

Socially-distanced volunteer work parties  
– see page 8



# Local Wildlife news

September to December 2021

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](mailto:iwg@wildipswich.org)



# Welcome

by **James Baker** *Editor*

I'm delighted to see that we once again have events listed in this issue! After many months of no public events, it is now possible to run them again and the Events Diary (page 22) has the usual wide range of walks, talks and practical activities to help you enjoy local wildlife even more! The organisations running the events will have taken all the necessary steps to ensure it is safe, so please do get out there and take part if you fancy it! As ever though, it is a good idea to contact the organiser prior to setting out – just to be sure it is going ahead as advertised.

A recurring problem in several of the articles in this issue is that of litter, vandalism and other forms of antisocial behaviour in our nature reserves and open spaces. It is always sad to see this and during the various 'lockdowns' with greatly increased numbers of visitors, it seemed that the problem was getting worse. Inevitably, an increase in the number of people using the sites, leads to an increase in mis-use – and perhaps some of this increase can be

explained by new people visiting who perhaps don't fully understand how nature reserves should be treated – but deliberately breaking things and leaving litter is obviously wrong and very frustrating for site managers and volunteers. Please do report all incidents of damage or other antisocial behaviour to the Police.

Personally, I have always been concerned that if we can't stop members of our community caring so little for their local environment, how will we ever make any positive changes on the big issues like climate change and biodiversity decline. Perhaps the only real positive from all of this is the number of people who have taken the opportunity that lockdowns have given, to start litter picking or looking after their local patch. We can only hope that in the end the positive outweighs the negative!

Happy Birthday to Suffolk Wildlife Trust at 60!!



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*Local Wildlife News is published by Greenways Countryside Project.*

*Editor: James Baker greenways.project@ipswich.gov.uk Tel 01473 433995*

*Production Editor: Colin Hullis colin@hullis.net Tel 07979 644134*

*Production Assistant: Lydia Woods*

*Artwork production: Chris Saunders chris@brokehall.plus.com Tel 01473 721550*

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# Do moles need to change their PR company?

**Sheila Roberts** *Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group*

There is no doubt that hedgehogs have been taken to the hearts of so many people over the past few years. And rightly so as their numbers have declined so dramatically they could actually become extinct. When I was a child they were such common visitors to the garden no-one even bothered to comment on seeing one. How different it is today.

I absolutely hope I'm wrong but I wonder if, in half a century's time, will persecution and habitat loss lead to moles becoming an equally rare species that people are encouraged to nurture and love in the way that we have learned to for hedgehogs?

I really started to think about moles on one of my numerous local lockdown walks earlier this year. As the heavy rains in January caused the Belstead Brook to overtop its banks and flood the adjoining meadows of Ellenbrook open space, I was startled to see so many mole hills start popping up. There are always a few in this open space but nothing like the number that were seen in January. As February brought heavy snow even more mole hills continued to appear – piles of earth emerging from the snow covered frozen ground. I couldn't help wondering what was going on and realised that, despite a lifetime's interest in natural history, I knew almost nothing about these velvety little subterranean dwellers.

Strangely, Google didn't really offer much in the way of

useful links so I went down the old-fashioned route of reading an actual book, and within five minutes of opening the pages, I was hooked. They are fascinating – and sadly mostly only known either as a pest or the clever little fictional friend of Ratty in *Wind in the Willows*.

So, here's few things I've learnt about about moles :

- Apart from the breeding season when the babies live with their mother, moles are solitary animals. Around 80% of their territory is a tunnel system used exclusively by one animal. So when people talk about a lot of moles ruining their lawn - it's generally just one.
- If a mole dies, another will take over its territory, often fairly swiftly.
- Their body is incredibly well adapted for their lifestyle – the bone of the upper arm is nearly as broad as it is long – contributing to their incredible strength and their 'hand' has an extra bone running parallel to the thumb which helps shape their digging paddles. And their spine is extremely flexible – allowing them

to turn round in narrow spaces.

- Molehills are mainly there to get rid of excess soil from the tunnels –not just when they dig them initially but also when they have to make repairs if part of the tunnel collapses. It is also thought that they help increase the amount of oxygen in the tunnel.
- One mole will have a network of tunnels over 1000m long between 5 and 90cm deep. More in poor soils.
- They eat worms and other invertebrates that they find trapped in their tunnels or that emerge as they dig.
- They can lift 20 times their own body weight of soil up the shaft of a molehill.
- Moles may also use surface tunnels where the soil is just pushed to the surface in a ridge. This is particularly so with young moles who have left their mother's tunnel and need to create their own territory (or take over one of a dead mole if they are lucky).

If you want to know more, *Moles* by Rob Atkinson, published by Whittet Books is very good.



## 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](http://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org).*



© Steve Bottom

# A pat on the back for Ipswich Borough Council

**Sheila Roberts** *Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group*

When I worked for a council elsewhere in the country, many years ago, I remember people challenging councillors on why the grass in verges and parks had to be cut lots of times every year so destroying the wildflowers, the habitats and food source for insects and other animals.



The answer was simple – if they left the grass to grow, they always got far more complaints about the shaggy sward than they did compliments on their foresighted use of land.

So, hasn't it been lovely in the Ipswich area to see how the councils have left some of our grass verges and formerly close mown parks to nature? I've seen a wealth of wildflowers flourishing – everything from yarrow to mallow in areas that were previously pretty boring. And early in the morning before the traffic builds up, it is fantastic to hear these areas are buzzing with bugs and to see the birds eating the seeds and insects. I wonder if this is part of the reason why I seem to be seeing more goldfinches in SW Ipswich?

So maybe we should all drop a line to our councillor and say thank you? And then maybe even more areas will be left to rewild?



**Ipswich Group Newsletter**

## Sun shines for Ipswich open garden

**After more than a year of not being able to meet face to face; events offered by the Ipswich group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust came back in style in June with a fabulous open garden event.**

Carefully planned in line with Covid-19 restrictions, visitors to the garden were treated to a beautiful display of plants, shrubs, water features and seating areas. Bees and other insects buzzed in the vast range of flowers and an array of birds waited in the surrounding trees for people to leave so they could enjoy spilled cake crumbs and their well-stocked feeders.

Each visitor was treated to refreshments including delicious home-made cakes and sausage rolls. A well-stocked plant and book stall meant visitors could take home some inspiration for their own garden while supporting trust coffers.

In total, £204.84 was raised for the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. The Ipswich group would like to offer its sincere thanks

to Sylvia and Steve for their incredible hard work in hosting the event and to everyone who donated cakes, books and plants.

If you know someone who has a beautiful garden that they might be willing to open for the Suffolk Wildlife Trust next year please do get in touch.





## Learn more about wildlife in bite-sized chunks

If you are one of those people who like to keep on learning new things and you enjoy watching nature documentaries on the telly, may we invite you to join us once a month for the Ipswich group of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust's evening talks?

We're a friendly group and will make you very welcome. Even if you are an absolute novice who has only recently started to get interested in nature, the talks are a great way to learn more and no-one will expect any prior knowledge.

The venue has plenty of space for us all, it's in the town centre, so handy for buses and there is parking almost opposite the hall in the well-lit car park beside the Wolsey Theatre. It is fully accessible and has a professional sound system and screens so everyone can see and hear the pictures comfortably.

## Evening Talks Diary

All Meetings will be held at 7.30pm at Museum Street Methodist Church, 17 Black Horse Lane, Ipswich IP1 2EF. £2.50 includes tea and coffee. There is access for people with disabilities including the toilets.

### **Wednesday 22nd September**

#### **Cathy Smith (SWT) Gardening for Wildlife**

Most of us want to see more wildlife in our gardens, and as a garden enthusiast, and employee of the SWT, responsible for the wildlife garden at Foxburrow Farm, Cathy will give us ideas as to what we should do to make our own gardens a haven for wildlife. This is a good time to make your plans for next year.

### **Wednesday 27th October**

#### **Fay Jones Wonderful World of Stinging Nettles**

Explore the wonderful world of stinging nettles with this fun and fact filled talk. Much maligned as an unwanted weed, it has a myriad of uses, from food and medicine, to dyes and fibres. Find out what actually constitutes a nettle, and why this plant is so valuable for wildlife.

