robison-Smith, Groundwork Suffolk



Groundwork Suffolk, the community charity with a green heart, is delivering two Yellow Fish projects in Suffolk with the clear message of 'only rain down the drain!'.

Both projects are designed to help **people reduce surface water pollution entering local rivers** and to **improve awareness of the negative impact it has on wildlife and habitats**. It aims to encourage all members of the community to work together to make a difference.

Groundwork is providing information and practical advice on how to reduce environmental pollution to residents, businesses and schools. A number of events and activities have already taken place with more to come. Public drains are also being marked with a yellow fish symbol as a reminder that all litter or pollution entering the system can cause direct contamination of our rivers and streams.

Yellow Fish is currently being delivered in:

Halesworth, Saxmundham and Framlingham

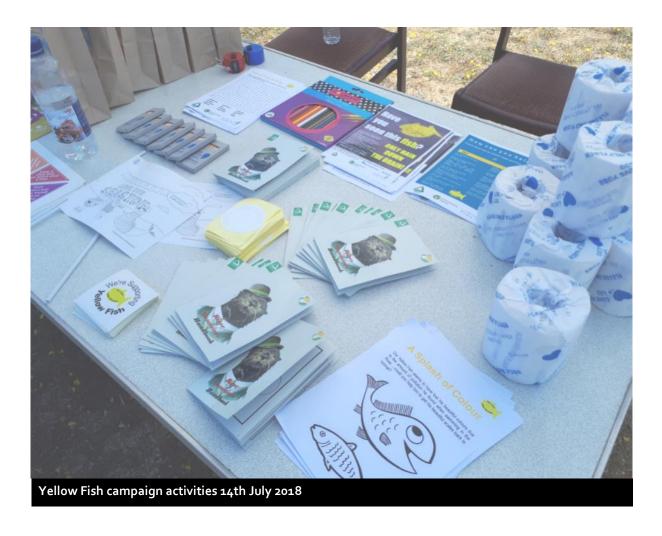
Groundwork is working with the Environment Agency to deliver the key messages to these areas, as previously mentioned in the summer 2018 issue pp10-11.

Woodbridge, Felixstowe and Lowestoft

Groundwork is working with East Suffolk Councils to deliver the key messages to these areas on behalf of the <u>Greenprint Forum</u> >



Yellow Fish campaign crafts - Halesworth library Aug 2018



Groundwork needs YOUR help

Whether you're an individual, business, school or community group there is something you can get involved with!

Groundwork has a number of FREE pocket ashtrays, stickers, River Detective handbooks and informational flyers to give out to the local community with advice on how you can make a difference to your local river. These can be found at local events which are listed on the Groundwork webpage.

Businesses can also get involved by showcasing their support by displaying a small sticker on their shop/office window stating "We're supporting Yellow Fish, only rain down the drain'. Informational flyers can also be provided and distributed to your network. Together we can make a difference!

Visit the Groundwork East website to find out more >

If you would like to get involved in the Groundwork projects please contact: Chloe Robison-Smith, Community Project Officer

email: chloe.robisonsmith@groundwork.org.uk

Tel: 01473 350370

Red crag renewed

Caroline Markham, GeoSuffolk

Winter 2018/9 has seen GeoSuffolk, working again with Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) volunteers, clearing Red Crag pits. This 2.7 million-year-old marine sand is stained with iron oxides and its ancient excavations provide colourful punctuation marks in the forest, heath and farmland of the AONB.

They are part of our history - some originally dug for coprolites, some to use the crag on farm tracks and some as animal shelters. Most are slowly becoming overgrown.

Butley Forest Pit County Geodiversity Site (CGS) is on Forestry Commission open access land. There is footpath access from the road just to the south of Butley Corner (TM367494) or alternatively, find it on the Rendlesham Forest UFO trail at the farthest point from the visitor centre.

This Red Crag pit is one of only two with public access (the other is the Suffolk Wildlife Trust Great Pit at Newbourne) and its two 5m vertical faces have become somewhat degraded over the last decade. The two exposures meet at an angle, enabling three-dimensional study of the sedimentary structures in the crag and on December 4th 2018 we worked to clear this area of vegetation and talus.

The photo shows one of the faces - the upper layer is a large cross bedded unit with tube-like trace fossils and the lower layer has smaller-scale bedding and yields fossils of *Neptunea contraria*, *Glycimeris*, *Arcopagia*, *Chlamys*, *Macoma* and other molluscs.



