

# Wild Cornwall

Cornwall  
Wildlife Trust



ISSUE 139 SUMMER 2019

## Ponds for all

Big or small... plan your  
wildlife-friendly pond

### CARING FOR PENWITH'S LIVING, WORKING LANDSCAPE

Success stories don't come much more  
remarkable than this.

### BLUE MINDS, HAPPY HEARTS

We explore the concept of Blue Minds.

# welcome

The last few months has seen a new wave of people taking action to combat climate change, which in turn helps to put the needs and state of our wildlife and our wild places at the top of the agenda.

Our school children are leading the way and many of our local organisations, like Cornwall Council, are declaring climate emergencies. At Cornwall Wildlife Trust, we're thinking about our role in climate change adaptation and it's clear that there is a strong overlap between the activities that we deliver (which are good for wildlife) and activities which are good for adapting to climate change.

By the time you receive this magazine, we will have a new Prime Minister. A new Environment Bill is expected in the autumn and Cornwall Wildlife Trust will continue to encourage our members and all wildlife and environment supporters to make their views known and to speak up for wildlife as the bill passes through Parliament.

And our voice is collectively getting bigger. Cornwall Wildlife Trust recently joined forces with thousands of others in a mass lobby in London. Staff, members and people concerned about the state of Cornwall's nature travelled up to meet MPs and represent the wildlife and wild places in Cornwall that we want to protect.

I hope by now you've seen our Wind in the Willows film trailer and joined our Wilder Cornwall campaign. The campaign is gathering momentum, linking in with 47 Wildlife Trusts and the Wilder Future campaign across the country. Keep your eye on our website and sign up for our newsletter and social media for information about when and where in Cornwall you can see the puppets used in the film – they're going on tour in August!

I hope you can join us for our Annual General Meeting and Discovery Day on 16 November, at which we'll be reflecting on a year in the life of Cornwall Wildlife Trust and debating a wilder future for Cornwall.

Finally, we held our Wilder Festival at the end of May and I wanted to say thank you to everyone who came and proved that the Cornish mizzle can't dampen our spirits.

Enjoy the summer!



**Carolyn Cadman**  
Chief Executive,  
Cornwall  
Wildlife Trust

## Know anyone who wants to go wild?

Gift Membership lasts a whole year and they will receive....

Three issues of our Trust magazine, *Wild Cornwall*, which is full of feature articles, wildlife and conservation news plus a handy pull-out diary of events, as well as our Nature Reserves guide.



Family Membership is the perfect family present – they can discover Cornwall's wild places and wildlife together.

Our Family Members receive not only three *Wild Cornwall* magazines a year, but also a **Wildlife Watch pack** full of stickers, posters and fun activities, plus **three issues of Wildlife Watch magazine**.



Join online at [cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/join](http://cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/join) or call (01872) 273939

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[localgroups@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:localgroups@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

We have links with many Local Groups you can get involved with – they are all listed on our website:

[www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/who-we-are/local-groups](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/who-we-are/local-groups)

Marine Strandings Network Hotline: 0345 2012626

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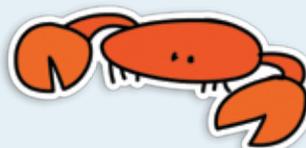
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Cornwall Wildlife Trust is a registered charity formed in 1962 by a group of volunteers who were passionate about Cornwall's natural environment and wanted to safeguard it for future generations.

Trustee Officers are:

**Dr Nick Tregenza** – President

**Mark Nicholson** – Vice President

**Daniel Eva** – Hon Secretary, Chair of Staff Welfare and Reward Package Advisory Committee

**Paul Coyne** – Hon Treasurer, Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee

**Stephen Warman** – Chair of Council

**Ian Pye** – Vice-Chair of Council

**Steve Crummay** – Chair of ERCCIS Advisory Board

**Fred Currie** – Chair of Nature Reserves Committee

**Frank Howie** – Chair of Conservation Strategy Committee

**Dee Reeves** – Chair of Marketing and Fundraising Committee and Interim Chair Five Acres/Two Burrows Working Group



# Caring for Penwith's **living, working landscape**



The list of **Penwith Landscape Partnership** success stories is steadily growing. This ambitious programme to restore and enhance access trails, archaeology, heritage buildings, farmland and wildlife is drawing people together from across the peninsula with a common aim; to care for this remarkable place.





The upward trajectory started in December 2017, when **PLP received much-needed funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund**. This was supplemented by some additional grants from Cornwall Council and the Cornwall AONB with a clear mission: to deliver a comprehensive five-year conservation and ecology programme. With the Cornwall Wildlife Trust as our lead partner, we are now more than one year in and a lot has happened. We are delighted to share news of our progress, and we hope it will inspire you to share our practical passion for Penwith.

## Vital volunteers

Our programme comprises 13 projects and the scope is incredibly broad, extending to access trails, ancient sites, Local Landscape Character Assessments, support for local farmers, Cornish hedges, digital interpretation and even the Cornish language.

Volunteering is, therefore, at the heart of our work. We began recruitment last summer at our first Open Day, and subsequently held a taster day at Mulfra Vean Iron Age settlement last August, which attracted 19 volunteers.

Since then we have signed up over 100 volunteers with our coordinator, Holly Berwick, forging links with organisations such as *Who Dares Works*, helping people to gain confidence and get back into work.



Cornish hedge repairs by volunteers



First-aid training at Cape Cornwall, St Just

But it's a two-way thing. We are passionate about enabling our volunteers to learn new skills and we have provided a number of free training courses on diverse topics, including first aid, brush cutting, Cornish hedging and farmland bird surveys. Upcoming courses include butterfly and dragonfly identification.

**Please visit our website for more information about our training courses, or to book your place.**

## Invaluable work

We run three regular volunteering days. On Wednesdays and Thursdays our Practical Tasks Officer, Richie Smith, helps volunteers to undertake hands-on work in the landscape. Over the winter this included a large amount of vegetation clearance. As a result, key archaeological sites identified by our Ancient Penwith Project Officers – Laura Ratcliffe-Warren and Jeanette Ratcliffe – are now far more visible.

These include the Iron Age settlement of Bosulow Trehylls, the impressive hill fort Chûn Castle, and both Tregeseal Stone Circle and entrance grave. This work has proven invaluable for Penwith heritage; not only has it allowed these ancient sites to be seen and appreciated, but at Mulfra Vean it even revealed a rare courtyard house that was previously unrecorded by archaeologists.

When not working on ancient sites, our volunteers also help improve the accessibility of the Penwith landscape by clearing footpaths identified by our Access Officer, Matt Watts.

Now we are in the height of summer and bird nesting season, our volunteer days are focusing on other work, such as repairing Cornish hedges, and installing access furniture, including stiles and kissing gates, one of which has already been built on a footpath leading to the ancient Boscawen-ûn stone circle.

Our other regular volunteer day has seen Jeanette leading groups in carrying out the archaeological surveying of ancient sites. This painstaking process has led to impressive drawings detailing the layout of the vast Mulfra Vean settlement, as well as Tregeseal entrance grave.



Archaeological surveying of the newly discovered courtyard house at Mulfra Vean



Volunteers and PLP Staff at our Volunteer Taster Day at Mulfra Vean

## Out and about in Penwith

We will soon be adding a volunteer programme for conducting Local Landscape Character Assessments – and with it the opportunity to identify and record the key heritage features. Our Community Coordinator, Nicole Broadhurst, will be taking the lead on these sessions working with the team at Cornwall Environmental Consultants.