### **Wednesday 24th November**

#### **Sid Cooper (Forestry Commission) Pests and Diseases of Trees**

Dutch elm disease, Ash die back - our trees are in danger. This talk will give an over view of the major pests and diseases currently affecting our trees and woodlands, and how they are currently managed. It looks into what pests may be coming next, what damage they might do and what we can do to prevent or slow down their spread, and help preserve our wonderful woodlands.

### **Wednesday 8th December**

#### **Liz Cutting (photographer) British Wildlife Near and Far**

Liz is a local photographer of distinction with a passion for wildlife, especially birds. Her images have been widely used by the RSPB, (for whom she works as a volunteer), and by many local and national journals and magazines. This talk will focus on local wildlife, and on that from parts of the UK further afield, in Scotland and elsewhere. To see some of her work, google Liz Cutting, Photographer. Enjoy it all, and also our Christmas mince pies.

### **Wednesday 26th January 2022**

#### **Lucy Shepherd (SWT Wild Learning Officer) Weird and Wonderful Wildlife in Ipswich**

It is usual for us to think we have to venture into the countryside to see wildlife, but this is not necessarily so. In Ipswich's magnificent parks, and even in some of its more urban areas it is possible to see an amazing variety of wildlife. Lucy will show some of the items she has found and hopefully encourage you to go and look too.

# Ipswich celebrates our 60th!

**Swift work! Our local mission to help local wildlife as part of our 60th celebrations.**

**Lucy Shepherd** *Wild Learning Officer, Suffolk Wildlife Trust*

This year, we here at Suffolk Wildlife Trust, have been celebrating our 60th birthday and all that the Trust has achieved over the past six decades for people and wildlife alike.

When I thought about how I could celebrate our 60th birthday, I thought the best way to celebrate was to take action to help species in Ipswich... with a slice of cake in hand.

Together with groups of keen teens and young people, 20 swift boxes have been carefully constructed ready to be installed on buildings in and around the town to provide this dramatically declining species with much-needed nesting opportunities. I am delighted to say that 16 of these boxes have already been installed on the Suffolk One building on the London Road (A1214), an area, according to the swift tracker map, where there are very few swift boxes and therefore nesting opportunities for swifts, and

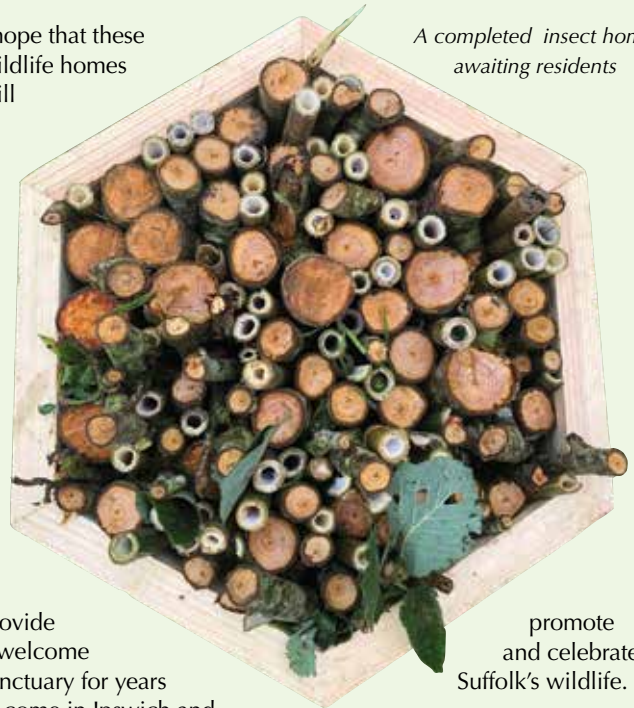
so providing a fantastic habitat and boost for local swifts. We know many pairs of keen eyes will be firmly on the sky near Suffolk One next year to see if any swifts have nested in their smart new accommodation.

These swift boxes couldn't have been made without the help of Ipswich Wildlife Group who kindly measured, cut and sawed the components to size, ready for us to construct on the day, and came along to lend a hand putting them together too! It just shows that we can achieve wonderful things for wildlife when we all work together.

Continuing the theme of providing homes for our feathered friends, 30 tit boxes have been lovingly made and distributed across the town, and as part of a county-wide effort with my colleagues, a whopping 60 invertebrate homes have been made providing our solitary insects with refuge. Well done to everyone who joined us to make these.

I hope that these wildlife homes will

*A completed insect home awaiting residents*



provide a welcome sanctuary for years to come in Ipswich and let's hope that over the next 60 years our declining species will be declining no more.

promote and celebrate Suffolk's wildlife.

Over the coming months, I am looking forward to welcoming groups back to Ipswich Parks and green spaces to go searching for wildlife and exploring our wonderful wild spaces in the town. Over the past year or so and as a result of lockdown, many people have found a new love for nature and Ipswich green spaces, and I look forward to having many more conversations with people when I am out and about in the park, and I hope that this new found interest continues and we have more wildlife fans on our side to help us safeguard,

If you would like to join me on one of my sessions, check out our [suffolkwildlifetrust.org](http://suffolkwildlifetrust.org) website for all my sessions in Ipswich and follow us on Instagram on @swtipswich and @Suffolk Wildlife Trust in Ipswich on Facebook.



*Swift accommodation on the way up*



*Proud builders of more superb homes for swifts*



Brooke House, Ashbocking, Ipswich  
IP6 9JY  
**01473 890089**  
[info@suffolkwildlifetrust.org](mailto:info@suffolkwildlifetrust.org)  
[suffolkwildlifetrust.org](http://suffolkwildlifetrust.org)



# GREENWAYS countryside project

Scout Headquarters (next to St Peter's Church),  
Stoke Park Drive, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP2 9TH  
Office: 01473 433995  
greenways.project@ipswich.gov.uk  
www.wildipswich.org  
Twitter: @greenwaysproj  
Instagram & Facebook: @greenwaysproject

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.

# Annual Report - April 2020 to March 2021

**James Baker** *Manager, Greenways Countryside Project*

This report covers just some of what the Greenways Project has done in the twelve month period up to March 2021. Further information on any of these examples or other sites can be requested from the Project Team using the adjacent contact details.

The map shows the rough locations of the main nature reserves and green spaces where we have worked, as well as the notional Project Area (pale green shading).

### Covid Pandemic

The pandemic and associated protection measures have had a massive impact on our activities and the sites we help to look after. Regular 'daily exercise' visits have greatly increased the number of visitors at all of our reserves – we estimate often between 5 and 10 times more people than usual. This

clearly has a knock-on effect on the sites with infrastructure wearing out more quickly and more litter and other antisocial behaviour.

It has sadly not been possible to run our usual public events and activities, but by way of balance, this has allowed us more time to deal with the additional maintenance requirements around the sites.

