



Newsletter

October 2010 to January 2011

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Business and Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the new carbon in environmental circles, but can you really measure, manage or cost it as easily as you can carbon?

For further reading and information click on this link

<http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/analysis/1935384/measure-firms-biodiversity-footprint>

East of England Biodiversity Forum: On-line Brochure

The EEBF has produced an on-line brochure showing the achievements to date for the regional biodiversity targets. The brochure looks very attractive, so please take a look at <http://www.eoebiodiversity.org/pdfs/saving-biodiversity.pdf>

The headlines are:

- Over 6000 hectares of ancient woodland restored since 1996
- Over 1000 hectares of heathland or acid grassland restored
- Over 1000 hectares of reedbed and fen created or re-established
- Almost 2400 hectares of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh re-established

UK Biodiversity Partnership Conference

Presentations and feedback from the workshop sessions at the UK Biodiversity Partnership Conference are now available on line at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Wildlife-habitats/16118/conference2010/Biodivconference/Q/forceupdate/on>

East of England Local Wildlife Site Project

The Natural England-funded East of England Local Wildlife Site Project aiming to get Local/County Wildlife Sites into HLS Agreements is making good progress in all six counties.

Two applications have been submitted, a third is near to completion and a further eleven are at various stages of development. If you have any further suggestions for Local/County Wildlife Sites for HLS applications then please let Nick Carter know Email: nickc@norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

The project is also well advanced at publicising the importance of Local/County Wildlife Sites to landowners and conservationists with articles produced for newsletters and talks given to various groups. In addition an article has been submitted for the next edition of *In Practice*, a publication for members of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management for publication in March.

Natural England Biodiversity Delivery Post - April 2011

Biodiversity remains a high priority for Defra. Caroline Spelman chaired sessions at the recent Nagoya Biodiversity Summit and is personally enthused. Overall Natural England will have less staff and less budget. The obvious top drivers of the future biodiversity agenda will be 'landscape scale', Big Society/localism.

Natural England continue to work with Defra and partners on the Natural Environment White Paper, revised England Biodiversity Strategy and England Biodiversity Governance. Natural England are not in control of the timescales for this work, but it is unlikely that we will have clarity around this until June 2011 earliest.

Integrated Biodiversity Delivery Areas (IBDAs)

Work is progressing well with The Fens IBDA. A large stakeholder event was held in early December and a wide range of interested groups attended. There was a request for volunteers to be involved in the development of the IBDA and the response has been very good, with representatives of the land owning, academic and historic heritage community, etc, coming forward.

A funding proforma has been sent out to all potential Fens IBDA partners, with the intention of selecting the projects which will achieve the agreed aims and objectives of The Fens IBDA and then trying to find the capacity to submit external funding applications to fund this work. The response has been huge with 58 completed forms returned.

Also in the region other NCAs, particularly the Brecks, Broads and Suffolk Coast & Heaths are progressing landscape scale thinking. With all these large scale projects in the region, it should put partners in the region in a good place to deliver parts of the Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP). (The signs are that the recommendations in the Lawton Report will be incorporated in the NEWP)

Natural Connections – Achieving More With Less Across Urban and Rural Landscapes Thursday 17 March 2011 - SOAS, Russell Square, London, WC1H 0XG

This conference is about natural or semi-natural networks that are managed, enhanced, created and designed to have multiple functions and deliver multiple benefits for people and nature. This thinking is at the heart of planning "Green infrastructure" for sustainable development in urban and rural areas, core to the best landscape scale projects, causing a rethink in river management and how best to manage protected landscapes and other areas. Benefits can include improved public health and quality of life, adaptation to climate change, economic regeneration and growth, functional wildlife links, flood control, recreation, and a host of other benefits. This agenda also looks set to be an important element of the Natural Environment White Paper. But with fewer resources to achieve all this, it has never been more relevant for public bodies, NGO's, other interests and communities, to all work together to achieve more with less.