Importantly, we have also begun working closely with farmers across Penwith. Our ecologist James Parkin and Farm Environment Officer Phil Pengelly have been visiting farms to provide free soil sampling and advice. These visits will soon include assistance via small grants to help farmers undertake work that supports farming practices and improves the local environment.

The identification and recording of rare species, such as the small pearl bordered fritillary butterfly, will also help build up a more detailed picture of the biodiversity of Penwith.

CHRIS LAWRENCE



## About the Penwith Landscape Partnership

The Penwith Landscape Partnership (PLP) was formed in 2014 by a group of community organisations and people whose shared aim is to support the conservation and enhancement of the Penwith landscape as a sustainable living and working area.

PENWITH LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP



Attendees at our Walking Weekend at Chun Quoit

## Raising awareness

As well as carrying out our practical tasks, the past year has seen us raise awareness of our work.

Regular newsletters and updates for local parish magazines have also been created and last summer we launched our social media channels. As a result, we now have well over 1,000 followers across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Our current website also receives a steady flow of visitors but we are currently working on a new online resource – the Virtual Landscape Hub. Due to go live anytime now, it will offer interactive content that allows readers to find out more about our work and the Penwith landscape.

We have also hosted a number of events, with our first walking weekend attracting more than 100 people.

The great news is that PLP has over three years of work planned, so we are very much focused on the exciting things yet to come.

Please come and join us!

## Keep up to date

To find out more about PLP, or to get involved with volunteering, please visit our website, follow us on social media, or sign up to our mailing list to receive regular updates.

[www.penwithlandscape.com](http://www.penwithlandscape.com)  
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Aerial shot Penwith Landscape



CORNWALL COUNCIL HER



Ratty floats downriver in a scene from our new film

UK UPDATE

## A changing Wind in the Willows

The Wildlife Trusts have launched a new campaign calling for a Wilder Future and nature's recovery on land and at sea. To kickstart the campaign and raise awareness of the plight of our wildlife, we've created a film trailer for *The Wind in the Willows*.

With an all-star voice cast including Stephen Fry, Alison Steadman and Sir David Attenborough, the film brings to life the modern threats facing the beloved characters from Kenneth Grahame's children's classic. A lot has changed on the riverbank since we first met Badger, Ratty, Mole and Toad just over a hundred years ago.

Wild places have shrunk and disappeared, threatening the wonderful wildlife they support. We've lost 80% of our heathlands and up to 49% of our seagrass meadows, crucial nursery grounds for fish and important stores of carbon.

Rivers are in poor condition and water voles like Ratty have become the UK's most rapidly declining mammal, lost from 94% of the places they were once common. Toads have found the last century tough as well, with numbers dropping by almost 70% in the last 30 years alone.

But the film's message is ultimately one of hope: nature is currently in a bad state, but it's not too late to change things. Our new campaign, *Wilder Future*, asks people to pledge to take action for nature in whatever way they can, from simple acts like planting wildflowers for pollinators to reaching out to politicians and speaking up for our wildlife.

Stephanie Hilborne, CEO of The Wildlife Trusts, said: "We are a nation of nature-lovers, yet we live in one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. If we want to put nature into recovery we have to create a mass movement of people calling for change."

Sir David Attenborough, President Emeritus of The Wildlife Trusts and narrator of the trailer, added: "Together we can make the next chapter for wildlife a happier one. Join us to put nature into recovery."

The trailer premiered on social media and attracted over a million views in the first few days. It also played in cinemas across the country.



### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- **Contact politicians – to call for strong environmental laws which help nature recover, including Nature Recovery Networks that connect wild spaces.**
- **Walk in the pawprints of others – and imagine what wildlife needs to survive in your neighbourhood. Are there gaps for hedgehogs to move between gardens? Woods for badgers to build setts in? Or ponds in which toads can spawn? Take action in your local area to create new homes for wildlife.**
- **Create a Wilder Future where you live – by checking out events and volunteering opportunities at your Wildlife Trust.**



#### Get involved

Join us on our campaign for a Wilder Future and watch our *The Wind in the Willows* trailer  
[wildlifetrusts.org/wilder-future](http://wildlifetrusts.org/wilder-future)

UK UPDATE

## Big or small, ponds for all!

For this year's Wild About Gardens challenge, The Wildlife Trusts and the Royal Horticultural Society are urging gardeners to make a splash for wildlife.

We are calling on people to create a pond to benefit their garden wildlife. Whether it's a large sunken pond or a tiny container pond, water is the garden feature



that can make the biggest difference to wildlife.

With a rapid decline in natural freshwater habitats, garden ponds are increasingly important for the wildlife that depends on these watery places, such as frogs, toads and insects. Adding a pond is one of the best ways you can help wildlife and enjoy the benefits of seeing more amazing animals and plants close to home.

You can download a free booklet full of advice on the Wild About Gardens website [wildaboutgardens.org.uk](http://wildaboutgardens.org.uk)

## UK HIGHLIGHTS

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



### 1 Water Works

An innovative project is testing new ways to grow food and lock in carbon in Cambridgeshire's Great Fen. The project will use wetland farming to test new crops for food, healthcare and industry, all whilst reducing the amount of carbon lost from the soil. This was made possible by the People's Postcode Lottery Dream Fund. [wildlifebcn.org/news/water-works](http://wildlifebcn.org/news/water-works)



### 2 An osprey anniversary

The Scottish Wildlife Trust are celebrating 50 years of ospreys at the Loch of the Lowes reserve. The reserve became just the fifth known nest site when ospreys recolonised the UK after their extinction in 1916. The current pair fledged 10 chicks from 2015-2018 and returned again this year. [scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/ospreys-50](http://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/ospreys-50)

### 3 Seal of approval

A record number of grey seals have been counted at South Walney Nature Reserve. A drone survey spotted 483 seals, 123 more than the previous record. The grey seal is one of the world's rarest seals and around 50% of the world population lives around the British Isles. [cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/record-seals](http://cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/record-seals)



## Beavering away

The Wildlife Trusts continue to be at the forefront of work to bring beavers back to our waterways, with reintroduction projects across the UK. Beavers are ecosystem engineers that can improve water quality, reduce flooding downstream and improve conditions

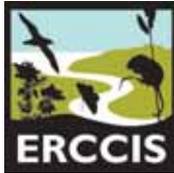
for many other species, including water voles, frogs and dragonflies. Conservation efforts received a boost on the first of May, when the Scottish Government introduced European Protected Species status for the Eurasian beaver in Scotland. [wildlifetrusts.org/beavers](http://wildlifetrusts.org/beavers)

BEAVER: NICK UPTON/CORNWALL WILDLIFE TRUST, TOAD: DAWN MONROSE, OSPREY: PETER CAIRNS/2020VISION



## ERCCIS moving species records online

The Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isle of Scilly (ERCCIS) hosted by Cornwall Wildlife Trust currently holds 7 million species records. These are a vital resource used by conservationists, species recorders and ecological consultants to name but a few. At the moment many of the records can only be accessed via computer based desk-studies completed by ERCCIS staff. This is all changing, with species records due to go on-line this summer. This will make record searches quicker and easier and free up vital staff-time to use the huge volume of ERCCIS data to better inform our conservation work.



