

BFER NEWSLETTER

6th EDITION - November 2021

Welcome to the BFER newsletter

Welcome to the November edition of the BFER newsletter.

It's scary to think that the second year of delivery is rushing to an end, and yet it feels like we're only just getting started!

October has proved to be an eventful month, with several exciting projects finally getting going on delivery and our programme of engagement activities getting a much needed shot in the arm. Check out our project updates and forward-looking events calendar for more information.

Although having managed to link up with many great people and organisations who will partner with us to deliver a wide range of new outdoor activities, we were sad to say goodbye to Ellie, our Volunteer and Engagement Officer this month. Despite only having been with us for a short period, Ellie has managed to make a big impact, and we will miss her energy and can-do attitude.

I hope to be recruiting soon to fill her post, so please look out for the advert this month, and forward it on to anyone you think might enjoy taking on the challenge.

It's been another busy month for our partners planning and delivering a wide range of projects, some of which are highlighted in this month's update. You can find even more updates on our project pages here:

<https://brecks.org/bfer/>

I hope you enjoy reading this and would like to encourage you to provide feedback on content, submit ideas and articles, or links to relevant activities in the Scheme area by contacting bfer.admin@suffolk.gov.uk

BFER Scheme Manager

Project Focus

Our partners have been incredibly busy this month, here are just a few highlights to celebrate key project milestones.

3.2 Fen Edge & Rivers Archaeology



October saw the start of our Fen Edge & Rivers Archaeology project. Led by Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service this project aims to reveal the extent and condition of buried archaeology at key sites in the project area focusing on the Lark Valley. We will explore under-investigated sites and the peripheries of known sites to stitch this historical landscape together, revealing how the river and its surrounding landscape were used through time. This month we have been focusing at delivering geophysical training to volunteers at the site of West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village.



Volunteers have taken part in a four-day training course using two methods of geophysical surveying including the use of a cart and a bartington. The training is being carried out by Phase Site Investigations who have experience in heritage and commercial geophysics surveying.

[Read more about the project here](#)