Find out more about:

- § **the latest news on the White Paper and other drivers**
- § **key concepts and evidence**
- § **approaches and methods that work**
- § **resources to help**
- § **inspiring success stories**

Draft conference programme and booking form available at: <http://www.dialoguematters.co.uk/registration.asp>

New report: The Economic Cost of Invasive Non-Native Species on Great Britain

A new report on the economic costs of invasive non-native species has been produced. For further details visit <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/downloadDocument.cfm?id=487>

Headline figures:



- Invasive non-native species (INNS) cost the British economy at least £1.7 billion per annum. This is likely to be significantly less than the full economic cost since many indirect costs resulting from INNS, such as the damage to ecosystem services and loss of biodiversity, cannot be readily quantified.
- This report focused on direct costs as these were most readily and/or reasonably estimable. An analysis of previous studies of the economic cost of INNS to the economies of various countries revealed that, on average, direct costs constitute only a small proportion of the estimated total INNS costs. Taking into account these indirect costs, it is likely that the full value of the economic costs would be significantly higher.
- The annual costs to the 3 countries are estimated to be: English economy - £1.3 billion, Scottish economy - £245 million, Welsh economy - £125 million.
- The significantly higher costs to England are likely to be due to the fact that England has proportionately more agricultural land (which is the sector with the highest measurable direct costs). In addition, England has more (and busier) international transport gateways than the other two countries and is therefore more likely to be the entry point for invasive species. Consequently, more invasive non-native species have become established in England and some species that are widespread in England have a limited distribution in Scotland and Wales.



The Economic Cost of Invasive Non-Native Species on Great Britain

F. Williams, R. Cochen, A. Heath, G. Sandhu, C. Prid, R.S. Shaw, S. Vane, J. Larrington-Godwin, S.E. Thomas, S.T. Murphy

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KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE

Highest sectoral impacts:

- The cost to the agriculture and horticulture sectors (including the effects of plant pathogens) amounts to just under two thirds of the total estimated cost (approximately £1 billion to Great Britain, £839 million to England, £156 million to Scotland, £71 million to Wales).
- The construction, development and infrastructure sector has the 2nd highest direct cost at approximately £212 million for Great Britain, £194 million to England, £7 million to Scotland, £11 million to Wales). Costs in this sector arise from very few species. Japanese knotweed is by far the most costly species, followed by the brown rat.
- Plants as a group inflict the highest costs to the economy, with plant pathogens and mammals also causing considerable costs across sectors.

Highest impact species:

- The top 20 non-native species inflicting the highest annual direct costs to the British economy are:

Rabbit, Japanese knotweed, common field-speedwell/wild oat, rat, potato cyst nematodes, non-native deer, varroa mite, floating pennywort, house mouse, grey squirrel, rhododendron, slipper limpet, mink, geese/swans, green spruce aphid, signal crayfish, giant hogweed, Himalayan balsam, buddleia, edible dormouse

Case studies – cost-benefit analysis of intervention:

- Using five detailed case studies, the report also examines the cost-benefit relationship of tackling INNS at different stages of the invasion process. The case studies were on Asian long-horned beetle, carpet sea squirt, water primrose, grey squirrel and coypu. These case studies revealed an exponential increase of the cost of control as an invasion progresses, and demonstrated the benefits of intervention at an early stage, as well as the long-term cost savings if eradication is undertaken early in the invasion process.
- It estimated that the early eradication of the aquatic plant water primrose will cost £73 thousand compared to the £242 million that it might cost if the plant was to become fully established as it has on the continent in countries like France and Belgium.

If you are interested in finding out more about non native species projects currently active in the country visit <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/maps/index.cfm>

POND CONSERVATION: Big Pond Thaw Results 2010

The winter of 2009/10 was the hardest for 30 years in the United Kingdom.

Because of this, many ponds froze for much longer than we have been used to, with ice cover persisting for a month or more in many places. As the ice melted, Pond Conservation started to receive reports from distressed pond owners about dead amphibians, mainly frogs, that had been overwintering in their ponds.

We already had evidence that the usual advice given to protect wildlife in garden ponds in cold weather – ‘make a hole in the ice’ – was having little effect. So we asked Pond Conservation’s supporters, and other pond lovers, to tell us more about their ponds during the freezing weather. We wanted to find out if the things people did to protect their pond wildlife were having an effect - for example: Did they make holes in the ice? Did they clear the snow? Did they run a pump? and, of course, Had they suffered amphibian or fish deaths?

