

The member magazine for Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust

Kingfisher

Winter 2019

Issue 101



HELP WILDLIFE THIS WINTER

10 ways you can support
your garden wildlife

NATURE COUNTS

Find out what
Data for Nature
has discovered

URBAN WILDLIFE

City slickers

From foxes to otters, discover the wildlife
making a home in our towns and cities





Welcome



Ensuring nature can thrive, even in urban locations (page 16) is at the heart of our calls for a Nature Recovery Network. So while we welcome a new Environment Bill which includes local nature recovery strategies, we remain concerned about some aspects of the proposals - such as the lack of legal requirement for major infrastructure projects like HS2 to improve the habitats they impact upon. Please visit bit.ly/EnvBillMP to ask your MP to help make the Bill more robust so we can get on with supporting nature's recovery.

It was great to see so many of you at our AGM and have the chance to let you know more about the work we have been doing over the last year. Following on from guest speaker Police Superintendent Nick Lyall's eye-opening talk about the work of Raptor Persecution Priority Delivery Group, it's great to be able to share the news that goshawks have managed to raise chicks in our patch (page 12) after some years of very poor breeding success.

One of the projects I especially highlighted in my AGM talk was Data for Nature which has significantly improved our approach to ecological monitoring and how it informs our conservation work. Our new monitoring protocols give us a much more detailed picture of wildlife on our nature reserves. Find out more about this fascinating project in the feature on page 22.

As we go into winter there is the temptation to hibernate, but turn to page 9 where Melissa Harrison makes the case for spending time in nature whatever the season. And of course there are ideas in the gardening feature on page 26 for you to incorporate into your patch, so that you can also contribute to nature's recovery.

A huge thanks for your continued support – we really couldn't do it without you!

Liz Ballard
Chief Executive



PHOTO

Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust *Get in touch*

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Cover: Urban fox by Sam Hobson/Naturepl.com





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How to provide safe habitats for overwintering wildlife in your garden.

Thank you to our volunteers!

A Binns, A Clegg, A Crowe, A Harrison, A Houldcroft, A Parker, A Reavy, A Rodgers, B Croxton, B Lightburn, B Mitchell, B Robins, C Corbin, C Davies, C Downes, C Measures, C Nicholson, C Smyth, C Sudbery, C Turk, D Botcherby, D Cutts, D Higgins, D Howard, D Stamp, E Comley, E Guest, E Miles, E Mitchell, E Stevenson, G Colley, G Craik, G Hunt, G Piggott, G Robinson, G Thorpe, H Parkes, I Commerford, J Carr, J Clarkson, J Hall, J Harker, J Horscroft, J Houldcroft, J Jackson, J King, J Leach, J Porter, J Stobart, K Hickey, K Mayor, K Wale, L Harding, L Murphy, L Nelson, L Richards, M Barker, M Brook, M Brunt, M Gillett, M Grice, M Kinsella, M Matthews, M O'Connell, M Sefelin, M Todd, M Woodcraft, N Fawson, N Hopkins, N Khan, N Uger, N Wingfield, O Pool, P Liversage, P Long, P Maddox, P May, P Nicolls, P Wolstenholme, R Beeley, Ride Sheffield, S Burton, S Dalrymple, S Harker, S Mather, S McGuinness, S Parker, S Pugh, S Smietana-Zarada, S Trickey, S Turner, S Wilson.

3 ways to get involved with your local Wildlife Trust

Take action If a local development or planning application could impact on nature, let us know takeaction@wildsheffield.com

Leave a legacy A gift in your will can help your loved ones remember you every time they see wildlife thrive wildsheffield.com/a-gift-in-your-will

Tell a friend Even better, buy them a year's membership and help them to help the wildlife they love! wildsheffield.com/giftmembership

Thanks to our Corporate supporters Join forces with them wildsheffield.com/corporate





WONDERFUL WILDLIFE

Badger, badger, badger

The elusive badger is our biggest land predator, a member of the *Mustelid* family and related to stoats, weasels and otters. Badgers live in family groups in a burrow system known as a 'sett'. An occupied sett can be recognised by the tidy burrow entrances, marked with piles of used bedding (hay and leaves), and by nearby latrine pits where they leave their droppings. They feed on small mammals, ground-nesting bird's eggs, earthworms, fruits, roots and bulbs, which they dig up with their strong front paws. Cubs are born in January or February, but spend the first two or three months underground, only emerging in the spring.

BRILLIANT BADGER FACTS

- **Top groomers** - Badgers spend much of their time grooming. As well as self-grooming, badgers also frequently groom each other - a social bonding behaviour known as *alogrooming*.
- **Unusual breeders** - Like some other mammals including stoats, martens and roe deer, badgers exhibit 'delayed implantation'. This enables badgers to suspend the development of fertilised eggs for several months so their cubs are born in spring.
- **Champion smellers** - Badgers have an acute sense of smell - said to be many hundreds of times more powerful than our own. Badgers also have good hearing but their eyesight is poor, so they use their noses to find food and detect danger.

Thank you

Thanks to you we've raised 25% of the money we need to start our badger vaccination programme. To discover how you can help visit wildsheffield.com/badgers



Your wild autumn & winter

The best of the season's wildlife and where to
enjoy it on your local patch

PHOTO: TERRY WHITTAKER/2020VISION

A badger foraging above a town at night.
Badgers are becoming increasingly urban, with
many visiting gardens in cities and towns.



Take a walk around Kilnhurst Ings to see the snipe which now breed there, along with the showy little egret, grey wagtail and teal.

HABITAT

Visit a wetland

The colder months bring winter visitors flocking to our wetlands. Several of our reserves are washlands designed to hold excess water, preventing urban areas from flooding. The mix of habitats including marshy grassland, ditches, mature trees and scrub makes them perfect places for seasonal species. Thanks to your membership we're able to manage post-industrial wastelands like Kilnhurst Ings and turn them into thriving wetlands for wildlife!

PHOTO: SNIPE, ROB MILLER



PHOTO: RED DEER AND JOGGER, TERRY WHITTAKER/2020VISION

Unexpected company in the jogging area.

URBAN FIELDCRAFT

Cervine city living

Imagine walking through your allotment or in a park in the mist, when you see what you think is a very large dog – but on closer inspection it turns out to be a deer! As their usual habitats of grasslands, field margins and woodlands are lost to development, deer are investigating urban areas throughout Sheffield and Rotherham, even close to the city centre. Opportunistic herbivores, they are attracted by the warmer conditions and variety of food on offer in the suburbs, especially in the winter. There are three species you might see in this area – red, roe and the non-native muntjac.

