



Sheffield &  
Rotherham

# Kingfisher

## In this edition...

Sheffield Lakeland  
Act for the  
Environment  
Understanding our  
reserves

Issue 99 Spring 2019

*For nature, for everyone*

How you  
can help...

Write to your  
MP asking for a  
wilder future at  
[wildsheffield.com/  
wilderfuture](http://wildsheffield.com/wilderfuture)

Read more on pages 12-13

For other ways you can support us, visit  
[wildsheffield.com/how-you-can-help](http://wildsheffield.com/how-you-can-help)

### Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust

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Find out more  
[wildsheffield.com](http://wildsheffield.com)

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A big thank you to all  
our partners and funders:



Sheffield Town Trust



Building communities. Transforming lives.





This time last year I was writing in this column about the launch of the government's 25 year environment plan and looking ahead to an important year in determining the future of our wildlife legislation.

We are now at a critical point in the process. Nature needs much better protection, both here in Sheffield and Rotherham and across the country, and we have a chance to do something about this, **right now**. In December, the government published its draft Environment Bill, and it was disappointing to see significantly weakened proposals, threatening the great opportunity of this Bill to ensure nature's recovery.

So we are asking people in Sheffield and Rotherham to contact their MP and tell them how important this Bill is and ask them to call for the major improvements we are asking for – read more about what they are and how you can help on pages 12-13. Our new Patron, broadcaster Mike Dilger, has also given his view in his column on page 14.

On a very positive note, we have been bowled over by your generosity in response to our Badger Appeal. Thanks to your generosity we have so far raised over £10,000 towards our target of £50,000, which will help us take the vital first steps towards preventing the need for a badger cull in South Yorkshire, but there is still much more to do.

We're also pleased to report that our Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership is now well on its way towards delivering 20 innovative projects which will help to conserve and celebrate the natural, built and cultural heritage of north west Sheffield (see pages 4-5). Even closer to home, we are also making progress in improving our understanding of our own reserves through our Data for Nature project (pages 14-15). Our wonderful volunteers who have been helping us collect the all-important data have been instrumental in the success of this project.

Finally, thank you as always to every one of our members for your ongoing support. Together, we are able to continue working towards a better future for wildlife, people and the green spaces we all rely on. Please do get in touch if you have any issues to raise or you'd like to share your views about our work.

**Liz Ballard**  
Chief Executive

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## Over the next four years Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership will:

- invest £3.4 million to protect and celebrate the things that make the Sheffield Lakeland landscape special
- join up the management of the landscape, working with different landowners to create a more resilient landscape - where the needs of nature and people matter
- work with more than 30 different interest groups and involve over 1,000 people to deliver projects ranging from natural flood management to barn owl conservation
- engage people in the stories of the landscape, through heritage, cultural and arts projects.

# Working in partnership on a landscape scale

Over the next four years Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust will be the lead partner in a new multi-million pound Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership, co-ordinating the work of more than 20 partner organisations in our region towards a common vision of a more natural and resilient Sheffield Lakeland landscape for everyone to value, enjoy, understand and feel part of.

The partnership has been made possible by a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, with matched funding from our core partners to deliver a package of projects together conserving and celebrating the natural, built and cultural heritage of north west Sheffield.

### What's so special about north west Sheffield?

Sheffield Lakeland is valued by different people for different reasons. Some of these are well understood - its aesthetic beauty and its recreational opportunities, for example. Some are highly valued by special interest groups such as its internationally protected wildlife, industrial heritage and distinctive culture.

Other aspects of the area are only just starting to be understood, such as the landscape's capacity to offer flood protection through natural flood management, or the benefits access to the landscape offers for our mental and physical wellbeing. A key ambition of the Sheffield Lakeland programme is to build a shared understanding of the multiple

**"We are in this for the long term and the award of the grant is the first step on that journey. We can achieve more by working together on a landscape scale than as individual organisations acting alone and we are already thinking about the legacy of the programme beyond the initial four year funding period."**

**Keith Tomkins, Partnership Manager**

ways in which the landscape is special, and to take action to record, manage and protect these for the future; addressing any conflicts which arise between the different values through effective partnership working.



Sheffield Lakeland has a distinctive landscape character, but at the same time has always been subject to change. At times change happens so slowly we don't notice, sometimes it is very rapid such as the building of the reservoirs. The Landscape is currently going through a period of rapid change and much of what is special about it is under threat. As the story of the landscape is also the story of the people who have lived and worked there, these threats extend to the cultural landscape as much as the natural and built heritage of the area. Over the next four years, the Partnership will deliver over 20 projects designed to identify, protect and celebrate the outstanding characteristics of the Sheffield Lakeland landscape.