So a very big “thank-you” to all of you who contributed to the Big Pond Thaw Survey – it’s provided some unique information.

View the [full report](#)

You can still complete the survey by clicking on this link:

<http://www.pondconservation.org.uk/bigponddip/bigpondthawformonline?referer=%7ba9b852a5-4bd0-4683-a4a4-1e045565fdc6%7d&noemail=1>



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS • 2011



International Year of the Forest

2011 is the International Year of the Forest, so hopefully the timing is right to help build the bridge between biodiversity and climate responses. Perhaps more organisations will want to help support a larger, annual celebration on or around the weekend nearest to 22 May 2011, the International Day for Biological Diversity and to be ‘friends of the CBD’. On the horizon are other opportunities to mobilise understanding:

- Rio Earth Summit +20 – which will aim to focus on joining up our understanding of a green economy that brings together climate change, sustainable development and biodiversity
- The London Sustainable Olympic Games where there is an opportunity to highlight issues of urban biodiversity
- The Convention on Biological Diversity COP11 in India in 2012 when key actions following this year’s Nagoya COP10 agreements have to be in place to fulfil the 2020 targets



Autumn-Winter 2010

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Website

Flora Locale's website is currently being reviewed and updated to both extend and improve accessibility to the huge amount of electronic information that is now available on restoring wild plants and their habitats, both produced by us and others.

Further details will be provided early in 2011.

List of native flora suppliers

Flora Locale's list of native flora suppliers is a unique facility offering a contact point between companies selling plants or seed and individuals wishing to purchase appropriate planting stock for restoration projects.

During 2011 we will be improving the functionality of this service. Further details will be provided in the Spring.



Ox-eye Daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*

Bluebell genetics and seed licensing

Anyone wishing to collect Wild Bluebell seed next year for subsequent sale should be thinking about applying for a license to do so now. Natural England's botanical specialist has given assurances that applications within England will be dealt with promptly. Please send *Flora Locale* your reports on experience with seed licensing – good or poor. A license is only required if the seed is to be sold or transferred to a different land holding.

Research undertaken by scientists based at the Natural History Museum and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, indicates that hybridization with the closely related Spanish Bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica* is a risk in urban areas, but that in more rural remote areas, populations of our native Wild Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* remain relatively pure. The implications are that in collecting seed for use in restoration projects, seed should be collected from wild populations well away from urban areas. Licensing authorities for Common Bluebell are the Welsh Assembly Government, Scottish Government and Natural England. We recommend that, in your application, evidence is given the wild population having been assessed as being largely *non-scripta*, using standard botanical identification methodology. The licensing authorities have been asked to provide some detailed guidance on the information they require and we hope that this will be available soon.

PLANTLINK UK - news

Flora Locale is represented on Plantlink UK and representatives attended meetings in April and October. Issues considered were:

- Licensing the sale of bluebell seed
- Continued use of peat for horticultural use
- Non native invasive species
- The consultation 'State of Nature in England' (see separate item).

Wales' wild meadows

Flora Locale's project in Wales ended in April and our project officer, Ivy Berkshire, has returned to her job working with the Welsh Assembly Government. Any queries relating to our work in Wales should now be referred to the office, info@floralocale.org. A major benefit of the project was the networking that was established between organizations, landowners and farmers, and the opportunities offered through our programme of free events showcasing good practice, which were very well supported. A number of practical restoration projects also received funding, resulting in measurable improvements to wildflower meadows 'on the ground'.





Wild flowers for pollinators

Flora Locale is pressing hard, the need to restore wildflower-rich habitats quickly and at a large scale if declines in pollinating insects and other farmland wildlife are to be reversed. This was the main message, forming our response to the Government's consultation *An invitation to shape the nature of England* (closed October 2010). Over the next six months we will be promoting this issue through the press and to policy makers in the UK and also those involved with shaping agri-environment schemes at the European level.

Flora Locale's webpage on wild flowers and pollinators, including our response to the Defra consultation can be found [here](#). We also relayed this message to a meeting of European policy makers and ecologists at a meeting held at the European Commission in Brussels in November.

