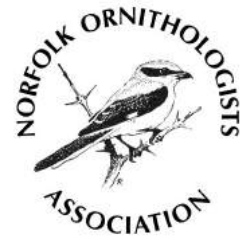


HOLME BIRD OBSERVATORY LAND PURCHASE APPEAL

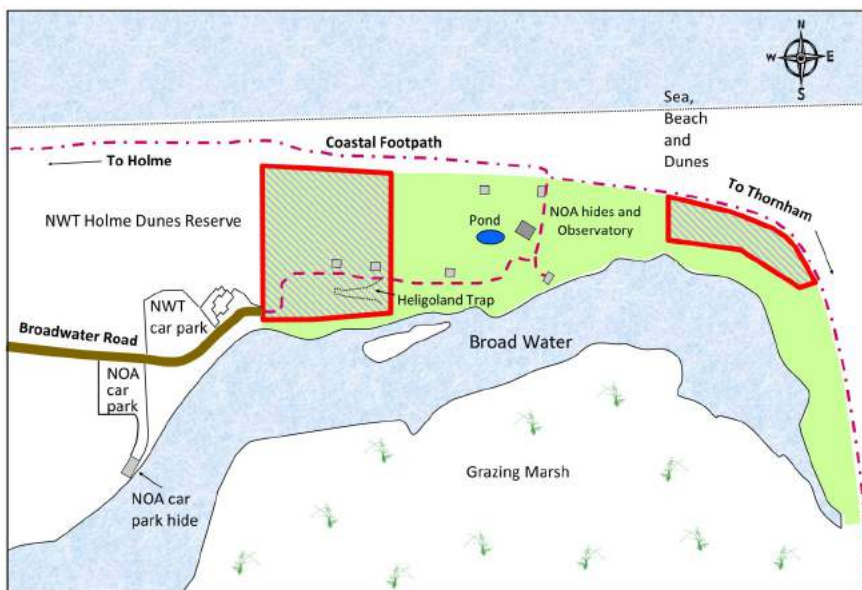


APPEAL to ensure the future of Holme Bird Observatory

I have been warden of the Norfolk Ornithologists Association's headquarters at Holme Bird Observatory for 12 years and I am writing to you today to ask for your help in an urgent and vital matter. You may know that although Holme Bird Observatory was established in 1962, all the land on the Observatory reserve has been leased to us. One of our landlords has recently decided to sell his land which makes up two significant portions of the reserve as shown on the map below. We are therefore launching an appeal, and these details will be circulated to members with our June newsletter.



Sophie Barker
NOA Warden



I am writing to ask if you can help us by making a donation towards our costs for buying this land. We were able to purchase the land by using our cash reserves, but this has significantly reduced our ability to react to any additional costs or contingencies which may come along. If we had not purchased the land, then we would run the risk of it being acquired by others, and of losing our current access to the Observatory and the area where our long-standing bird ringing programme is carried out. This would threaten the very existence of our operations at Holme, which is Norfolk's only accredited Bird Observatory.

FACILITIES

The land we have acquired will protect several of our most important facilities:

- The Observatory's staff and disabled car park, and our disabled access ramp
- The Dowson Hide looking north from the main bank
- The Richardson Hide looking north from the main bank
- The Heligoland trap used for catching birds at any time, including in conditions when mist netting is not possible
- Two drinking pools, used by birds, mammals and insects throughout the year
- The Tawny Owl Box, used by our resident Tawny Owls for roosting and breeding
- Nine of our most important nets for migration monitoring through ringing
- Some of our best birding areas



Photos: The disabled access ramp (top), and western section of the reserve's main bank (above) are among the areas included in the purchase land.

HABITATS

Diverse habitats found on the land we have acquired includes much of the stand of Corsican pine trees north of the main bank, elders at the east end of the reserve, as well as hawthorn, buckthorn and bramble which are widespread in the mature dune slacks throughout the area. It's not just birds for which this land is important, as many other species of wildlife use the area such as rare breeding Natterjack Toads, Smooth Newts, Common Lizards, Water Voles, Bank Voles, Pygmy Shrews, Water Shrews, Hedgehogs, Chinese Water Deer and many more.

RINGING RESULTS

Bird ringing has been taking place over many years on the purchased land, and this includes some areas used for ringing since the 1960s. The total number of birds we have caught and ringed on the land currently stands at 44,565 individuals of 112 species. These include many rare species such as Wryneck, Pallas's Warbler, Bluethroat, Red-flanked Bluetail, Dusky Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Arctic Warbler, Great Reed Warbler and Subalpine Warbler to name a few!

How You Can Help

Your support has helped our small committed team of trustees, staff and volunteers to achieve a great deal over many years. Please help us to ensure the future of the NOA and all the birds and wildlife that use the threatened areas. The cost of buying the land for sale at Holme and securing access to the Observatory and all parts of the reserve is £48,000.

Should we be fortunate enough to exceed this amount, then any excess will be used for maintenance of our reserves.

Thank you

**Sophie Barker
NOA Warden**