### Hitting the ground running

Some projects are already delivering great results:

The Steel Valley Project has completed repairs to the boundary wall at Bowcroft Cemetery, a Quaker burial ground dating from the 17th century, now in the care of Bradfield Parish Council. The site is a hidden gem, not far from Stanington, and a peaceful place to enjoy panoramic views of the Sheffield Lakeland landscape.

The Wildscapes team has made a start on the removal of invasive rhododendron from the cloughs on Hoyles Farm as part of natural flood management through the Working with Water project.

The Partnership's first Community Grant Scheme award has been made to the Sheffield Ramblers to make stiles between Worrall and Low Bradfield more accessible for walkers of all ages.



The Wildscapes team hard at work near Strines Reservoir. Photo by Nabil Abbas. Opposite page: Canyards Hills is designated as a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) for its geological interest; its tumbled topography makes it a fascinating place to visit. Photo by Tony Sangar.

## What is Sheffield Lakeland?

The north west of Sheffield is an outstanding example of a living landscape, rich in history, with diverse habitats abundant in wildlife, vibrant communities and strong traditions. This 'Sheffield Lakeland' area covers 145km<sup>2</sup>, the central point being close to the village of High Bradfield.

The reservoirs form such a distinctive aspect of the landscape that they inspired a bus company in the 1950s to establish bus tours from the city to visit the Sheffield Lakeland.

This is a special and unique area, and the work of the Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership seeks to identify, protect and celebrate these qualities.



### Stepping stones to confidence

The Connecting Steps programme will work with community groups to deliver projects which build confidence and develop a stronger sense of nature connectedness, so that more people can enjoy the physical and mental wellbeing benefits of access to a high quality natural environment, more people will care about their local environment and more people will take action to look after it.

### Connecting classrooms to cows

Landscape Connections will provide new opportunities to deliver hands-on farm visit experiences, connecting children from urban areas with the countryside, food production and wildlife. It will be based at Cliffe House Farm, home of Our Cow Molly, in Dungworth, and led by Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust's Outdoor Learning team.





# Improving access at Moss Valley Woodlands



Moss Valley bluebells by Claire Taylor

**Over autumn and winter Moss Valley Woodlands nature reserve has seen big strides forward with improved access and woodland management.**

**This charming chain of ancient woodlands on the southern edge of Sheffield is well-known as an outstanding site to see bluebells and other wildflowers every spring. Over the winter, the Trust has been working hard to improve the management of the woodland and access to the reserve.**

The permissive bridleway running through Long Wood has always been problematic, being notoriously muddy for much of the year and with a steep gully which horse riders have found difficult to cross safely.

Thanks to funding from Countryside Stewardship and Viridor Credits, as well as Open Gate Trust and our members who made donations towards the project, we've been able to install drainage and resurface one kilometre of this track, providing a good year-round surface. Not only has this work improved the accessibility to the nature reserve, it's also channelling visitor traffic and helping prevent erosion of the precious wildflower habitat.

The nature reserve has also seen the dominance of beech and sycamore in the woodland. Both of these species were extensively planted in the woodland historically, resulting in an unnatural woodland structure and composition. As a consequence the woodland is now too dark and dense for the native oak and birch to regenerate, creating long-term problems.

To address this issue, we've surveyed the woodlands to identify the best individual native trees, which will live on to become veterans and provide a good seed source for centuries to come. We've started 'halo thinning' around these trees, clearing room for them to develop and grow healthily. We've also been thinning trees across the wider woodland, creating gaps in the canopy so that enough light can reach the woodland floor to allow for the germination and growth of the next generation of oak trees.



Moss Valley Woodlands track construction



# Active Amphibians

**Springtime sees amphibians becoming active after their winter hibernation, so here's a quick guide to the five native species you might find locally!**

## Common frog

Widespread in countryside and city, they congregate in large numbers in the spring to breed in ponds, producing unmistakable floating blobs of frogspawn. Adults are extremely variable in colour, including shades of green, brown, orange, yellow and red, with dark spots on their legs and bodies. They have smooth moist skin and move in short jumps.