HOW TO SPOT AN URBAN DEER

- **Follow the sun** – red and roe deer are mostly active during dawn and dusk so you are more likely to see them moving then. Muntjac are active all the time.
- **Watch the weather** – Red deer move into the wind as they graze. Roe deer will often seek shelter from the rain.
- **Stake out shrubs** – Although our local reds have adapted to live on open ground like our reserve at Blacka Moor, most deer naturally prefer tree cover – and they are quite partial to a rose bush!





SEE THIS

Look at the horizon as dusk falls to see spectacular starling murmurations, formed as hundreds of birds come together to find an evening roost.

DO THIS

Take a bag and some thick gloves on a walk through the woods to look for sweet chestnuts in their spiny cases – delicious roasted!

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Black Poplar

Beth Robins explains the crisis and conservation challenges facing our rarest tree.

The black poplar is a large, fast-growing woodland tree native to the UK and Europe. Found on floodplains and other waterside locations such as river valleys, mature black poplars can grow to around 30 metres high, their trunks can be up to 2.5 metres in diameter and they can live for 200 years. Black poplars are an extremely valuable resource for wildlife. Many butterfly and moth species rely on the tree; in fact over 100 specialist insects are associated with it, while the catkins provide an early source of food for bees and finches.

Losing ground

Black Poplars were once a familiar part of the British landscape, but their numbers have rapidly decreased over the past 100 years. There are a variety of reasons for their decline; natural fire-resistance made the timber popular for floorboards, while changes in farming practices such as draining floodplains to convert them for agricultural use resulted in a loss of suitable habitat for the trees. They are now the rarest native species in the UK, with only around 6,000 of them still standing. With so few of them around, most are too far away from other specimens for pollination. Because of this, they are in danger of becoming extinct from the UK in the next 20 years.

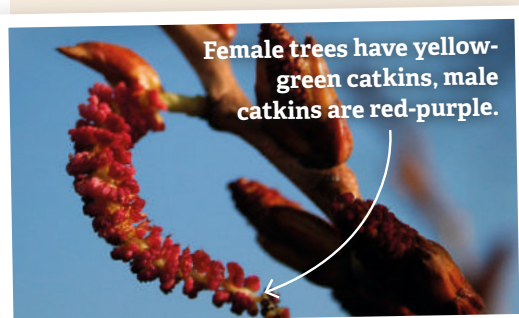


A helping hand

The loss of black poplars has such a detrimental impact on the wildlife which relies on them. Conservation work is being done to prevent their numbers declining further. This includes raising awareness about their threats, taking cuttings, protecting existing black poplar trees and planting new ones. In an attempt to reduce the threat of extinction, a team of volunteers from Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust recently planted six black poplar trees at Woodhouse Washlands nature reserve as part of a wider Council-led scheme to introduce native black poplars around Sheffield.

SEE THEM THIS SEASON

- **Woodhouse Washlands** – this wetland is home to a stately 35 metre tall cultivated hybrid Black Italian poplar which really stands out in the landscape.
- **Shirtcliffe Woods** – the woodland edge near Beaver Hill Road is home to the area's largest hybrid black poplar.
- **Shire Brook valley** – several young native black poplars can be found on this local nature reserve.



Top tips MORE WOODHOUSE WONDERS

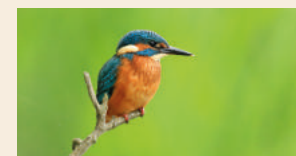
Fieldfare

These sociable birds come here to feast on the hawthorn berries in flocks ranging from a few dozen to their hundreds! Other migrants to look out for include redwing and waxwing.



Kingfisher

Regularly seen darting up and down the River Rother, look for the unmistakable azure blue and metallic copper as it flashes along the riverbank.



Waxcaps

A wander through the grassland in late autumn and early winter is likely to reward you with glowing red waxcap fungi. It only grows where artificial fertilisers and weedkillers are not used, so Woodhouse Washlands is perfect.



PHOTOS BY BETH ROBINS, BOB EMBLETON/CC BY-SA 2.0, DON SUTHERLAND, JON HAWKINS/SURREY HILLS PHOTOGRAPHY, NABIL ABBAS



HEAR THIS

The mating call of the red fox is unmistakable – it's been described as a blood-curdling scream!

FORAGE FOR THIS

Sloes are at their best after the first frost – steep them in gin and sugar for a few months for a tasty treat.



NOT JUST FOR KIDS

Seven ways to enjoy the winter

PHOTO: HELENA DOLBY



1 IRREPLACEABLE: AN EVENING OF TREES

Thursday 21st November

Join us and Julian Hoffman, author of *Irreplaceable: The fight to save our wild places* for an evening of impassioned accounts about endangered habitats like ancient woodland – including our very own Smithy Wood – and the people fighting to save them. Book now wildsheffield.com/whats-on

PHOTO: NICHOLAS WATTS



2 FANCY A WILD NIGHT IN?

Monday 2nd December

You're invited to a new series of great nights in with us! We have some great speakers with inspirational and informative talks and presentations, with a chance to ask the questions you've always wanted answering.

Coming up next is **A Wild Night In: Farming and Wildlife** with Nicholas Watts. With around 75% of the UK used for agriculture, the impact farming practices can have on wildlife is huge. When Nicholas noticed a worrying decline of breeding bird species on his farm he set out to reverse this decline. He'll be sharing the story of his success – he's now won more awards for conservation than any other farmer in the UK, including an MBE for his services to farming and conservation – and we'll discuss how we're working with local farmers to improve practices for wildlife. You don't want to miss this! Reserve your space at wildsheffield.com/whats-on

3 PICK UP THY SHOVEL...

Thursday 15 August

This is the best time of the year to carry out many of the necessary land management projects on our reserves. Working in the colder months minimises the disturbance to wildlife and habitats, but it does mean we have to cram a lot of work into a short space of time! Lend a helping hand to wildlife for an hour (or five!) at any of our volunteer work days – we'd love to see you. Find one near you now wildsheffield.com/whats-on

4 Put your wellies on and follow some animal tracks to see where they lead.

5 Wrap up warm and go out at night to listen for tawny owls – December is the highlight of their mating season. The tawny owl is the familiar 'brown owl' of the UK's woodlands, parks and gardens. Listen out for the famous 'twit-twoo' call, actually made up of a 'ke-wick' sound from a female and an answering 'hoo-hoo-ooo' from a male.

7 Make a wild bird feeder to help our feathered friends while food is scarce: Mix lard with bird seed, grated cheese and breadcrumbs. Smear the mixture onto pine cones, then roll them in dried fruit and nuts. Hang them up in your garden, then sit back and watch your visitors flock in!



PHOTO: CHRIS GOMERSALL/2020VISION

6 PLANT A TREE

The environment and future generations will thank you! Native trees are great for helping pollinators and animals to thrive. With a bit of planning even the smallest of gardens can accommodate a tree, and now is the perfect time to plant them. Visit wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-plant-tree for a step-by-step guide.