3.3 Watery Wildlife

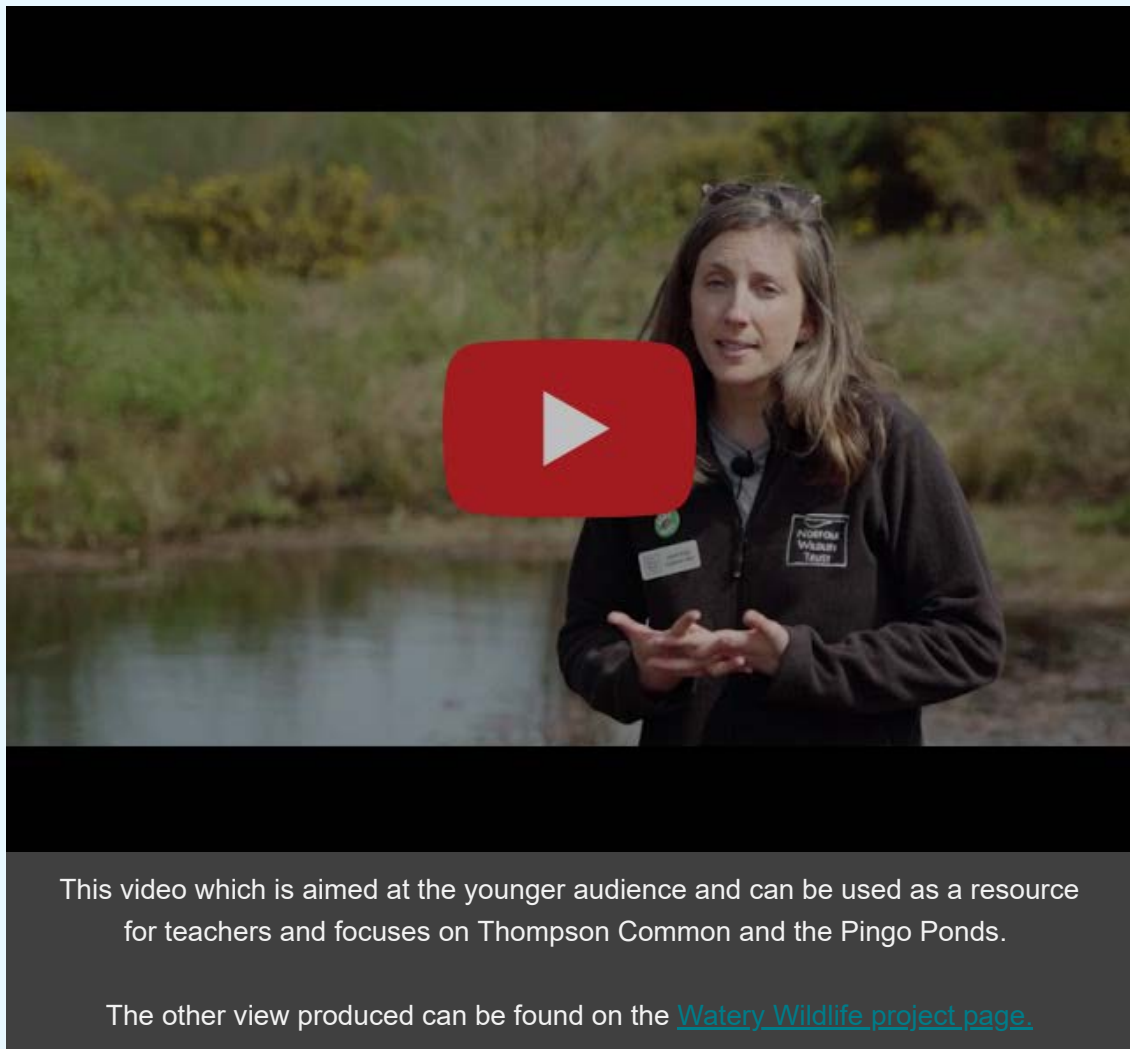
The Watery Wildlife project has been very busy over the last few months with two school visits to Thompson Common, two films about Thompson Common and the Pingo Ponds, and the completion of a calendar.

The Watery Wildlife Calendar produced together with Norfolk Wildlife Trust and Suffolk Wildlife Trust celebrates some of the amazing plants and wildlife that can be found in watery habitats in the Brecks. The Calendar shows which months you are mostly likely to find them and it also shows a map of the Wildlife Trust sites.

Click the image to view the calendar in full on the project webpage



[Read more about the project here](#)



4.5 Volunteer Hub & Engagement

During October we teamed up with [Positive Steps Fitness and Wellbeing](#) to host our first Nordic Walking Taster session at West Stow Country Park. We had 7 enthusiastic walkers come down and try out nordic walking. We hope to continue more events like this in the future so make sure to follow us on social media for updates on events we are hosting



4.6 3rd Party Grant Fund

We have awarded £750 to Honington and Sapiston Parish Council for their interpretation boards.



Towards the end of September we went along to the unveiling of the [Brecks Fen Edge & Rivers LP](#) funded interpretation board which forms part of the new Honington & Sapiston heritage trail.

We were joined with members of Honington and Sapiston Parish Council and Andrew Blenkiron, Euston Estate Director who was representing the Duke of Grafton.

Calling all schools!

We have various projects in the pipeline that we would like to engage with schools in the Brecks area. If you are interested in any of these projects please email us at: BFER.admin@suffolk.gov.uk

Sea to Chalk: Eels in the Classroom

This opportunity is part of the Sea to Chalk Project which aims to remove in-river structures and create fish passes on the R. Lark to enable the free flow of Native wild brown trout and other river species such as European eels.

This element will give schools in the scheme area an opportunity to host a tank of European eels in your classroom and learn all about their local significance, life cycle, habitat and role in the aquatic food chain

There are places for 6 schools to have a tank of eels, with specialist lessons delivered by an ecologist from Norfolk Rivers Trust over the period of May to July 2022

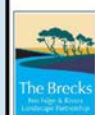
The timing of the programme looks something like this, but the exact delivery of the eels depends on the timing of the migration which isn't always predictable.