DAN MURPHY

## National Whale & Dolphin Watch

The Seaquest Southwest team are gearing up for National Whale and Dolphin Watch and National Marine Week 2019, between 27th July and 11th August. We have four organised watches all around the coast, and many others being run by local marine groups and partners of Seaquest. 2019 has already been a bumper year for marine mammal sightings; with huge numbers of common dolphins all around the coast, humpback whales causing great excitement and of course our resident bottlenose dolphins. Find out more on our events listings in this magazine, or on our website.

## Wilder beef – local box scheme available soon

With Cornwall Council declaring a climate emergency, and the move to buy local, we are pleased to be starting a local 'wilder beef' box scheme this autumn. Cutting down on red meat is widely seen by medical experts as a healthier option, and the discussions around the dinner table are increasingly focusing on how to buy beef in a more sustainable way, with animal welfare also high on the list of what beef to buy, and where to buy it.

We hope to have made this more simple for you, by selling our 'wilder beef' in partnership with a wildlife friendly farmer who has grazed animals on our nature reserves for many years – so when you do eat beef, you know you've made a choice that can be traced back to the actual cow in an actual Cornish field.

These pedigree belted Galloway cattle have spent most of their life grazing Cornwall Wildlife Trust land, helping to conserve some of our most valuable wildlife. The pastures that these animals graze on not only support wildlife, but have an important role to play in fighting climate change by storing carbon in the soil. The cattle have been free to roam outdoors, feeding on a wide range of grasses and herbs and have not been fed

concentrated grain-based feed. These grain 'nuts', which are increasingly fed to livestock, increase the carbon footprint of farmed animals – unlike cattle reared on a 100% grass fed diet – turning locally growing grass that we can't eat, into beef that we can eat.



If you are interested in supporting wildlife-friendly farming by buying some of this beef, we are taking advance orders now. We expect to be selling mixed 10kg boxes, which will include a range of cuts including steak, mince, stewing steak and joints. Details will be finalised nearer the time and orders will be ready for collection in October. Why not share a box with a neighbour? Please contact us on the following e-mail address, giving your name, phone number and an idea of the quantity you'd like, and we will be in touch nearer the time with more details.

**Wilder.food@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk**

## Sharing seafood secrets!



We have launched a new and improved website which makes it even easier for us all help save the seas by supporting sustainable fishing and eating local!

We know how much you like our 'how to' guides, so we have included and will be adding to our list! Helping us all enjoy sustainable Cornish seafood! Look out for new films featuring restaurateur and fishing experts sharing trade secrets!

Thank you to Dewsign digital design agency, one of our Business Supporters.

**cornwallgoodseafoodguide.org.uk**



**CORNWALL  
GOOD  
SEAFOOD  
GUIDE**



## Is badger vaccination gaining ground?

It can be hard to stay optimistic about the future of badgers. We estimate that culling is licensed across 54% of Cornwall and further cull licence applications have been submitted. We will find out in the autumn if the cull area will be expanding. Meanwhile, the Trust has started vaccinating on our nature reserves and across a 20 km<sup>2</sup> area of mid-Cornwall at the request of local farmers.

Badger culling is implemented in an attempt to reduce the level of bovine tuberculosis (bTB) in cattle. The argument is often pitched as a choice between cattle or badgers, with farmers and landowners on one side of the argument and wildlife groups on the other. Our message is that it doesn't have to be like this, because badger vaccination offers a viable alternative to culling. Vaccination of badgers protects individuals from bTB infection by trapping them and injecting with a BCG vaccine. All the research suggests that badger vaccination is a very promising technique; raising awareness of this

is a key focus for the Trust. Last year we publicised a programme of badger vaccination on our nature reserves and launched a membership appeal to raise funds (see page 39). This came to the attention of a group of farmers in mid-Cornwall and they asked us to go and speak to them about badger vaccination. Five months on we are preparing to vaccinate badgers across a 20 km<sup>2</sup> area of mid-Cornwall, in and around the St Stephens area.

There were various reasons for the farmers' interest in vaccination; some were tenants whose landlord wouldn't allow culling, others don't want to get involved in something that is so unpopular with the public, another said that the badgers had been on her land for 100 years and she couldn't face harming them. From our discussions it was clear that information about vaccination hadn't been reaching them, yet when they found out more about it they decided to get involved.

The Trust hadn't set out to facilitate a wide-scale vaccination project, but here was a cluster of farmers wanting to work with us to vaccinate badgers over a significant area – we simply had to help. Luckily we have experienced badger vaccinators based in Cornwall; staff from the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and a PhD student working with Imperial College. Work has now started and it is a real team effort with the farmers themselves helping to pre-bait the traps with peanuts before trapping badgers for vaccination.

After 7 trapping nights we have already vaccinated 64 badgers! We intend to shout about this from the rooftops so that word of vaccination travels. Just maybe this mid-Cornwall project will change others' hearts and minds, and the future for our local badgers will be a little less uncertain.

To learn more about Cornwall Wildlife Trust's badger vaccination appeal please visit: [cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/badgervaccinationappeal](http://cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/badgervaccinationappeal)

## New wave of protection for the sea?

For the 3rd tranche of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) our attention is now shifting towards influencing their management. We will be lobbying government and fisheries managers to ensure that MCZs are managed better, so that they provide the protection that marine habitats and species so desperately need.



## Highways England investing in Cornwall's wildlife

Cornwall Wildlife Trust is working with Highways England to help deliver an ambitious set of projects designed to enhance habitats for wildlife within mid-Cornwall.

The proposed schemes include:

- tree planting, Cornish hedge construction and species-rich grassland restoration in landscapes either side of the strategic road network to create a series of "Green Ribs" enhanced for wildlife
- enhancing and restoring areas of internationally important heathland habitat around Carland Cross
- working with nature to reduce flooding and water quality issues in local watercourses

A close-up photograph of a large yellow flower, likely a poppy, with a black and red bumblebee on its stamens. The bee is positioned on the right side of the flower, facing left. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a natural outdoor setting. The overall tone is bright and natural.

# Space for nature

Today, the UK is one of the most nature-depleted nations in the world, but it's not too late to help our wildlife recover.

**Simon Barnes** finds out how the fortunes of three much-loved species can be transformed by protecting and connecting their wild habitat.

If we think we can live without insects, we're wrong: 80% of our crops, as well as fruit trees, herbs and most garden and wild flowers are pollinated by bees, wasps, beetles and flies. It's said that if bees died out, we would follow four years later.



“Only connect!” EM Forster’s words – from his novel *Howard’s End* – are about the need to improve human relationships, but let’s borrow them, for they say a great deal about the world we live in today. “Live no longer in fragments,” Forster added – the perfect motto for bees, toads and water voles. And just as good for our own relationship with nature.

We need more connections. Just as more and better connections enrich human lives, so we need exactly the same things to keep the wild world wild.

It’s a problem that’s been sneaking up on us across the years. We can visit a fantastic nature reserve, but when it’s surrounded by industry, houses, roads and intensive farming, it’s an island – lovely but doomed. We have allowed the human world to take over our countryside.