### Partnership and Funding

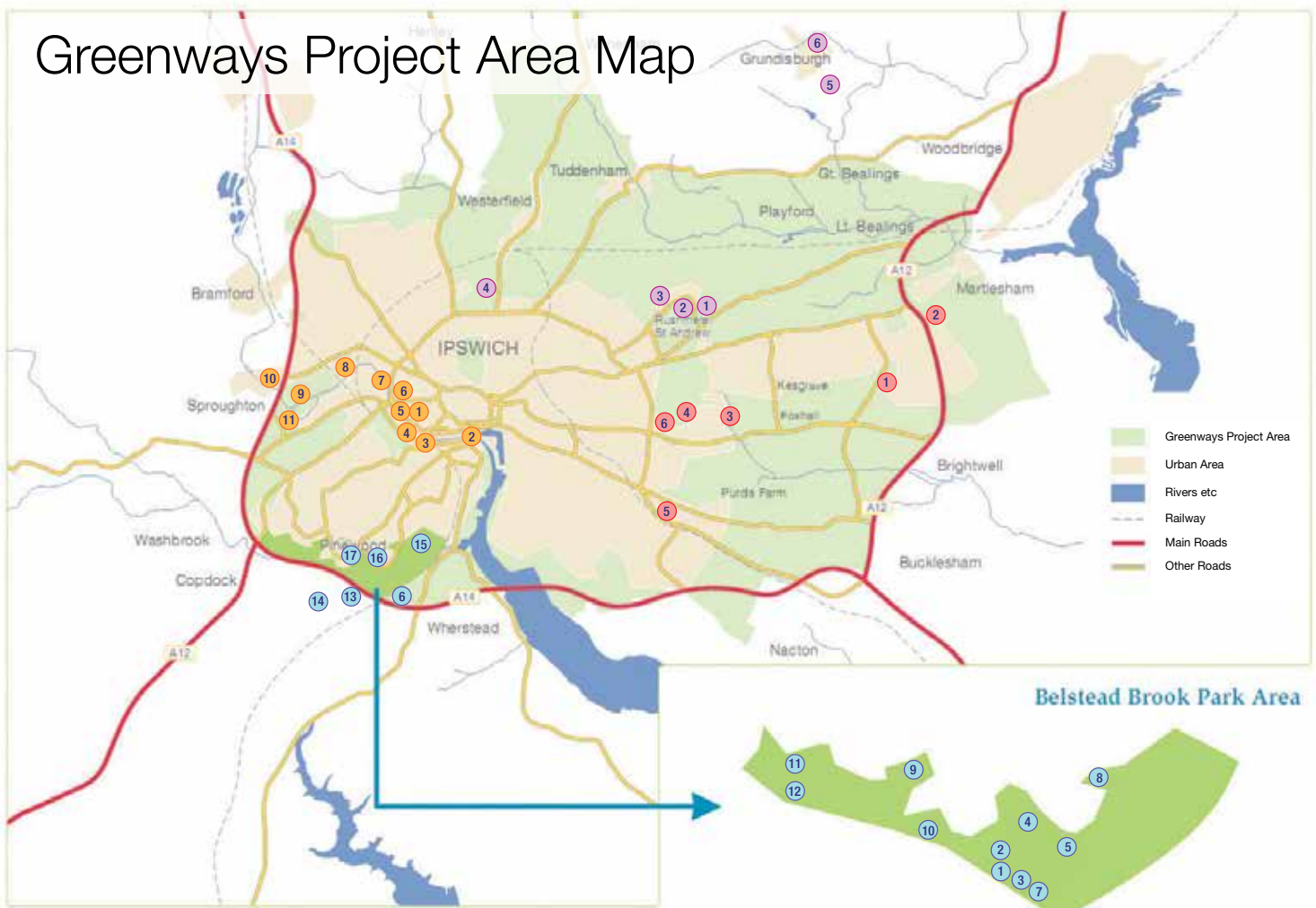
The Project has been a successful and genuine partnership since 1994. Since 2018 when Suffolk County Council left, the partnership is between Ipswich Borough Council (the lead authority), Babergh District Council and East Suffolk Council. The three partners contributed about £35,000 between them in the year, of the total annual cost of around £105,000, with

additional contributions from IBC and BDC for specific site management works. The Project team have had to find the remaining required income from a wide variety of sources including working for Parish and Town Councils, householder associations, developers and private landowners, along with grants, other contributions and minor sales. As the partners' contributions have not increased with inflation for many years, the real income target increases every year, and the need to generate income inevitably means that some work we have traditionally done is no longer possible.

### Volunteers and their invaluable role

The Greenways Project has just two staff members, the Project Manager and Project Ranger – so without the incredible

## Greenways Project Area Map



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efforts of our wonderful volunteers, we would not be able to carry out the amount of work required for all of our reserves. The Project has always relied on volunteers and holds them in the highest regard for achieving startling results. The pandemic meant that we were not able to have the help of the volunteers for several months – and they were greatly missed! The Project Ranger valiantly managed to maintain the sites to a very high standard despite the lack of volunteers, with the first lockdown thankfully happening at our relatively quiet time of year. We managed to modify the way we work sufficiently to allow a small number of volunteers to re-start with us from July. We continued working with small numbers (and other measures) through the rest of the year – meaning a very busy winter habitat

management season (especially as the Project Ranger was off injured for 15 weeks!). Despite this, we had a very productive winter – entirely thanks to the dedication and commitment of a small number of highly motivated and capable volunteers. The total number of person days of volunteer time is understandably well down on previous years to 647 days (worth an estimated £50,000 using Lottery figures), or the equivalent of an additional three full time staff. Despite being roughly half the number of days compared with last year, our productivity has increased!

### Our nature reserves and green spaces

The vast majority of the sites we help to manage are open to the public to come and enjoy nature. This means that as well as managing the wildlife

habitats to maximise their value for as wide a range of species as possible, we also have to provide facilities for people to access and value the sites too. Our work varies through the seasons, with winter being the busiest time (when many species are hibernating; have migrated away or are less active) – when most of the habitat management is carried out – coppicing or thinning of woodlands; clearing scrub on heaths; planting or maintaining trees and hedges etc. Winter is considerably shorter now due to the changing climate, so this busy time is now busier than ever!

Spring and early summer, when most wildlife is most active, is when we focus on the visitor facilities – everything from paths, boardwalks and bridges to information boards, signs and seats. Paths need regular cutting, litter picking and myriad other tasks!

Late summer and autumn are dominated by the management of wildflower meadows (or long grass areas), which are a vital component of almost all of our sites. More details of this management follow.

## Examples of site work

### Meadow/long grass management

Wildflower-rich meadows are extremely important habitats which have suffered massive declines in recent decades, predominantly due to modern agricultural practices including the use of herbicides and insecticides – greatly reducing the biodiversity of the countryside. In recent years many more areas of long grass habitat have been established across parks and open spaces to help to redress the balance.

Unlike gardening or farming, the aim for wildflower grasslands is to reduce soil fertility – so after the flowers have set seed, we mow a proportion of each site and remove the cuttings into habitat piles. Removing the cuttings not only reduces the nutrient level across the area, but also prevents the build up of a 'thatch' of dead material which can also prevent less competitive plants from being able to establish in future years. The habitat piles of cut grass are a practical solution to dealing with the arisings, but do create opportunities for many species including small mammals; reptiles and numerous invertebrates. Part of each meadow tends to be left uncut to allow various invertebrates to complete their life-cycle and to provide some residual cover for reptiles, amphibians, small mammals and other species. The areas left uncut are varied each year to ensure all areas are cut at least every three years to prevent woody scrub developing which could become too dominant.



## List of sites

### Belstead Brook Park and Southern Fringe

- 1 Spring Wood (LNR)
- 2 Kiln Meadow (LNR)
- 3 Millennium Wood (LNR)
- 4 Bobbits Lane Meadows (LNR)
- 5 Ashground Plantation and Whitland Close area
- 6 Bobbits Lane – upper area
- 7 Butterfly Ride
- 8 Stoke Park Wood (LNR)
- 9 Ellenbrook Meadow and open space
- 10 Burnet Meadow and Thorington Park area
- 11 Belstead Meadows
- 12 Belstead Lower Meadows (CWS)
- 13 Thorington Hall Farm area
- 14 Belstead Heath
- 15 Bourne Park
- 16 Netley Close open space
- 17 Lynnbrook Wildlife Area

### Eastern Fringe

- 1 Martlesham Heath (SSSI)
- 2 Martlesham Common (CWS, LNR)
- 3 Mill Stream (LNR), Rushmere St Andrew
- 4 Sandlings, (LNR), Rushmere St Andrew
- 5 Warren Heath (CWS)
- 6 Broke Hall School

### Northern Fringe

- 1 Chestnut Pond, Rushmere St Andrew
- 2 Rushmere Street Wildlife Corridor
- 3 Limes Pond
- 4 Fonnereau Way
- 5 Grundisburgh Millennium Meadow
- 6 Lyttleton's Meadow, Grundisburgh

### Western Fringe and the River

- 1 Alderman Canal (LNR)
- 2 River Path – Stoke Bridge
- 3 River Path – Princes St to West End Rd
- 4 River Path – West End Road
- 5 River Path – West End Rd to Handford Rd
- 6 River Path – Handford Rd-Yarmouth Rd
- 7 River Path – Yarmouth Rd to Riverside Road
- 8 River Path – Boss Hall
- 9 Sproughton Nature Reserve
- 10 River Path – A14 to Sproughton
- 11 Churchman Way

LNR = Local Nature Reserve  
CWS = County Wildlife Site  
SSSI = Site of Special Scientific Interest

**Sproughton Nature Reserve – river path improvement**

As part of the overall redevelopment of the former sugar factory at Sproughton, undeveloped areas of the site are now being managed by Greenways as a nature reserve. Another part of the overall site development is the need to improve the riverside footpath, increasing the width to two metres and providing a flat, level surface with timber edging.