We also cleared two sections of a privately-owned Red Crag pit in Alderton on February 5th 2019. The palaeontology of this pit makes it important that access is maintained. Now glimpses of Red Crag can be seen again from the Alderton / Ramsholt footpath – as seen in the photograph on p. 6.



Many thanks to Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, its volunteers, the Forestry Commission and the Alderton pit landowner.

The Great British Beach Clean Lynn Allen, Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB

The Marine Conservation Society's (MCS) 2018 Great British Beach Clean was a huge success! Almost 15,000 volunteers took part, nearly 500 beaches were cleaned and litter levels had dropped. This is a fantastic achievement for the 25th anniversary of the event. Here's a snapshot of the MCS's report and you can find out more on the MCS website >



Suffolk played a big part in the MCS national success by organising 24 events. 664 volunteers filled nearly 69 bin bags, donated over 800 hours of their time and collected 184 kg of rubbish.



25 Group with rubbish: Fred Olden Travel on the foreshore of the River Orwell at Alnesbourne Priory



Joe, Ben, Isaac Mathison, Jessica, Emily, Lynne Allen, Sarah Potter and Andrew Excell at Suffolk Wildlife Trust's (SWT) Trimley Marshes. SWT, Orwell District Scouts and BT joined forces for the event. 141 people took part on the day!



Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB Volunteers with event Organiser and AONB Volunteer Placement Officer Steph Poole, at Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Simpsons Saltings, Hollesley

Felixstowe Community Nature Reserve - Plans for 2019 Adrian Cooper, FCNR

Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve has exciting plans for 2019!

To watch a YouTube video of our plans, click here>

First, we will continue with our core activity of encouraging local people to allocate as much space as possible in their gardens, allotments and window boxes for wildlife-friendly features such as pollinator-friendly plants, bird feeders, wildlife ponds, hedgehog homes, insect lodges etc. Even before the New Year had begun, there were over 1200 local people actively involved in this work. If you add together all those small areas of wildlife-friendly spaces from these gardens, allotments and window boxes, you'd have an area which is the equivalent in size to 90% of a full size football pitch! 2019 will see that figure grow.

Our second plan for 2019 is to develop our Citizen Science Group. They will share more data and locally produced maps with partners such as Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service, the National Biodiversity Network, and our new friends among the European Citizen Science Association. We also hope to announce other major developments elsewhere!

Our Citizen Science Group was founded in April 2018 and has already established itself as a source of valued data and maps on subjects such as the reported sightings of hedgehogs, bird feeding patterns, swift sightings, pond insects and much else too.

2019 will also see us working with more young people than ever before. That will include some very exciting projects with at least six schools in Bristol through their School Nature Reserves. Young people everywhere deserve to have a future in which wildlife is a fundamental part of their lives. Our work in 2019 will reinforce the legacy which we hope to offer future generations who will live in our beautiful town.

More locally, we will continue to show-case the excellent work of local artists, photographers and musicians whose creativity is inspired by wildlife and community-based conservation in our gardens, allotments and window boxes. Throughout the New Year, we hope to share the best of this exciting, challenging and fascinating work.

To learn more about Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve, please visit our Facebook page >

In the shadow of Sizewell C - a prime site for Lepidoptera

Rob Parker, Suffolk Branch of Butterfly Conservation

The idea of dropping two new nuclear reactors into a Site of Special Scientific Interest, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and a prime site for butterflies and moths is (fortunately) a once-in-a lifetime issue.

We (Butterfly Conservation) are concerned about the impact of the construction work (as distinct to worries about nuclear safety), so we took part in the extensive consultation exercise conducted by EDF. We listed the species, and in particular the rare and vulnerable species that inhabit the area, and considered their prospects in the face of such a disruptive project. So, we submitted a paper entitled: **Butterflies and Moths of the Sizewell Area.** The essence of the paper is summarized here:

Suffolk's 34 butterfly species (resident and regular migrants) are spread around the county unevenly. On average, each 2km square supports 15.3 species, but the squares around Sizewell B have 25, and are well monitored by two butterfly transects (Sizewell Belts and Upper Abbey Farm).

UKBAP Species. Seven Suffolk butterflies are designated as UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species. Six of the seven fly in the Sizewell area. Those of most concern are:

White Admiral which flies in light woodland where honeysuckle flourishes. It breeds in small numbers in and around Kenton Hills and Goose Hill. It is at risk of displacement by construction work.

