

Trinity Broads Partnership

Trinity Broads Newsletter - Autumn 2011

Managing Land and Lakes for All

The Trinity Broads are a tranquil and beautiful part of the Broadland landscape; a hidden gem isolated from the bustling main river system. Situated north-west of Great Yarmouth, the Trinity Broads make up 14% of the open water within the Broads National Park. The habitats include wide expanses of shallow open water, extensive tracts of broadshore reedbed and undisturbed areas of wet woodland. These habitats support a wealth of wildlife, from the tiniest rare snail, to the spectacular bittern. The wildlife importance means that over 3km² of the Trinity Broads is protected by national and international conservation designations.

The Trinity Broads are linked to the River Bure via the Muckfleet watercourse; this passes through another protected site called Burgh Common, over 1.2km². As another core wildlife area Burgh Common is home to some of the most diverse fen vegetation in the Broads, which in turn supports a stunning array of insects and bird life including a heronary. As part of this working landscape cows graze the grassland between the ditches, woodland and shallow open water. These broads are at the heart of the local communities, providing drinking water for the people of Great Yarmouth and the local villages themselves, a superb recreational resource for local anglers and sailors as well as the foundation of successful local businesses. The surrounding farmland not only produces our food, it also provides refuges for wildlife along the field margins, dykes and patches of woodland.

The Trinity Broads Partnership works to safeguard and enhance the Trinity Broads for wildlife and people. The four partners have been working together for over fifteen years to restore the habitats to their full potential, and to encourage sustainable enjoyment of the site by the local community and visitors.



Contact us and get involved!

Contact: Hannah Gray or Phil Heath
Mobile: 07711 439180 or 07971 156086
Email: trinity.broads@broads-authority.gov.uk

Post: Trinity Broads Project, Broads Authority,
Ludham Fieldbase, Horsefen Road, Ludham,
Great Yarmouth, NR29 5QG.

Volunteer: Practical conservation tasks every Monday, Wetland Bird Surveys one Sunday a month, other opportunities including seasonal surveys of plants and animals, and admin assistance.

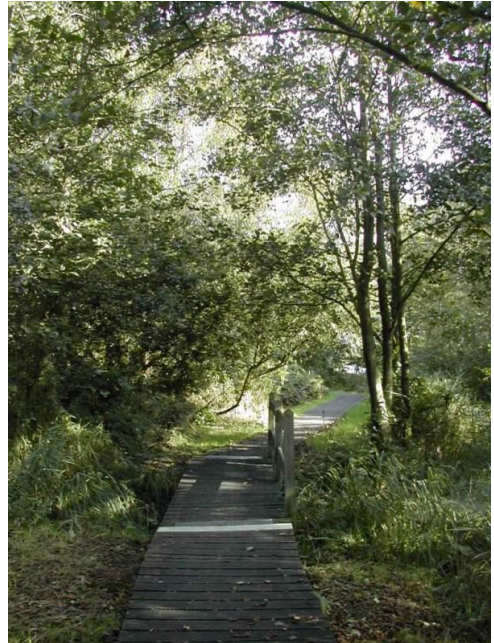
Top Story: Improvements to Filby Bridge Car Park

Filby Bridge Car Park and the adjoining footpath and boardwalk will be closed from the 26th October until early 2012 whilst the Broads Authority carries out improvement works.

The existing boardwalk is now almost 30 years old and is becoming very rotten in places. For many years we have been carrying out ongoing maintenance, but it has now reached the point where it needs replacing. It will be replaced with a footpath instead of a boardwalk.

When the boardwalk is removed we will use the opportunity to manage the dyke that runs adjacent. This dyke is of conservation importance within the Trinity Broads system but has become very silted up in recent years. The dyke will be "slubbed out", i.e. cleared of leaves, branches and silt, to create some open water again. We apologise for any inconvenience to people that use these facilities. If anyone has any queries please don't hesitate to contact the Project staff.

The Trinity Broads Partnership is also keen to upgrade the viewing platform overlooking Ormesby Little Broad, and install some information panels along the route of the footpath, and we are currently seeking funding for these improvements.



Sailing and water plants in Rollesby Broad - update

Members of Rollesby Broad Sailing Club have faced challenging conditions in recent summers because water plants have been growing up to the surface across much of the Broad. The Trinity Broads Partnership secured agreement and funding to cut some of the water plants in 2011 to enable sailing to continue safely.

The specialist machinery (pictured right) was booked in for a late July cut, and members of the sailing club had volunteered their services to assist with managing the cut plant material. When the warm weather arrived, club members started to monitor the growth of the water plants. It was apparent in mid July that the plants were still low down. We decided to postpone the cut until mid August, but again the plants were still low down. Everyone agreed to cancel the cutting for 2011, and wait to see what happens in 2012.



©Kingcombe Aquacare



Rare plant returns to the Trinity Broads

Each year staff and volunteers carry out a water plant survey in each of the Trinity Broads. This year we were excited to find a rare plant called Holly-leaved Naiad growing healthily throughout the system. Holly-leaved Naiad is so rare that it is on the Red Data Book, a list of wildlife that is under considerable pressure. In the past tiny fragments of it have been found at the top of Ormesby Broad, but this summer we found large beds of it in Ormesby, Filby and Ormesby Little Broads, as well as some fragments in Lily Broad. This is good news because it means that water quality must be improving and the broads are returning to a wonderfully diverse ecosystem, full of life.

