

Main Work Party Reports.

Oct 25 – Jary’s Meadow – East meadow– Central area raked and cleared including some cut willow. Southern boundary bank and inside of hedge cut raked and cleared. Nine members.

Nov 08 – Snowdrop Acre – Annual maintenance of all of site carried out. Ten members

Nov 22 – Howes Meadow – Area A (Northside of meadow)- Mown, raked and cleared ½ of area and rowed up remainder. Area C (South east section)– some clearance of vegetation left over from last WP. Seven members

Dec 06 – Walsham Fen – Areas F, H, J & K raked and cleared to spoil heaps. Eight members.

Dec 20 – Railway Wood – Following the additional work party on Nov 17 - Levelled the public footpath, cleared away the remains of the fallen tree. Three large broken branches pulled down from trees and cut and cleared away. Cut around ivy on a number of trees to reduce risk of falling. General tidy up around the wood and checked for any hazards. Nine members.

Additional Work.

Oct 27 – Howes Meadow – Area D cleared the 3 heaps to fire site. Started to rake out under hedge line. Halfway from gate still to be cleared.

Oct 27 – Lingwood Pond – West compartment—the hedge on the southern side of the pond has been cut on the pond side.

Oct 28 – Lingwood Church – Conservation area mown.

Oct 30 – Lingwood Church – Conservation area raked and cleared.

Nov 11 – Howes Meadow – East end fire site – tidy up the previous dumped sheet loads from around area.

Nov 17 – Railway Wood – Fallen tree/branch blocking public footpath reported on 15th Nov, cut and cleared. Footpath now clear, some additional clearance to follow.

Nov 24 – Howes Meadow – Area A – approx. ¼ of area not completed at work party on 22nd Nov, raked and cleared into rows. Later, started clearance of rows.

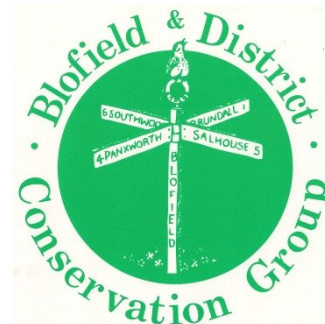
Nov 26 – Howes Meadow – Area A – continue clearance.

Nov 27 – Howes Meadow – Area A – clearance completed.

Dec 02 – Walsham Fen – Areas – F, J, H and approx. 80% of area K mown.

Dec 17 – Lingwood Pond – NE corner – some willow and bramble cut back.

Dec 20 – Walsham Fen – Area F – two large stumps removed to improve access for the mower.



Chairmans Update January 2026.

BADCOG NEWS.

No 241: January 2026

President: Richard Hobbs

Chair: Tony McKie, Teal Barn,

Vicarage Road, Lingwood,

NR13 4TT

01603 714255

www.badcog.co.uk



To begin this first newsletter of the year, I would first like to wish all BADCOG members & volunteers, a very Happy New Year and to say thank you for all your hard work in 2025.

At our Sub-Committee Meeting held in December, we reviewed the management of our sites for the past 12 months, and I'm very pleased to report that all fourteen sites are in very good order which is all down to our volunteers. In fact, owing to your keenness, we are slightly ahead of schedule, particularly at Howe's Meadow. Here we have been able to complete a second cut and clearance in one section of the meadow. It's hoped that this additional work will improve the north side of the meadow, as bindweed is becoming a problem. We have also sown common rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) seeds which should help to suppress the more vigorous plant species and encourage the establishment of more delicate flora. Only time will tell if this helps.

In November, we paid host to Sam Brown from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT), who came along to give us some advice about our management of Walsham Fen. This visit was set in motion after the NWT saw the decline in orchids numbers at Walsham Fen when BADCOG attended the Norfolk Community Biodiversity Awards & Fair. This was Sam's first visit to Walsham Fen, and after looking at our management, Sam wasn't really able to come up with a reason why numbers were so bad this past year. It seems like our management of this fen-meadow is sound. Whilst Sam was at the Fen, we took the opportunity to show her around Jary's Meadow, and I'm pleased to report that the site will be awarded a County Wildlife Site (CWS) status in 2026.

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October -
BADCOG Stand/Display at
the Forum

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I would like to thank John, Pat and Paul, who reacted very swiftly after a cry for help. After strong winds in November, a medium size tree and a large branch off an oak tree had fallen, blocking the public footpath through Railway Woods. As we own the wood it's BADCOG's responsibility to keep the path open. After about a hour of cutting and clearing, the footpath was reopened and safe to walk again, all within about 48-hours of the incident happening, so thank you all.

BADCOG now have a draft copy of the new management plan for Buckenham Woods produced by Strumpshaw Parish Council. There will now be a small working group established to coordinate the management of this popular woodland.

Finally, we have a new BADCOG sign (right). This will be on display whenever we have a work party to advertise ourselves, with the hope this may encourage others to join us. Thanks go to David & Barbara Pilch for designing and producing the sign.