## Common toad

Similar in size and shape to the common frog, but distinguished by drier and bumpier skin, and striking coppery eyes. They are also variable in colour, from grey to reddish or dark brown. Toads prefer deeper ponds and lakes for breeding, and produce a long chain of toadspawn rather than a cluster. They move by walking or hopping rather than jumping, and spend more time on dry land.

## Great crested newt

The largest and most spectacular of the three native newts, the great crested newt (GCN) resembles a small dinosaur!

It has bumpy skin which is dark brown or black on land, but can vary in colour and appear much paler in the water. Both sexes have a yellow/orange underside with black spots. In the breeding season the males have a white line along their tail and a jagged crest along their back, although this can be hard to see out of water.

## Smooth newt

The most widespread newt in the UK often occurs in garden ponds. Approximately two thirds the size of the GCN, it is paler in colour (beige to olive brown) and lacks the bumpy skin of its larger relative. Both sexes have a yellow/orange underside with black spots, and breeding males also have a crest on their back, which can lead to confusion with GCN. However the crest of the smooth newt is less jagged than the GCN and runs the entire length of the back and tail.

## Palmate newt

It's easy to mistake these for smooth newts as they look so similar. Male palmate newts have distinctive dark webbing on their hind feet and a fine filament at the end of their tail. Both sexes have a yellow-orange underside with spots, but unlike other newt species, the throat is usually a pale pinkish colour and unspotted.

**Come and meet Woodhouse Washlands' wonderful newts on 27th April – see page 8 for details.**



## March

### Monday 11th

**Centenary Riverside Work Day**  
Riverside Way, S60 1DS  
10am – 3pm

### Friday 15th

**Woodhouse Washlands Work Day**  
Furnace Lane entrance, S13 9XB  
10am – 3pm

### Sunday 17th

**Wyming Brook & Fox Hagg Work Day**  
Redmires Road car park, S10 4QX  
10am – 3pm

### Thursday 21st

**Blacka Moor Work Day**  
Stony Ridge car park, S11 7TW  
10am – 3pm

### Saturday 23rd

**Blacka Moor User Forum**  
Totley AC Pavilion, Lane Head Road, S17 3AZ  
10am – 12pm

### Monday 25th

**Bat Surveys: An Introduction to Bats, Buildings and Activity Surveys** ✿  
37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF  
9.30am – 5pm

### Tuesday 26th

**Bat Surveys: An Introduction to Bats and Tree Surveys** ✿  
37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF  
9.30am – 5pm

### Wednesday 27th

**Sunnybank Work Day**  
Broomhall Place entrance, S10 2DG  
10am – 12pm

### Wednesday 27th

**Woodhouse Washlands User Forum**  
Woodhouse Library, 3 Skelton Ln, S13 7LY  
6pm – 7pm

### Friday 29th

**Greno Woods Work Day**  
Woodhead Road, S35 8RS  
10am – 3pm

## April

### Monday 1st

**Crabtree Ponds Work Day**  
Crabtree Close, S5 7BJ  
10am – 12.30pm

### Tuesday 2nd

**Ecclesall Woods Wild Play** ✿  
Abbey Lane, S7 2QZ  
10am – 12pm and 1pm – 3pm

### Tuesday 2nd

**Wyming Brook & Fox Hagg Work Day**  
Redmires Road car park, S10 4QX  
10am – 3pm

### Wednesday 3rd

**Ecclesall Woods Wild Play** ✿  
Abbey Lane, S7 2QZ  
10am – 12pm

### Thursday 4th

**Greno Woods Wild Play** ✿  
Woodhead Road, S35 8RS  
10am – 12pm

### Thursday 4th

**Moss Valley Woodlands Work Day**  
Meet Hazlehurst Lane layby, S8 8BG  
10am – 3pm

### Friday 5th

**Wildlife Gardening**  
37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF  
10am – 12pm

### Saturday 6th

**Blacka Moor Work Day**  
Stony Ridge car park, S11 7TW  
10am – 3pm

### Monday 8th

**Centenary Riverside Work Day**  
Riverside Way, S60 1DS  
10am – 3pm

### Tuesday 9th

**Ecclesall Woods Wild Play** ✿  
Abbey Lane, S7 2QZ  
10am – 12pm and 1pm – 3pm

### Wednesday 10th

**Ecclesall Woods Wild Play** ✿  
Abbey Lane, S7 2QZ  
10am – 12pm



Great crested newt by Joy Russell

### Thursday 11th

**Greno Woods Wild Play** ✿  
Woodhead Road, S35 8RS  
10am – 12pm

### Friday 12th

**Woodhouse Washlands Work Day**  
Furnace Lane entrance, S13 9XB  
10am – 3pm

### Thursday 18th

**Blacka Moor Work Day**  
Stony Ridge car park, S11 7TW  
10am – 3pm

### Wednesday 24th

**Sunnybank Work Day**  
Broomhall Place entrance, S10 2DG  
10am – 12pm

### Thursday 25th

**Introduction to Phase 1 Habitat Surveys** ✿  
Join ecologist Julie Riley for a day's training on Phase 1 Habitat Survey techniques - an essential skill for quickly surveying and mapping habitat types.  
37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF  
9.30am – 4pm