Hopefully we will be delivering the improvement works for Ipswich Borough Council (owners of the site), but we have already carried out improvements to two sections of the path as a trial. The existing public footpath was extremely narrow in places due to erosion and the steeply sloping banks – so two sections were widened and levelled to reduce risk to path users. The unique challenge of this task is the remoteness of the location meaning that it is impossible to use machinery and all materials and tools have to be carried in for up to 900 metres from the nearest vehicle access!



**Kiln Meadow – scrub management**

The winter months saw a huge amount of activity in Kiln Meadow Local Nature Reserve, as a considerable area of developing scrub habitat was cleared to favour wildflower grassland – ideal for the reptiles that make the site their home. Every winter, our volunteers have to clear scrub from around the site – maintaining an attractive and valuable ‘mosaic’ of grassland, bramble, bare ground (paths), hedges, woody scrub and larger trees. This winter the scrub clearing was more focussed along the edge of Bobbits Lane due to Anglian Water preparing to adopt underground sewers and drains. In order for them to ‘adopt’ the services from the house builder (of the Thorington Park development), the underground service routes have to be clear of woody vegetation, for two main reasons - firstly, the roots of trees and shrubs growing over the pipes can dislodge or fracture the pipes or joints, and secondly – if a problem occurs with a drain and they need to dig to access the pipe, the presence of trees and shrubs would prevent this during bird nesting season.



The material we cut was mostly used to construct a ‘dead-hedge’ along the edge of the reserve. Dead hedges are very useful in several ways – they allow for the disposal of cut material more sustainably than by chipping or burning; they can act as a barrier to steer visitors and their dogs to reduce disturbance to vulnerable species; and they provide a rich habitat in themselves for birds, insects, fungi and small mammals.

**Martlesham Common – more path improvement and new information boards**

Following on from two sections of path construction on the Common last year, we have completed another 440 metres this year – another part of the parish-wide ‘trim-trail’.

The path was constructed by digging out a shallow ‘trough’ and filling with crushed stone which is levelled and then rolled by a compacting roller. The resulting surface is relatively flat and even and much more durable than the previous soil path. We have continued to look after the Common on behalf of Martlesham Parish Council, carrying out annual management of the heathland habitat as well as designing and installing three new information boards to help visitors to the Common understand more about the wildlife and history of the site.



# Here's hoping . . .

**Yvonne and Andy** *Friends of Holywells Park*

Writing in July, volunteering is slowly returning to the new normal and hopefully we will be able to begin to put some of our regular events on come Autumn. If all goes to plan we hope to be able to welcome people to Apple Day 'Peared' Down in October. It will be good to see friends who have supported us over many years and to welcome new ones.

We have been busy in the orchard refurbishing our bug hotels, replacing the rotting roofs with new green ones which we have seeded with wild flowers. Several species of solitary bees have made their home in our bug hotels. They are so different from the honey bees in our apiary but these, along with other insects, are essential pollinators and all the fruit trees in the orchard rely on them. With the general decline of most insects, it is becoming increasingly important to provide suitable habitat for them.

The orchard is looking verdant with all the rainfall we had during June, particularly our willow tunnel, which has grown prolifically.



Above: The Honey bees apiary at Holywells. Inset: Hairy-footed flower bee. A species of solitary bee.



Peter and Nick creating a new green roof to one of the bug hotels

The Wednesday volunteers are starting to work in other areas of the park outside the orchard and one of our first tasks has been to refurbish some of the park benches. We plan to carry out other tasks including keeping footpaths clear, cleaning the information boards and general habitat management.



Refurbishing the park benches



## Friends of Holywells Park

The Group aims to work in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council to improve and promote the Park.  
Contact: [fohpiptwich@gmail.com](mailto:fohpiptwich@gmail.com)  
[www.holywellspark.org.uk](http://www.holywellspark.org.uk)  
[facebook.com/holywellsparkipswich](https://www.facebook.com/holywellsparkipswich)

# Looking ahead

**Colin Hullis** Ipswich Wildlife Group

At the time of writing (mid July), the future of Covid restrictions is still up in the air. However, the Group is managing to continue with work parties on a restricted basis and looking forward to resuming at full speed. As we are not a Group that holds indoor meetings and Talks we have not been as badly affected by the restrictions as others. Our Annual General Meeting was a casualty in that respect and our biggest sadness has been the demise of our principal public event Spring Wood Day - but . . . it will be back!

Also looking ahead, the committee has decided to make increased efforts to attract new members to enjoy the pleasures of the wonderful wildlife sites around Ipswich. As a result there will no longer be an annual subscription charge but of course donations will always be welcome. As we are involved with practical wildlife management work, we are always pleased to have members join us at the various work parties. However,



All pictures © Colin Hullis

*Our stand at local events in the town's parks aims to promote the Group by encouraging visitors to get involved in wildlife conservation.*

we are also pleased to welcome those who support our efforts without having to be physically involved. Every membership is important as it provides valuable influence when we are standing up for local environmental issues. All members are kept informed by email of our activities and the latest news by Group secretary Leila.



*Our Saturday morning monthly work party manages the area around Alderman Canal near the centre of town.*



Secretary Leila Matata

iwg@wildipswich.org www.wildipswich.org  
Facebook@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.*

Hand distribution of Local Wildlife News



*Completion of a project by our Friday Barn work party to construct racking to allow timber planks, produced by the Greenways mobile saw mill, to air-dry before being used to make wildlife homes for birds, bugs, bats and hedgehogs.*

has become increasingly difficult and from the next issue (January 2022) we will not be delivering a copy to individual members' homes, however the magazine will be sent to members by email and will appear on our website and Facebook page. Printed copies will be available at all libraries in the town and from the Reg Driver Centre in Christchurch Park. In addition we have made weather-proof literature holders for the magazine and these will be situated at the entrances to Kiln Meadow, Millennium Wood, Mill Stream off Foxhall Road, at Martlesham Common and at the Greenways office by the Scouts building in Stoke Park Drive.

If you are interested in learning more about local wildlife sites and would like to support our work, become a member by simply emailing your name, address and contact details to Leila at [iwg@wildipswich.org](mailto:iwg@wildipswich.org)

# Finally returning to the woods

**Stephen Corley** *Chairman Portal Woodlands Conservation Group*

Since the start of the lockdown days in March 2020, we have not been able to hold any volunteer work mornings. The woods have been pretty much left to themselves, apart from a few health and safety issues with trees that needed urgent attention.

On a dry, warm evening at the end of June this year, a walk along our annual glow worm survey route found just three females. Unlike the males, the females cannot fly and have bright green glowing tails to attract the males. This was another year with very low numbers, continuing this recent trend. Bats were few and far between that night, but instead, several stag beetles were flying making an impressive sight.

Having been released from COVID restrictions, we have set some dates for volunteer

work mornings, and are looking forward to finally returning to the woods. Unfortunately, I am sad to report that most of our first jobs will be to repair vandalism. This has included destruction to some of the fencing around the pond and our brand new notice board that was only installed in November 2020. The mentality of these vandals is beyond comprehension. It is a trend that has become more frequent in the local area and the police have asked for all incidents to be reported.

On a more positive note, we have seen a good number of visitors in all seasons and weathers, and people have reported how the woods have helped their wellbeing during this time. This has been helped by good displays of spring flowers, particularly bluebells this year.



© D. Sweeting

*A female glow worm found on our annual survey*



© K. Corley

*Female stag beetle*



© K. Corley

*Fungus at night*



© S. Corley

*Good display of bluebells last Spring*



## Portal Woodlands Conservation Group

Enquiries: Martlesham Parish Council  
01473 612632 [pwcg.onesuffolk.net](http://pwcg.onesuffolk.net) or  
email [pwcg.martlesham@gmail.com](mailto: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 18th September,  
Sunday 17th October,  
Saturday 20th November,  
Sunday 19th December.