MY WILD LIFE



Catherine Downes

Trust member Catherine Downes tells us how volunteering keeps her sharp



I became a member about ten years ago. I've always had a keen interest in nature and ecology, so when someone asked if I'd thought about membership I said, 'Yes, for decades, but I've not got round to it!' I joined up then!

I got involved with the Data for Nature project when ecologist Julie Riley contacted me. I'd assisted on some phase 1 surveys with her before and really enjoyed it, so I was happy to get involved. She's a great educator and made sure we had training before all the surveys.

Find out more about the National Lottery Heritage Fund Data for Nature project with the feature on page 20.

Volunteering helps my brain and I'm taking on new learning throughout, so I volunteered for any survey I could. I've been on the surveys for winter tree and early spring trees, nightjars, meadows, dragonflies and damselflies, harvest mouse and wildflower indicators.

I co-ordinated the Skylark surveys; they were a very early start. I remember the landscape would be covered in mist and we would see it getting burnt away as the morning went on.

My favourite survey has to be the Ancient Woodland Wildflower survey at Moss Valley. It was early evening, the bluebells were out and we were the only people around. It was such a nice environment. Moss Valley Woodlands is a fantastic reserve. It's a delightful place and so quiet.

I was surprised how bright and keen the young volunteers were, particularly on the dragonfly and damselfly surveys. They took what we had learned in the training and used that so well to quickly identify the different species on the surveys.

I enjoy meeting people with similar enthusiasms. There is such a mix of people volunteering on the Data for Nature project – young, old, and from a range of backgrounds. I loved getting to know a regular team of people. ”

Catherine



Want to know if volunteering is right for you? Give us a call on **0114 263 4335** or visit **wildsheffield.com/volunteer** and we'll tell you all about it. Indoors or outdoors we have lots of ways you can help share your experience. In return we provide training, equipment, travel expenses and endless cups of tea!

NOW YOU DO IT

Visit Blacka Moor

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Location: Blacka Moor is on the south-west of Sheffield.

How to get there: Bus numbers 65, 215, 271 and 272 all stop opposite the nature reserve on Hathersage Road. Find more details on the Travel South Yorkshire website. Parking is available at Stony Ridge car park off Hathersage Road and Strawberry Lee Lane car park.

Access: There is an extensive Public Rights of Way network across the reserve. The topography of Blacka Moor means that many routes across and around the reserve require steep uphill climbs. Please be aware that some areas of the reserve can be wet and boggy. Contact us for disabled access information.

Other information: Dogs are permitted on the reserve but must be kept on a lead at all times. Cycles are permitted on designated cycle paths within the reserve.

Phone: 0114 263 4335

Email: mail@wildsheffield.com

Website: wildsheffield.com

TOP WILDLIFE TO SPOT

Red deer: Our largest land mammal is undoubtedly the monarch of the moor. Stags roar and grunt during the rut (breeding season) which takes place September-November, and carry their impressive antlers until March, when they shed them.

Fungi: The pastures at Blacka Moor have been managed under a low-input grazing regime for over 700 years, allowing a diverse community of grassland fungi to develop. We've identified 106 species on this single site, including 14 species of waxcap! Other species to look out for include the iconic fly agaric and the impressive giant polypore.

THINGS TO DO

- Climb Bole Hill in the south-east; this outstanding viewpoint offers sweeping vistas of Sheffield and beyond.
- Go for a bike ride. There are many cycle paths on Blacka Moor, and you can see a lot of the reserve on two wheels – plus the exercise will keep you warm on a brisk day!

Discover the magic of Blacka Moor

Blacka Moor is a spectacular nature reserve right on the edge of our outdoor city.

With 181 hectares of breath taking scenery it forms part of an internationally important wild landscape – the Eastern Peak District Moors – which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its rare heathland habitat and wildlife. There's always something new to discover at Blacka Moor, from sweeping vistas revealed as the morning mist burns off, or surprising fungi by your feet; or the red deer which roam freely here.

The autumnal colour is phenomenal – glowing copper, reds and golds, while throughout the winter the moor has

a wild look, making the vivid reds of hawthorn and rowan berries really pop. Winter spectacles for bird-lovers include fieldfare, redwing and (in some years) waxwing, all here to take advantage of nature's bounty. Short-eared owls are regularly spotted nearby too.

Thanks to your support we can look after Blacka Moor to keep it special. Throughout the winter we will be 'halo thinning' around some mature trees in the woodland, giving them space to grow and flourish. By improving the habitat and creating the right conditions we hope to increase the numbers of rare woodland birds including redstart, pied flycatcher and spotted flycatcher which use the site.



Plan your next day out from all our reserves at

wildsheffield.com/reserves



**Melissa
Harrison**

Connect with winter this year



When I lived in a city, winter didn't mean much more than a warmer coat for my commute. Now I live in a rural village it seems darker, longer and colder, but also more interesting, with so much to observe and take pleasure in. The slow cycle of the seasons is now a central part of my life.

These days nearly 90 per cent of us live in urban areas where, unless we get outdoors and immerse ourselves in nature, seasonal changes are much less noticeable than in the countryside. But while insulating ourselves from the colder months with 24/7 street lighting and temperature-controlled offices may be convenient, it comes at a cost. Our bodies and minds evolved in nature, alert to its cycles. Studies have shown that part of the brain knows what time of year it is outside and adjusts our immune system and metabolism accordingly, even if the subjects involved are entirely protected from seasonal cues.

It's only very recently in evolutionary terms that we've started spending so much time indoors; just a blink of an aeon, in fact. Perhaps that's why forging a year-round connection to nature can prove so rewarding, because it's something our brains have evolved over millennia to do. Tuning in to cyclical events like the slow ripening of apples, the blossoming of ivy flowers providing late food for bees, the shy eruption of mushrooms among the leaf litter or the peeping calls of redwings migrating over cities after dark – these things root us in time as well as place, creating a feeling of



connection that becomes stronger, more rewarding and more enriching with every passing year.

There's a good case to be made for spending daily time outdoors in nature, whatever the weather (within reason!) and all times of the year. Perhaps it's a lunchtime stroll that takes in your local green space, an evening run around a nature reserve or a new morning route to the bus stop that takes you across a nearby common: build it into your routine and you'll soon feel the benefits. Having a dog is a great motivator; any owner will tell you the benefits to body and mind that come from taking their four-legged friend out every day – even if they may grumble a little on rainy mornings!

Watching even the humblest place change through all four seasons will lead you to know it intimately, a deep, atavistic pleasure that connects us to our past and helps prepare us for an uncertain future, too. The more connected we are to our environment, the more likely we are to protect it – so when the days draw in, keep going out; keep looking, keep listening, keep loving the natural world.

A LITTLE BIT WILD

Study the seasons

Phenology is the study of cyclical natural phenomena. Several projects record sightings from citizen scientists, so you can contribute to these valuable, long-running studies of nature. Visit wildsheffield.com/sightings

Melissa

Harrison is a nature writer and novelist, and editor of the anthologies *Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter*, produced in support of The Wildlife Trusts.