Large-scale restoration is the future

A recent major review of nature conservation in England has found the current suite of protected areas unfit for purpose - wildlife habitats are simply too small and too fragmented, resulting in continuing biodiversity loss. Professor Sir John Lawton, in [Making Space for Nature: A review of England's wildlife sites and ecological network](#), concludes "we need a step-change in our approach to wildlife conservation, from trying to hang on to what we have, to one of large-scale habitat restoration and recreation under-pinned by the re-establishment of ecological processes and ecosystem services". A consultation on how to address the issues raised by the Lawton report was subsequently carried out by Defra and will be followed by a White Paper to be issued by the government next year. Should the recommendations of the Lawton report come to fruition, it will be even more important that land managers are tooled up with the right set of skills and knowledge – making the work of *Flora Locale* even more relevant in the post-2010 world.

Land managers' training in 2010 – *Flora Locale* training programme

This year there were over 236 paid places booked on our courses. NGOs took 41%, consultancies 33%. The Wildlife Trusts also took significant advantage of the courses; others included the National Trust, the Environment Agency, and commercial specialist nurseries made up the rest.



Frances Clayton (left), *Flora Locale's* new Director, led an afternoon event in south Wales, focusing on managing flower-rich grasslands using horses and ponies.

In Wales, with support from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, 9 free events were organized as part of our Wild Meadows initiative. Some 105 places were taken, 36% of which were from the private sector representing landowners and consultancies.

Flora Locale gratefully acknowledges the expertise of all our course facilitators and hosts who helped run events this year.

New director for *Flora Locale*

Flora Locale is pleased to welcome its new Director, Frances Clayton (see above). Frances joined the Board in October. She is well known in south east England, as the South East's Equine Champion. Her knowledge of grassland management and horses complements well the knowledge and skills of *Flora Locale's* other five Directors.

Contact us

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C/o Forestry Commission Office, Postern Hill Lodge, Marlborough, SN8 4ND.

Company Secretary & Projects Administrator: Sue Clarke

Admin Officer: Claire McCorquodale

Technical Adviser: Sue Everett

Flora Locale

Flora Locale seeks to restore wild plants and wild-plant communities to lands and landscapes across the UK, and by this means raise the biodiversity, environmental quality and enjoyment of town and countryside. *Flora Locale* is a Charity registered in England and Wales No. 1071212, a Scottish Registered Charity No SC039001 and UK Registered Company Limited by Guarantee No. 3539595.

Wicken Fen Recording & Research Newsletter

Please click on this link for the latest copy:

<http://www.wicken.org.uk/research/WickenRR2010.pdf>



IEEM East of England Shadow Section

Forthcoming Events

1. Floodplain Meadows: Diversity, Water and Nutrients

Tuesday 25 January 2011 19.30

Professor David Gowing, Open University

Location: Old Library, Girton College, Cambridge (with the College Geographical Society)

2. Management of Wicken Fen

Wednesday 16 February 2011 19.30

Carole Laidlaw, Grazing Manager National Trust

Location: Wicken Fen Nature Reserve Visitor Centre, Wicken

Full details of the events can be found on our website:

www.ieem.net/eastengland.asp

Both events are free but booking is essential – please contact David Collins via dcollinselmtwo@btconnect.com

Diary Dates



16 February 2011 7.30pm

IEEM East of England Geographic Section Meeting - Management of Wicken Fen – Carole Laidlaw, Grazing Manage, National Trust

Wicken Fen Nature Reserve Visitor Centre, Wicken

The event is free but booking is essential - please contact David Collins via Email: dcollinselmtwo@btconnect.com

Non-members are welcome to attend. For members who attend these meetings they count towards your CPD requirements.

23 March 2011

IEEM Spring 2011 Conference - Invasive Species: New Natives in a Changing Climate?

London

[Click here for further information and to book a place.](#)

17 March 2011

Natural Connections: Achieving More With Less Across Rural & Urban Landscapes

SOAS, London

More information and a booking form can be found at www.dialoguematters.co.uk.

Enquiries to admin@dialoguematters.co.uk or telephone 01233 813875

2-3 November 2011

IEEM Autumn 2011 Conference - Tools for Rebuilding Biodiversity

Liverpool

More information to follow.