### Friday 26th

**Greno Woods Work Day**  
Woodhead Road, S35 8RS  
10am – 3pm

### Monday 29th

**Bat Surveys: An Introduction to Bats, Buildings and Activity Surveys** ✿  
37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF  
12pm – 9.30pm

## Saturday 27th

**Woodhouse's Newts** ✿  
Come and meet Woodhouse's amazing newts. Find out all about the impressive great crested newt and explore Woodhouse Washlands nature reserve. Grab your boots and join us!  
Furnace Lane entrance, S13 9XB  
7am – 9am

## Tuesday 30th

**Bat Surveys: An Introduction to Bats and Tree Surveys** ✿  
37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF  
12pm – 9.30pm

## May

### Thursday 2nd

**Moss Valley Woodlands Work Day**  
Meet Hazlehurst Lane layby, S8 8BG  
10am – 3pm

### Friday 3rd

**Wildlife Gardening**  
37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF  
10am – 12pm

### Saturday 4th

**Blacka Moor Work Day**  
Stony Ridge car park, S11 7TW  
10am – 3pm

### Monday 6th

**Crabtree Ponds Work Day**  
Crabtree Close, S5 7BJ  
10am – 12.30pm

### Tuesday 7th

**Wyming Brook & Fox Hagg Work Day**  
Redmires Road car park, S10 4QX  
10am – 3pm

### Monday 13th

**Centenary Riverside Work Day**  
Riverside Way, S60 1DS  
10am – 3pm



## Volunteer Work Days

Give us a hand! Our Volunteer Work Days are a great opportunity to get some fresh air and get closer to the wildlife on our reserves – and our volunteers are a friendly, welcoming bunch! Our friendly Community Rangers Rachel and Hannah will be on site to welcome you.  
For more information go to [wildsheffield.com/volunteer](http://wildsheffield.com/volunteer)

## 15% discount at Cotswold Outdoor

Our supporters can claim 15 per cent off in-store and online. Just present your membership card at the checkout, or use code **AF-WILDLIFE-M5** online.





### Thursday 16th

#### Introduction to Phase 1 Habitat Surveys ✿

Join ecologist Julie Riley for a day's training on Phase 1 Habitat Survey techniques - an essential skill for quickly surveying and mapping habitat types. Stafford Road, S2 2SF 9.30am - 4pm

### Thursday 16th

#### Blacka Moor Work Day

Stony Ridge car park, S11 7TW 10am - 3pm

### Friday 17th

#### Woodhouse Washlands

Work Day  
Furnace Lane entrance, S13 9XB 10am - 3pm

### Saturday 18th

#### Bird Walk at Wyming Brook ✿

Redmires Road, S10 4QX 10am - 1pm

### Sunday 19th

#### Moss Valley Woodlands User Forum Meeting

Hazlehurst Lane layby, S8 8BG 10am - 12.30pm

### Wednesday 22nd

#### Sunnybank Work Day

Broomhall Place entrance, S10 2DG 10am - 12pm

### Friday 31st

#### Greno Woods Work Day

Woodhead Road, S35 8RS 10am - 3pm

## June

Can you do something wild every day in June? See our website for even more ideas to go #30DaysWild

### Saturday 1st

#### Blacka Moor Work Day

Stony Ridge car park, S11 7TW 10am - 3pm

Event Key: ✿ Online booking essential

### Monday 3rd

#### Crabtree Ponds Work Day

Crabtree Close, S5 7BJ 10am - 12.30pm

### Tuesday 4th

#### Wyming Brook & Fox Hagg

Work Day  
Redmires Road car park, S10 4QX 10am - 3pm

### Thursday 6th

#### Moss Valley Woodlands

Work Day  
Meet Hazlehurst Lane layby, S8 8BG 10am - 3pm

### Friday 7th

#### Wildlife Gardening

37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF 10am - 12pm

### Sunday 9th

#### Wild about Photography Workshop ✿

Join wildlife photographer Guy Badham on Blacka Moor photographing beautiful scenery and fantastic wildlife. Learn some great skills and techniques for taking brilliant pictures. Blacka Moor nature reserve, S11 7TW 10am - 12pm