For more details of the Group's events, and to check for date changes, please go to: [www.pwcg.onesuffolk.net](http://www.pwcg.onesuffolk.net) or join our members' Facebook Group by messaging Duncan Sweeting.

# Update on the birds in our Park

**Philip Murphy** *Friends of Christchurch Park*

Birds are often discovered in unexpected locations during harsh weather and this was clearly demonstrated by a Woodcock which was found inside the toilet block across from the Christchurch Park's Children's play area during the freezing conditions in the second week of February.



## Friends of Christchurch Park

Secretary: Sylvia Patsalides 07971 467042  
Membership Secretary: Robert Fairchild  
01473 254255

www.focp.org.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.*

After the cold weather relented, up to 45 Redwings were frequently noted in late February and early March foraging on the open grass areas on the east side of the Park, building up their energy resources prior to their lengthy journey back to breeding grounds in northern Europe.

The first summer-visiting warblers were recorded in March with singing Chiffchaff from 24th and Blackcap from 29th. The Park's marauding Lesser black-backed gulls are also, generally, summer visitors (from Iberia and north-western Africa) and the first pair was back on the Wilderness Pond on March 6th.

The adult Little Grebe which over-wintered on the Wilderness Pond was joined by a second bird on



*Female Great spotted woodpecker at nest hole.*

February 20th - last year's breeding pair? As in 2020, they bred successfully hatching out four chicks of which three survived. Very surprisingly, a third adult was present from March 13th and was frequently seen being chased away by the breeding pair.

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*... the most unexpected sight was that of a male and female Mandarin Duck on the top branches of "Mabel's" tree...*

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Also as in 2020, a single Coot was present on the Wilderness Pond in early spring (March 9th to May 4th). It constructed an enormous nesting platform but finally realised, as in 2020, that a mate was probably not going to arrive and was not seen after the latter date.

The site's resplendent escapee male Hooded Merganser was present from February 20th to April 21st. It often accompanied a particularly dark-plumaged female Mallard which, in some respects, resembled a female Hooded Merganser. Any male Mallard which attempted to approach this particular female was vigorously chased away by the Hooded Merganser.

A female Mandarin Duck with three tiny ducklings was present on the Wilderness Pond on May 21st but by May 26th no ducklings were present. Peak totals of Mandarin Ducks on the Wilderness Pond declined from 34 in January and 28 in February to only 6 in April. By early June the annual gathering of moulting Mandarins had recommenced and by the end of June a maximum of 25 was present, with the males looking very dishevelled.

A resplendent pair of Grey

Wagtails obviously bred within the vicinity of the Park – the male and female were frequently seen between late April and mid-May as they searched for insects on the edges of the Wilderness Pond.

Other noteworthy sightings during this period included an easily-visible Great Spotted Woodpecker's nest near the Westerfield Road Park entrance, a male Common Whitethroat which set up territory in the thick hedgerow just north of the Wilderness Pond for ten days in mid-May, a Reed Warbler singing in the hedgerow just east of the tennis courts, May 23rd a gathering of about 200 Common Swifts over the Reg Driver Visitor Centre, May 11th a Hobby, May 27th up to six sightings of Red Kite.

Finally, perhaps the most unexpected sight was that of a male and female Mandarin Duck on the top branches of "Mabel's" tree on March 30th.

# Reg remembers ...

A reflection on a childhood in the wilds of Ipswich in the 1940's by our regular Christchurch Park correspondent

## Reg Snook

Near to the top of this large and straggly hawthorn tree was an untidy construction of twigs, much larger than a rook's nest and roughly shaped like a beer barrel.

The trouble is that hawthorns have thorns on their branches and branches which are not too strong, certainly not strong enough to bear the weight of a fast-growing 10 year old. The male magpie was cursing me with its rattling call as I gained height, flicking its iridescent tail feathers in annoyance whilst I was trying to avoid piercing my arms on the tree's sharp spikes. I had already found a song-thrush's nest, mud-lined and containing blue-black spotted eggs.

Magpies, in those days particularly where I lived, were quite rare thanks to the endeavours of the local gamekeepers. As I gained height the branches became more pliable and the nest began to slowly sway. Gingerly I eased myself up to the entrance of this massive structure and then the female magpie decided to abandon her home. With her departure I was finally

able to peer into the inner bowl. The nest was lined with fine roots and there, much to my delight, were six eggs, pale blue/green and covered in light brown spots and splashes.

Bird nesting in those days (forties and fifties) was a serious occupation, especially as most of us youngsters owned an egg collection. The Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1956 would eventually dampen our enthusiasm and provide us with a different outlook on wild birds and their protection. However, before that time we all went bird-nesting. My mother was furious when I returned home with bloody shirt and torn trousers – the only pair of trousers I owned.

Those nests in tall trees posed a greater problem. A



rookery was viewed with some trepidation as was the single crow's nest high up an elm or oak tree. Some lads were good at scaling high trees but crows were uncooperative as they built their nest well above the

height that even good climbers dared to attempt. Luckily, for me, an unexpected gale resulted in one particular crow's nest being dislodged with one of the clutch of four eggs landing in the undergrowth below intact. How my friends envied me! My fame was short-lived as a new boy in our primary school from Wales produced a raven's egg that his Uncle had collected from Anglesey.

Egg collecting is, however, still with us but not by youngsters and is now a very secret occupation. Birds are not now so common and many enjoy legal protection. During my stint as a Wildlife Inspector for the Department of the Environment I came across a couple of serious 'nest



robbers'. It is strange that I who had been a young former egg collector should one day give evidence in court prior to a collector being sentenced for illegally stealing eggs. In our day, we would be satisfied with a single egg from a single clutch but in the two cases in which I bore witness, literally hundreds of eggs were involved. So pointlessly destructive.

So this year has been a time for reflection. Bird populations have declined but legislative protection has increased in recognition of this. New reserves have been created with increased co-operation of local and national wildlife societies leading to a greater awareness of nature's needs. Times were so different when I was young!



Song Thrush nest



Magpie nest minus the dome

All pictures © Reg Snook

# Planned walks, coffee and a roller

**Tim Kenny** *Leader, RSPB Ipswich Group*

I thought the spring edition's column would be my last, but with Covid putting paid to our AGM I'm still here for now! If you would like to step into my shoes as the Group Leader of the RSPB in Ipswich, the committee would love to hear from you; please contact group secretary Judy Cook at [cookhouse47@btinternet.com](mailto:cookhouse47@btinternet.com).

Reopening has allowed us to start our planned programme of outdoor walks, starting with our traditional nightjar evening at Upper Hollesley Common on June 23rd. Although the birds were not showing (we suspect it was a bit late in the season and the females were on nests) we were treated to the otherworldly churring of the males. It's always a nice place for a walk and it was just great to be outdoors with other humans after so long under restrictions.



© Tim Kenny

*European roller*

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*... our first midweek walk for eighteen months took place ...*

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On 29th June our first midweek walk for eighteen months took place at Christchurch Park, led by group stalwart Stephen Marginson. He reports that during their wander round they saw many common birds such as coal tit, goldcrest, long-tailed tit, chaffinch, blackbird, duncock, jackdaw and wren. Mistle thrushes were very noticeable, these birds being breeders, using the large trees for nesting and the open grassland for feeding. Stephen adds that it was good to be back and see some familiar faces.

I had the pleasure of leading a walk on

Sunday July 18th to Hollesley Marsh. It was a very hot day so we all agreed we would finish around 11am before temperatures got too unbearable, but we did manage to see a few passage waders in the two hours we were there. Common sandpiper, greenshank and black-tailed godwits were all seen as well as two of the local spoonbills that have recently begun to breed at nearby Havergate. Marsh harriers and buzzards represented the raptors whilst non-birding highlights were butterflies such as gatekeeper, meadow brown, red admiral and painted lady. The walk concluded in the Marsh Barn Café for coffee and cake – this is a really excellent pit stop provided by Combat2Coffee, and I promised founder Nigel Seaman that I'd give it a mention in connection with this trip report!

I couldn't resist a trip out to Icklingham in June in search of the European roller that took up residence for a few days. My personal rule is not to twitch any bird that is outside of Suffolk so this one was at the outer limits of my jurisdiction. It was well worth the trip and the bird performed beautifully, feeding then perching back on the wires to be admired further. There are certain species that draw the crowds because they are attractive, and the roller, with its blues, lilacs and chestnuts, certainly fits the bill.