Grayling which has undergone a serious decline across England and Suffolk, although it has been quite common from Kenton Hills, through Sizewell Belts and particularly amongst the grass and shingle belt between the sea and Sizewell B. The work along the sea wall could be a significant threat to this declining species.

Small Heath which still flies in the short grass areas around Sizewell B, but its health is unlikely to improve as a result of the construction work.

Moths. A total of 11 BAP, rare or Nationally Notable moths are found along the coast and inland to the Sizewell Belts. Many tetrads have records for over 200 species, and two have over 500, which is impressive (macro and micro moths together).

The records presented show clearly what a rich share of Suffolk's Lepidoptera exist in the vicinity of the Sizewell C development. The likely impact on their populations can be considered in three phases:

Preparation. EDF plans to present its planning application early in 2020 and anticipates a wait of 12 to 18 months before the application is approved. This time is an opportunity to consider possible mitigation measures to benefit wildlife, and to implement them ahead of the construction phase. The continuation of wildlife monitoring is important, and EDF can help by allowing unhindered access to wardens and those conducting the butterfly transects.

Construction. There will be damage to the wild populations early in the construction phase, where new roads are built, car parks and hard storage areas replace natural vegetation, for example around the southern margin of Goose Hill. **Wildlife will be displaced.**

Operational Phase. In the long term, about one square kilometer will have been covered in concrete, and the disturbed areas will have been restored to agriculture/nature.

Impact. Three UKBAP butterfly species and 11 notable moths are presently flying in the relevant 2km squares. All of them are likely to suffer losses; most have some chance of recovering ground when Sizewell C goes operational – which is realistically 15 years from now.

Other conservation bodies – Natural England, RSPB, Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the AONB Partnership have their own concerns as owners or guardians of important habitats, so we shared our study with them.

Planning in a Designated Landscape: Guides, Rules & Tools - Conference

This conference was held on 25th January at the Waterfront Building, University of Suffolk. Around 150 delegates packed the lecture theatre to hear speakers on AONB legislation, Natural Beauty, Tranquility and the Use of Colour in Design. The Dedham Vale AONB Advisory Committee chairman, Cllr Chapman, described the event as 'stunning'. A report on the event and the presentations can be viewed here >

Grant Success for River Restoration Projects

The AONB team has been awarded c£72,000 from the Water Environment Grant Fund to undertake a river restoration project on the R. Stour and its tributaries. Work will include the creation of 'natural features, control of non-native invasive plant species and significant tree planting'. The works will seek to improve the environmental conditions of the river.

Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Forum 21st June 2019 - Bookings Open

There will be a wonderful selection of speakers on environmental education, landscape heritage, emerging farming policy, how to save our swifts and the special qualities of the AONB and Stour Valley by national expert Alison Farmer. There will also be optional field trips to Daws Hall Nature Reserve or Mount Bures Castle, led by experts. Plus, networking opportunities and lunch at the fantastic Shrubs Farm Barn, by kind permission of Robert and Sara Erith. Book now before it's too late...

Visit Dedham Vale and Stour Valley to see the programme Click here to book >

Nature's Value Photography Competition - Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB

The natural environment has progressively declined over the past 70 years. You might think this would hit the headlines and that everyone would see there is a big risk in allowing the degradation of the natural world. The problem is that communicating this issue is really difficult! We can't tell you why you should care for nature because only you know why it matters to you. The Suffolk Marine Pioneer wants us all to recognise the value of nature, so we are inviting you take part in our photography competition to help us communicate why the natural environment is important to us. Deadline noon, 13th May. To find out more visit Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB >

Sandlands Facilitation - Farmer led groups for conservation Diane Ling, Suffolk FWAG

Facilitation is the concept of developing cooperation between land managers for the creation of landscape scale habitat schemes where the environmental, ecological and public benefit of the whole is greater than the sum of the individual holdings working separately.

Our goal is to work together to enhance / increase habitat, biodiversity and wildlife on a long term and sustainable basis, across the East Suffolk Sandlands. This will also improve soil and water health and reduce erosion and pollution.

The three groups, the Sandlands, Felixstowe Peninsula and Shotley Peninsula, includes 60 holdings of some 22,000 hectares from north of the River Alde to the River Stour.

This farmer-led initiative gives its members training opportunities, a support network, the opportunity to deliver wildlife benefits outside of Stewardship schemes and knowledge/resources/labour sharing.