Rare Dragonfly Returns

A re-introduction project succeeds for the White-faced Darter, one of our rarest species. Numbers of this small but striking dragonfly have plummeted in England due to habitat destruction.

Over many years conservationists have worked to create the right habitat conditions at RSPB Campfield Marsh in Cumbria for an ambitious translocation project. This is supported by The British Dragonfly Society, Cumbria wildlife Trust and Natural England.

In April and August staff and volunteers carefully collected small amounts of Sphagnum moss containing larvae of the dragonfly from a stable donor population, transporting it in buckets to healthy peat bog in Campfield Marsh. In July the site was officially designated a Dragonfly Hotspot - the 12th such location in England.



Sotshole Broad Update.

Norfolk Wildlife Trust has acquired a haven in the heart of the Norfolk Broads, Sotshole Broad, located just south of Ranworth village, to create a new publicly accessible wildlife reserve.

The Broad itself is approximately 1.2 hectares in area, and the whole site covers nearly 25 hectares. The site is not only a haven for the wildlife of the secluded broad, but also the diverse species that make a home within the valley's bluebell wood, alder carr wet woodland, mature tussock sedges, sunny grassland and wet scrub and dykes.

The site is the perfect home for a wide variety of wildlife. The watery edges are ideal habitat for otters and water voles. Wetland birds such as teal and water rail could be found in the flooded alder carr and it's not uncommon to catch the bright blue flash of one of the resident kingfishers darting across the Broad. The drier woodland is alive with sound thanks to species that could include tawny owl, woodcock and treecreepers and come spring there is a spectacular display of bluebells.

They were offered the unique opportunity to buy the site from a private seller, on very generous terms in memory of family member David Pooley. David bought the land in 2005 and spent decades restoring the site for wildlife.

BADCOG WORK PARTY DATES.

Work parties start at 10.30am and finish at about 1pm.

All welcome.

3rd January 2026—Lingwood Village Pond

17th January—Jary's Meadow

31st January—Howe's Meadow

14th February—Walsham Fen

28th February—Buckenham Woods

14th March—Holly Lane Pond

18th March—Note: BVCG at Walsham Fen

28th March—TBD (Buckenham Woods or Jary's Meadow)

Check website for more details and for any changes/cancellations.

Tree Facts

A single mature oak tree can support more than 2,300 different species of invertebrates, birds, mammals & fungi. The largest living tree on earth is a giant sequoia in the USA, named General Sherman.

It stands 83m tall and its trunk is 31m in circumference at its base. It's nearly as tall as Big Ben which is 96m!

The oldest hedgerow in the UK is Judith's Hedge in Cambridgeshire. At over 900 years old it is believed to have been planted by William the Conqueror's niece in the 11th century.

There are over 73,000 known tree species on the planet but only just over 100 native trees and shrubs in the UK and Ireland.

There are an estimated 3 trillion trees in the world - that's more than the number of stars in the Milky Way

Trees can help cities adapt to global warming by providing shade and cooling the surface temperature by up to 12°C in some regions. Only 13% of the UK's total land area is covered in trees compared to an average of 46% in Europe. In England, the figure is just 10% with an additional 4% covered by trees outside woodland.

Trees help us feel better. Studies have found that being close to trees generally reduces mental and physical stress, anxiety, and depression, and improves mood.

Hedgerows alongside roads can reduce air pollution exposure by up to 63%, helping people breathe cleaner, healthier air.

There are more than 80 community tree nurseries in the UK, growing an estimated 250,000 trees a year (often from locally collected seed,) which are given away or sold at minimal cost.



Glossy ibis at Carlton Marshes

Considered a 'rare visitor to the UK' a glossy ibis has been spotted at our Carlton Marshes nature reserve. The iridescent dark plumage of the ibis makes it a truly captivating sighting.

It is uncommon for glossy ibis to stay long in the UK, however there is the possibility with a milder winter that the bird might stay. Despite being a rare visitor to the UK sightings of this species are becoming more regular, likely a result of changing climate and milder winters. Whilst the glossy ibis can be spotted year-round, autumn marks an increased chance to encounter these beautiful visitors.

New hope for ash.

Research at a Woodland Trust reserve has revealed that Britain's beleaguered ash trees are developing natural resistance to ash dieback. Scientists have sequenced the DNA of 800 ash trees growing wild at Marden Park near Woldingham in Surrey and found that young saplings more often have genetic markers for resistance than mature trees nearby.

Spores of the deadly Asian fungus arrived in Southeast England in 2012, soon sweeping the country. In some woods it has now wiped out 85% of all ash, once Britain's third most populous native tree.

When the epidemic first hit a huge trial saw 155,000 saplings taken from tree nurseries and planted across 14 sites to find out which might escape infection. Professor Richard Buggs of Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew led the work. "This study boosts our hopes that ash could survive the disease long-term."