Go wild this winter From bugling cranes to bubbling brent geese, there's a world of wild wonders to get you outside this winter. Find your next adventure at wildlifetrusts.org/winter-wildlife





WILD NEWS

All the latest regional and national news from The Wildlife Trusts

Goshawks can
fly through the trees
at up to

40km
per hour!

PHOTO: TAKEN UNDER LICENCE BY PEAK DISTRICT RAPTOR MONITORING GROUP



LOCAL

Majestic predators return to the Sheffield Lakeland

2019 has seen the return of a breeding pair of goshawk to the Sheffield Lakelands, laying four eggs and three young, of which two successfully fledged over the spring. Goshawks were once extinct in the UK, but this area of South Yorkshire became a stronghold for their recovery in the 1960's before suffering significant declines, in the 2000s, with the result that no birds have bred successfully for years.

This charismatic and secretive raptor is one of the key species that the Sheffield Lakeland Partnership is working toward protecting and supporting. As part of a four year National Lottery Heritage Funded project, raptor experts (The Peak District Raptor Monitoring Group) and key habitat managers (Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust, Yorkshire Water and Sheffield City Council) are working together to make sure the land management they undertake results in suitable nesting and rearing sites for these birds. Loss of habitat, persecution and disturbance have all been identified as putting these birds at risk, but by working together, the partners can

positively influence habitats and manage the landscape in such a way as to minimize disturbance.

We should all be able to see amazing birds of prey like goshawk, hen harriers and short-eared owls when we walk across our Sheffield Moors. They are part of nature as well as our own heritage and culture. Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust is determined these fantastic birds will return to our countryside and that it will not be an exceptional day when chicks like these successfully fledge or you catch sight of one soaring overhead. We work positively with landowners, land managers and dedicated groups like PDRMG to ensure there is space for these birds in our busy countryside and we will continue to work toward stopping the illegal persecution of birds of prey

People are asked not to go looking for goshawk; instead enjoy the countryside, watch but do not disturb all of the birds and other wildlife – and if you are lucky enough to see one let us know!



GOSHAWK TIMELINE

- **1800s** - UK goshawks became extinct in the wild after extermination by gamekeepers and egg collectors.
- **1960s** - Escapees and releases from falconry recolonize the UK.
- **2000s** - Goshawk numbers in the Dark Peak crash. Breeding locally ceases.
- **2018** - Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership project begins, Peak District Raptor Monitor Group identify potential nest site during woodland surveys.
- **2019** - Goshawks identified establishing a nest in the area and the site is monitored until they successfully fledge two chicks.



Discover what else we're doing
to help our birds of prey
wildsheffield.com/birds-of-prey



PHOTO: HELENA DOLBY



LOCAL

Wildflowers for woodlands

Wildflowers are an important element of the woodland ecosystem, so we're grateful to have received a grant from Mondegreen EB, through funds generated by Outokumpu Stainless, to safeguard Greno Wood nature reserve's wildflowers and allow them to flourish. This winter, we'll be clearing overgrown holly, creating a perfect seedbed for recolonization by bluebell, wood anemone and new tree seedlings. We'll also bring back areas of old sweet chestnut coppice into management, opening up the canopy and letting light in to encourage carpets of wildflowers to return.

We're also working to open up the rides and glades to help woodland edge species thrive. These areas provide an essential source of nectar and warmth for a range of insects, from bees and butterflies to the famous Greno Wood ant, while the rides act as superhighways for dragonflies moving between our new ponds. Using funding from both EPIP and Outokumpu, we're currently planting wetland flowers around pond three. We can't wait to see Greno burst into life!



Investigate Greno Woods with the free Wild Sheffield app
wildsheffield.com/grenowoods-thingstodo

LOCAL

Working well

In July, we said farewell to our fantastic Working for Nature trainees Liam and Moustafa, who had been with us since September 2018. They did incredibly well and we are really pleased that following on from completing their diplomas, they have gone on to find work in the environmental sector. A warm welcome to our new trainees, Shaun and Steven. We look forward to working with them over the next 11 months!



Find out more wildsheffield.com/working-for-nature

Together we're stronger

Here are some of the ways your membership has been helping to protect your local wildlife:

8600

people connected to nature through our community projects
wildsheffield.com/your-community

1 Gold award

from BBC Gardeners World Live for Wild at Heart wildsheffield.com/wild-at-heart

Thank you!

Over 350

of you lobbied your MP to raise the issue of the Environment Bill
wildsheffield.com/campaigning-for-wildlife

You've helped our species recording site reach more than

10,000 entries

in just two months!
wildsheffield.com/sightings



A shore thing



A shoal of citizen scientists across the UK will be learning more about our shorelines than ever before, following the launch of The Wildlife Trusts' new and improved Shoresearch programme this summer.

This national citizen science survey trains volunteers to monitor the marine life around our coasts, gathering valuable data that will help experts monitor our sea life and better understand the effects of pollution and climate change.

Surveys focus on the intertidal zone (the area of the shore that is covered by water at high tide, but exposed to the air at low tide). They take place on all shores, rocky, sandy and muddy alike, to chart coastal wildlife around the UK.

Anyone can become a budding marine biologist by attending a free Shoresearch event hosted by a coastal Wildlife Trust. Regular volunteers will be trained to identify and record intertidal plants and animals and their habitats, from colourful butterflyfish hiding in rockpools to weird and wonderful worms buried in the sand and mud.

Previous Shoresearch surveys have used different approaches depending

on which part of the UK they took place in. Now, for the first time, the same methods will be used across the UK, giving us even better data and ensuring that species records can be compared between different regions and changes can be monitored.

The data collected by Shoresearch in the past has already been key to securing many of our Marine Conservation Zones, revealing the special places on our coast that are most in need of protection. Following the Government's designation of 41 new Marine Conservation Zones this summer (bringing the total in English waters to 91), the Shoresearch programme will be crucial for monitoring the health of the coastal regions of many of these protected areas.

Shoresearch launched during this year's National Marine Week, the annual celebration of our seas in which thousands of people enjoyed coastal activities, from rockpool rambles to whale watching.

Find out more

Learn more about Shoresearch and discover how you can get involved: wildlifetrusts.org/shoresearch

A YEAR OF SUCCESS FOR OUR SEAS

■ **More protection** - this May the Government announced the designation of 41 new Marine Conservation Zones, adding to the 50 already designated. These will form a vital series of underwater habitats which, with the right management, will allow nature to recover.

■ **Better information** - The Wildlife Trusts' new Shoresearch programme launched in July, giving citizen scientists the chance to survey our shores, gathering vital data on the health of our coastal wildlife.