Alien invaders at Filby Broad! – update



Broads Authority officers found an alien plant on the edge of Filby Broad and Fleggburgh Common in summer 2009. The plant comes from Australia and shouldn't be growing in the wild here. It is called Australian Swamp Stonecrop or New Zealand Pygmyweed in garden centres (Latin name *Crassula helmsii*).

It looks innocent enough, but in our climate and without natural predators it just keeps on growing. Eventually it can overtake whole ponds, as it has done in the New Forest. You may be wondering how it got all the way from Australia to Filby! The answer is simple. It is sold in garden centres as an oxygenating plant for aquariums and garden ponds. When people get fed up of keeping fish in tanks, or want to move tadpoles from their ponds, they often inadvertently introduce this plant into local ponds, dykes, and even the broads.

This summer has been dry enough to enable the Broads Authority to carry out management to try and eradicate it. When we found the plant in 2009 we quickly installed plastic piling (see below) to contain the patch, and sprayed it with herbicide to weaken the plant.



Research shows that the only way to truly eradicate this stubborn plant is to bury it. This summer we removed the top layer of soil within the area including all root material, and buried it in a hole. The area was then back-filled with peaty soil.

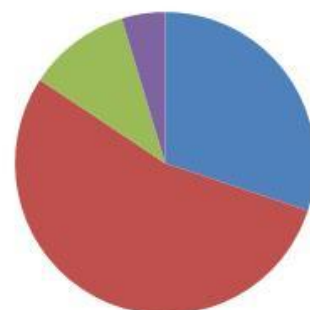
We will monitor the site to check it is truly eradicated. We will continue this monitoring for at least a year, and if there is no evidence of any re-growth of the *Crassula*, we will remove the piling. Thanks to the Norfolk Non-Native Species Initiative, which provided the funds for this management work – check out their website for more info about non-native invasives: www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies.

Work planned for winter 2011-2012

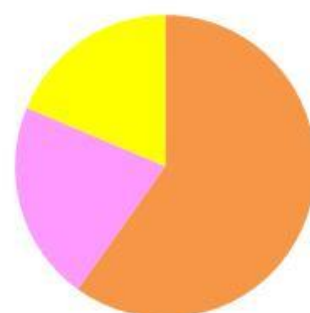
As always, winter is a busy time for carrying out habitat management work. When out on the broads, you may see our contractors or volunteers removing young willow and alder trees from the broad shore reedbeds. We have received some additional funding this winter from Natural England to create some shallow ponds at Burgh Common, and to carry out work along Town Dyke to improve the flow of water and to de-silt the channel. We also hope to work with Filby parish council and school on the clay pits pond.

2010-2011 Finances

In the last financial year, a total of £42,920 was spent by the Trinity Broads Partnership on project activities. The first pie chart below shows which aspects of the Project received funding. The second pie chart shows how much each partner organisation contributed. In addition, the total cost of employing Project staff was approximately £50,000.



■ Biodiversity monitoring
■ Biodiversity management
■ Community projects
■ General costs



■ Essex & Suffolk Water
■ Broads Authority
■ Natural England
■ Environment Agency

If you would like any further information about Trinity Broads Project costs, please contact the Broads Authority.

Wildlife Sightings during Summer 2011

- Great Crested Grebe, Mute Swan and Coot all nested in good numbers with high productivity.
- All duck species had very poor breeding season with only 2 broods of Mallard and 3 broods of Tufted Duck noted.
- Large numbers of non-breeding Mute Swans over-summered attracted by plentiful supply of water plants to eat.
- 6-7 pairs of Common Terns nested successfully on tern platform at Ormesby Broad, while one pair bred successfully on sailing platform at Filby Broad – we will be installing specially designed tern platforms at these locations next spring to allow breeding to continue without impeding access to sailors and maintenance staff from waterworks.
- Kingfisher numbers were severely reduced countrywide by severe winter weather, but a number of pairs bred across the Trinity Broads system.
- Booming Bittern heard at two locations early in season though no nests were established. Male subsequently over-summered on Ormesby Broad. (Thanks to Roger from The Waterside for the photo, right, taken on Rollesby Broad).
- A few Little Egrets noted throughout summer but no indication of breeding.
- Other notable birds seen include Black Terns, Little Gulls, Crossbills, Black Necked Grebe, Mediterranean Gulls.
- No American Mink sightings this summer, thankfully. Evidence from scat shows that Otters remain present, and several have been sighted around the 'narrows' between Rollesby and Ormesby Little.
- Swallowtail Butterflies had a good year with adults regularly seen on Burgh Common, with occasional sightings elsewhere in the Trinities, including on the nectar-rich flower beds at the Waterside.



Trinity Broads Management Plan 2012-2017

The Management Plan is almost complete, and an Extended Summary will be circulated to members of the Trinity Broads Consultation Group whilst it is being considered by the Broads Authority management and members. The Full Technical Document will be available on our website shortly. We have incorporated ideas put forward by the Consultation Group into the Action Plan. We welcome any comments on the Management Plan from members of the public and stakeholders. It is worth remembering that all Site Management Plans are adaptive, i.e. they can evolve and expand over time, so please don't assume that everything is set in stone because it is in the Management Plan.

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/projects/trinity-broad.html

Trinity Broads News – Autumn 2011

Please note that the views expressed in Trinity Broads News are those of the authors, and may not reflect the views of the partner organisations.

All photos copyright Broads Authority, except where otherwise stated.