But we can fight back, and the way we can do so is by joining up the good places, by softening and freeing our landscape, by allowing wild places and wild things to connect. We can, for example, make flower-filled roads for bees. →

## Space for bees

We have grown rightly worried about the decline of the insects that pollinate plants. Without pollinators the countryside dies; pollinators provide every third mouthful of food we consume. Bees are not great travellers: they prefer to potter from flower to flower. What they need is connectivity.

So Kent Wildlife Trust is making it possible for bees to travel by road. Roadside verges can be treated as long, thin nature reserves, places that allow bees to travel small distances, spread and increase. "We look for sites where you can find some of the rarer species of bee, and where there's the best connectivity," says the Trust's Rosie Earwaker.

She's been working with Kent County Council and Swale Borough Council to establish the right sort of conditions. In most sites, this is a matter of clearing, mowing and removing the clippings: a process that allows wild flowers to regenerate. If it doesn't work naturally, you can spread seeds or insert plant plugs.

The scheme had a target of eight hectares of land under management; they are already at 11.5 hectares and hope to add more sites. Which is all very well, but it involves another kind of connectivity – connecting wildlife and conservation organisations with people.

Many roadsides are managed by mowing them "within an inch of their lives," as Rosie describes it. We have somehow developed the idea that the ideal green space looks like the fairway on a golf course, which is like saying that the ideal sitting room is an airport lounge.

We have an unfortunate mania for tidiness, forgetting that we call an untidy house 'lived-in'. If we want a lived-in countryside – one lived in by

bees (and toads and water voles and everything else) – we must persuade people to accept a little roughness around the edges. So communication with local people matters. You can't impose conservation, it has to be carried out with the will of us all. So that again is about connecting.

### Developing a long-term vision

There's another crucial move: connecting the present with the future. It's no good making a series of lovely bee roads if you leave them to fend for themselves. Soon they will become overgrown and lose the very thing that bees love them for. There's no point to the scheme unless it has a long-term legacy – and that is done by recruiting and training local volunteers to monitor and care for sections of the bee roads. After that we must look for further connections.

"Small actions make a difference," Rosie says. "We need people to be aware of that. What you do in your garden matters." Kent Wildlife Trust have started giving awards for the best gardens for bees and for other wildlife. So they're joining up people and bees.

Bees are part of our lives. We need them; many of our crops depend on them. They are essential for a wild and living countryside. So we need to make a mental adjustment and see them in a different light: creatures that we must connect with, and whose connections we need to cherish and enlarge.

**Bees are part of our lives. We need them. They are essential for a wild and living countryside.**

Bees, such as this buff-tailed bumblebee, can do well in cities due to the variety of trees and flowers available. Gardens help to connect flower-filled foraging areas.



## Space for toads

On warm, damp evenings in early spring, toads migrate back to their breeding ponds. But busy roads often block traditional routes. An estimated 20 tonnes of unlucky toads are killed on the UK's roads every year.

SIGN: LINDA PITKIN/2020VISION, TOAD: SAM HOBSON

Live no longer in fragments, eh? A hard thing to achieve when many areas of our countryside have been split down the middle with roads. There's a classic example in Herefordshire, where a road cuts off an area of woodland from Bodenham Lake.

That's not good news for toads, which hibernate in the woods and, in spring, travel down to the lake to get on with the crucial business of mating and spawning and making more toads. Toads are not swift and sure crossers of roads. It's ironic: Mr Toad in *The Wind in the Willows* is the great mad driver of fiction, but in practice toads are the constant road casualties of Mr and Mrs Human.

Sophie Cowling of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust coordinates a team of lollipop people for toads. They go out on spring nights with buckets and torches as toads, mad with desire, make their way to the lake. In its first year, the team helped 200 toads to the other side. Last year, the tally was 1,300 – not because they're better at catching toads, but because, thanks to their efforts in previous years, there are now more toads needing to cross.

As a simple example of connectivity in action it could hardly be bettered.

Toads have declined by 70% since 1985, due to a complex combination of reasons. But saving them from being run over is a swift and effective counter-blast to the fragmentation of our countryside. Yet it's only the beginning.

In an ideal world there would be no need for toad patrols. And so work is underway to improve the landscape around the lake for the toads. Plans include making places where toads can hibernate without needing to cross the road to do so.

### Creating new ponds for toads

One of the problems toads suffer from is the loss of the old farm ponds. On the wooded side of the road, farmers are being encouraged to install new ponds, so that toads will be able to mate and spawn – again without crossing the road. "It's all about improving the quality of the connecting landscape," says Sophie.

More ponds: part of a gentler and softer landscape that joins up the best places and so brings the wider countryside back to life. It's good for wildlife and good for humans. A wilder countryside is a better place for us all, reconnecting us with nature and making our lives richer. →





## Space for water voles

Ratty in *The Wind in the Willows* is not a rat but a water vole. He is also a poet, a dreamer and a waterman. Here he is talking about the river: "It's my world, and I don't want any other. What it hasn't got is not worth having, and what it doesn't know is not worth knowing. Lord! The times we've had together..."

You can interpret this as Ratty's plea for connectivity, for not breaking up the system of waterways on which water voles depend for their lives. But we have dredged them and concreted them, polluted them and generally bullied them, until it's a wonder they're able to support any life at all.

Now we're beginning to rethink, and to adjust the way we live to make for greater connectivity, with more consideration for what wildlife needs to survive.

You might think that, at least in rural stretches of river, water voles would have it their own way. But that's not the case. Riverside meadow is traditionally good for cows, and as they crowd onto the bank to drink or to graze the riverside vegetation, they munch away on water vole food. Worse, they trample the banks and make it impossible for the voles to make the tunnels they live in.

Wherever we look, even in the heart of the British countryside, it seems that we're losing our connection with wildlife and making it harder for wild animals to make a living. An idyllic bucolic scene – cows with sweetly vacant expressions staring at a dreamy riverside landscape while chewing the cud – actually represents a life of hell for poor Ratty.

### Protecting natural river banks

Sometimes the solution is as simple as the toad bucket, requiring little more than common sense and goodwill. I spoke to Darren Tansley of Essex Wildlife Trust. "In several places we've erected fences to protect stretches of river bank from cows and create the perfect habitat for water voles."

When a local landowner introduced a regimen of light grazing at Lodge Farm, the water voles living on the river there disappeared within a year. Darren advised the owner to fence off a section of river and the voles returned, all along the bank.

Lock gates on rivers and canals are also problematic for water voles. But with 'soft engineering' solutions to the problems they create, including coir matting instead of concrete and the planting of willows, they can become water-vole friendly once again – and the connecting nature of the river can be restored.



In just 10 years, 30% of the water vole's waterside habitat has been lost to agricultural intensification and development.



Our new 10 year study of water voles shows that national treasure 'Ratty' needs urgent help, and sensitive management of river banks, to survive.

This is not, as you will no doubt have observed, rocket science. It requires no great eureka moment in technology: rather, a subtle shift in the minds of humans. We have relegated wildlife to the backwater of life – and it should be mainstream.

We have made wildlife a luxury item, the first thing we lose when we chase that will-o'-the-wisp we call progress. But as we start to live with notions of connectivity, we can make for a kinder and richer landscape, a better countryside and a better country.

It starts, often enough, with small individual decisions: not using pesticides in your garden, accepting that a tidy landscape is a dead landscape and letting part of your lawn grow wild

as a flower meadow, supporting measures taken by conservation organisations such as your local Wildlife Trust, and speaking up for wildlife whenever you get the chance, over cups of coffee and pints of beer.

