

PRESS BRIEFING

21st March 2022

Embargoed for 24th March 2022

**Journalists are welcome to a reception at:
Broad Cottage, Carrs Road, Buckenham, NR13 4HL
Thursday 24th March, 4:00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.**

BUCKENHAM CARRS

The Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society (NNNS) has recently completed the first wide-ranging survey of this little-known area of wetlands, woodlands and grazing marshes on the north bank of the River Yare¹.

In three years of fieldwork, more than 1600 species of fauna, flora and fungi were discovered and identified by voluntary specialist recorders in the Society. This total represents almost 15% of all the species previously recorded in the Broads, including many rare and endangered species and several insects and fungi completely new to the Norfolk list.

These and many more still waiting to be discovered at the site depend for their survival on a continuous supply of clean freshwater to Buckenham and Hasingham Broads. Brackish water from higher tides in the Yare, or nutrient-rich water from arable fields, could be disastrous.

The Broads Authority, UEA and Natural England have found that nearly 16% of all the species in the UK are to be found in the 1,122 sq km Broads Biodiversity Action Plan area, despite this being just 0.5% of the land area of the UK². This is why we need such a rich array of protected areas in Broadland, including a 303 sq km National Park, National Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and County Wildlife Sites.

Whilst NGOs like RSPB, NWT and the National Trust, together with the Broads Authority, manage the biggest, more public areas, private landowners also play a key role, as here in the 340 ha Buckenham & Hasingham Estate. Buckenham Carrs includes parts of two SSSIs, carefully managed with support from Natural England, and is part of the internationally designated 46 sq km Broadland Ramsar Site.

In addition to hosting the largest nocturnal winter roost for rooks in Great Britain, with up to 50,000 birds, the Buckenham Carrs area also has records of the Osprey, Marsh Harrier, White-tailed Eagle, Bittern and other iconic denizens of the Broads.

The NNNS project has identified rare wetland and aquatic plants such as Milk-parsley, Marsh Fern, Water Soldier and Holly-leaved Naiad, diverse mosses and liverworts, rare insects like the Enchanter's Mompha and Hedge Cosmet moths, a rare Spider-hunting Wasp and the endangered Fen Raft Spider.

A species of predatory Silver Fly, *Leucopomyia palliditarsis*, has been discovered here for the first time in Britain. Interestingly, Silver Flies are used in biocontrol programmes for scale insect outbreaks.

For more details contact Dr Mark Collins, Chair, NNNS Research Committee, collinsmark@gmail.com; 07941248100. Photographs are available.

¹ Collins, N.M. (ed.) 2021. The ecology and biodiversity of Buckenham Carrs. *Trans Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society* 54 (1): 1-48.

² Panter, C.J., Mossman, H.L. & Dolman, P.M. 2011. *Biodiversity Audit and Tolerance Sensitivity Mapping for the Broads. Broads Authority Report*. University of East Anglia, Norwich. 70pp. ([ref](#))