

NATURE VOLUNTEER NETWORK

July 2023 - Newsletter 1.

Upcoming Neonics talk 7th September - details to follow.

Welcome folks to our first newsletter. It's nothing fancy, but I hope the content will make up for that.

Many of you will have taken part in the "Walk for Nature". I thought I'd start off with a few pictures from Lynn News who covered the event.



Above: Walkers gather for a photo at Boal Quay just before setting off.

Over 50 took part on what was a scorchingly hot day. The route was 2.6 miles, included a ferry ride, and ended at Hardings Pits for a picnic.

Several local eco-groups took part as well folks who were concerned for nature and wanted to show their support.

The idea of the walk was to bring groups and people together so we can unite and work with each other to give nature a voice.



Left: Julia Irving and Lucy Ward leading the way (both NVN and XR members).

Below: Long procession of walkers along the route.

No Schools:

I approached every Secondary School in West Norfolk inviting them to come along, and not one got back to me. So, to try and engage with schools the NVN want to organise nature talks, and we have specialist speakers ready, so if any members have contacts that can make this happen please let us know.



At the Picnic:

We all gathered at the end of the walk for a picnic where folks chatted amongst themselves and listened to speakers representing the groups that supported the walk. They were: Andy Bullen ; Brenda Kent ; Daphne Sampson ; Trudy Clark - NVN: Jan Smith - Ryston Rachel's Hedgehog Hotel; Julia Irving - XR; Helen Baczkowska - Norfolk Wildlife Trust; and at the end Rob Archer gave a moving speech about the future of Hardings Pits (to be featured in an upcoming newsletter).



Left: Walkers enjoying the picnic (photo courtesy of KL XR).

Below: Helen Baczkowska from Norfolk Wildlife Trust talked about their concerns over the Western Link Road in Norwich and the proposed Wash Barrier, both of which would devastate wildlife. Helen also pointed out, when helping nature, “nothing is too small”. (Photo courtesy of KL XR).

Support from Five Borough Councillors:

Five Borough Councillors attended the walk.

Below right (L to R):

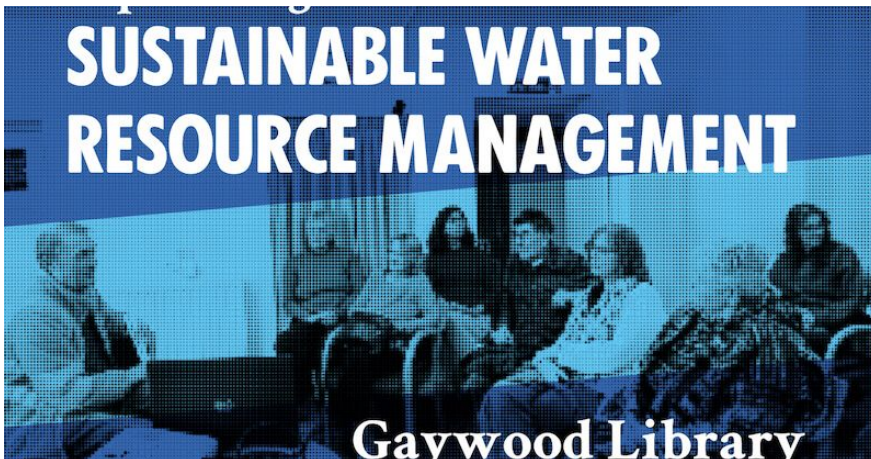
Andy Bullen, Michael de Whalley - Portfolio holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity, Pallavi Devulapalli and Jo Rust. Rob Colwell also came but left before the picture was taken.

The councillors engaged with all the groups and connections were made, which, hopefully, will lead to a brighter future for wildlife, biodiversity and protecting our green spaces.



EXTREMELY INFORMATIVE TALK AT THE GAYWOOD LIBRARY:

“Designing for Water Resource Management in a Changing Climate”.



XR and the NVN hosted a talk at the Gaywood library on 22nd of June.

The speaker was Giles Bloomfield, Project Development Manager for the Water Management Alliance. The talk was attended by folks from several eco-groups and three Borough Councillors.

The Councillors were Josie Ratcliffe, Rob Colwell and Deputy Mayor, Paul Bland. Councillor Ratcliffe is a member of the Environment and Community Panel, and found the talk very informative.

I think most of us were surprised to learn that Typha (aka Reed Mace; Bullrush and Cattail), is capable of **storing 35 times more carbon than trees**. What an opportunity that presents here in the fens. It also has commercial value, being used as insulation, both in buildings and clothing, the latter as a vegan alternative to feathers in clothing.



Above: Various Typha products.

We also learned that the Water Management Alliance has no budget for NET ZERO.

Consequences of how our climate is changing :



39% less rain in Summer
River flows 81% lower in Summer
35% more rain in the Winter
River flows 35% higher in Winter

I think it's time to start planting those bullrushes!



What is the NVN doing now?

The NVN has 2 ongoing projects at present;

The Pollinator Initiative, and **Saving Tree Seedlings**.

We have collected the seed from wild flowers for the past two years and handed them out for rewilding projects. The tree seedlings are being dug up from lawns where they would otherwise be lost to the mower.

This year, with a new Borough Council, we may very well need more seeds and seedlings.

So please lovely members, collect, collect, collect.

NVN Donates £100 to Ryston Rachel's Hedgehog Hotel:

Hedgehogs were once a common sight across the UK, but not any more. Their populations have dwindled from around 30 million in the 1950's, to under a million today. Some of the reasons for such a dramatic decline include: loss of nesting and foraging habitat through development in urban areas, hedgerow removal in rural areas, Impermeable fencing, climate change, road deaths and garden casualties (strimmers, mowers, pesticides etc). Luckily for some of the hedgehogs, places like Ryston Rachel's Hedgehog Hotel come to the rescue. Rachel told me **lack of food and water are serious issues**.

One of four hoglets (below) being cared for by Rachel.



You can keep up to date with Rachel's hogs on her facebook page: Ryston Rachel's Hedgehog Hotel. Her pictures are guaranteed to melt your heart. Donations are always thankfully received.



That's all for this issue. I hope you enjoyed it. I will leave you with a picture taken in my garden: A single Cinnabar Moth caterpillar, whose food plant is Ragwort, trying to feed on an almost dead Groundsel.

I have seen several caterpillars crossing bare ground trying to find plants they can eat, and it brings home just how important it is that we grow native plants in our gardens to help our struggling wildlife.

I did move this caterpillar to a ragwort plant, where a tiny colony of similar caterpillars are happily munching away.



Don't forget to check out our Facebook pages.

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