It's also about our connections with wildlife and our connections with other people. We can do it. Only connect. Let's resolve to live no longer in fragments. →



**Simon Barnes** is an author with a passion for wildlife. He was awarded the Wildlife Trusts' Rothschild medal in 2014.

**With a bit of 'soft engineering', the voles have returned and the connecting nature of the river has been restored.**

VITAL STATISTICS

**£430m**

The estimated value of services by pollinating insects for agriculture



**1km**

Most bumblebee workers forage within a kilometre of their nest



**63%**

The increase in area treated with pesticides between 1990 and 2016

**80%**

The increase in road traffic between 1980 and 2005



**2km**

Toads can travel two kilometres to reach their breeding ponds

**4 in 5**

Four out of five rivers (80%) in England and Wales fail to achieve 'good ecological status'



**1-2km**

The distance most water voles travel to find food, shelter and mates

**Join our campaign** for a Wilder Future and help us put nature into recovery  
[wildlifetrusts.org/wilder-future](http://wildlifetrusts.org/wilder-future)

WATER VOLE: TERRY WHITTAKER/2020VISION, YELLOW IRIS: LIZZIE WILBERFORCE



**Could Cornwall see the return of the water vole? They are already back on the Bude marshes, but habitat enhancements elsewhere on nature reserves and farmland could provide the right conditions for a more widespread recovery, as well as helping a host of other species.**

## Water Vole 'Logosen an Dowr' (Ratty)

Having been hit hard by removal of vegetation from riversides and riverbank cattle trampling, draining of marshes, losses of ditches and intensification of farming, the invasion by escaped mink was the last straw for the water vole and it was declared extinct in Cornwall in the 1990s. This small, grass-eating creature, food for our native weasels, foxes, adders, birds of prey and even large fish, is now gone from our wetlands and waterways.

The increase in otters, whose numbers are up 8% in Cornwall since the early 1980s, is indicative of this good work, and as otters out compete mink, this should benefit the water vole. Careful natural management of our rivers can recreate the peaceful, clean waterways favoured by water voles as well as many species of dragonfly and damselfly.



**Can we help the water vole back from extinction in Cornwall?**

MARGARET HOLLAND

## Badger 'Brogh'

In Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*, Mr Badger is a kind but solitary animal. However, badgers are actually social creatures, living in the same family setts for many generations and spending the daylight hours in groups or 'clans' underground.

Badgers live as omnivores, feeding on earthworms, fruits, berries and nuts and a variety of small animals. Badgers were one of the first species to be protected under law when badger baiting became illegal in 1835. Today however, they are usually seen by the sides of roads as roadkill, but are also the target of widespread culls, having been implicated in the spread of bovine TB in cattle. We are working to protect badgers from culling with our badger vaccination programme in Cornwall.



**Vaccination is a cull-free alternative for Badgers**

DAVID LIDSTONE

## Toad 'Kronek'

Although common toads occur in any damp habitat, their strings of spawn and masses of jet black toad tadpoles are no longer a common sight.

This decline is due to the loss of ponds and ditches from our countryside, changes in intensive agriculture, the choking of existing wetlands through excessive fertilisation of the land and invasive species taking over ponds. Toads require damp places, so extreme weather, causing excessive heat and drought, coupled with a lack of vegetation for shelter, also takes its toll.

The reintroduction of beavers to an enclosed farmland in Cornwall is helping by creating wetland habitats, as well as reducing flooding, and will reverse the decline of toads and other wetland wildlife. By creating ponds in gardens and our parks, we can replace some of our essential aquatic homes that we have lost from our village greens and countryside.



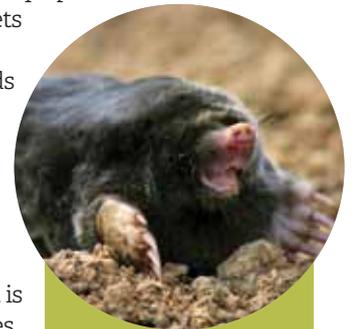
**Toads have declined by around 24% in the last 37 years in Cornwall**

JOHN BRIDGES

## Mole 'Godh'

Mole appears to be our lovable but timid hero, but in reality, the mole is often persecuted, due to our dislike of its tunnels and molehills. The tunnelling of moles, however, has many benefits; loosening and aerating heavy soil in fields and gardens – a crucial process in Cornwall's healthy soil ecosystem.

'Moldywarps' as they were known, rely upon earthworms, grubs and leatherjackets and other insect larvae for food. However, nearly half of English fields now lack key species of earthworm needed to create a healthy soil. Moles themselves are food for larger mammals and birds such as owls, buzzards, stoats and foxes in the natural cycle of life. The mole, along with earthworms and insects, is in decline in Cornwall. Insect species have plummeted by 41% globally over the past decade – victims of intensive agriculture, pollution, urbanisation and climate change – spelling a catastrophic food shortage not just for mole, but all our creatures in Cornwall.



**Insect species have declined globally by 41% in past decade**

STEVE BOTTOM

Information from The Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCCIS) based at Cornwall Wildlife Trust, 2019. Figures on insect decline: Sánchez-Bayo & Wyckhuys, Biological Conservation, 2019

# Making a mountain out of a molehill?

Rarely seen, most people will be more familiar with mole 'hills' rather than the creature itself and, sadly, more is known about trapping and killing moles than about their secretive, solitary lifestyle. In gardens and amenity areas the results of their tunnelling can be a significant nuisance. However, a little knowledge of the natural history of these subterranean creatures may help you to understand some of the reasons why moles visit gardens – and maybe persuade you to turn a mole's blind eye to a molehill that will last only a few weeks.

## Are they really a pain in the grass?

One mole can tunnel up to 20m per day and produce a considerable number of hills, particularly where food is in short supply. Moles in your garden are not harmful as such but this activity is understandably very frustrating if you're trying to maintain a neatly manicured lawn. In agriculture, molehills can also damage farm machinery or contaminate grass used to make silage, and surface tunnelling may affect crop growth.

However, tunnelling activity usually only lasts for a few days while the mole completes its network of tunnels and chambers. After that there may be little evidence above ground of its presence.

The only other occasions when you may see molehills are when the mole is doing repairs or during times when the soil is frozen or very dry and they have to dig a bit deeper to find food. Therefore as mole activity is largely a seasonal problem, tolerating a few molehills may be all you have to do. Leaving moles undisturbed also means that they are less likely to dig new tunnels.

**Tunnelling activity usually only lasts for a few days**

## The gardeners' friend

In fact, moles can be beneficial, preying on many garden pests such as cockchafers, leatherjackets, cutworms, carrot fly larvae and slugs. Their tunnels help to drain and aerate heavy soils and mole hills also provide a source of good quality potting material, with each mound containing up to 5 litres of earth. Try changing some of your grassy areas by increasing the height and reducing the number of cuts, disguising mole runs and hills whilst also encouraging wildflowers and associated wildlife.

