



Suffolk's Roadside Nature Reserves

What are RNRs?

- ❁ Wildlife habitats and refuges for plants that are now rare in the wider countryside (mostly forbs and none for woody species directly)
- ❁ Designated County Wildlife Sites or SSSIs
- ❁ Many verges are the vestiges of ancient grassland, lining routes which have barely changed in centuries.
- ❁ They support important Suffolk flora or fungi
- ❁ They are managed by Suffolk Highways contractors and a network of volunteer wardens
- ❁ The RNR project is a partnership between SBIS, Suffolk Highways and SCC Natural Environment Team and is supported by SCC

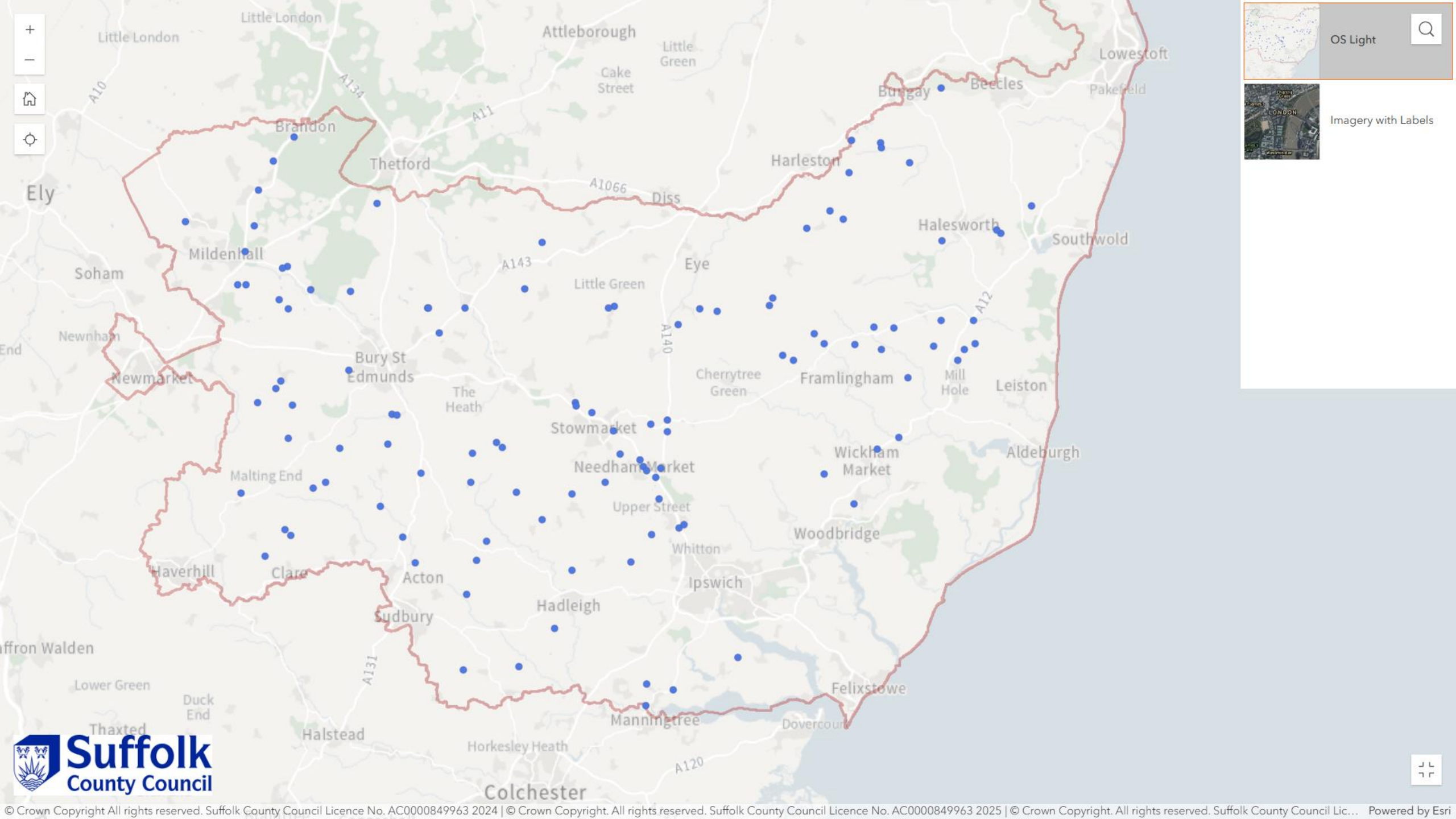


Facts and Figures



- There are 121 in Suffolk, 10 of which are designated for rare fungi.
- Most are also County Wildlife Sites, some are SSSIs
- 90 Suffolk parishes have an RNR
- Vulnerable plant species have been protected on RNRs for around 40 years
- 65% of RNRs have a dedicated warden looking after them





