

## **October 2025:**

Everywhere seems to have had a late green flourish following the long overdue September rains that have relieved the parched vegetation all over the Walberswick Common Lands Charity estate.

The bracken on the Common has been flailed. This is done between the bird breeding season ending and the bracken tops turning brown; a small window which will be better next year when Natural England will support the identification of late nesting sites with infra-red imaging.

Bracken is a native species and as such is an important and natural part of our landscape. It can be important for many forms of wildlife including birds such as the Nightjar. However, whilst a valuable habitat in its own right, particularly where it forms a mosaic with other habitats, bracken can be present in abundance in the 'wrong' location and severely reduce the ecological value of heathland habitat as other species are crowded out.

The other focus has been on Cliff Field, which is now cut twice a year to maintain a sward height of between 5 and 15cm. A real reward here would be to glimpse the Southern Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*), a native that can be widespread in the grasslands of Norfolk and Suffolk, flowering in midsummer. There is an expectation in the work plan that scrub is no more than 15% and that undesirable species are kept to a minimum.

Writing this on autumn eve, the colours in the landscape are changing - producing a whole new vista to enjoy!