## Moles ...did you know?

- Moles inhabit deciduous woodland, grassland and farmland – wherever suitable soil is deep enough for tunnelling and sufficient food is available.
- They spend almost all their lives underground in an extensive and complex system of tunnels, with spherical nest chambers used for sleeping and raising young.
- Moles remain active throughout the year, insulated from cold weather, with four-hourly cycles of activity and rest.
- Moles regularly patrol their tunnels collecting invertebrate prey; earthworms are the staple diet and an adult mole will eat 70-100% of its body weight per day!
- They are specialised for a subterranean way of life with broad, spade-like forelimbs for digging and moving earth, short water-repellent fur, a highly sensory snout and an ability to survive with only a third of the oxygen available at the surface.
- Although not blind, moles' eyes are very small and hidden in fur, probably only useful to distinguish light and dark.
- Moles grow to a length of around 15cm and weigh approximately 70 to 130g.
- They are highly territorial and tend to lead solitary lives, except for a brief spell in the mating season (February-March).
- Mole young (an average of four in a litter), are born in the spring, weaned after one month and disperse soon afterwards.



The full-length factsheet from our Wildlife Information Service can be found here: [www.erccis.org.uk/FAQ](http://www.erccis.org.uk/FAQ)



# Nature Reserves news

MID CORNWALL:

## Helman Tor Habitat <sup>1</sup> Restoration

Plans to restore fen habitats across Helman Tor Nature Reserve are going ahead this autumn to improve conditions for rare wetland-loving plants and animals. The work will involve the clearance of nearly 13 hectares (32 acres) of woodland, a task which will be carried out by contractors using diggers with tree cutting attachments. The work is necessary to reverse the gradual loss of fen (wetland) habitat to willow and birch woodland, which has developed over the past 30-40 years in areas that haven't been grazed.



Contractors will clear vegetation using machinery similar to this.

LANDMARC

This is a tricky balance to strike, as the birch and willow woodlands are themselves valuable for wildlife. The areas to be cleared have been surveyed by consultants to assess their current ecological value, and the proposal has been discussed by a team of ecologists, Nature Reserves staff, Natural England representatives and Trustees to consider the evidence before making the final decision whether to go ahead.

The conclusion is that the value of the increase in fen habitat, and the rare wildlife for which it will provide a home, will outweigh the loss of these woodland habitats. This approach will adjust the balance slightly in favour of the rarer fen habitat – and considering that after this work 65 hectares (160 acres) of woodland habitat will remain on the site and the area of fen habitat will increase from 67 hectares (165.49 acres) to approximately 80 hectares (198 acres) it seems like the best of both worlds.

The work will also include the installation of woody debris dams (like man-made beaver dams) in drainage ditches on Red Moor with the aim of reversing the harmful draining effect they have been having since being excavated in the 1980s. Whilst initially the work may appear heavy handed, once the wetland vegetation recovers the result will be wildlife-rich habitats including a network of shallow ponds and improved views up to Helman Tor.

## A new walk at Prideaux Woods Nature Reserve <sup>2</sup>

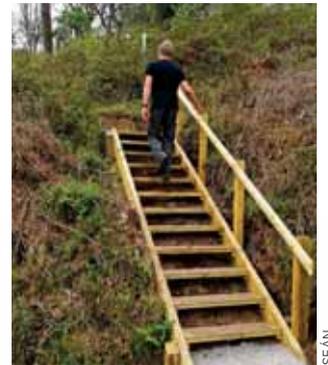


PETE

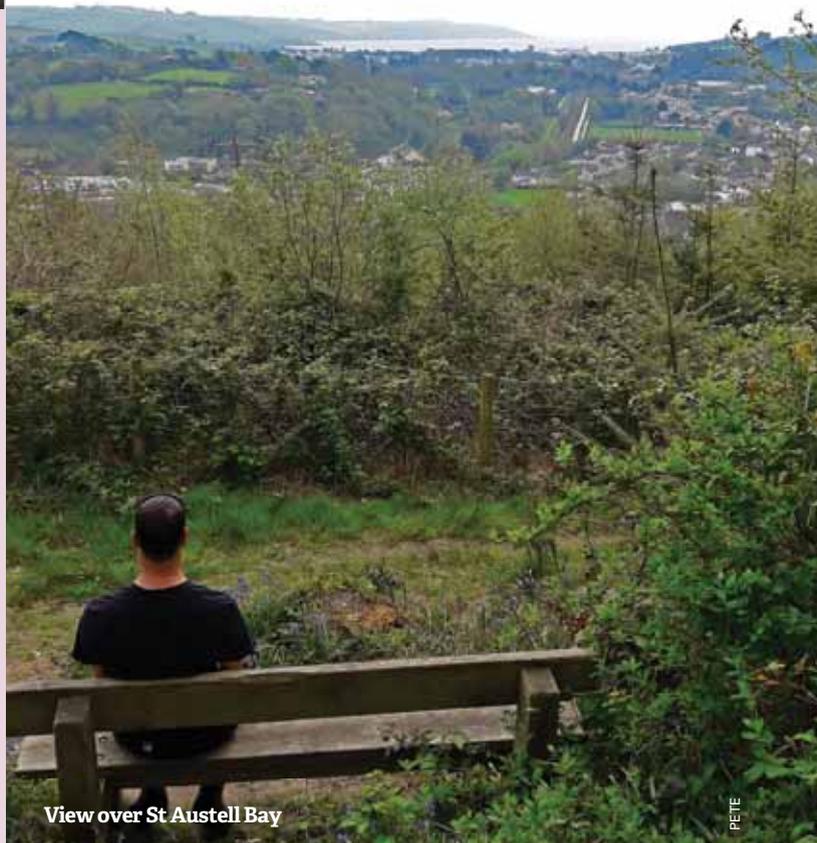
A new footpath is now complete at Prideaux Woods Nature Reserve, after a flight of steps linked up two dead-end tracks at the far northern end of the nature reserve, creating a lovely 2.3 km (1.5 mile) circular walk across mixed terrain with some steep sections.

The walk, as modelled by the crack Mid-Cornwall Reserves team – Seán O'Hea and Pete Gardener – takes in sunny paths and views down to

St Austell Bay. It is a great way to explore this site, which has been transformed in recent years from a dark conifer plantation to a wildlife-rich mixed woodland. The site is home to the rare greater and lesser horseshoe bats, which roost in the many mineshafts on the site. Take a walk there one summer's evening and enjoy the stunning views from this peaceful location.



SEÁN



View over St Austell Bay

PETE



## Penhale <sup>4</sup> Spreading the word not the turd!

Dog fouling is always a contentious subject! On the Gear Sands part of Penhale dunes it is a big problem. 95% of visitors to that part of the dune are there to walk dogs. Most pick up their dog's mess and make use of the bins provided. However, with so many visits it only takes a few left-behind poos to have a really big impact on the dunes. As well as effecting people's enjoyment, it causes nutrient enrichment of the soil. This causes coarse grasses to flourish to the detriment of dune flora.



CORNWALL WILDLIFE TRUST

Recently installed signs featuring Perran Sands' mascot – chocolate Labrador 'Murphy' – to get the message across have had little impact. So to combat the problem, Reserves Ranger Jon and trainee Gemma Crow have been out talking to dog walkers and spray painting the poo! They are using biodegradable paint to highlight the issue along popular entrances to the dunes. One path had 61 poos along its 75m length – almost one per metre. Visiting the same paths a week later some of the mess had been cleaned up, which was a nice surprise. However there were still a great many fresh deposits, so there's more work to be done!

