

BADCOG NEWS.

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AGM Chairman's Annual Report 2019

2019, another busy year. The work parties have been well attended and we continue to manage all our wildlife sites.

As always, the biggest one, Walsham Fen requires plenty of input. I saw from my 2018 report that we were negotiating extra help with management from the Bure Valley Conservation Group, BVCG. This has now happened. BADCOG did two sessions of cutting in early July and this was followed by 20+ BVCG volunteers coming on a fine, dry day and clearing all our cut vegetation to existing piles and we are now talking about further cutting of mainly reed areas in the early New Year which BVCG will clear. In return we are making donations to their group. Their work is over and above what we continue to cut and clear annually on our best areas. We also carried out substantial board walk repairs last winter and John Elvin erected a new barn owl box which has already been occupied.

Howes Meadow, also leased from the County Council, is work in progress, helped by the dry weather. We cut and cleared the best SW section ourselves followed by Darrell Starkings, who cuts our hedge. He came and topped the rest of the meadow, North of the stream and SE, inside the gate. Using my old hay turner, I rowed all this up and we managed to clear a large amount to fire sites using my 4WD and large sheet. Long term it would be ideal if we could arrange controlled grazing. (At the time of typing this report we have now burned these piles). The shrub boundary is doing well and David and I fitted a Tawny Owl box in the big oak.

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Clark's Wood, above Shack Lane, had a group TPO confirmed by Broadland District Council in November after our neighbour Mr. Cole bought it, and the land along and above Shack Lane.

Work on our other sites continues as usual; Jary's Meadow in particular is looking good. Apart from our grassland management, we thinned the self-sown oaks, which are starting to form a wood pasture. We are very lucky to own Jary's Meadow.

Regarding churchyards, we had an interesting project at South Burlingham where we dug up 15 self-sown, 2 – 3 foot oaks and replanted them, plus half a dozen of mine and a hornbeam, on the banks around Peter's Wood in Lingwood. We also planted oaks on some of the adjoining field banks. Despite the dry summer they are all growing.

Last February we planted a new mixed hedge along the South side of Limpenhoe churchyard, replacing a concrete post and wire fence.

Lingwood Church, which is mainly managed by the two Tonys (Tony Bowyer & McKie) and Dennis Carter, had a lovely show of harebells. BADCOG mowed Blofield churchyard in July and Yarmouth Green Gym again helped with the clearance work and plan to return for the second cut in October.

Four parishioners helped us with the work at Hemblington church, where a few days later some of us attended an interesting talk given by Professor Tom Williamson titled the 'Norfolk Landscape'.

In May Tony McKie and I gave a BADCOG presentation to the Blofield Garden Club.

Some of us went for a Glow Worm walk on 20th August in Walsham Fen, the first since one on the 21st August 2011. We recorded Pipistrelle Bats, a Barn Owl and eventually a few Glow Worms, not encouraged by the cool evening. It was 10c when I was the last to leave at 10.00 pm.

As always we had some interesting speakers last Winter and an enjoyable Spring walk at Limpenhoe and Cantley, and summer tea and cakes in the garden at Sunny Cottage.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has put in hard work and enthusiasm during 2019.

ELM TREES ON THE WAY BACK?

- **The Historic Spread of Dutch Elm Disease**

Few of us can remain unmoved by the tragic fate of the elm tree during the last century. More than 70% of these glorious trees in Europe and North America have perished since the first outbreak of 'Dutch Elm Disease' in the 1920's. Although it is still unknown how the pathogen, the fungus *Ophiostoma ulmi*, found its way into the elm population, its terrifying spread is due almost entirely to two types of beetle: the Large Elm Bark Beetle (*Scolytus scolytus*) and its lesser cousin the Small Elm Bark Beetle (*Scolytus multistriatus*). These beetles live harmlessly under the bark of the elm, feeding on small new shoots. But in the spring, when the young emerge, they fly to another nearby elm carrying the deadly *Ophiostoma* spored with them. The fungus spreads through the tree, interrupting the liquid transportation system by blocking the xylem vessels. Deprived of water and nutrients, the tree begins to desiccate and starve, and most are dead within a year.

- **Development of Resistant Varieties**

Since the 1950's, scientists led initially by Professor Eugene B. Smalley of Wisconsin University began a series of experiments to hasten the progress of those already working on the problem. What began with simply selecting seemingly more resistant varieties was later tackled more aggressively by injecting dozens of varieties of elm with a strain of *Ophiostoma* fungus in their 3rd or 4th year of growth. This enabled breeders to select those trees better able to resist the fungus or to restore flow to blocked vessels and hence recover from the fungal attack. These trees were then crossed and re-crossed to strengthen their resistance.

This research led to a range of elm species known as 'Resista'-elms. These are so far proving extremely effective at resisting this deadly disease and in fact come with a 10-year guarantee from the growers. As well as their resistance to Dutch Elm Disease, all have been selected as normal for fast growth, well-shaped crown, erect stem, leaf form and colour, resistance to stress, salt, drought and frost.