### Saturday 15th

#### Family Day Out at Greno Woods Nature Reserve ✿

Come and explore the woods, have a go at orienteering, or find a geocache. Bring a picnic and stay all day! Woodhead Road, S35 8RS 10am - 3pm

### Monday 10th

#### Centenary Riverside Work Day

Riverside Way, S60 1DS 10am - 3pm

### Thursday 20th

#### Blacka Moor Work Day

Stony Ridge car park, S11 7TW 10am - 3pm

### Friday 21st

#### Woodhouse Washlands

Work Day  
Furnace Lane entrance, S13 9XB 10am - 3pm

### Saturday 22nd

#### Wonderful Wetland Birds ✿

Grab your binoculars and look out for the lapwings' impressive somersaults and the beautiful song of the skylark, led by bird expert Chris Measures at Woodhouse Washlands nature reserve. Furnace Lane entrance, S13 9XB 7am - 9.30am

### Wednesday 26th

#### Sunnybank Work Day

Broomhall Place entrance, S10 2DG 10am - 12pm

### Friday 28th

#### Greno Woods Work Day

Woodhead Road, S35 8RS 10am - 3pm

## July

### Monday 1st

#### Crabtree Ponds Work Day

Crabtree Close, S5 7BJ 10am - 12.30pm



### Tuesday 2nd

#### Wyming Brook & Fox Hagg

Work Day  
Redmires Road car park, S10 4QX 10am - 3pm

### Thursday 4th

#### Moss Valley Woodlands

Work Day  
Meet Hazlehurst Lane layby, S8 8BG 10am - 3pm

### Friday 5th

#### Wildlife Gardening

37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF 10am - 12pm

### Saturday 6th

#### Blacka Moor Work Day

Stony Ridge car park, S11 7TW 10am - 3pm

### Monday 8th

#### Centenary Riverside Work Day

Riverside Way, S60 1DS 10am - 3pm

### Tuesday 16th

#### Sunnybank Reserve Advisory Group Meeting

Meet at Broomhall Place entrance, S10 2DG 6pm - 7pm

### Friday 7th

#### Moss Valley Woodlands Herbal Walk and Workshop

Discover Moss Valley Woodlands' amazing flora and learn all about its herbal qualities with expert James Adams. Join us for a walk and workshop around this beautiful ancient woodland. Eckington Rd, S18 3AX 10am - 2pm

## Find out more...

For more information about all our events, including exact meeting points, please visit [wildsheffield.com/whats-on](http://wildsheffield.com/whats-on) or call 0114 263 4335. You can also find out about events by subscribing to our newsletter, Kingfisher Online - just email [mail@wildsheffield.com](mailto:mail@wildsheffield.com)



Sheffield & Rotherham



# #StayWild

Share your sightings!









**Through Natural Neighbours - funded by The Big Lottery's Reaching Communities programme - Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust is continuing to engage diverse audiences in Rotherham.**

Since July the Trust has engaged around 300 children and young people through Natural Neighbours, most of whom are from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds.

This work has included a pilot working with Roma families in Rotherham. Through the use of bilingual wildlife ID cards the Trust led nature walks with around 80 parents and their children, engaging them with local wildlife in parks and at Centenary Riverside nature reserve. Interpreters were on board to support this work, engaging parents who often spoke less English than their children and helping walk leaders to have more in-depth conversations about wildlife in Rotherham and even back in their native countries. Many of the people on the walks had never previously visited Centenary Riverside, despite it only being a mile or two away from their homes, but greeted the opportunity to discover the wildlife on their doorstep with real enthusiasm and enjoyment.

The Trust has predominantly been engaging with children and young people in Rotherham through its Young Rangers programme and environmental play sessions with schools and local community groups. The next year will see these programmes expand, with 'Young Leaders' sessions in addition to the Young Rangers programme, involving more advanced skills and safety outdoors. This year will also see young people from disadvantaged backgrounds given the opportunity to improve their life skills and have opportunities for youth employment in the environment sector, thanks to a new partnership project with Clifton Learning Partnership, supported by the Careers and Enterprise Fund.