Now restrictions have been lifted we hope to see you soon (Johnson variant notwithstanding) at one of our forthcoming events - see the Events pages. Please check our website in case anything changes, as it may do depending on government guidelines. Happy birdwatching!



## Ipswich Local Group

Group Leader Tim Kenny

Tel 01394 809236

[ipswichrspliblocalgroup@yahoo.com](mailto:ipswichrspliblocalgroup@yahoo.com)

[www.rspb.org.uk/groups/ipswich](http://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.*

© Colin Hullis



*Spoonbill*



# Clearing rubbish, pushing, heaving and raking - what's not to love?

**Ann Havard** *Friends of Belstead Brook Park*

In April we met again at last for a mega litter clearance behind the flats in Alderlee, off Stoke Park Drive. To say this was challenging is an understatement.

It was really quite depressing to see the amount of litter that people had just thrown over the fence into this wildlife area bordering the Belstead Brook. Rubbish which could have easily gone in the council black bins – there is really no excuse or explanation that can justify this lack of responsibility. With heavy hearts we set to and by the end of the morning we had cleared a big area and filled Peter's truck up to the brim. At the end of the morning it felt good to have made such a difference, hopefully it will inspire the residents to keep it clear.

Our next work party in May was altogether a more satisfying morning despite the heavy rain. Meeting in Bobbitts Lane, we walked along to the wooden bird hide on the mound in Bobbitts Lane Meadow Local Nature Reserve. The path up the mound has been getting very overgrown and the railway sleepers holding the earth bank up have been gradually tilting downhill. We were very glad that we had the strength of James and Carl to help push, shove, pull and heave them back to the upright position. Us lesser mortals cut back the grass and levelled



*Rubbish thrown over the fence*


the path. We saw several slow worms that were hiding in the vegetation and made sure they were safely out of our way.

In June we met in Cottingham Road and headed down into Belstead Meadows where we raked the grass that James and Carl were cutting for us. Several parts of the path were made passable in the heat and humidity. The rakings were put into the usual habitat piles. A bespoke tool made by Peter of 'nails hammered into wood' worked a treat cleaning a bridge!

A damp July morning saw us in Stoke Park Wood, with some of us again raking grass paths to enable walkers to

go through the meadow area without getting soaked. We also went around the other paths in the woodland cutting back trees and brambles that were threatening to trip up walkers. Finally we all came together at the front of the site on Stoke Park Drive and lopped back the vegetation off the pavement. James gave the path a final go with his favourite tool – the leaf blower and it looked good - a cared for and far more inviting Local Nature Reserve.

If you'd like to join in the fun and can spare three hours on the second Saturday of each month, we'd love to see you. You wear old clothes and stout boots – good exercise, great



**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.*

company and the pleasure of knowing you've helped the environment – what's not to love?



*Slow worm found in the vegetation*



*Clearing the pavement along Stoke Park Drive*

# A tribute to Ken and Jean Garrod

**Anne Wright** *Suffolk Bird Group*

I've been a member of the RSPB and various Wildlife Trusts for as long as I can remember - first in Norfolk, where I originally hail from, then, when we moved around for work, Essex, and finally in 2007, Suffolk.

talks and making sure that they felt included and very welcome. Despite her frailty in recent years she was determined to continue to attend these talks whenever she could, not least so that she could catch up with all her old friends.

Jean had specified that she would like donations in her memory to be made to SBG, and it was therefore decided that these donations should be used to acquire a memorial seat for Jean and Ken, and so a beautiful oak bench carved with a commemorative message was acquired from Orwell Mencap, who operate the Genesis joinery works in Ipswich. It was agreed that the Landguard Bird Observatory would be the best site for this bench, as it was one of Jean and Ken's favourite places and they were involved in its setup. A small dedication event was consequently held there on Sunday 11 July, attended by Jean and Ken's immediate family, plus a few friends and several SBG members. The opportunity was also taken to present the Garrod Award to Jamie Everett. Jean endowed this award in memory of Ken, to be awarded annually to a young nature enthusiast for their contribution to birds and wildlife conservation and monitoring in Suffolk.

## Walks are back

Thankfully the walks at least have, at the time of writing, been able to resume again, albeit with limits and careful protocols in place.



For the first of the walks since restrictions eased we met at 7am on 23 May at Eastbridge, and spent a wonderful morning, led by David Walsh, walking around the perimeter of Minsmere. Not only was the wildlife that we saw en route stupendous, it was great to have a 'socially distanced' catch up with old friends, and to be able to welcome some new members – and the great benefit of walking in a group is of course that the many pairs of eyes make for a far greater number of sightings - as always, helping me to (very gradually!) improve my skills.

Since then outdoor meetings have been held in June at Minsmere in the evening for the Nightjars, then a morning walk at the RSPB's Lakenheath Fen reserve. Then in July, a short walk with a later start along the River Gipping at Needham Market, followed by an 'expedition' to Kent to the Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory and Oare Marshes.

Walks and talks planned for the rest of the year are summarised in the Events Diary at the back of this magazine but we would always recommend checking our website at [www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events](http://www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events) in case of changes. Everyone is welcome at our indoor talks when they restart – and anyone who is thinking of joining Suffolk Bird Group is very welcome to join us at one of these walks – we can promise that you will be made very welcome!



Enquiries:  
[info@suffolkbirdgroup.org](mailto:info@suffolkbirdgroup.org)  
[www.suffolkbirdgroup.org](http://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.*

As a result of this last move I consequently started to receive the Local Wildlife News, and always thoroughly enjoyed reading all about the updates and events of the various Suffolk wildlife local groups. This subsequently led me, because of my overarching love of birds, to also join what was, at that time, Suffolk Ornithologists' Group, and is now, Suffolk Bird Group (SBG).

I hasten to add that, even though I love birds, I was then, and still am, very much a 'learner birder' - but even though I was far from being an expert ornithologist, that didn't stop everyone at SOG/SBG from making me extremely welcome from the word go.

Ever since I joined I have attended as many of the Group's walks and indoor meetings as possible and it was at these talks that I first met the redoubtable Jean Garrod, who sadly passed away last year aged 92, and will be missed dreadfully by all those who knew her. Jean and her late husband Ken were long-time members of SOG, and she was the group's outdoor events organiser for nearly 30 years. Jean always made a point of speaking to new members at the



*SBG members with the Memorial Bench at Landguard Bird Observatory*

# Summer in the Dales

**Kaye Roberts** *Secretary, Friends of the Dales*

The first work party of the year took place mid May, but only limited work could be carried out.

A step on one of the higher paths was removed and replaced with two others. Some excess vegetation was removed from the pond but this is now filling up fast with water soldier which may overwhelm everything. Much of the morning was devoted to litter picking and the removal of numerous Sycamore saplings, which never seem to have any trouble taking root as soon as the seeds hit the ground. As well as the usual cans, bottles and crisp packets collected, we also found a plastic chair minus the seat and one crutch!

A few Cowslips were just starting to show in the wildflower strips with Yellow Archangel, Green Alkanet, Stitchwort, Alexanders and a pink-coloured Primrose all found nearby. Butterflies on the wing were Holly Blue, Comma and Speckled Wood. Blackcaps were singing vociferously and a Great Spotted Woodpecker was calling, but, unfortunately, not in view.

Another work party in June was a fairly limited exercise as, unfortunately, again we had no attendance by Ipswich Borough Council Rangers. Not so much litter was found this time so perhaps fewer people are now using the area than during the lockdowns.

Foxgloves are an important flower in early summer, which are mainly pollinated by Bumblebees which generally visit the lower female flowers on the plant first and then proceed up the plant to the male flowers near the top. When the bee visits the next plant,



© Jan Cavston

Wildflower strip

it arrives loaded up with pollen for the female flowers. The July work party was a much more organised affair with IBC attending with

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*A weasel was seen which is a new species for this site ...*

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mowers to cut the long grass near both entrances and around the main pond as well as a clear path round the wildflower strips. The main paths have also been strimmed to make it easier to wend your way through the higher ground.