## WEST CORNWALL: Adding the cherry on top at Pendarves Wood Nature Reserve <sup>3</sup>



BEN WATKINS

At Pendarves Wood Nature Reserve, thanks to a successful grant bid of £4,500, we have managed to put the cherry on top of the previous year's access and habitat successes.

We now have new nature reserve signs, an interpretation board, waymarked trails and a Victorian style gate hung between the grand granite columns at the entrance.

Over the previous five years, 10 hectares of rhododendron and laurel had been felled by hand. During this time the woodland looked like a bomb-site, parts of which had become inaccessible and difficult to navigate. We are very grateful for this final injection of funds to get the reserve just over the finish line where staff, volunteers, contractors and members can feel proud of all the hard work that's been put into this site.

## EAST CORNWALL: New Boardwalk <sup>5</sup> at Lower Lewdon

Last summer we had some help managing the Culm grassland at Lower Lewdon in the form of some very obliging ponies. Although they did great work opening up the purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*) dominated sward to allow for more grassland species to thrive, their presence also sped up the demise of the ageing boardwalk. It seems they didn't want to get their hooves muddy if they could help it!



Volunteers and Reserves staff installing new boardwalk at Lower Lewdon

CORNWALL WILDLIFE TRUST

We decided that the boardwalk, which runs through wet woodland and forms part of a circular walk through the site, was beyond repair, so staff and volunteers have spent a lot of time over the last few months removing and replacing it.

It's been a long process, during which we have spent many hours stuck in, covered with and surrounded by mud, glorious mud! But it is now beginning to take shape and will soon be completed and reopened. A new fence to protect the walkway from future grazing animals will also be installed.

The sheltered grassland and woodland rides are a good place to spot butterflies, and dormice are present in the hazel dominated sections of woodland.



### Callum Deveney

Callum is Head of Nature Reserves. He loves to travel and keep fit, having completed several marathons in different countries.



### Seán O' Hea

Seán manages mid Cornwall's nature reserves including our Five Acres HQ. A passion for surfing, sailing, camping and wild food.



### Nick Marriott

Nick manages west Cornwall's nature reserves. Loves bikes, creating ponds and spending time in wild places.



### Peter Kent

Pete manages east Cornwall's nature reserves. A keen and talented photographer with a particular interest in birdwatching.



# Cornwall Wildlife Groups



STEFAN JOHANSSON

## Bude Group

The first meeting of the season was a guided tour by Colin and Patricia Humphrey round the southern coast of America from Chile to Montevideo via the Falklands. We were enthralled by superb photos of birds and scenery including the wandering albatross, so big it needs to sprint across the water flapping its wings in order to achieve take off, the dolphin gull native to South America and Humboldt, and king and gentoo penguins. There was spectacular scenery with shots of the active Osorno Volcano in Chile and the Amalia Glacier in Patagonia that towers over three times the height of a cruise ship. Each photo was accompanied by Colin's amusing and informative narrative.



JOHN WALTERS

Mating dance of the rufous grasshoppers

John Walters, artist and naturalist, gave us a magical tour of the Secret Life of the Undergrowth. His expert knowledge of the life cycles of the invertebrates he studies opened a window into what can be observed if you look carefully, such as the ash black slug, which can grow to 30cm, and the rare blue ground beetle, only 3cm long but capable of attacking and consuming slugs bigger than itself. A video of the mating dance and song of the rufous grasshopper reduced the audience to laughter and the evening passed all too quickly.



CAROLE FELLOWS

Light bulb sea squirt

Our final talk had the intriguing title of The Diversity of the Impossible, given by Alison Wood and Lydia Deacon from the Bude Marine Group. Using macro photography – supplied by Carol Fellows – they talked us through the visible and almost invisible life that lurks on the shores around Bude. We moved from the easy-to-find beadlet anemones to the more elusive Celtic sea slug and on to the wonderfully weird sea squirts such as the light bulb sea squirt. This talk was literally an eye opener to the wonders available on our beaches.

**Ursula Edwards**, volunteer.

## Friends of Churchtown Farm Community Nature Reserve

At 5am on a beautiful spring morning, a group of eight Friends of Churchtown Farm Community Nature Reserve met at the Cecil Arms pub, Saltash, to begin their annual Dawn Chorus Walk around the picturesque reserve.

As the sun rose, so did the volume of the birdsong, with more species joining in as time went on – a truly wondrous experience. The many interesting sounds included the rapid, harsh warble of many whitethroats, chirruping skylarks, the rapid piping and drumming of the lesser spotted woodpecker – and a very noisy flypast by some Canada geese.

The previous week, exotic-looking hoopoes had been discovered on the reserve – probably from Spain or Portugal – but sadly, they had obviously moved on.

The three-hour Dawn Chorus Walk was led by Paul Mallet, who has been the very knowledgeable and entertaining leader of this event for the last few years. A great time was had by all, and as the hungry group looked forward to a hearty breakfast, they agreed that the trip was well worth the early start.

### Bob Austin

Chairman of the Friends of Churchtown Farm Community Nature reserve.

## Launceston Area Parish Wildlife Group (LAPWG)

LAPWG began the year's activities in January with a 'visit' to Costa Rica via the wildlife photos of guest speaker Derek Spooner from Looe. A surprisingly hot and sunny February day in North Cornwall saw the intrepid group outdoors, clambering down the spectacular Rocky Valley and across the clifftops to Tintagel. Early warm weather led to first sightings of bees, butterflies and even a violet oil beetle.

The March AGM in Lockett included a photo show of the group's exploits over the past year followed by a cooler, shadier walk along the edge of the River Tamar in Greenscombe Woods, led by local naturalist Tony Atkinson. Marsh marigolds (*Caltha palustris*) were in



JEN BOUSFIELD

Lesser celandine flower

## Falmouth MCG Shore success for egg case hunters

Nature detectives of all ages joined an Easter egg hunt with a difference this April. Families patrolled the strandline of Swanpool beach, Falmouth, and found egg cases belonging to the thornback ray, small-eyed ray and small-spotted catshark.

The egg cases, known as mermaids' purses, are tough, leathery capsules that protect the growing embryo of a shark, ray or skate. Once eggs have hatched, the empty cases may wash up on the beach, providing valuable evidence about life in local seas.

The event was organised by Falmouth Marine Conservation and Your Shore Beach Rangers in support of The Shark Trust's Great Egg Case Hunt. Buckets and ID guides were provided, and volunteers were on hand to help identify the egg cases.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust's Youth Engagement Officer Jenn Sandiford said, "This was a great opportunity for families to learn about the diversity of species in our waters, to get hands-on experience of finding and identifying them, and to provide valuable data."

For further details or photos please contact Cornwall Wildlife Trust Youth Engagement Officer Jenn Sandiford on [jennifer.sandiford@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:jennifer.sandiford@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk) or ring 07973 728775.



Some of the finds from the Great Egg Case Hunt at Swanpool Beach.

