

# NENE VALLEY

Nature • Improvement • Area  
connecting people and nature

Update  
April – September 2014

This project has been supported by Defra, DCLG, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Natural England

## The Natural Environment - use it but don't lose it!

The Northamptonshire Local Nature Partnership conference was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014, with a particular theme around the value of the natural environment to the economic future of Northamptonshire. There was an emphasis on avoiding growth that erodes natural capital and reduces our ability to grow in future. Lord de Mauley made the key note speech, and was followed by Jo Lappin from NEP, Jon McCarthy from LXB, and Oliver Burke from the Nene Valley NIA.

The minister picked out a quote from David Attenborough: **“No one will protect what they do not first care about.”** We have a clear challenge to ensure that those who use the natural environment, and have potential to erode it, value it themselves and understand the value that others place on it.

*There are 5 times more visits to nature than to premiership football matches each year.* This impressive fact emphasises the importance of the natural world to people.

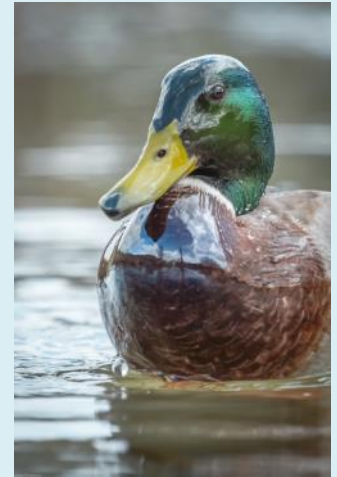
## New interactive website launched!

[www.nenevalleynia.org](http://www.nenevalleynia.org)



The interactive map is one of the innovative new developments to the NIA website. The map is being used to collect information from local people about the places that they value. This will inform our Ecosystem Services assessment for the Nene Valley. Please visit the site and add pins for the places you value!

A photo competition was run alongside the launch; there was a fantastic response and the winning images are on display at Stanwick Lakes until at least the 10<sup>th</sup> November. Some of the most popular images are shown in this newsletter.



### Keep in touch

As a partner in the NIA project we would like to keep you up to date with the project's progress. If you would prefer not to hear from us, or would like more information, please contact Heather Procter (nee Ball) ([heather.procter@wildlifebcn.org](mailto:heather.procter@wildlifebcn.org)). News stories and updates will be regularly posted to our dedicated website [www.nenevalleynia.org](http://www.nenevalleynia.org).



Photo credits: Mallard Landscape, Matt Lodge, Ringstead Sunset, Carole Harvey, Lilford Bridge, Tony Bosworth.

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## Land advice has a massive impact on meadows in Northants

Meadows are a rare and declining habitat across the Country, but have wide environmental benefits and huge cultural significance. In Northamptonshire there has been a significant boost since 2008. Due to projects such as the NIA, Coronation Meadows, the Local Wildlife Sites program, and ongoing advice to landowners, the amount of Lowland Meadow in Northamptonshire has increased by 60% between 2008 and 2014. From a baseline of 620ha in 2008 there has been a further 211ha created and 173ha restored.



Left: SSSI meadow at Achurch now buffered by 15ha of restored meadow

Right: 14ha of new meadow created at Upper Heyford in 2008 (photo taken in 2010).

## Only 5 months to go...

The government-funded phase of the Nature Improvement Area only has 5 months left to run. There have been strong messages that there will be no direct continuation funding, but that the concept of NIAs will be supported. We need to produce a strong case to demonstrate how much we have achieved during the three years of the project in order to secure any chance of future financial support. We will be updating the business plan for the Nene Valley NIA over the winter which will put us in a good position to secure any funds that may become available.

It is a really important time to make sure that we have captured all of the good work that has been carried out since April 2012, even if it wasn't funded by the NIA project. It is great to know what is going on to improve nature and engage people in the valley. There is an online tool to capture this. It's not as bad as it sounds! So to get your hard work recognised please contact Heather Procter.

## Who's who?

Natural Development Officer - Heather Webb ([hwebb@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:hwebb@northamptonshire.gov.uk))

River Restoration Advisor - Simon Whitton ([swhitton@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:swhitton@northamptonshire.gov.uk))

Land Advisor - Robin Field ([rfield@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:rfield@northamptonshire.gov.uk))

Post-Doctoral Research Fellow - Jim Rouquette ([jim.rouquette@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:jim.rouquette@northampton.ac.uk))

The NIA team is supported by Heather Procter at the Wildlife Trust and the finance and admin team at RNRP. Colin Wilkinson ([colin.wilkinson@rspb.org.uk](mailto:colin.wilkinson@rspb.org.uk)) is coordinating the delivery of objective two, access and public awareness.

## The NIA is Good value for money!

In 2013-14 the NIA project brought in £1.50 of additional funding (including in-kind contributions) for every £1 of funding from Defra.



## River improvements in Peterborough

Funds have been secured to improve 530m of bank in the City by installing pre-planted coir rolls. This will supplement the successful 12m-long trial area which was installed in March 2014.

Photo credits: Frosty Morning, Carol McIntyre-Jones, Heron, Ewan Heath-Flynn, Orange tip, David James.