

Village Nature Reserve

Inspired by the Wildlife Trusts' vision of a Nature Recovery Network and the Wildlife Friendly Village initiatives undertaken in the Suffolk villages of Bredfield and Risby [www.bredfieldwfv.org.uk and www.wildlifefriendlyvillage.co.uk] we hope to see Campsea Ashe become a nature reserve by encouraging each resident to devote part of their garden to wildlife.

See www.littlegreenspace.org.uk/features/felixstowe-nature-reserve for a similar scheme in Felixstowe.

This might involve growing bee-friendly herbs such as marjoram and lavender or crops such as beans and strawberries but if, in addition, we could each leave a minimum of 9m² of garden uncultivated or unmown to encourage nectar-producing wild flowers such as yarrow, and insect food plants such as nettles, we could together provide several hectares worth of "nature reserve" in the village, particularly valuable if each patch can be linked by "wildlife highways" such as verges, trees and hedges with gaps in fences to allow creatures such as hedgehogs to move between them. And by creating wildlife ponds, log piles, nest and bat boxes, hedgehog houses and insect hotels, we can provide additional shelter for our wildlife.

Given resources and opportunity we might eventually be able to enhance other private and public green spaces in the area, benefitting both wildlife and the community.

If you would like to join us in supporting wildlife in Campsea Ashe, please get in touch with one of our coordinators (see back panel) and register your interest. You might like to add your garden to the initiative or volunteer your active support for other projects. Maybe you feel you can't do much in practice but would like to be kept informed. We are all more aware than ever of the value of green spaces and wildlife to our own health and well-being so let's do all we can to look after our patch.



Find us on:

www.nextdoor.co.uk/g/7cmnxw5os

Instagram: #wildaboutcampsea

WhatsApp: wildaboutcampsea

Are you able to devote some of your garden to wildlife?

Would you like to share your local wildlife-friendly achievements and sightings with others in the village?

Can you suggest other projects that Wild About Campsea might be able to help with? If so, please text or email one of the coordinators listed below.

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We are an informal group of wildlife enthusiasts of all ages who live in or near the village of Campsea Ashe in Suffolk and are keen to encourage biodiversity in the gardens and green spaces of our neighbourhood.

We meet once a month to inspire, encourage and learn from each other and to undertake practical projects to enhance wildlife habitats in our area. We are not experts (yet!) but hope to learn from those who are and swap our interests and ideas with others.

Would you like to be involved?

Please read on.....



The Problem

According to the Natural History Museum, the UK has led the world in degrading the natural environment. [<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/news/2020/september/uk-has-led-the-world-in-destroying-the-natural-environment.html>]

While countries such as Canada and Finland have 89.3 and 88.6% of their biodiversity left intact, the UK only has 50.3% remaining, putting us in the bottom 10% of all countries globally. The **2019 State of Nature** report reveals that although there have been some success stories, 41% of UK species have declined since the 1970s and 133 species have been lost from our shores completely since 1950. In the most comprehensive assessment of nature in the UK scientists looked at almost 8,500 species, finding that another 15% are threatened with extinction. There are no signs of these trends slowing. [www.nbn.org.uk/stateofnature2019]

What we can do

We can, of course, support the many organisations that educate and campaign for positive change but we can also take action at a very local level ourselves. We are custodians of the little patches of land that we own or rent—whether farmland or garden—and together we fund community spaces such as parks and playing fields. There are many ways in which we can manage these habitats to improve biodiversity. By linking with like-minded neighbours in Campsea Ashe, we can celebrate what we have, share ideas, work together on local habitat improvements and together make a significant difference. And as each community does the same, and local and national government provides the legal framework, we will achieve a National Nature Recovery Network as envisioned by the Wildlife Trusts at www.wildlifetrusts.org/nature-recovery-network.



Helpful web sites

The Wildlife Trusts	wildlifetrusts.org	The national wildlife conservation charity
Suffolk Wildlife Trust	suffolkwildlifetrust.org	Suffolk's wildlife conservation charity.
National Biodiversity Network	nbn.org.uk	National wildlife recordings database
Natural History Museum	nhm.ac.uk/take-part.html	Wildlife projects and identification charts
East Suffolk Greenprint Forum	eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/east-suffolk-greenprint-forum	Connecting local government with environmental and conservation organisations and concerned citizens.
British Trust for Ornithology	bto.org	Bird facts and studies. Runs annual Garden BirdWatch!
RSPB	rspb.org	Mainly about birds but includes wildlife gardening. Species database includes recorded bird song.
Royal Horticultural Society	rhs.org.uk/advice/wildlife-garden	Planting for wildlife including making a wildlife pond.
Plant Life	plantlife.org.uk	The British wild plant conservation charity
Woodland Trust	woodlandtrust.org.uk	Includes tree identification and woodland projects.
Bug Life	buglife.org.uk	Includes identifying insects and gardening tips.
Butterfly Conservation	butterfly-conservation.org	gardening for and identifying butterflies and moths
Bumblebee Conservation Trust	bumblebeeconservation.org	Bumblebee identification and conservation .
Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust	arc-trust.org	All about frogs, toads, newts, lizards and snakes. Includes advice on wildlife ponds.
The Mammal Society	mammal.org.uk	Includes downloadable field guides on all uk species including their dung and tracks.
Wildlife Gardening Forum	wlgf.org	Loads of information on all kinds of garden wildlife
Wild About Gardening	wildaboutgardens.org.uk	Wildlife Trusts and RHS site. Really good downloadable guides on wildlife gardening
Grow Wild initiative from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	growwilduk.com	Information and advice on wildflowers and fungi from Kew Gardens
Campaign to Protect Rural England	cpre.org.uk	Includes information on wildlife conservation
Friends of the Earth	foe.org	Contains a couple of guides on gardening for bees.
Little Green Space project	littlegreenspace.org.uk	On-line mag with environmental news/projects ideas
Inkcap Journal	inkcapjournal.co.uk	An on-line news mag about nature conservation issues