Photos by Wayne Munro-Smith from Love Where You Live

**Thanks to the players of People's Postcode Lottery, our children's Wild Play sessions are available to everyone. For family fun in the woods during the holidays, see page 8.**



## School Specials!



30 Days Wild is back this June – email [schools@wildsheffield.com](mailto:schools@wildsheffield.com) to find out how to get your school involved!

Exciting Sustainable Energy fieldwork sessions at EON's biomass plant are available for Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 – a student experience you just can't get inside a classroom!

[wildsheffield.com/outdoor-learning](http://wildsheffield.com/outdoor-learning)

## Legacies

It is with regret that we report the loss of some valued members of Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust during 2018:

- Michael Oliver had been a member of Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust for five years, and left a gift in his will to ensure that he would continue to support local wildlife into the future.
- Thank you to the family and friends of Mrs Netti South who made donations to the Trust in her memory.
- The family and friends of Ms Susan Varah also made donations to the Trust In Memoriam.
- Roy Swallow had been a member of the Trust for 13 years and regularly donated the fees he was paid for presenting talks on birds to local organisations. He too left a gift in his will to ensure his good work will continue.

Thank you to all of them for their support and our sincere condolences go to their loved ones.

## New corporate member

We're delighted to welcome Outokumpu Stainless Limited, a global leader in steel production with several Sheffield sites, as a new corporate member. If you'd like more information on working with Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust as part of your company's corporate and social responsibility targets, please email [c.grice@wildsheffield.com](mailto:c.grice@wildsheffield.com)



Support our  
campaigns

Go to  
[wildsheffield.com/  
campaigns](https://wildsheffield.com/campaigns)



# A Wilder Future

## Take action for a wilder Sheffield and Rotherham

**As you read this, the Government is deciding the contents of a new Environment Bill. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to put wildlife at the heart of decision-making and kickstart nature's recovery - and we need your help to make it happen.**

Wildlife across the UK is facing huge decline. The laws that should be ensuring nature's protection are failing wildlife and people. Common species are becoming rarer, their habitats are getting smaller and more disconnected, and we're losing vital assets for our health, wealth and happiness.

As shown in our *Sheffield State of Nature 2018* report, priority species like white-clawed crayfish, turtle dove and water vole have all but disappeared from our area. Our farmland birds represent four of the five most severe declines in local bird

species, mirroring a national trend.

Our current wildlife legislation can only try to protect certain habitats or species. It wasn't designed to put nature into recovery and it can't deliver that. To reverse the trends and turn around nature's fortunes, we need new laws that can address the problems it faces. We need a Nature Recovery Network - a joined-up landscape of wilder, less heavily managed places where wildlife can thrive. We need to see the return of the species that should be in these wild places - water vole, pine marten, goshawk, hen harrier and more.

This is our chance to make these new laws a reality and ensure a Wilder Future for Sheffield and Rotherham. But we'll need as many of you as possible to take action so we can make a noise for nature the Government simply can't ignore.





Pine marten by Terry Whittaker/2020VISION



## So what you can do?

Well, the most immediate action you can take to help kickstart nature's recovery is to write to your MP. Collectively our MPs have the power to make these new laws a reality – but to persuade them to take action, they need to know it's important to you.

There's a form at [wildsheffield.com](http://wildsheffield.com) that makes contacting your MP really quick and easy, or you can put pen to paper and write to them the old-fashioned way. But whichever method you prefer, please do write to your MP.

Tell them how important our local wildlife and habitats are to you and ask them to support a strong Environment Bill. Tell them what needs to be in it too – clear targets, a Nature Recovery Network for wildlife to recover and a strong, independent green watchdog with the power to hold government to account.

We can also make a difference by providing space for wildlife where we live and work too. On their own, our actions can feel isolated or small – but linked together every garden window box, bird feeder, log pile, street tree, field margin and riverbank can make a big difference for nature. Why not take a look around and see what you can do to make your own places wilder?

