

Wildlife wonders make it all worthwhile



Photo by Dan Wareing.

13 individuals who attended a Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Wild Walk and Talk organised on behalf of the Greenprint Forum were treated to the 'Churr Churr' and several sightings of the nocturnal Nightjar, summer time treasure of our heathlands. Keen eyes also spotted the silent winding of the slow worm, our legless lizard.

These joys followed an interesting talk by Malcolm Farrow with an overview of the geology and ecology of the AONB and the vital work of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit. Not just in utilising the passions of local people in observing and protecting these wonderful species and their habitats for their own sake but also for the sake of the local economy. For example did you know that tourism in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB is worth over £160,000,000 a year?

Picking up snippets of interest about species such as the Dartford Warbler which has flown in from warmer climes to make its home here (indeed it has been sighted testing out the climate as far North as Derby in recent years). And the exciting project to assess the effect potential changes to the climate may have on our farming communities and the landscape of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which spans our coastline, (and of which 60% is given over to farming). Then walking out and seeing these species reminded those present that work in the environmental and community sector really is worthwhile, even in the face of all the change and financial challenges that is underway.

So stop reading, get out there and enjoy and maybe join the band of volunteers that do such vital work in keeping our landscape special for Little Terns, Grayling Butterflies, Silver-studded Blues, Hawker Dragonflies and Hobby's, many other species and us.

Visit <http://suffolkcoastandheaths.org/> to find out more about volunteering.