■ **Fantastic support** - thousands of people across the UK, Alderney and the Isle of Man joined us in celebrating our seas during National Marine Week.

UK UPDATE

End of an era

Stephanie Hilborne OBE has stepped down as Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trusts. Steph has led The Wildlife Trust movement, championing its beliefs and vision, for the last 15 years.

Under Steph's leadership, The Wildlife Trusts have been at the forefront of marine conservation, successfully campaigning for the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, led on landscape-scale conservation and published ground-breaking research on the benefits of nature for health and wellbeing.

Speaking about her departure, Steph said, "I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to be so central to this amazing movement of dedicated people who care so passionately about wildlife and future generations. I wish all my friends in the movement well as they go from strength to strength."

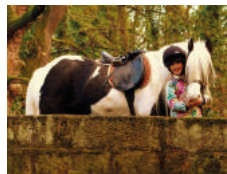
We wish Steph all the best in her new role as CEO of Women in Sport. wildlifetrusts.org/ceo-steps-down



25 years of support

Since 1994, players of The National Lottery have helped to protect vulnerable wildlife and bring people closer to nature across the UK. This includes supporting our Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership which has enabled projects like Heritage Highways to get underway. Many of the volunteers are keen riders like Piper (pictured with her horse Elvis) who

have spent the first year of the project surveying and researching 14 historic routes in the Lakelands project area. They've discovered some were once used by pack horses and others linked to neighbouring villages, work places or churches. Discover more at wildsheffield.com/sheffield-lakeland



Saving sand dunes

A pioneering project is stepping in to save Europe's most threatened habitat, sand dunes. Home to rare plants and animals, including fen orchids and sand lizards, the last century has seen them decline dramatically. The ambitious Dynamic Dunescapes project aims to reverse these declines, working with local people to bring life back to our dunes. This partnership project was made possible by £4m funding from The National Lottery. wildlifetrusts.org/saving-sand-dunes



UK HIGHLIGHTS

Discover how The Wildlife Trusts are working for you across the UK



1 Moor wildlife

600 acres of wildlife-rich moorland have been saved from potential development by Northumberland Wildlife Trust, thanks to incredible support for their fundraising appeal. Benshaw Moor is home to round-leaved sundews and sphagnum mosses, as well as nesting curlews, otters and rare butterflies. The site will now be protected as a nature reserve.

nwt.org.uk/news/benshaw



2 Tern tracking

For the first time ever, chicks from Wales' only Sandwich tern colony have been given special "flags" to help birdwatchers track their movements. Each flag, fixed to a ring on the bird's leg, has a unique code that can be read through a spotting scope, helping us learn more about these seabirds.

northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk/news/ringing-changes

3 Going batty

The largest ever survey of Alderney's bat population has revealed the island's first live brown long-eared bat. For Alderney Wildlife Trust's 'Bat Week', visiting experts trained residents in survey techniques while conducting an island-wide study. They also found five pipistrelle roosts, including a maternity roost, and a natterer's bat. alderneywildlife.org/bat-week-2019



RED DEER: TERRY WHITTAKER/2020VISION

Red and fallow deer live in managed herds in some urban parks, but wild deer also roam our suburbs. We need green spaces in our towns and cities to create a Nature Recovery Network that helps wildlife spread and thrive and connects people with nature.



GO WILD *in the city*

It's not only pigeons and people that live in concrete jungles. Nature writer **Amy-Jane Beer** reveals the exciting variety of wildlife that not only survives but thrives in the built-up habitats of our cities.

Worldwide, about 55% of people live in cities or towns, and that figure is set to rise to 66% by 2050. The UK is ahead of the curve: as far back as 1950, urbanites accounted for 79% of the populace, and by 2030 it'll be 92%.

The urban landscape offers humans every convenience – providing us with roosts and dens (though you might call it housing), optimal foraging opportunities (retail, if you must), efficient means of getting about, of interacting socially, of rearing families. They are an ideal human habitat in many ways, except perhaps for the loss of close contact with nature. This contact, we are beginning to recognise, is vital.

Happily, it is surprisingly easy to encourage wildlife into urban areas. In fact some species have been exploiting the opportunities of manmade





Hedgehogs can be abundant in urban gardens that provide food, nest, rest and hibernation sites, and that are well connected to other gardens. They need to roam on average 2km each night.

environments for generations, and others are on the rise. Partly this is a result of increasing pressure on habitats in the wider countryside, but it's also because some towns and cities are making space for nature.

Green oases

Many British townscapes have a surprising amount of green space. Gardens, parks, recreation areas, business parks, university campuses and other institutional grounds can all offer excellent habitat for everything from butterflies to bats, woodlice to wood mice, sparrows to swifts. Wild plants thrive too, invited or otherwise – there is no reason for anyone to grow up unfamiliar with daisies, dandelions, nettles, docks, and ivy or with trees such as planes, willows, holly and limes. These all bring their own retinues of invertebrates and birds, so that gardens, parks and even scrub-covered vacant lots and back alleys often literally thrum with life.

You'd be mistaken for thinking urban wildlife was mostly small. Our largest terrestrial mammal, the red deer, lives wild a stone's throw from central London. A November morning in Richmond Park can feel primordial, with rutting stags bellowing and clashing antlers, while locals jog and commuters hurry past wearing headphones.

The first and most conspicuous species to reclaim urbanised habitats are often commensals – species that thrive best alongside humans, including rats,

house mice, house sparrows and feral pigeons. These may not be universally popular creatures, but a little bit of wildlife easily begets more. Just as 'weeds' bring invertebrates, which in turn feed bats and birds, mice are food for foxes and owls. Where there is ivy, there is food for bees and cover for birds, even in winter. Where there are sparrows there may be sparrowhawks. Where there are pigeons, peregrines can thrive – the pair that live in my home city of York have bred among the ornate stone grotesques and finials of the Minster, and their lethal raids provide an appropriately gothic spectacle over the often-unsuspecting heads of shoppers and tourists.

Another cliff-nesting bird that has taken to manmade structures is the kittiwake – a dainty gull with an eponymous 'kitti-waaaayyk' call. The colony that has made its home fully eight kilometres inland

Where there are sparrows, there may be sparrowhawks. Where there are pigeons, peregrines can thrive





Peregrines are making a comeback, particularly in our towns. Here they enjoy an abundance of prey and a wide choice of suitable nest sites, from cathedrals to tower blocks.

on Newcastle quayside has become a local cause célèbre, despite the liberal splatter of guano that accumulates on local landmarks such as the Tyne Bridge and Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art.

Unlike larger gulls, kittiwakes are not scavengers. No chips, kebabs or cigarette butts for them. The Newcastle birds still hunt far out to sea, spending 10 hours or more away from their young and returning to their artificial cliff ledges with crops full of sandeels. A webcam installed by Durham Wildlife Trust attracts thousands of viewers, who follow the annual drama of nesting, rearing and fledging.