The Sandlands Facilitation Group

It allows members to have close contact with Stewardship officers, DEFRA, partner organisations and opens the door to other funding. As a large group of land managers, we have the chance to influence future Countryside Schemes. With this complete farmer ownership of the project, we aim to cooperate, identify challenges and educate and enthuse those that manage this unique landscape.

For further information, please contact
Diane Ling, Farm Conservation Adviser,
Suffolk Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group
diane.ling@suffolkfwag.co.uk

Save our Suffolk Swifts - Marlborough Road Neighbourhood Swift Project Amanda Warren

'They've made it again Which means the globe's still working, the Creation's Still waking refreshed, our summer's Still all to come --'

The first sighting of the swifts is always a magical moment; Ted Hughes captured it wonderfully in his poem. Maybe you hear them first - can it be, can they be here, you wonder? Then you look up and see one, and you are filled with a surge of joy. Well, that's how it is for me.

I am no ornithologist, but I am an appreciator of birds, and the swifts are my favourite, and all the better for being seasonal, like English asparagus or strawberries. I love their exuberant screams and their daring aerial antics. They are the Red Arrows of the avian world, streaking and streaming overhead, down through the telegraph wires and up again tirelessly, before spiralling up into the sky at dusk, calling as they go, fainter and fainter in the evening air.

You used to be able to hear cuckoos in Ipswich, and now you can't; the town used to have its



Photo credit: Chris Courtney

own large murmuration of starlings, that roosted in the churchyard of St Mary le Tower, but now it hasn't. But it does still have a population of swifts, and along our road, I seem to think it's growing!

For years they have nested under the terracotta tiles of the houses opposite, and I have envied those households. When I realised that my neighbour, Chris, had erected swift boxes on his house, I knew I had to have one. He helped me to acquire one and to find a willing helper to fasten it up high, under the guttering. Some swifts quickly found it, and raised their family there last year, to my delight.

Front cover: Sulphur Clover Trifolium ochroleucum

From there it was a short step to considering how to further enhance swift accommodation all along Marlborough Road, a largely Edwardian residential street in Ipswich. There are three of us involved: Chris Courtney, a keen ornithologist, very much 'in the know' about the birds, such as where to source nest boxes, and ready with a great deal of other useful information; chimney sweep Marcus Webb, an expert up ladders and willing to give his time to put up all the boxes, and finally me, able to push leaflets through doors and collect and collate the responses.

We have had a terrific response to the initiative, with eighteen households ordering a total of twenty boxes. It has been a great way to get to know our neighbours, and everyone is delighted to play their part in supporting this iconic species. With the boxes arriving for distribution in March, as April gives way to May we should have plenty of suitable places when our Marlborough Road swifts return. I hope they're pleased!



Suffolk Naturalists' Society events

AGM and Spring Members' Evening

Wednesday 10th April, Cedars Hotel, Needham Rd, Stowmarket IP14 2AJ

Come and join us for our AGM and for an evening of illustrated natural history talks by members of the society. Drinks will be available from the pay bar on arrival and a half time refreshment break will be provided with tea and coffee. We hope to see you there. We will have illustrated talks by:

Paul Read on Orchards East ... click here to <u>visit the OE website</u>

Peter Vincent on Diptera ... because this is the "Year of the Fly"

SNS Conference 2020 - 'On The Verge of Success'

Hold the date: 29th February 2020, venue: Wherstead Park, Ipswich, Suffolk IP9 2BJ

All about road verges and wildlife - value to wildlife, conservation, management, Roadside Nature Reserves and more.... We are currently organising the conference, so keep an eye on the <u>SNS website for updates ></u>

UK's first Tree Charter Day and National Tree Week

Woodland Trust, Suffolk Tree Warden Network, The Tree Council, Suffolk County Council

The UK's first Tree Charter Day and the start of National Tree Week was celebrated on a Suffolk farm by the planting of thousands of saplings. The event at Peacocks Farm, Wickhambrook on 24th November 2018, was a collaboration between organic vegetable farmer Greg Harrison, the Woodland Trust, Suffolk Tree Warden Network, the Tree Council and Suffolk County Council. Around a dozen volunteers dug in to start the creation of new areas of woodland, which will serve as living memorials to all those who died in the First World War, a shelter belt to protect crops and 600 metres of hedgerow.



create the new wood on his farm.