A Weasel was seen, which is a new species for this site. The wildflower strips are now coming into bloom with Field Scabious, Yarrow, Red Clover, Bird's foot Trefoil, Ox-eye Daisy, Black Knapweed and Viper's-bugloss among those found. As expected, Meadow Brown butterflies were the most abundant species feeding on these, but there were also Red Admiral and Small Skipper. In the trees bordering the wildflower strips a few Comma were seen and also a White Admiral was seen on two separate occasions on 16 July.

Stag Beetles were seen on



© Jan Cavston

Foxgloves



Black knapweed



## 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](mailto:kayefotdsec@virginmedia.com) or find us on Facebook by searching Friends of the Dales



© Jan Cavston

Female stag beetle

the wing on calmer evenings in June and early July. A Muntjac was glimpsed recently and there have been many sightings of foxes, sometimes with cubs.

# Pond Hall Farm – Orwell country park extension

**David Dowding** Ipswich Borough Council Wildlife Team

Pond Hall Farm is situated at Orwell Country Park between Pipers Vale to the west and Bridge Wood to the east.

Part of the former farm area and the farm house have been sold to a private owner, but the remainder of the farm will form an extension to the Country Park, to help encourage visitors away from the estuary when it is being used by wading birds in the winter months particularly.

The two ex-arable fields to the east of the site are in the process of being rewilded and have been identified as a reptile receptor site for building developments in Ipswich. We have created a series of scrapes and bunds to increase capacity for reptiles through improved foraging and basking opportunities. These have been seeded with heather cuttings and wildflowers.

They are currently free of reptiles but between the fields there are lots of wild areas with rough grass and bracken that support good numbers of reptiles. Because of this it is important the receptor



*Partitioning off sections of the fields using reptile fence panels*

sites remain isolated to prevent natural colonisation and maximise capacity for translocation in future years.

These will be achieved by a combination of mowing and the fencing of sections with semi-permanent fencing panels. Once reptiles have been translocated the fencing will be removed to allow the populations to mix.

To delineate reptile receptor areas and reduce disturbance from people and dogs, each field will be fenced off with post and rail. They will be closed during the summer for ground nesting birds but open in the winter to divert people away from the Orwell estuary and reduce disturbance to the birds that overwinter there.



**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.*



*Turf stripped areas have naturally regenerated with lots of poppies and musk thistles*



*Orwell estuary to the south of Pond Hall Farm*

# Snippets

## Purp Emps in Wolves Wood

*Colin Hullis*

On 17th July two Purple Emperor butterflies were seen in RSPB Wolves Wood near Hadleigh. The sighting is reckoned to be the first ever in this woodland.

This magnificent butterfly is extremely elusive as it flies high in the tree-tops where it feeds on aphid honeydew and tree sap. The eggs are laid on willow where the caterpillars also feed. I went along to the Wood a couple of days later and was lucky enough to find them and get several photos.



## Landseer picture *Martin Cant*

An early July walk around Landseer park was a great pleasure, to see so many wild flower banks hosting a plethora of insects. We were surprised at the number of small skippers which seemed to cover nearly every plant as far as the eye could see. There were also quite a few Marbled whites and meadow browns and grasshoppers. This is a great result, mainly due to the hard work in recent years of the IBC Wildlife Rangers. Brilliant.



## Bee Hotel - few vacancies

*Martin Cant*



Our bee hotel in the garden was installed around September last year and had not been used, until this spring/summer. At times we had more than 20 solitary bees all trying to access the hotel and for a month most of the holes had been taken or used as can be seen in the photo. Bees were still using it in July. The hotel faces east which seems to be ideal (for the bees).

## So pleasing

So pleasing to see beautiful summer wild flower areas created by the IBC Wildlife Rangers as part of a landscaping contract at the old Tooks Bakery housing development site along Norwich Road.



## Baby Wood mice discovered

*Martin Cant*

Whilst replacing rotten posts in the orchard at Holywells Park, we were excavating for new seat posts when we accidentally came across a wood mouse nest in the old post hole, where at least five young were seen. They were possibly about seven days old and still had their eyes closed. All were returned to their nest.



# Events Diary

For events covering a broader range of environmental issues go to [www.wildipswich.org](http://www.wildipswich.org)



**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.**

## SEPTEMBER

**Thursday 9th September 7.30pm RSPB Ipswich Group INDOOR MEETING**  
AGM plus 'Alaska - Bears, Eagles, Killer Whales & more' An illustrated talk by Derek Howes, Wildlife Photographer and Tour Guide. Rushmere St Andrew Church Hall, The Street, Rushmere, Ipswich IP5 1DH. Please note we are unable to serve refreshments at this time, so feel free to bring your own. Group members £2.50, Non members £5. Under 18s free.

**Saturday 18th September 8am Suffolk Bird Group WALK**  
Shingle Street and Hollesley Marsh. Meet at Coastguard Cottages.  
**Additional information from [www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events](http://www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events)**

**Saturday 18th September 10am - noon Portal Woodlands Conservation Group VOLUNTEER WORK MORNING**  
All ages welcome - no need to book. Meet at the Education Area. **For more details of the Group's events, and to check for date changes, please go to: [www.pwgc.onesuffolk.net](http://www.pwgc.onesuffolk.net) or join our members' Facebook Group by messaging Duncan Sweeting.**

**Sunday 19th September 9.30am RSPB Ipswich Group FIELD MEETING**  
Tinker's Marsh: Meet at Ferry Road car park, Walberswick. Map ref TM500748. Parking £3 for 4 hours. Walking can be difficult. 3-4 hours. **Leader Chris Courtney Telephone 07765 045182**  
**E-mail [chrisc.courtney@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:chrisc.courtney@yahoo.co.uk)**

**Wednesday 22nd September 7.30pm Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group TALK Cathy Smith (SWT) Gardening for Wildlife.**  
Most of us want to see more wildlife in our gardens, and as a garden enthusiast, and employee of the SWT, responsible for the wildlife garden at Foxburrow Farm, Cathy will give us ideas as to what we should do to make our own gardens a haven for wildlife. This is a good time to make your plans for next year. Museum Street Methodist Church, 17 Black Horse Lane, Ipswich IP1 2EF, £2.50.

**Tuesday 28th September 10.30am RSPB Ipswich Group MIDWEEK WALK**  
A walk round Holywells Park Ipswich (including Conservation Area). Lasts approx 2 hours. Meet at Stable Block off Cliff Lane. Map ref TM176432. **Leader Stephen Marginson. Telephone 01473 258791. E-mail [smarginson@btinternet.com](mailto:smarginson@btinternet.com)**

**Thursday 30th September 7.30pm Suffolk Bird Group TALK**  
'The Seafarers - on seabirds and nature writing' with Stephen Rutt.  
**For venue or Zoom details see [www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events](http://www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events).**

## OCTOBER

**Thursday 14th October 7.30pm RSPB Ipswich Group INDOOR MEETING**  
'Common Buzzards' An illustrated talk by Zoe Smith, Peregrine Project Officer Hawk & Owl Trust. Rushmere St Andrew Church Hall, The Street, Rushmere, Ipswich IP5 1DH. Group members £2.50, Non members £5 Under 18s free.

**Sunday 17th October 10am - noon**  
**Portal Woodlands Conservation Group**  
**VOLUNTEER WORK MORNING**

All ages welcome - no need to book. Meet at the Education Area. **For more details of the Group's events, and to check for date changes, please go to: [www.pwgc.onesuffolk.net](http://www.pwgc.onesuffolk.net) or join our members' Facebook Group by messaging Duncan Sweeting.**



**Thursday 21st October 7.30pm Suffolk Bird Group TALK**

'Human interactions with birds and wildlife in the Horn of Africa and Arabia - in the context of drought & conflict' with James Firebrace. **Expected venue Woodbridge Community Hall, Station Road, IP12 4AU, but please check at [www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events](http://www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events)**

**Saturday 23rd October 8am Suffolk Bird Group LBO OPEN MORNING**

Autumn Open Morning at Landguard Bird Observatory. Meet at main car park View Point Road Felixstowe (charges apply). **Additional information from [www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events](http://www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events).**

**Sunday 24th October 9am RSPB Ipswich Group FIELD MEETING**

Iken Cliffs for waders and wildfowl. 3 hours, 3 miles. Walking mostly easy, but can be muddy. All welcome. Meet at Iken Cliffs car park. Map ref TM398562. **Leader Tim Kenny Telephone 07887 770942.**

**Wednesday 27th October 7.30pm Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group TALK**

Fay Jones Wonderful World of Stinging Nettles. Explore the wonderful world of stinging nettles with this fun and fact filled talk. Much maligned as an unwanted weed, it has a myriad of uses, from food and medicine, to dyes and fibres. Find out what actually constitutes a nettle, and why this plant is so valuable for wildlife. Museum Street Methodist Church, 17 Black Horse Lane, Ipswich IP1 2EF, £2.50.