Water brings life

Water is a magnet and a corridor for a huge range of urban wildlife. Canals and ornamental ponds invite the solemn, stately presence of grey herons, which may even nest in plain sight if trees of adequate stature are available. None of our cities yet rival Amsterdam, which is home to more than 800 herons, but there is potential.

The electric blue and orange flicker of kingfishers may seem like the stuff of leafy idylls, but improvements in water quality and fish populations mean these glittering birds can now be seen flickering along waterways in cities such as London and Bristol. A similarly heartening story is that of the otter. In the 1970s and 1980s, these sinuous aquatic carnivores were creatures of near mythic scarcity.

Healthy populations of kingfishers in urban areas such as central London, Manchester, Aylesbury, Coventry, Leeds and Preston show the important role waterways have in greening our towns and cities.



DISCOVER URBAN WILDNESS

My favourite urban spectacle

Our experts from around the Wildlife Trusts share their wildlife highlights



Ragwort

"Ragwort is known by many names, including stinking willie, benweed and

St Jameswort. It's commonly viewed as a weed and a pest, but I love it for the important role it plays in our ecosystem, providing a home and food to at least 77 insect species, 30 of which eat only ragwort and nothing else!"

Qasim McShane, The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country



Cheerful ragwort flowers attract butterflies and other insects



Badger

"It's always a surreal experience to see a badger, the symbol of the British

countryside, going about its business in our towns and cities. I've studied the rise of the urban badger in Yorkshire and the Midlands, and had the pleasure of watching these charismatic creatures roaming a city park in Solihull."

Ben Devine, Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust



Stag beetle

"Stag beetles are such an exciting part of summer. Hearing their whirring,

clumsy flight over the garden or balcony on a warm evening is so atmospheric. I always rush out to see their amazing 'antlers'. I'm lucky to live in south London, which is a hotspot for these otherwise declining giants, so I try to create as much habitat as possible for them."

Rachel Dowse, London Wildlife Trust

HEDGEHOG: TOM MARSHALL, PEREGRINE: BERTIE GREGORY/2020VISION, KINGFISHER: LAURENT GESLIN/NATUREPL.COM, SMALL SKIPPER ON RAGWORT: ROSS HODDINOTT/2020VISION



My favourite urban spectacle

Our experts from around the Wildlife Trusts share their wildlife highlights



Cinnabar moth

"The cinnabar moth is my favourite urban insect. I love to see its black and

yellow caterpillars munching on ragwort in gardens and waste ground in late summer. With its bright red wings fluttering weakly in the sunshine, the adult moth brightens up any urban space, including gardens."

Ben Keywood, Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust



Ivy flowers are a source of nectar for autumn insects



Ivy

"Ivy is a hugely important, but often undervalued habitat that brings year-round colour and wildlife into grey town centres. In winter, it provides shelter for birds and a superb early source of nectar for emerging insects. Despite a reputation for causing damage to buildings, ivy can actually form natural armour against frost and pollution."

Ian Mackenzie, Scottish Wildlife Trust



Brown hare

"There's wildlife we're used to seeing in urban settings, such as foxes and squirrels – and then there are some surprises. One morning, I saw what I first thought was a rabbit near my tram stop in Nottingham. A closer look revealed it to be a brown hare – a creature associated with wide open countryside – wandering unphased up the street!"

Hattie Lavender, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust



As cities have cleaned up their waterways, grey herons have returned. Today, the birds loiter in many London parks, watching passers-by for handouts, and form bustling breeding colonies in park trees.

Now they can be seen in or close to the centres of Edinburgh, Leeds, Exeter and Winchester.

On a smaller scale, the popularity of lime trees with the urban planners of yesteryear means city streets and parks are among the best places to spot one of our most spectacular insects. The adult lime hawk-moth wears a version of the 1960s carpet I remember from my grandma's house, while the pencil thick caterpillars are resplendent in lime (naturally) green, with smart diagonal stripes and a lurid blue 'horn' at the posterior.

Home for hedgehogs

Perhaps the best loved of all urban wildlife is a species that visits our homes without causing any inconvenience and often without apparent fear. Hedgehogs have undergone a catastrophic decline over recent decades, but some urban populations are bucking the trend, thanks largely to sympathetic homeowners. Gardens make superb hedgehog

The adult lime hawk-moth wears a version of the 1960s carpet I remember from my grandma's house



DISCOVER URBAN WILDLIFE

10 great cities for urban wildlife



- 1 Inverness** On the edge of the Moray Firth, 'The City in the Highlands' is great for wildlife. If you're lucky you could even spot a bottlenose dolphin.
- 2 Glasgow** The city's rivers hold wild and watery wonders, from dippers and water voles to otters!
- 3 Belfast** In the heart of the city, Bog Meadows reserve attracts abundant birds, from warblers in spring to winter thrushes in autumn.
- 4 Newcastle** A colony of kittiwakes has swapped coastal cliffs for buildings and bridge ledges.
- 5 Liverpool** The Mersey estuary is a haven for wildlife, hosting internationally important numbers of wading birds and wildfowl.
- 6 Sheffield** A green corridor of parks and reserves with woodlands, wetlands and hedgerows carries wildlife through the city.
- 7 Birmingham** This city boasts

- more miles of canal than Venice, which draw dragonflies and damselflies right into the centre.
- 8 Cardiff** This metropolis is home to over half of the UK's bat species, including the rare lesser horseshoe.
 - 9 Bristol** One of the UK's best cities for urban wildlife, the nearby Avon Gorge is home to peregrine falcons and ravens.
 - 10 London** England's capital is full of wildlife. Stag beetles roam the parks and gardens, deer patrol parklands and herons stalk the Serpentine.

habitat provided they are accessible (a 13cm square hole in a fence or wall is sufficient), and contain sufficient cover and invertebrate food. Small slugs, beetles and grubs make up the bulk of the diet, and this further endears the 'hedgepig' to gardeners.

Foxes are particularly well suited to city living. Adaptable and opportunistic, they have taken to denning under sheds and decking; sunning themselves on shed and garage roofs; making use of roads and rail verges, canal paths, cycleways and footpaths to cover distances more efficiently; and foraging among bins and outside takeaways.

Town foxes are often less nocturnal than rural ones, and less wary of people, which gives them the impression of being more abundant, though in truth they only account for about 13% of the total fox population. Nor are they any bigger, or any more or less healthy – rural foxes are just as likely to be afflicted by mange, but less likely to be photographed. Some foxes appear to transition between urban and rural habitats, taking advantage of each in different ways.

In need of a helping hand

It's not all good news. Some formerly abundant urban birds are in trouble. The house sparrow, once considered too common to even be counted on bird surveys, has declined massively as an urban bird, nowhere more so than London, where a 98% crash in population in the 1990s led to questions

being asked in parliament. You'll still be lucky to see one in the capital, but at least the decline has gone some way to rehabilitate the image of a species regarded as too numerous in years gone by.

