



**Essex**  
Wildlife Trust

## Uttlesford Local Group Newsletter June 2024

The Uttlesford Local Group runs weekday work parties on Tuesday and Thursday mornings between 9:30 and 12 noon at the nine nature reserves in our district, moving around them as the seasonal work requires. Broadly speaking in the winter months this involves woodland coppicing, in summer meadow management and in the autumn hay cutting and raking. Additional meetings are held at Shadwell Wood on the second and fourth Sunday mornings from September to April to carry out the winter coppicing. These events are a great way of learning how habitats work and seeing wildlife, and are sociable and great fun. To join our volunteers contact [volunteering@essexwt.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@essexwt.org.uk) and you will be sent further details.

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## Sustainable Hadstock Habitat Survey



Our usual Work Party routine is to stop work in early May and leave the nature reserves to their own natural processes. Birds are nesting and feeding, so they need some space and peace without the volunteers working around them. It is also the season for wildflowers to grow, and you might have noticed the Plantlife campaign for 'No Mow May' to let plants grow and flower. We do that every year, and in fact leave most of them to set seed for the following year.

So this is usually a quiet time of year for us and we take a break. But this year one of our volunteers, John Lockton, wanted to carry out a full survey of the parish of Hadstock where he is a parish councillor, to see what wildlife habitat is in the area and whether there is scope for improvement. We chose to use the well-established 'Phase1 Habitat Survey' technique which was first developed in the mid-1980s by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, involving a field survey and then plotting the results on a map. This can then be used as a framework for more detailed work later on in the year.

The survey became part of the Sustainable Hadstock project, organised by parish councillors and residents, to look for biodiversity improvements, and also has a second theme to look at energy efficiency improvements in houses in that parish. Our Essex Wildlife Trust volunteers joined residents of the village to walk all of the footpaths in the parish and assess every visible plot of land for its habitat type, resulting in a map that shows woods ( in green ) , hedges ( green lines ) and grasslands ( orange ) in categories which represent their quality for wildlife. Not surprisingly the dominant land use is arable land, shown with an " A " .

A thumbnail image of the map is shown above, but the detailed version can be seen on this web address

<https://www.hadstock.org.uk/sustainablehadstock/habitat-maps/>

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## Summer in the Nature Reserves



The Gallery of images above were taken in the Aubrey Buxton Nature Reserve on the 18th June, showing the top lake and reflections of trees, and the Common Spotted Orchids that were flowering in the South Meadow. As I write this it is the longest day of the year, and the busiest time for all the animals and plants. Take time to visit the reserves and enjoy the summer scenery.



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