**Saturday 30th October 10am to 3.30pm**  
**Greenways Project Sroughton Nature Reserve WINTER MEGABASH**

Join Greenways and other local groups to carry out habitat management and other improvements around the reserve. Please bring your own food and drink. Meet on the reserve by the Bailey Bridge - parking available near Sroughton Church and walk east along the river path or in car park on Boss Hall Road and walk west along the river path. Some parking available within the reserve, contact us for details. **More info from Greenways 01473 433995/07736 826076 or [james.baker@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:james.baker@ipswich.gov.uk)**

## NOVEMBER

**Thursday 11th November 7.30pm RSPB Ipswich Group INDOOR MEETING**

'Wolves Wood and Stour Estuary' An illustrated talk by Rick Vonk, RSPB Site Manager. Rushmere St Andrew Church Hall, The Street, Rushmere, Ipswich. IP5 1DH. Group members £2.50, Non members £5. Under 18s free.

**Saturday 20th November 10am - noon**  
**Portal Woodlands Conservation Group**  
**VOLUNTEER WORK MORNING**

All ages welcome - no need to book. Meet at the Education Area. **For more details of the Group's events, and to check for date changes, please go to: <http://pwgc.onesuffolk.net/> or join our members' Facebook Group by messaging Duncan Sweeting.**

**Sunday 21st November 10am to 3.30pm**  
**Greenways Project Belstead Brook Park**  
**WINTER MEGABASH 1**

Join Greenways, Ipswich Wildlife Group and others for a day of woodland management in Spring Wood and Millennium Wood reserves, hopefully including a bonfire! Please bring your own food and drink. Meet opposite the Bobbits Lane car park. **More info from Greenways 01473 433995/07736 826076 or [james.baker@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:james.baker@ipswich.gov.uk)**

**Sunday 21st November 10am RSPB Ipswich Group FIELD MEETING**

Abberton Reservoir Essex Wildlife Trust Reserve for wintering duck, grebes and sawbills. Walking easy, with much birding to be done by car. Meet at Visitors Centre at Layer-de-la-Haye, Colchester. TL962177. EWT non-member charge applies if hides visited. 3hrs. 3miles. All welcome. **Leader Tim Kenny. Telephone 07887 770942.**

**Wednesday 24th November 7.30pm Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group TALK**

Sid Cooper (Forestry Commission) Pests and Diseases of Trees. Dutch elm disease, Ash die back-- our trees are in danger. This talk will give an over view of the major pests and diseases currently affecting our trees and woodlands, and how they are currently managed. It looks into what pests may be coming next, what damage they might do and what we can do to prevent or slow down their spread, and help preserve our wonderful woodlands. Museum Street Methodist Church, 17 Black Horse Lane, Ipswich IP1 2EF, £2.50.

**Thursday 25th November 7.30pm Suffolk Bird Group TALK**

'The Consolation of Nature - Spring in the Time of Coronavirus' with Jeremy Mynott and Mike McCarthy. **Expected venue Ipswich Hotel, Old London Road, Copdock, IP8 3JD, but please check at [www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events](http://www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events)**

**Sunday 28th November 9am Suffolk Bird Group WALK**

Lynford Arboretum - meet at car park at 9am. **Additional information from [www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events](http://www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events)**

## DECEMBER

**Saturday 4th December 9.30am Suffolk Bird Group WALK**

Martlesham Creek - meet at Martlesham Church car park at 9:30am **Additional information from [www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events](http://www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events)**

**Wednesday 8th December 7.30pm Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group TALK**

Liz Cutting (photographer) British Wildlife Near and Far. Liz is a local photographer of distinction with a passion for wildlife, especially birds. Her images have been widely used by the RSPB, (for whom she works as a volunteer), and by many local and national journals and magazines. This

talk will focus on local wildlife, and on that from parts of the UK further afield, in Scotland and elsewhere. Enjoy it all, and also our Christmas mince pies. Museum Street Methodist Church, 17 Black Horse Lane, Ipswich IP1 2EF, £2.50.

**Thursday 9th December 7.30pm RSPB Ipswich Group INDOOR MEETING**

Illustrated talk by Tim Kenny, details to follow nearer the date. Rushmere St Andrew Church Hall, The Street, Rushmere, Ipswich IP5 1DH. Group members £2.50, Non members £5. Under 18s free.

**Saturday 11th December 10am to 3.30pm**  
**Greenways Project Belstead Brook Park**  
**WINTER MEGABASH 2**

Join Greenways, the Friends of BBP and others for a day of meadow scrub clearing at Kiln Meadow LNR. Please bring your own food and drink. Meet at the Marbled White Drive entrance to Kiln Meadow, parking considerably on Marbled White Drive. **More info from Greenways 01473 433995/07736 826076 or [james.baker@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:james.baker@ipswich.gov.uk)**

**Sunday 12th December 9am RSPB Ipswich Group FIELD MEETING**

Melton and River Deben for waders and wildfowl. Walking easy, but can be muddy in places. 3hrs. 3miles. Meet at Melton Riverside car park. TM288503. All welcome. **Leader Tim Kenny. Telephone 07887 770942.**

**Saturday 18th December 9am Suffolk Bird Group WALK**

Mersea Island - meet at Victoria Esplanade at 9am **Additional information from [www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events](http://www.suffolkbirdgroup.org/events).**

**Sunday 19th December 10am - noon**  
**Portal Woodlands Conservation Group**  
**VOLUNTEER WORK MORNING**

All ages welcome - no need to book. Meet at the Education Area. **For more details of the Group's events, and to check for date changes, please go to: <http://pwgc.onesuffolk.net/> or join our members' Facebook Group by messaging Duncan Sweeting.**

## JANUARY 2022

**Saturday 22nd January 2022 10am to 3.30pm**  
**Greenways Project Martlesham**  
**Common WINTER MEGABASH**

Join Greenways and other groups to help maintain this Local Nature Reserve - including scrub clearing and a bonfire (wind direction permitting!). Please bring your own food and drink. Meet at Martlesham Community Centre car park, off Felixstowe Road, Martlesham. **More info from Greenways 01473 433995/07736 826076 or [james.baker@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:james.baker@ipswich.gov.uk)**

**Wednesday 26th January 2022 7.30pm**  
**Suffolk Wildlife Trust Ipswich Group TALK**

Lucy Shepherd (SWT Wild Learning Officer) Weird and Wonderful Wildlife in Ipswich. It is usual for us to think we have to venture into the countryside to see wildlife, but this is not necessarily so. In Ipswich's magnificent parks, and even in some of its more urban areas it is possible to see an amazing variety of wildlife Lucy will show some of the items she has found and hopefully encourage you to go and look too. Museum Street Methodist Church, 17 Black Horse Lane, Ipswich IP1 2EF, £2.50.

# Regular Events

## **THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH 10.30am - 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 10am 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](mailto: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](http://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. Meet at the Stable Block located down the driveway from Cliff Lane. **Contact Andy Smuk for details 01473 728907**

## **SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH Friends of The Dales WORK PARTY**

**Contact Kaye Roberts [kayefotdsec@virginmedia.com](mailto:kayefotdsec@virginmedia.com)**

## **THURSDAYS 10am 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 9 – 10pm '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 10am 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

## **FRIDAYS FORTNIGHTLY 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, Bobbits Lane, Ipswich. **More information from Martin Cant 07858 436003 [martin.cant@ntlworld.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://wildipswich.org/fobbp) or email [fobbp@wildipswich.org](mailto: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**

## Nest boxes 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](http://www.wildipswich.org) where there is more information and prices.

All proceeds go to Ipswich Wildlife Group, a registered charity.