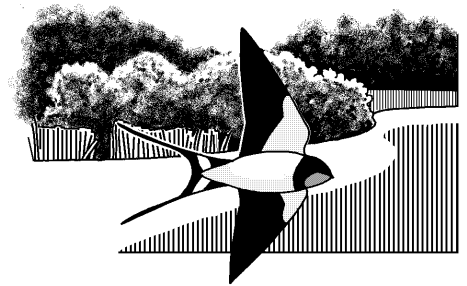


# Little Ouse Headwaters Project (LOHP)

## Members' Newsletter: March 2007



The last few months have been relatively quiet ones for the LOHP - after the frenzied activity associated with the TEN project last year, we have been concentrating on our routine site management activities, with one or two events thrown in for good measure:

### **Land management**

After a very dry summer and autumn, we seem to have gone to the other extreme - water levels are very high on all our sites at the moment, the scrapes on Betty's Fen have re-filled (and there's been an influx of frogs and toads), and the new pond on the Frith is holding plenty of water (although we do expect this one to dry out from time to time).

Fortunately we didn't suffer too much tree damage in the winter gales, although a significant number of trees did come down in Blo' Norton Little Fen - as we're not actively managing this site at the moment, this is a case of nature doing the work for us, opening up areas of ground that may be colonised by typical fen species.

We have held a number of successful and very well attended work parties through the winter months, clearing trees and scrub at Hinderclay and Blo' Norton, and continuing our hedgerow management on the Frith.

The winter has been so mild that the grass has continued to grow, and we had sheep grazing on the Frith right through to early March, rather than taking them off in the autumn as would normally be the case. The sheep will be back on the Frith and the Lows after lambing.

We have continued to increase the number of bird nest boxes on all our sites, thanks to funds raised by our River Link Appeal, which continues to be very successful. We also plan to install a significant number of bat boxes in the coming months.

### **Events**

Our AGM in November was very well attended, and we were privileged to hear Professor Richard West explaining his new theory on the formation of the Little Ouse and Waveney valleys. The talk he gave was recorded, and a transcript will be available on our web site later this spring.

We held our usual seasonal walk on New Year's Eve, and were again fortunate with the weather - around 30 people plus dogs enjoyed a brisk walk around the fens. In February we provided a sumptuous lunch of baked potatoes on Hinderclay Fen, encouraging people to visit the site and see for themselves the results of the hard work of our volunteers.

### **Forthcoming events - Dates for your diaries**

#### **Work parties:**

Details of the programme for the next few months are given below and up-to-date information is posted on the website. Everyone is welcome and even if you can only spare a couple of hours it still makes a real difference to what we can achieve on our sites.

#### **Other events:**

We are planning several events for the spring and summer - details of all events will be put on our web site ([HYPERLINK "http://www.lohp.org.uk"](http://www.lohp.org.uk)) once they are finalised, or you can phone or e-mail us for further information on times and meeting places:

**9/10 June** - Biological recording weekend - we aim to have many expert naturalists out and about identifying a wide range of species of flora and fauna in the valley. Members are very welcome to join in too - the event will include a volunteers barbeque

**24 June** - Dragonfly walk, starting in Thelnetham and visiting Betty's fen - the dragonflies and damselflies were spectacular over the new ponds last year, so we'll be hoping for good weather and a repeat performance

**26 or 27 August** (date to be confirmed) Bank Holiday Treasure Hunt - open to all, with foot, cycle and car options, plus other attractions to visit in the valley - more details nearer the time.

#### **Access:**

All our sites are open for you to visit at any time. We welcome dogs if kept under close control - please remember to keep your dog on a lead when there are grazing stock on site. Our sites have a mixture of public and permissive footpaths, so not all the paths will appear on Ordnance Survey maps - do contact us, or check on the website ('where to walk' on the left-hand menu) if you're not sure where the paths are. Please note that the paths we maintain are for pedestrian access only and are not suitable for cycling or horse riding.

### **Spring/summer 2007 Work Party Programme**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Task</b>
15 April	The Frith	Thistle control (& Easter Eggs!)
13 May	Blo' Norton Fen	Pond digging
9/10 June	All sites	Biological recording + BBQ
8 July	Hinderclay Fen	Mowing/raking fen meadow
12 August	Blo' Norton Fen	Path and sedge cutting

All work parties start at 10-30am and, with the exception of the April party, are on the second Sunday of each month. Please come for as little or as much time as you like and bring your friends along - all contributions are valuable. You will need wellies or strong boots, old clothes and a drink. We will provide tools and gloves and other refreshments.

Venues can change, depending on weather and ground conditions, so for up-to-date information nearer the time email { [HYPERLINK "mailto:" }info@lohp.org.uk, look at our web site \[www.lohp.org.uk\]\(http://www.lohp.org.uk\) or phone:](mailto:info@lohp.org.uk)

for Hinderclay Fen, Reg and Rowena Langston on 01379-898009

for Blo'Norton & Betty's Fen, Jo-Anne Pitt on 01379-898684

for the Frith and the Lows, Helen Smith on 01379-687680

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