Starlings have declined markedly too, but are still common enough that their cheery, irrepressible whistles and cover versions of sirens, car alarms and text alerts can still be heard on many city streets in spring, while winter flocks boosted by birds from the continent put on displays of such grandeur they literally stop traffic.

Perhaps the best known urban murmuration location in the UK is Brighton, where a mixed flock of around 40,000 gathers to roost on the scaffold of the derelict West Pier, often obliging photographers with a performance against the setting sun.

Waxwings are another winter spectacle sure to draw the wildlife paparazzi. These big, buff, immaculately coiffed rockstar birds arrive from Scandinavia in numbers that vary from year to year, depending on the severity of winter and the availability of food, specifically berries. It's worth planting a rowan, cotoneaster or a hawthorn in an urban garden, just for the chance of a waxwing irruption alighting on your patch. They don't usually stick around longer than it takes to strip the fruit and toss them down like peanuts, although fermented fruit sometimes reduces whole flocks to drunken lethargy. Either way, a sighting will give you wildlife bragging rights for at least a year. 🍷



Amy-Jane Beer

is a North Yorkshire-based biologist and author specialising in natural history and conservation. She contributes to *The Guardian* and *BBC Wildlife* magazine.



The results are in!

We reveal the findings and outcomes of
our innovative Data for Nature project.

This male ruddy darter is just one
of the dragonflies volunteer Isobel
found on a survey at Woodhouse
Washlands.

**“...if you don't know
where you are, then
you don't know where
you're going. And
if you don't know
where you're going,
you're probably going
wrong”**

Sir Terry Pratchett.

The importance of data is often underestimated but it is essential to getting a clear picture of species and habitats. When the 2018 Sheffield State of Nature report highlighted the need to address gaps in the city's ecological data, Data for Nature was launched to help us understand the wildlife and habitats on our nature reserves in more detail. This means we can make sure we are targeting our resources where they will be most beneficial.

Thanks to players of the National Lottery, the project was awarded £100,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, to create and implement a robust monitoring framework, increasing our capacity to collect data on nature reserves and engaging with local people to increase awareness and engagement in citizen science.

The first step was getting baseline surveys done – and we couldn't have done that without our army of wonderful volunteers who helped us carry out the species surveys and habitat condition assessments, as well as helping with data input and analysis.

Over the course of the project we have carried out surveys on our nature reserves mapping species richness and density of woodlands, great crested newts, birds, dragonflies and vegetation. We've also launched a new species recording site which anyone can submit their sightings to. This will make it easier to bring together valuable information from the local

FOCUS ON DATA FOR NATURE

community with the data collected by ecologists. With over 10,000 records already we're thrilled that so many of you have already started to tell us what you've seen while you're out and about! This gives us a much more detailed picture of how our wildlife is faring here in Sheffield and Rotherham.

We've developed a standardised system which will help us to measure the effectiveness of our management strategies and identify any changes over time. As the surveys are repeated, this will highlight what is working best and which species might need more help. Having accurate facts and figures will show us which species are being affected by changes such as habitat loss or improvement, climate change and development; and how we can make sure our work has the most impact, making make sure that everyone has access to wildlife and open spaces whatever the future holds.

Despite the importance of data in conservation work, funding is rarely available for monitoring projects, which means we have to rely on 'unrestricted' funding from sources such as membership fees – so a big thank you to all of you for making this possible!

Data for Nature has been shortlisted for a prestigious NBN Group Award for Wildlife Recording – we'll find out the results just after you open this. Keep an eye on our social media to see how we do!

Bird Surveys

We've had multiple teams carrying out surveys throughout the project, looking for waders, nightjar, skylark and bird species richness, requiring some very early starts, late nights, and protection from midges!

The bird richness survey was carried out using the Mackinnon Lists method. This technique has surveyors walk a set route of the site making lists of species encountered. The first few lists have lots of new species encounters in them, but by the last lists the amount of new species encountered drops to one, or zero. This gives us a list of species recorded on site, (species richness) and a snap shot of the nature reserve, as well as the frequency with which species are spotted, enabling us over time to track species trends. Using this technique at Blacka Moor led to us recording a total of 37 species including wood warbler, tree pipit, curlew, great spotted woodpecker and cuckoo.



PHOTO: LUKE NELSON

Dragonflies

Lovely weather meant we had perfect conditions for our Odonata surveys - dragonflies and damselflies only like to come out when the weather is warm and sunny. Our volunteers worked tirelessly, recording seven species of dragonfly and six species of damselfly. They were very excited to find a mating pair of migrant hawkers and record a brown hawker while it was laying eggs. They also recorded common darter, blue-tailed damselfly, azure damselfly, emerald damselfly, four-spotted chasers and broad-bodied chasers. We also recorded emperor dragonfly and a darter exuvia at Woodhouse Washlands, giving us the best evidence of successful breeding in pond 11 at the reserve!

Great Crested Newts

Monitoring carried out at Woodhouse Washlands Nature Reserve found a thriving population of great crested newts in the complex of ponds there, including in the four new ponds which have been colonised since they were created 18 months ago.

A total of six ponds at Woodhouse Washlands have scored 'excellent' in the HSI survey. The results from this survey can be used to highlight which ponds are suitable for great crested newts (backed up by our fantastic newt survey results) and identify areas for improvement on the site. Based on our findings we were able to identify key issues affecting habitat suitability for great crested newts. Now we can focus on continuing to improve the site to successfully manage and conserve our great crested newt population.



PHOTO: B. ROBINS

Volunteers

"Getting involved with Data for Nature was one of the best decisions I made during my time at university" volunteer Libby Pool told us.

We had an astounding 62 nature-lovers volunteering on the project, carrying out monitoring, data input, reporting, supporting admin and mapping. We provided training to 55 volunteers and 36 members of staff on subjects ranging from species identification to geographic information system (GIS) mapping, to make sure everyone was well-equipped to gather the data. 518 hours were donated purely to the huge task of inputting over 15,000 historical documents so that they can be searched in the new database.

Our volunteers say it's not a one-way street; they enjoy the



PHOTO: PETE TOMLIN

camaraderie, making new friends, getting out into nature with experts and discovering species close up for the first time, even when it means some early alarm calls! In total volunteers have given over 2000 hours of support to the project - so for every soggy day, early morning, late night, midge bite and entry we want to say 'Thank You' - we really couldn't have done it without you.

Visit wildsheffield.com/busy-bloggin for more from volunteers like Libby.

Recording

Since our new Nature Counts species recording page went online at wildsheffield.com/sightings we've had over 10,000 sightings logged - many from members of the public who have sent us their sightings from their gardens, or when they are out and about. It's helping us to build up a picture of wildlife across the whole of Sheffield and Rotherham, not just our reserves.

