

FEBRUARY 6th WAYLAND WOOD (1 mile S Watton), O.S. map 144, grid ref. TL 923 996

This ancient and historic woodland is managed in the traditional way as coppice with oak standards, and has a varied and attractive ground flora. The wood was mentioned in the 11th century Domesday Book, and the medieval boundary banks can still be seen. We will be doing some coppicing.

FEBRUARY 13th PENSTHORPE, (2 miles SE Fakenham) O.S. map 132, grid ref. TF 947 291

Pensthorpe is advertised as “The Natural Centre of Norfolk”, and was host to the 2010 Springwatch series on BBC TV. It is 500 acres of ancient fen meadows, woodlands and lakes in the Wensum valley. As well as the Conservation Centre (where rare UK birds such as cranes and corncrakes are bred) and a collection of water and other birds, there is a large area of nature reserve. We will be planting some trees.

FEBRUARY 20th HICKLING BROAD (18 miles NE Norwich), O.S. map 134, grid ref. TG 428 222

Hickling Broad is the largest expanse of open water in the Broads system. The National Nature Reserve contains 600 ha of open water, reed bed, fen, grazing marsh and woodland. It is home to marsh harriers, bitterns, swallowtail butterflies and Norfolk hawker dragonflies. We will be clearing and burning some scrub.

FEBRUARY 27th SWANNINGTON UPGATE COMMON (8 miles NW Norwich), O.S. map 133, grid ref. TG 143 183

This is an interesting and varied site, with a range of habitats. The variation in soils and wetness has caused a wide range of vegetation including dry acidic heathland, wet heathland, fen, birch and alder woodland, scrub, bracken, rough grassland and ponds. We will be clearing scrub re-growth.

MARCH 6th SUTTON FEN (16 miles NE Norwich), O.S. map 134, grid ref. TG 372 229

This RSPB reserve is a large area of nationally rare and internationally important fen habitat. It contains breeding bitterns, marsh harriers, rare swallowtail butterflies and Norfolk hawker dragonflies, rare plants and much more. It is not open to the public, so this is a rare opportunity to see this important site. We will be clearing and burning scrub or cutting some of the fen.

MARCH 13th LONG ACRE WOOD, CATFIELD (17 miles NE Norwich)

O.S. map 134, grid ref. TG 393 218

This is 7 acres of recently planted native broadleaved woodland. Half of it was planted in 1994, and the other half in 2001. Norfolk Conservation Corps helped with the planting of both halves. Although the wood is relatively new, it is already showing its wildlife potential with two species of orchid, three species of deer, a great spotted woodpecker nest and regular sightings of woodcock. We will be removing some self sown willows and alders, and suckers from the aspens, which are tending to smother some of the trees in the older half of the wood. Tea and cake will be provided at the end of the task.

MARCH 20th LINGS WOOD, THURSFORD (3 miles NE of Fakenham),

O.S. map 132, grid ref. TF 969 326

This 29 hectare wood has been recently purchased by Norfolk Wildlife Trust, and is close to their Thursford Wood reserve. The site has been identified as having a high biodiversity potential. It consists predominately of Corsican pine, but the Trust plans to gradually restore the site back to native deciduous woodland. We will be helping this by removing some young pines.

MARCH 27th HOLT LOWES (1 mile SE Holt), O.S. map 133, grid ref. TG 088 382

This reserve is an attractive mixture of dry sandy heath and valley bog close to the River Glaven. The small tributary valley that bisects the heath contains a fine example of a mixed bog community, as the alkaline water of the feeder stream contrasts with the acidic areas on the valley sides. We will be clearing small scrub from the mire (wet boggy bits). NB We will be meeting in the Hempstead Road car park (map ref above). Not at the Visitor Centre.