Delving deeper into the ecology of NWT Sweet Briar Marshes

Delving deeper into the ecology of NWT Sweet Briar Marshes

A new partnership with Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists Society (NNNS) will help us discover more about the unique ecosystem at our newest urban nature reserve.
Naturalists and scientists from NNNS will be visiting Sweet Briar Marshes regularly over the next two years to collect data from the site. Each of our County Recorders will be collecting using different methods such as nets, pitfall traps, binoculars and magnifying lenses to identify species, says Professor David Harper from the society. 'We are confident that over two years we can double or treble the species records for such an important site."

Nature Conservation Manager for NWT, Steve Collin, adds: "Establishing which species we have on site, known as an ecological baseline, is especially Important for a new nature reserve as it Informs our conservation management and allows us to measure change. For example, data gathered on aquatic and semi-aquatic animals such as newts and water voles will determine how we manage the dyke and ditch system: and research into grassland-reliant species such as butterflies will affect where we move our grazing herd, Monitoring also gives an early warming of problem Invasive species so we can remedy at an early stage, and identifying rare species allows us to better protect them."

The new research project will enhance the ecological baseline established The ecological from previous monitoring at Sweet Briar Marshes by other groups and experts including Norfolk Wildlife Services. which revealed an amazing diversity of wildlife for an urban reserve. Surveys so far include evidence of nearly 1,000 species of invertebrate, over 200 species of flowering plant such as musk mallow, wild carrot and water mint and more than six types of bat.

Get involved

Norfolk Naturalists are looking for volunteers to help with monitoring at Sweet Briar Marshes and other places across Norfolk. Contact John Worthington-Hill at joworthingtonhill@gmail.com for more information.