We are proud to be members of the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and our records are shared with them through the NBN Atlas, a database which is available to ecologists across the country and used to inform national policy decisions about nature and the environment. This means that anyone who sends in a local sighting could be affecting environmental policy at a national level. So to all you citizen scientists out there; thank you for your sightings, and keep it up - they're making an impact!



Nature Counts

10,000 records in just 3 months

1,671 new biological records produced by volunteers



Species recorded

13 Harvest mice nests found

82 individual great crested newts counted

30 lapwing spotted at Hammonds Field

5 skylark territories recorded

37 bird species recorded at Blacka Moor

FOCUS ON DATA FOR NATURE

Volunteering

Over 2,000 hours of volunteer time

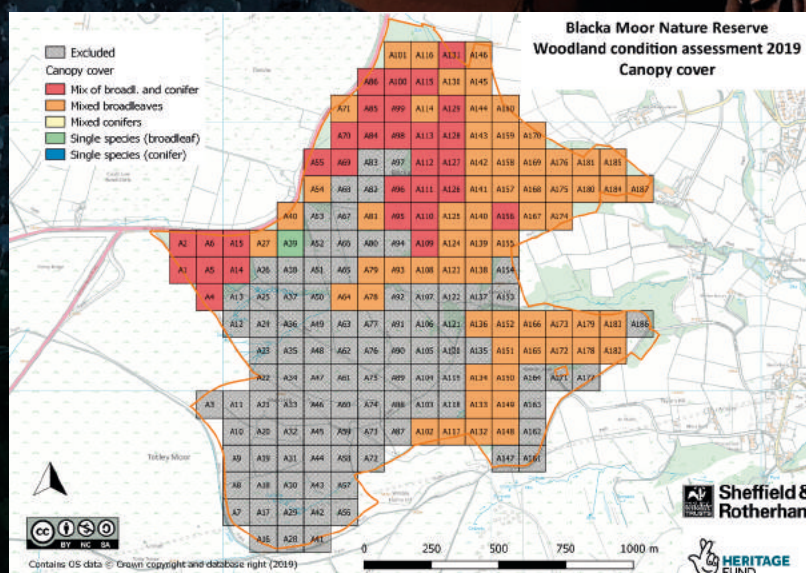
62 volunteers

Over 15,000 historic records uploaded

1,279 hours monitoring/surveying



Thank you!



It took a lot of legwork but now we know the composition of tree cover on Blacka Moor.



How you can help wildlife this winter

From log and leaf piles to open compost heaps and towers of terracotta pots by the side of the shed, **Kate Bradbury** reveals how we can provide safe habitats for overwintering wildlife in our gardens.

Bird box

Birds may use these to roost communally on very cold nights. Fill them with dry leaves or similar material to make them warmer.

Long and tufty grass

Caterpillars and other insects hunker down in the thatch. Some caterpillars may emerge on mild days to eat the grass, so try to leave it uncut until mid-spring.

Log pile

Insects hide beneath the logs, while amphibians and small mammals, such as these wood mice, shelter in gaps. Fill them with autumn leaves to make them more snug.

Compost heap

A large, open heap will attract insects including bumblebees and amphibians, such as this smooth newt. It may even lure mammals such as hedgehogs. Try to leave it undisturbed until April.

Pond

Frogs (particularly males) overwinter at the bottom of ponds so they can be the first to mate in spring. Float a ball on the surface to stop it freezing over.

Seedheads

Seedheads provide shelter for ladybirds and other insects in winter, and offer a natural source of food for birds, so leave them standing until spring.

With the notable exception of birds, most garden wildlife lies dormant over winter, with only a few species, such as hedgehogs, truly hibernating. The rest spend winter in various states of 'torpor' – not fully shutting down their bodies as true hibernating animals do. That's why, on sunny days, you may spot frogs swimming at the bottom of your pond, or bats flying on mild evenings. Even true hibernating animals have a break from all that sleeping – hedgehogs wake up and move nest sites at least once during the cold months.

But on the whole, much of our wildlife isn't seen from around November to March. Where does it go? Insects might crawl into seedheads or wedge themselves beneath bark for winter. A pile of leaf litter might shelter anything from caterpillars, beetles, centipedes and woodlice to larger species, such as amphibians and mammals. Others hide

deep down in the thatch of long or tufty grass, bury themselves in the soil, or shuffle into the still-warm grass clippings and food waste in the compost heap.

Wildlife is very vulnerable at this time. Disturbing mammals can cause them to waste energy that they can't easily replenish, while insects can be exposed to fungal infections if they get damp. Providing winter refuges (called hibernacula) will help wildlife overwinter – but not disturbing these habitats once you've created them is imperative to their survival.

Spare a thought for birds, too, which have to battle it out in winter, instead of hibernating. Growing berrying plants, feeding them and creating cosy roosts can help them in winter, too. 🐦



Gardens of all sizes are an essential part of a Nature Recovery Network. For more tips visit wildlifetrusts.org/gardening



Kate Bradbury

is passionate about wildlife-friendly gardening and the author of *Wildlife Gardening for Everyone* and *Everything in association* with The Wildlife Trusts.

Shed

Adult butterflies may sneak into your shed or outhouse to overwinter on the walls, where they resemble leaves. Make sure there's a gap so they can leave in spring.

Bird feeders

Birds need as many calories as they can find during the short winter days to give them the energy they need to survive each night. Provide energy-rich suet products, peanuts and sunflower hearts. You can even buy window-mounted feeders if you don't have a garden.

Garden borders

Lots of insects like to shelter among fallen plant stems, particularly hollow stems. Try not to cut back or tidy the border until spring – leave it to rot down naturally, instead.

Soil

A wide range of species overwinter in the soil, from slow worms to moth pupae and bumblebees. Try to resist digging the soil until mid-spring when they'll be awake.

A close-up photograph of a hedgehog curled up in a nest of dry, brown autumn leaves. The hedgehog's spines are a mix of brown and grey, and its face is partially visible. The background is a dense layer of fallen leaves in various shades of brown and orange.

Give the children in your family the gift of nature this christmas

**Includes
cuddly
hedgehog toy
and adoption
certificate**

PHOTO: TOM MARSHALL

**We are proud to have the support of so many members like you
and we would love to welcome your family as members too.**

Treat them to an annual family membership, for two adults and up to four children, and they will receive our hedgehog adoption kit complete with cuddly toy hoglet and adoption certificate, as well as regular copies of Kingfisher and Wildlife Watch children's magazine.

But most importantly, as a member of Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust your loved ones will be joining you in helping us work towards a better future for wildlife, people and the green spaces we all rely on.

**Make it a family affair and buy gift membership online now at
wildsheffield.com/gift-membership**

wildsheffield.com

For nature, for everyone