- Tank set up in late May in a classroom after school - approximately 1 hour. (The tank water and filter need to become established for a few weeks before the introduction of fish)
- Eel delivery after June half term and classroom lesson about fish husbandry and local significance of eels - approximately 1 hour
- Classroom lesson about eel biology, freshwater food chains, habitats and water quality - approximately 2 x 45-minute sessions
- River visit - water quality check, basic kick sample and biotic score to assess the health of the river, eel release - 2-3 hours depending on distance from school to Mildenhall.



What is required from the school?

- Enthusiasm for eels and native wildlife.
- A sturdy classroom table near a double plug socket, away from direct sunlight.
- 1 hour in May to set up tank with Rivers Trust specialist with Rivers Trust specialist and teacher or caretaker
- 1 hour in June with whole class for eel delivery and lesson
- 2 x 45 minutes in late June or early July for further lessons
- 2-3 hour whole class activity for eel release session at Jubilee playing fields, Mildenhall



If you are interested please get in touch as soon as possible to avoid missing out on a very exciting opportunity.

Email ursula@norfolkriverstrust.org for more information.



Eels in the Classroom is lead by Norfolk Rivers Trust which involves a tank being set up in a classroom, children are taught about their local significance and life cycle and then at the end of the project they get to release the eels into the river.



We are offering schools free Little Pick Lessons with the River Trust through the Preventing Plastic Pollution project. The Litter Pick lesson is linked to Citizen Science, and the science, maths and citizenship curricula. In the lesson, pupils take part in a practical outdoor activity to collect litter on their school site. They record their litter finds as data, which they collate as a class and then submit to The Rivers Trust's Citizen Science platform for schools. They also receive an introduction to the issue of plastic pollution and an opportunity to discuss some of the problems and possible solutions together.



Do you work for a school near Lackford Lakes or know someone who does? Please let us know, we are looking for schools to take part in an education project lead by Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

Upcoming Events

We are really excited to share with you some of the wonderful outdoor events and activities that are in the pipeline.

BFER Events

Guided Walk Session: 25th November

West Stow Country Park IP28 6HG

The first of our monthly programme of guided walks for all ages and abilities. Exploring the river Lark and Kings Forest, watch out for King Fishers and Deer!

Spotlight on Thetford: 28th November

An event focusing on health and wellbeing with exciting events and activities for all ages, at various locations around the town centre.

Festive Guided Walk Session: 23rd December

Santa special walking from Brandon to Weeting

Part of our monthly programme of guided walks for all ages and abilities, led by Positive Steps Fitness and Wellbeing.



Do you have an event you would like us to promote on our newsletter, on our website, or across our social media pages?

Please complete the form for us to share your event:

[Event detail form](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

Our Partners below are recruiting volunteers for a variety of exciting projects in the Brecks:

Brecks' Fen Edge and Rivers LP - Events Volunteers

Bush Adventures UK - Events Volunteers and Garden Volunteers

Charles Burrell Museum - Front of House Volunteer, Main Display Area Guide, Café Staff and Engine Specific Volunteer

For more information on the opportunities visit: <https://brecks.org/bfer/resources/volunteer-hub/>

Upcoming Opportunities:

Brecks' Fen Edge and Rivers Archaeology - Geophysics Volunteer Opportunity. Recruiting starts mid-September. Join our mailing list or follow us on social media to sign up.

West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Country Park - Woodland Conservation Volunteer Opportunity. Details coming soon.

If you are recruiting volunteers in the Brecks area and would like to advertise your opportunities here, please email: bfer.admin@suffolk.gov.uk

Social Media

Are you following us on social media? Click the icons below to follow us!



Are you subscribed to us on YouTube?

We will be creating more video content this year so make sure to subscribe to us on YouTube and hit the notification bell!

While we are out filming videos for you, you can watch our latest video here:

[Open Water Lifeguard Training May 2021](#)

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