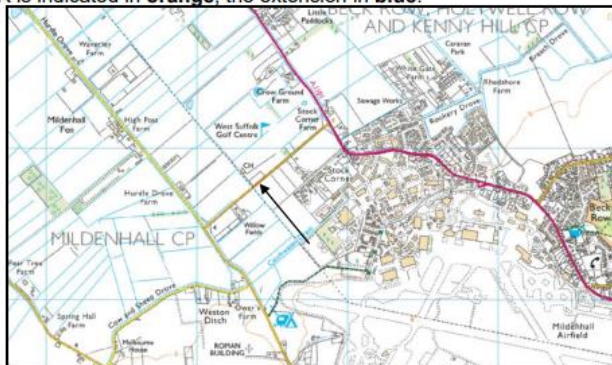
OS Light

Imagery with Labels



FACTSHEET – EXTENSION - Beck Row, Mildenhall Roadside Nature Reserve No. 161

The RNR is indicated in **orange**, the extension in **blue**.



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Site Name and Number	Beck Row, Mildenhall 161
Is there a Warden?	No
Map Reference	RNR: TL 67367773 to TL 67467781 Extension: TL 675778 to TL 672776
Road Number	C603
Highways Area	West
County Wildlife Site?	FHDC 63
RNR Area	RNR: 435m ² Extension: 2328m ²
Road Sides (length)	RNR: 124m Extension: 683m
Cutting time	SEPTEMBER
Criteria	Sand Catchfly

HEALTH AND SAFETY

As this is a **HIGH RISK** site you are advised **NOT** to visit this RNR.
Suffolk County Council does not permit volunteers to work on this RNR



Photo courtesy of Scott Chalmers
Sand Catchfly can be found on the RNR.

What is a RNR?

A RNR is a Roadside Nature Reserve. Under the Roadside Nature Reserve Scheme, the grass verges are individually managed to benefit the scarce or unusual plants or fungi growing in the stretch protected from normal highways management. RNRs may also be designated as County Wildlife Sites (CWS) and several are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

RNRs are marked by two white posts, one at each end, with a black arrow on both posts pointing inwards to the RNR. This is to indicate to the grass verge cutters that this specific site is a RNR and is not to be cut outside of its designated cutting times.

Why are we conserving them?

Many roadside verges are very old, on the edges of routes that have changed little over the centuries. These verges are the remains of the semi-natural grassland that was once widespread throughout the country, but which has declined by 98% since 1945, as a result of changes of land use, intensive cultivation and drainage.

By careful management of the sites we aim to preserve the species on RNRs, giving future generations the chance to enjoy these remnants of ancient grassland meadows.

How can you help?

You can help by keeping an eye on the RNR, and letting us know if anything happens to it, such as material being dumped, or the marker posts being damaged. Even if we have a warden we might need help with raking after the grass is cut. If you would like to help out or be a RNR warden please get in touch, we will be happy to talk to you about the RNR and discuss the warden's role with you.

For further information on this RNR contact
RNRs@suffolk.gov.uk

Importance

- Specific management conserves the rare flora present on RNRs, which would otherwise likely be lost.
- Some species are rarely found outside of Suffolk and represent some of the best populations in the country.
- They serve as vital wildlife corridors in a landscape increasingly fragmented by intensive use and development.
- They support a large number of species, especially pollinators
- Alongside some of our busiest roads, roadside verges create an invaluable network, linking habitats and green spaces.
- This is especially important for pollinators and wildlife such as hedgehogs and badgers who travel great distances



Essential Management

- Cutting schedule – usually September (differs for fungi and late flowering species)
- Raking off the arisings – usually done by volunteer wardens
- Trimming hedges back to prevent shading
- Scrub management



Suffolk Verges Project

- Next step to identify other sites within SCC Highways land to improve biodiversity through alteration of management and/or habitat creation/enhancement.
- Not designated at County Wildlife Sites.
- Identified for wider biodiversity benefits than RNRs e.g.
 - ❖ Faunal interest,
 - ❖ connectivity between sites of value,
 - ❖ reinstatement of defunct features etc.

Thanks for
listening

