

Scarning Conservation Volunteers / Scarning Water Meadows 2016/17 report.

Since this time last year there have been a number of notable achievements and events.

As a County Wildlife Site we have had good liaison and advice from Norfolk Wildlife Trust particularly with the Bioblitz held on the site last July.

This achieved over 300 species of plants and animals being identified and recorded for the county database. It was also a showcase for the local community and over 200 members of the public attended and participated in activities and guide walks.

Work has been on-going by the volunteers to enhance the bio diversity of the site. Task days have enabled clearance of rank growth and encroaching scrub. Wider areas have been cut and cleared by contractor.

Last autumn a long held plan to create a hard path for ease of public access was achieved with the laying down of a 'trod' path along the west side.

This has been appreciated by walkers, mobility scooter users and mums with buggies. The water scrapes dug in 2015 have become well colonised by many aquatic plants and animals.

Two bat walks with detectors saw several species recorded and a good level of interest from local people.

Many birds are seen regularly – including kingfishers, little egret, heron, buzzards, owls, etc - and water voles are evident in the main stream and ditches.

The work needs to be ongoing to maintain the area for the benefit of wildlife and the local residents.

Many use the paths for exercise and for dog walking. There is an issue with a minority who do not clear up after their dog. There is liaison with Breckland for more signage. Litter likewise has to be cleared on a regular basis in spite of bins being provided.

How many members of the Parish Council - and those present today - have been to see and appreciate the area in the past 6 months?

Please take an interest in what is a very special area within our parish.

If time can be given to supporting the volunteers on task days, roughly once a month, that would be appreciated. Information is given on the parish web site or talk to any of the committee.