For more information about our Wilder Future campaign, go to [wildsheffield.com/wilderfuture](http://wildsheffield.com/wilderfuture)



Bee at Sunnybank nature reserve by Paul Hobson

## News in Brief

### Smithy Wood

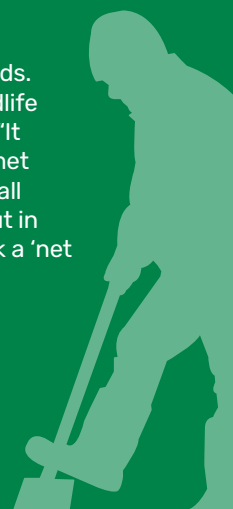
Many *Kingfisher* readers will have been following Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust's campaign to protect Smithy Wood, an ancient woodland and local wildlife site in Sheffield's Green Belt, from being destroyed by a Motorway Service Area (MSA) at Junction 35 of the M1. Although the Trust has been campaigning on this issue since 2013, progress through the planning system has gone rather quiet over the last year. A rival MSA application was submitted for Junction 33 to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council in 2017 and this is still in the planning system with no committee date yet set. With the Sheffield Smithy Wood application still 'live' we anticipate both going to committee this year and we will keep members up-to-date through all our communication channels.

### Brilliant for badgers

A massive thank you goes out to everyone who has contributed to our badger appeal so far. You've helped us to raise over £10,000! That's 20 per cent of the way towards the Trust's target for a planned programme of local badger vaccination against TB to deter culling in our area. Visit [wildsheffield.com/badgers](http://wildsheffield.com/badgers) for more information or to make a donation.

### Condemnation for 'devastating' HS2 impact

The Trust has condemned the HS2 Phase 2b draft Environmental Statement. HS2 Ltd's own figures show it will have a devastating impact on important places for wild plants and animals. The Trust understands that the new route is likely to impact on six important Local Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodlands. Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust CEO Liz Ballard said: "It is high time that HS2 Ltd met the same requirements of all other developers, as set out in Government policy, to seek a 'net gain' for wildlife."





# Our first ever Patron



So what's a lad born and bred in the West Midlands, who now lives in the West Country, doing by accepting the Patronage of Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust? Well firstly, working as a Wildlife Presenter in BBC's *The One Show* gives me a reasonably high profile. But crucially, what sealed the deal, were my Yorkshire roots. While my mother's family emanate from the 'Red Rose County' (sorry about that!) my father's family all hail from Britain's City of Steel.

As a child I have clear recollection of countless trips up to S5 (or Shiregreen) to visit my nan and aunty. These regular visits to see the 'rellies' would also invariably include either a walk along the Don or a ramble in the Peaks to enable me and my brothers to let off steam. But these day trips also had the unintended consequence of providing a fledgling naturalist with some of his first brushes with wildlife – making it only fit and proper that I can now return the favour to the place that sparked that interest all those years ago.

As someone who has now been wildlife obsessed for the best part of 40 years and is determined to continue being a voice for nature, I must admit these are worrying times. The *State of the Nature 2016* report makes clear that many of the species and habitats we all adore are patently struggling for space and protection in modern-day Britain. Irrespective of how you voted in the European referendum, surely we all agree that new, strong wildlife legislation is essential, which is why I'm backing The Wildlife Trusts' push for an Environment Act to protect our natural heritage. Despite all the political uncertainty on the horizon, the only certainty is that everything is up for grabs, so I urge you to help the Trust in speaking up for the biodiversity of South Yorkshire and beyond... why? Because it's worth it.

## Mike Dilger

Naturalist, TV Presenter and Patron of Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust



There are plenty of opportunities to get involved in the Data for Nature project this spring and summer. If you are interested in helping us carry out surveys out on our reserves, or you are a whizz with data and GIS, we'd love to have you on board! In-depth training in monitoring techniques, data management and analysis will be provided by the Trust to help volunteers develop the ecological and surveying skills necessary for these voluntary roles.

Become a  
Data for Nature  
volunteer!

Email Volunteer Coordinator, Julie Riley, at [data4nature@wildsheffield.com](mailto:data4nature@wildsheffield.com)