- **Ulmus 'New Horizon' is First of Resistant Elms (Pictures on page 5)**

There are now a half dozen varieties of Resista-elm available for planting in Europe. The first of these Resista-elms is *Ulmus* 'New Horizon'. This is a medium-sized tree with one straight central leader. A dense conical crown shows even branches and upright twigs. The leaves are a dark silky glossy green. It grows best in a sunny or part-shaded position, in neutral or slightly acid soil, well aerated and with a good water supply. It can tolerate compact soils and is resistant to stress from traffic, wind and frost. 'New Horizon' is particularly suitable for avenue or street planting because of its compact habit. Only small seeds are produced and the leaves decompose fast.

**TREE WARDEN REPORT FROM EAST OF ENGLAND FORUM
6TH OCTOBER 2019.**

This was held at Reedham village hall. It was well attended with tree warden delegates from Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire.

The subjects under discussion were:

- Ash Dieback.
- Role of The Tree Council's Pilot Advisory Group.
- Broadland's Tree Heritage.
- The Government's Climate Change Report.
- Reports of Tree Warden Groups' Activities

Picking out two of these:-

Ash Dieback is making its way relentlessly through the country and by 2023 we will have lost 50% of our ash trees with most of the remaining trees showing signs of the disease which will eventually kill them. As yet no disease resistant variants have been found.

Climate Change Report with the aim of being carbon neutral by 2050. It was emphasized that tree planting is imperative for carbon capture and that this is important as much locally as it is nationally. To do this we need to plant 3 billion trees by 2030 and extend hedgerows by 40%. This will increase tree cover nationally from 13% to 17% by planting an area equivalent to the size of Dorset. The selection of species for planting and their aftercare is an important issue as is the type and management of any hedges which need managing in a sustainable manner. An example was given of the amount of biofuel a farmer could expect which would encourage hedge planting.

It was ironic that in case we hadn't registered the association of climate change and severe weather we were subjected to torrential rain which meant that our visit to a local ancient wet wood was cancelled and I had a journey home punctuated by many flood induced diversions.

David Pilch 8.10.19

SPECIAL OFFER TO BADCOG MEMBERS

BADCOG has been given a number of new copies of the definitive book about the distinguished Yarmouth naturalist Arthur Patterson who wrote under the name of Kohn Knowlittle. The donation has been given so that they can be sold to boost BADCOG's funds.

The book is written by his granddaughter and its 138 pages are richly illustrated by many of Arthur Patterson's drawings and paintings.

It is available on a first come first served basis from David Pilch at The White House, Blofield for the discounted price of £5 (RRP £9.95).

SCRIBBLINGS OF A YARMOUTH NATURALIST

An edited selection from the writings
of Arthur Henry Patterson, A.L.S.
(John Knowlittle)



By
Beryl Tooley

Ulmus 'New Horizon' Resistance Elms



Autumn weather at Lingwood 2019

Ernest Hoyos

After a dry July and August, September saw the return of rain, but really only in the last 9 days. 12.5mm fell in the first 3 weeks and 62mm in the final 9 days making a total for the month of 74.6mm = 141% of average.

We also had the coldest September night for 10 years when the air temperature fell to 4.0c on the 8th and a touch of ground frost at -1.1c. As we know this October is the real talking point. The wet weather at the end of September continued into this month with 17mm in the first few days followed by the deluge which started in the early hours of Sunday 6th and continued unabated all day, finally clearing at 5pm by which time 80mm had fallen. The average for the whole of October is 62mm so it was unsurprising that many roads and unfortunately properties were flooded.

At the time of writing, 16th of October, half way through the month I've recorded 122mm or 4.75inches of rain. Added to the heavy rain at the end of September we've had 7.25 inches in the last 25 days, over a quarter of our expected annual rainfall. Despite this we are now only a little above average for the year so far. Time will tell whether we are due for more heavy rain this month. The wettest month I have on my records was June 2007 with 166.7mm.



Lingwood Pond after the rain on 6th Oct

Talks and Meetings

Methodist Chapel, Chapel Road, Lingwood

Start time 7.30pm.

Refreshments available after talks.

8th November - Ellie Beach, a talk by the conservation manager of the Little Ouse Headwaters Project.

10th January - The current work at NNNT - By Tony Leach.

14th February - The Guardian's Naturalist writer Patrick Barkham

13th March - TBN.