"In 2017 we analysed 1,250 of the survivors and found 10,000 gene variations linked to higher resistance. That is the model we've been testing against the real-world setting of Marden Park."

The new study has proved seedlings with the right variant genes can better tolerate the disease - though this doesn't mean long term resistance is guaranteed. "We don't yet know which markers are most important, nor even whether having all 10,000 would give a tree full immunity."

The plan is to profile 2,000 long-term survivors from the original nursery trial, including hundreds growing at the Trust's Hucking Estate in the Kent Downs.

"Armed with a clearer picture we hope to inform a breeding programme, selecting trees with different combinations of the best genes for resistance".

There is another problem - ash takes 12 years to flower and reproduce by which time even the strongest specimens may be ailing. So Richard is also helping pioneer lab research to speed up flowering, exposing ash to high light and CO₂ levels. "Now we've shown natural selection is giving us a helping hand I am more optimistic for the future of the species. But it's too early to know whether ash can save itself without our assistance."

A walk around Buckenham Woods.

On Saturday, 13th December, which turned out to be a gloriously sunny winter's day, ten BADCOG members enjoyed an engaging and pleasant walk through a part of Buckenham Woods owned by Ernest.

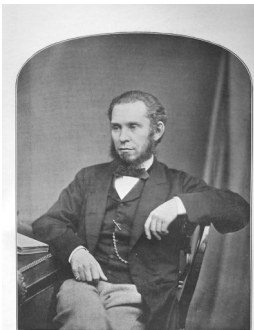
Ernest described the conservation management he has been doing since acquiring the woodland and pointed out some interesting features, including the many different species of native trees found here. Thank you Ernest for an enjoyable morning.



Photo by Richard Bond

A Visionary Man from Blofield Sir Peter Eade 1825 - 1915

Peter Eade (pictured right) was the son of Peter Eade a Blofield GP. He initially joined his father in the practice before establishing himself in Norwich as a physician where he soon became a notable public figure. He served as Mayor of the city three times and was knighted by Queen Victoria for his public service. He had visionary ideas, securing the castle for the city as a museum after it no longer served as a gaol. Mousehold Heath became a public open space through his efforts, and he promoted the establishment of Eaton Park and many other parks around the city. However, he was disappointed by another scheme to turn Wingfield Hill into a park Opposition saw it succumb to housing. He was much involved at the hospitals, being particularly pleased to have smoking banned from the wards. His two-hundred-page autobiography was published in 1910 by Jarrolds and Sons revealing the many interesting social and political events of his time. It includes his involvement in the terrible train crash at Thorpe on 10th September 1874 when he was returning from Yarmouth. I have produced a facsimile copy of this otherwise rare book which can be obtained from me for £10. The proceeds will go to Blofield Church where he is commemorated in the fine east window. His grave is marked by a large stone cross at the southeast corner of the church close to the graves of his sisters.



SIR PETER EADE AS A YOUNG MAN.

David Pilch
email address; db@gmail.com

BADCOG Evening Talks 2026

**9th January—Guest speaker is Harry Mack from the Broads
Authority**

All talks take place on the 2nd Friday of the month starting at 7.30pm
Venue: Strumpshaw Community Hall.
NR13 4FS

Strange Structures

Finding something new or not seen before, is one of the great pleasures provided by an interest in nature. Sadly, as one gets older, these events seem to occur less often. However, the changing climate is beginning to influence these events, by allowing species to spread to new areas, and so provide more opportunities to see new things.



At the beginning of June 2025, I was walking round the far end of my garden, when I noticed a number of small black wasps flying round a dead apple tree stump. This old stump is about 2 meters tall and 30 centimetres in diameter and has been left in place for insects. The bark fell off long ago and the surface is peppered with the holes of wood boring beetles, probably *Anobium* or *Ptilinus* species, and it was these holes that were attracting the attention of the small wasps. Many of these holes were surrounded with beautiful little rings of little resin spikes about 5 to 6mm in diameter. These almost looked like little crowns. As this was something new to me, I spent quite a lot of time over the next few weeks, watching all the activity. Subsequent enquires revealed that these distinctively decorated nests were the work of *Passaloecus eremita*, one of the aphid hunting wasps, and a relatively recent colonist, the first record of the species in the UK taking place in 1978. The wasps are between 6 and 8 mm long and seemed to favour holes that were no larger than 2mm in diameter. The wasps were stocking the holes with aphids caught amongst the needles of a large Scots Pine a few yards away. An egg was then laid in the nest before the hole was sealed with resin from the pine tree. The purpose of the ring round the nest hole is still not clear to me, although I did witness marauding black ants diverted around the still unsealed hole, by the projecting resin spikes. All activity had ceased by the second week of August, at which time I counted 347 of these beautiful little ringed nests.



Hans Watson