The trees – a mix of more than a dozen native broadleaf species including oak, rowan, bird cherry, alder, goat willow, hornbeam and field maple - were provided by the Woodland Trust after Mr Harrison signed up to the charity's flagship woodland creation scheme MOREWoods. It took more than a week to plant all 4,250 trees being provided.

Mr Harrison, who runs the Sunshine and Green vegetable box scheme, said: "I want to be able to grow food at the same time as habitat. Trees provide that opportunity. They will

shelter the crops, improve the soil and attract pollinators. The benefits are huge. Every year, the fields here are drained because of the weather and lack of trees. Planting trees and crops will improve that. I want to be able to develop a viable agroforestry scheme. Farming and the environment go hand in hand."

Edwin Van Ek, Woodland Trust Outreach Adviser for the Eastern Claylands said: "Not only will these trees form a beautiful living memorial to those men from the village who lost their lives in the First World War, they will also work hard for Peacock Farm." He added: "We need more trees. Woodland cover in the area is currently just over seven per cent compared to the UK average of 13 per cent. Just over half the trees within the Eastern Claylands are outside of woodland and about a third of these are ash, many of which will succumb to ash dieback. By creating

new woodland Greg is helping to build a more resilient landscape for the future."

The planting was carried out by volunteers from Suffolk Tree Warden Network and members of the local community. Chair and co-ordinator Frances Jannaway said: "Given how important trees are to us and our communities we thought this would be a great opportunity for Suffolk's Tree Wardens to come together and learn not just how to plant a woodland but why they are important to the wider community and how we can create more. This wasn't just a day for planting trees, but for sharing ideas and hopefully inspiring people to find creative ways to get more trees in the ground."



Staff from the Woodland Trust, the Tree Council and Suffolk County Council worked in partnership with volunteers to create the new Suffolk wood.

Gary Battell, Woodland Officer at Suffolk County Council, said: "It's incredibly exciting to have planted thousands of young trees for the benefit of future generations and poignant that they are in honour of previous generations who served in WWI. Suffolk is committed to becoming the Greenest County by working with partners to create green legacies such as this." He added: "I am full of praise for the Woodland Trust, the Tree Council and Suffolk Tree Wardens Network who have been supported by Suffolk Wildlife Trust and all the major landowner organisations. This partnership working has led to many trees being planted outside woodlands. More trees than ever are dying from the impacts of climate change and tree diseases and therefore it is crucial we all protect and manage our mature trees and also



Experienced tree planters worked alongside people planting their first trees.

plant a wide range of native trees to replace losses and to enhance the Suffolk landscape. I am heartened by the amazing commitment from the farming community to plant trees on their Suffolk farms and I hope many more farmers will take up the offer of the fully subsidised high quality cell-grown trees, stakes and guards."

The Woodland Trust's First World War Centenary Woods project is supported by lead partner Sainsbury's. The retailer is helping the Woodland Trust to plant millions of native trees to commemorate the First World War through donations from sales of products including woodland eggs, chicken and turkey.

Edwin van Ek advised that the Woodland Trust can help with grants for woodland creation and restoration of plantations on Ancient Woodland sites.

In 2019, the Woodland Trust will be making 200 fully subsidised Targeting Tree Disease packs available to landowners in the Eastern Claylands of Essex and Suffolk. They contain 45 UK sourced and grown trees and include three species from the following five: oak, hornbeam, silver birch, wild cherry or beech. The Tree Packs will include trees, guards and stakes and need to be picked up from a selection of pick-up points in the project area.



A local father and daughter donated their time because they will walk past the new wood most days.

The offer will be launched at the Suffolk Show in May, so come and see us to find out how we might be able to help you or we could work together. Or contact me on edwinvanek@woodlandtrust.org.uk / tel: 0343 770 5758.



Sharing information about Suffolk's wildlife

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

News <u>SBIS</u> website >

Events SBIS News / Events >

Funding Opportunities Check out the SBIS web page to see if any of these funds can benefit your conservation or community wildlife project. <u>SBIS News / Funding ></u>

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

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

All records are verified via iRecord and our County Recorders and then added to our database for Suffolk (currently 4.23 million). Species records help us to understand the distribution and patterns of Suffolk's wildlife as well as informing the conservation activities of key partners and the planning process.

Follow us on Twitter @Suffolkbis > Like us on Facebook > Share photos on Flickr >

Newsletter Publication dates : Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Deadline for Spring 2019 newsletter articles: **Friday 11**th **May 2019.**

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

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

Contact Us

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

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