# A step change in understanding our reserves

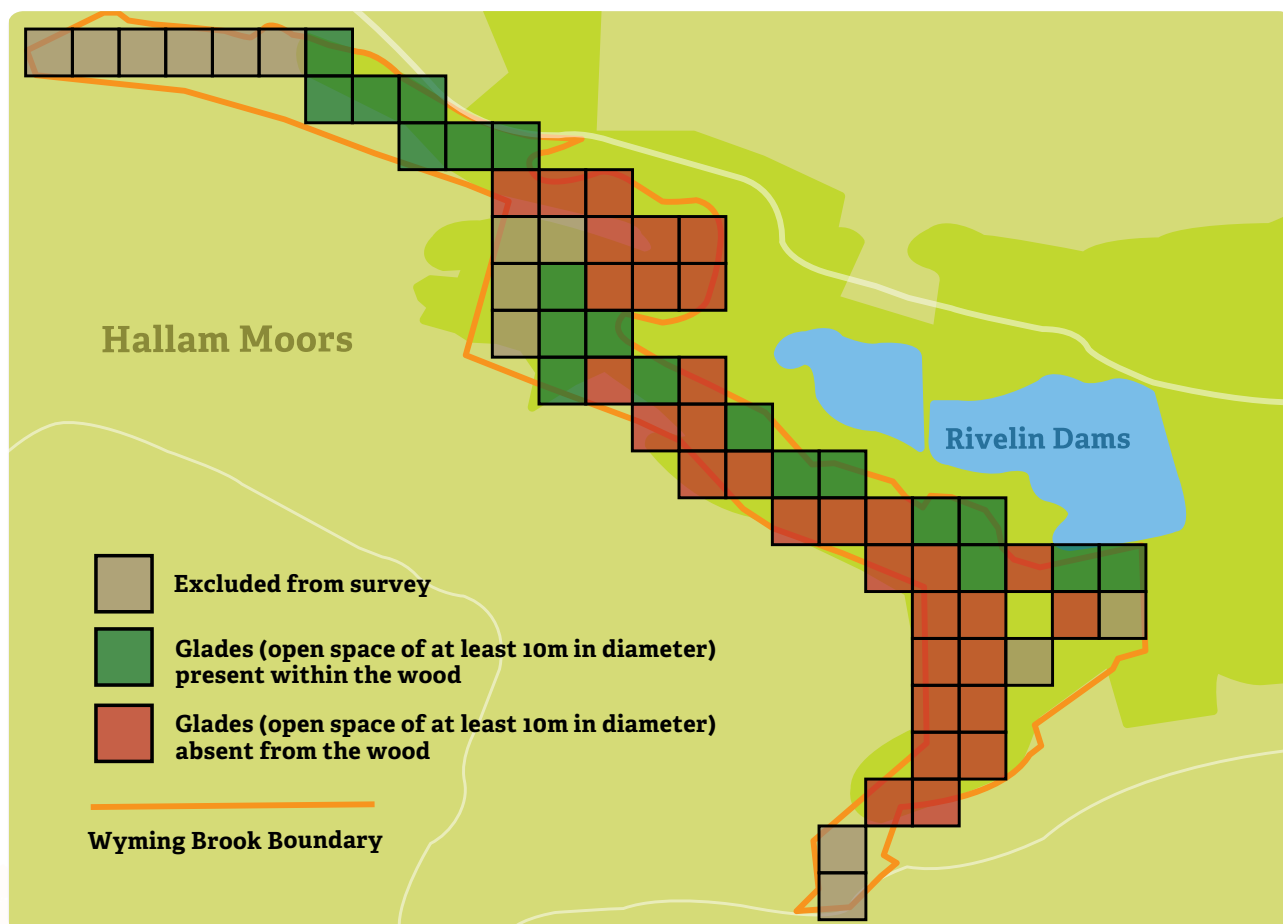
One of the key recommendations of the *Sheffield State of Nature* report, published in April 2018, was to address gaps in the city's ecological data. Data for Nature – a new initiative supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and run by Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust – will help to achieve this by increasing our understanding of the wildlife and habitats in nature reserves across Sheffield and Rotherham.

The project was launched in the second half of 2018, and since then the team has been working hard to deliver a step change in how Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust approaches ecological monitoring and data analysis on its own reserves. Following guidance from Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and North East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre, the Trust has implemented an approach to monitoring using a grid-based system. This approach has been piloted over winter through carrying out harvest mice surveys at Carr House Meadows nature reserve, and woodland condition monitoring at four of the Trust's other nature reserves.

Our initial results are in and we have been able to 'heat map' these (see map, below), enabling our nature reserve managers to implement more evidence-based management in the future.

Senior Data and Monitoring Officer Pete Tomlin said: "We're really happy with the progress that has been made so far in developing a new monitoring framework for the Trust. This spring and summer promises to be a busy time for us as we roll out our new approach across our nature reserves, carrying out monitoring on habitats such as the stunning wildflower meadows at Carr House Meadows, and mapping skylark territories at Woodhouse Washlands."

Chris Doar, Greno Woods Reserve Manager, said: "This new monitoring system makes it much easier for us to measure the effectiveness of our management techniques, and gives us the evidence to help us decide where to concentrate our efforts for best effect."



Results of the Wyming Brook woodland condition monitoring

# Survey season 2019 is rapidly approaching!

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