

Challenge 20

Here are the '**Top 20**' species to spot during our centenary year. How many can you spot?



100
YEARS

Log this activity at norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/DoOneThing

☐ Use the tick boxes to keep track of the species you have seen!

1. ☐ **Swallowtail butterfly** *Papilio machaon britannicus*

The UK's largest butterfly, it is very colourful, and arguably our most beautiful. Habitat loss and butterfly collectors initially caused the species to decline. However, better protection, education, habitat improvement and reedbed creation work has increased its population over the last 100 years. Found on NWT Broadland reserves in May and June.

2. ☐ **Eurasian bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

A streaky brown heron that hides deep in reedbeds, the male delivers a loud 'booming' call in the spring. Became extinct in the UK, but in the early twentieth century returned to breed at NWT Hickling Broad. Can be found year-round, and recent habitat improvements and reedbed creation have seen numbers and distribution around the UK significantly improve.

3. ☐ **Silver-studded blue** *Plebejus argus*

The silver-studded blue is a small dazzling butterfly. The male's wings are blue with a dark outer rim. Females are a chocolate brown. It is a rare butterfly, found in heathland habitats. It emerges in June and is usually on the wing until late August. NWT Buxton Heath is the best place to see them.

4. ☐ **Norfolk hawker** *Aeshna isosceles*

A large brown dragonfly with clear wings. It is the only UK dragonfly with green eyes. Originally restricted to the Norfolk Broads but has recently widened its range. Better water quality and climate change may be factors for its increase. Can be found on all NWT Broadland reserves. On the wing June / July.

5. ☐ **Fen orchid** *Liparis loeselii*

A small waxy green orchid. The flowers are pale yellow-green, spiky with a tongue-shaped lip. Growing in moss, this orchid requires a particular type of poor fen. Conservation work has taken the species from only a few dozen flowering plants to annual counts in the thousands. NWT Upton Fen is the best place to see them. Flowers in June.

6. ☐ **Common crane** *Grus grus*

The UK's tallest bird has long legs and a long neck, with powder-grey plumage and a distinctive black, white and red head. It was driven to extinction in the UK many hundreds of years ago. Since its surprise return as a breeding bird to the Norfolk Broads in the 1980s, it has made a steady recovery. Found year round.

7. ☐ **Milk parsley** *Peucedanum palustre*

Belonging to the umbellifer (carrot) family, its green leaves resemble carrot tops. Drainage in the 19th century and scrub invasion in the 20th century restricted the plant's prime reedbed habitat. Milk parsley is the food plant of the swallowtail butterfly. NWT Broadland reserves. The plant flowers from July to September producing clusters of small white flowers.

8. ☐ **Stone curlew** *Burhinus oedicnemus*

Although a wader, it is not related to true curlews; it has a short bill and belongs to the 'thick-knee' family. 'Stonies' are pigeon sized birds, with brown and sandy plumage and a large yellow eye. The curlew suffered population decline as agricultural practices became more mechanised and intensive. NWT Weeting Heath. April through to August.

9. ☐ **Marsh harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

A raptor with a long tail and broad wings. The male has streaked brown plumage with grey wing panels and black tips. The female is brown with a cream-coloured head. Prefers large stretches of reedbed. Numbers have grown but DDT pesticide caused decline during the 1960s. NWT Cley and Salthouse Marshes / Broadland reserves –all year round. Hickling Raptor Watch Point in winter.

10. ☐ **Fen mason wasp** *Odynerous simillimus*

A solitary wasp with a shiny black body and distinctive ivory marks on its shoulders and abdomen. Found in fens and marshy areas, but requiring dry compacted ground to build its characteristic 'chimneys'. The wasp was thought to be extinct in Britain, until its rediscovery in the Norfolk Broads in 1986. Its population has grown, but it is concentrated in the Broads.

11. ☐ **Purple emperor** *Apatura iris*

A prize of a butterfly. The males have iridescent purple wings with white bands and orange-ringed eyespots. Females are larger, but duller in colour. Favours ancient oak woodland. Conservation work to restore the ancient woodland has created the ideal conditions for the species. Became extinct in Norfolk but has recently returned. NWT Foxley Woods. Peak time on the wing mid-July.