10th April - A talk by Garth Coupland

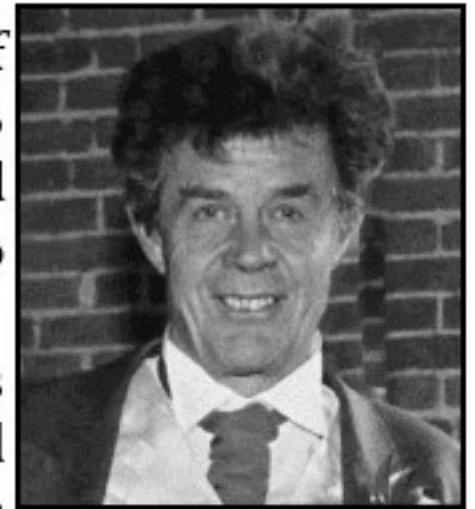
OBITUARY

MIKE BLACKBURN 9TH JANUARY 1944 - 24TH AUGUST 2019

It is with much sadness that we record the death of Mike Blackburn. Mike was the first warden at RSPB Strumpshaw Fen when it opened in 1976. He laid the basis of its management which has enabled it to be the iconic place it is today.

Mike was a strong supporter of BADCOG from its inception in 1983 providing both advice and physical help with management. His kind, calm and unhurried manner was a great encouragement.

His funeral took place at Strumpshaw Church on Friday 6th September 2019. The presence of a packed church bore testimony to the affection so many felt for Mike. He will be greatly missed. Our sympathies go to his family in their loss.



BADCOG Winter Walk and Christmas Lunch 14th December 2019

This year's winter walk and lunch will start at 10.30am at St Andrew's church North Burlingham and will follow footpaths and tracks through Burlingham Woods, Millenium Wood and Austin Wood and then via Hare Fen to Fairhaven Cafe at South Walsham for lunch. After lunch we will return by the same route with minor variations to Burlingham.

The walk is a round trip of 5 miles but by appropriate positioning of cars could be a one way walk to Fairhaven for those less able.



WORK PARTY DATES

ALL START AT 10.30 UNLESS STATED

- 9th November—Strumpshaw Stone-pit**
- 23rd November—Snowdrop acre**
- 7th December—Jary's Meadow**
- 28th December—Railway Wood**

Main Work party Reports

Aug 31 - Howes Meadow -EH completed the rowing up of the cut reed using the hay-turner prior to the start of the WP. 90% of area C &D raked and cleared to spoil heap and fire site.

Sep 07 - Howes Meadow - Areas A/D - continued the clearance of cut vegetation to spoil heaps/fire sites. With so much cut reed a feeder pile was made adjacent to the west fire site and a further pile near the stream. Approx 25% of reed not cleared.

Sep 14 - Howes Meadow - Completed the clearance of all cut vegetation to fire sites and piles ready for burning when weather conditions permit.

Sep 28 - Buckenham Woods - Main area - 2metre strip to east of path, the area to west by chestnut tree and around the seat, mown raked and cleared to spoil heaps. Steps area raked and cleared to fire site. The vegetation on and by the steps cut down using hook.

Oct 02 - Moulton Pit Wood - General tidy up of site. Cut vegetation raked and cleared to spoil heaps. Fallen timber cut up if necessary and cleared to wood piles. This WP carried out by the Bure Valley Conservation Volunteers (BVCV)

Oct 12 - Walsham Fen - Area G - Vegetation mown on 08 Oct raked and cleared to spoil heaps. Boardwalks partly cleared.

Additional Work party Reports

Aug 24 - Howes Meadow - Area C mown. Area A&D cut by farmer Mr D Starkings using tractor and cutter

Aug 24 - Jary's Meadow - Completed the clearance of cut vegetation started at WP on Jul 17. Burning carried out at east meadow fire sites.

Aug 27 - Howes Meadow - Mowed vegetation rowed using hay-turner

Sep 17 - Lingwood Church - Conservation area mowed.

Sep 19 - Howes Meadow - Area A - Reed pile by stream burnt

Sep 19 - Creamers Meadow - 50m x 40m section mown

Sep 20 - Lingwood Church - Conservation area raked and cleared and piled ready for burning

Sep 21 - Howes Meadow - Area A - main fire site and reed piled at east end burnt

Sep 23 - Buckenham Woods - Steps area; main area around seat and 2m at east side of path mown

Sep 26 - Lingwood Pond - West Compartment - an area of reed by boundary wall mown

Oct 02 - Lingwood Pond - additional mowing and raking reed into pile for future clearance

Oct 03 - Blofield Church - All 4 conservation areas mown. 2 mowers used.

Oct 05 - Lingwood Pond - West Compartment south boundary hedge - pond side of hedge trimmed back and cut vegetation cleared to reed pile

Oct 08 - Blofield Church - All 4 conservation areas raked and cleared to spoil heaps. This WP carried out by the Gt Yarmouth Green Gym (GYGG)

Oct 08 - Walsham Fen - Area G and boardwalk + a mower cut at both sides, mown 2 mowers used.

Oct 22 - Limpenhoe Church - Conservation area mown.

Lingwood-Peters Wood Permissive Path - Field barrier bank - Glyphosate sprayed in a band at the location of the proposed hedge planting area.