12. ☐ **Natterjack toad** *Epidalea calamita*

It is smaller than the common toad, greenish in colour with a distinctive yellow line running down its back. It is found at a few favoured locations and remains a rare amphibian in the UK. Norfolk is one of the few counties that has retained a population. Visit NWT Syderstone Common on a warm spring evening and you may hear a chorus of the males' mating call.

13. ☐ **Sulphur clover** *Trifolium ochroleucon*

Yellow-creamy flowers. Nationally scarce, Norfolk is an important county for the species. Claylands of south Norfolk is a stronghold for the species. Look along roadside nature reserves. Flowers June / July.

14. ☐ **Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

Distinctive tall wading bird with a spatula shaped bill. Spoonbills were absent as a breeding species in the UK for over 300 years. Returned to the UK as a breeding bird in north Norfolk. NWT Cley and Hickling Broad. All year round.

15. ☐ **Water vole** *Arvicola amphibus*

Our largest vole, brown with a blunt nose, small ears and furry tail. Massive decline due to habitat loss, pollution and predation by the invasive non-native mink. Population is slowly growing in Norfolk wetlands, particularly our chalk streams and broadlands.

16. ☐ **Grey seal** *Halichoerus grypus*

The grey seal has a 'Roman nose' and pups in the winter. The pups are white in colour, unlike the harbour seal's pups that are brown and born in the summer. The Norfolk coast is an important 'pupping' county for grey seals. Winterton Dunes is a great place to see them in November / December.

17. ☐ **Fen raft spider** *Dolomedes plantarius*

UK's largest spider, it will sit on aquatic vegetation awaiting prey to come by. A re-introduction scheme has seen the population increase. Fenland dykes and ponds. Restricted to a few locations in East Anglia. Late summer. RSPB Strumpshaw Fen.

18. ☐ **Sand martin** *Riparia riparia*

A small brown martin with a white belly and chest band. Slight decrease nationally in the population, Norfolk remains an important county for the species. In Norfolk often found nesting in colonies in the sandy coastal cliffs. NWT Cley and Holme Dunes. Summer visitor – April to September.

19. ☐ **Giant oak aphid** *Stomaphis quercus*

The largest aphid in the world. About the size of a coffee bean, grey in colour and always accompanied by black ants on oak trunks. A rare aphid, which is continuing to decline. Norfolk heathlands are especially important for this species. Late summer. NWT Buxton Heath.

20. ☐ **Royal fern** *Osmunda regalis*

A large rich green fern that grows in clumps. The fronds are tall and bipinnately divided. Restricted range and small population make this fern vulnerable. Found in East Anglian carr woodlands, fens and dune systems. An excellent example can be found along the boardwalk at NWT Ranworth Broad.



1. Swallowtail butterfly
Papilio machaon britannicus
 © Robert Morgan



2. Eurasian bittern
Botaurus stellaris
 © Elizabeth Dack



3. Silver-studded blue
Plebejus argus
 © Steve Evans



4. Norfolk hawk
Aeshna isosceles
 © Elizabeth Dack



5. Fen orchid
Liparis loeselii
 © Adam Pimble



6. Common crane
Grus grus
 © Lynne Warner



7. Milk parsley
Peucedanum palustre
 © Jon Kelf



8. Stone curlew
Burhinus oedipnemus
 © David Tipling



9. Marsh harrier
Circus aeruginosus
 © Lynne Warner



10. Fen mason wasp
Odynerus simillimus
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11. Purple emperor
Apatura iris
 © Tom Hibbert



12. Natterjack toad
Epidalea calamita



13. Sulphur clover
Trifolium ochroleucon
 © David Ferre



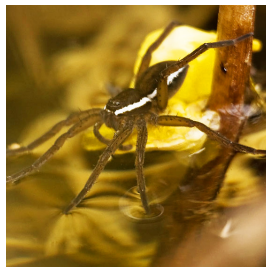
14. Spoonbill
Platalea leucorodia
 © Russell Edwards



15. Water vole
Arvicola amphibus
 © John Assheton



16. Grey seal
Halichoerus grypus
 © Elizabeth Dack



17. Fen raft spider
Dolomedes plantarius
 © Darren Williams



18. Sand martin
Riparia riparia
 © John Lincoln



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Stomaphis quercus
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