FALMOUTH MCG

## Friends of Kilminorth Woods

Each spring the Friends of Kilminorth Woods, Looe, eagerly await mid-April, when small woodland birds, especially blue and great tits, return to their nestboxes. While they wait, with the woods still quite bare, there is a special delight to be found – the nest of the 'bumbarrel', memorably described by the great nature poet John Clare:

*'Bumbarrels make a nest  
Of mosses grey with cobwebs closely tied  
And warm and rich as featherbed within  
With little hole on its contrary side'*

Volunteer Derek Spooner says, "Bumbarrel' is an old name for the long-tailed tit. Another, in Cornish dialect, is 'ekkyowl'. Most woodland and farmland birds are declining in numbers, but the long-tailed tit bucks this trend, and is actually becoming more common. These sociable little birds nest early. In March, particularly around the woodland edge, I listen for their noisy banter – 'sisisi, sisisi' – and scan the brambles, gorse and ivy for their extraordinary bottle-shaped creations, which seem curiously ill-adapted for a bird with a long tail and sometimes more than ten nestlings. Sure enough this year I found a nest again, and the marvel in the encounter was undiminished. The nest takes up to three weeks to build. It is made of moss, bound with cobwebs, wool and hair, and has a surprisingly elastic quality, necessary as the chicks grow. The lining may contain thousands of feathers, and the exterior is coated with grey lichen, providing excellent camouflage. Truly a miracle of nature."

**Derek Spooner**, volunteer.

bloom and the hedgebanks were studded with primroses and golden celandines. In April, guest experts helped the group rootle around for beetles, including violet oil beetles, in lush, verdant Stara Woods near Rilla Mill.

A Facebook Group and monthly newsletter keeps local members up to date with sightings and news while a new website is under construction. Great events coming up include: hedgehogs; grass identification (with botanist Ian Bennallick); a trip to Looe Island; ferns; a visit to the beavers at Ladock, and a visit to Kilminorth Woods, Looe. With these and other opportunities, there's no time to be bored!

**Jen Bousfield**, volunteer vice chair for LAPWG.



M. ATKINSON

Climbing up Rocky Valley  
(inset) violet oil beetle



ROWENA WILLAR

Details on our groups and how to volunteer or join them are at [www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/cornwall-wildlife-groups](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/cornwall-wildlife-groups)



# Cornwall Wildlife Groups

## Photography Group: Cattle Egrets in North Cornwall.



**Cattle egrets are gregarious and often come together in the evenings to wash and preen on the side of the pools.**

I well remember standing above Trewornan Dam on the Camel estuary, where the Amble stream meets the River Camel, with a host of other bird watchers looking at a lone cattle egret in a pool. This was December 1981 – 37 years ago – and it was one of the handful of records that were new to the Duchy.

I recently drove past the very same field at Trewornan and there were at least 20 egrets in the field feeding around the herd of cows. I made a rough count as I waited at the traffic lights but didn't bother to stop as they've now become such a regular sight in the meadows around the Camel ecosystem.

The western form of cattle egrets were usually found in Africa, & the Iberian peninsula but in the 1940s spread across the Atlantic and into South America before spreading northwards into the USA and beyond into Canada.

Since 2007 there have been regular influxes into Cornwall and it is thought they may have bred on the Camel in 2017. Oddly enough, in 2018, after they'd overwintered in the area, they all disappeared in late April, returning again in October.

This past winter (2018/19) has seen large numbers in North Cornwall with the biggest count – at Walmsley Sanctuary – standing at 83. However, groups of 50-60 have been counted many times amongst sheep flocks and in cattle yards where cattle have been spending the winter before being put out to pasture.

I've had calls from several farmers about the birds, but other than identifying the species there is little more real information I can give them as it seems no-one really knows the reasons for these influxes other than an expansion of their range. We automatically think of climate change as a factor and it may well be linked to the hotter summers and milder winters affecting their food source.



**When not around the feet of cattle, these birds will often settle on their backs and just use them as mobile perches.**



In February of this year we had a flock of 55 birds all gorging on common frogs at Walmsley.

This was quite a spectacle and I took many photographs of the event but now I look back on that event and fear for the future of amphibians in the area if these birds become a permanent feature of Cornish birdlife.

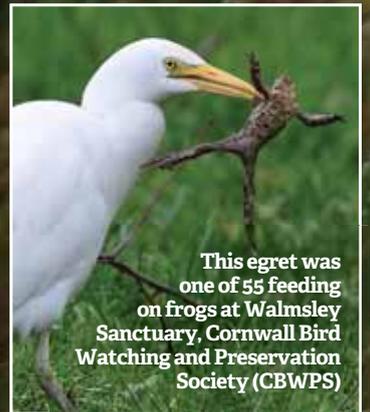
Many of the frogs hadn't spawned yet, as was evident when I could see eggs being squeezed from the animals as they were grasped by the egrets. So how many frogs will there be next year and in following years?

The birds then started following animals in the pastures and also feeding in newly ploughed fields. I'm guessing worms, leatherjackets and other invertebrates are their diet until grasshoppers and crickets are more available as summer progresses.

How long can the local ecosystem withstand predation on this scale or will it all gradually balance out?

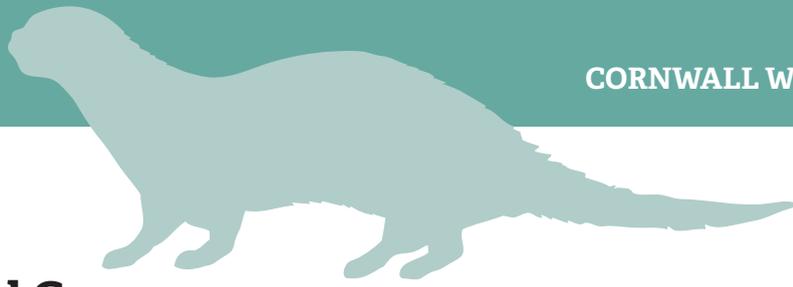
Only time will tell, but in the meantime enjoy what is an amazing bird and continue to follow its takeover of the Cornish skies and fields.

Adrian Langdon.



**This egret was one of 55 feeding on frogs at Walmsley Sanctuary, Cornwall Bird Watching and Preservation Society (CBWPS)**

ALL PHOTOS: ADRIAN LANGDON



## Cornwall Mammal Group Probing the secrets of otter spraint



ALL PHOTOS: CORNWALL MAMMAL GROUP

Mammal Group,  
Otter Spraint workshop

This spring, a special weekend workshop enabled volunteers to come together with archaeologists to learn all about fish remains. Cornwall Mammal Group (CMG) are collecting and analysing otter spraint (droppings) for the Cornwall Coastal Otter Project (CCOP), to determine how much marine prey otters are eating. The findings will be important to both otter conservation and the management of coastal habitats.

Whilst the archaeologists peered down their microscopes at a sample collected from an ancient tomb, the biologists began to separate and identify bones in freshly cleaned Cornish otter spraint.

CMG had previously been inspired by a fascinating talk on the history of Cornish mammals given by Naomi Sykes, the University of Exeter's newly appointed Lawrence Professor of Archaeology. CMG and the University's EcoSoc had invited Naomi to speak at a joint meeting, and went on to discuss ongoing projects including the CCOP. Naomi specialises in animal (particularly fish) remains from ancient middens, tombs and waste tips and pointed out that the only difference

between her studies and those of the CCOP was the age of the samples. The follow-on weekend course, where 15 volunteers and 15 archaeologists came together with half a dozen internationally renowned experts, was hosted by the Centre for Human-Animal-Environment Bioarchaeology at the University of Exeter. Talks focused on otters, why the CCOP was established, and in particular, bony fish skeletons. CMG, who had been looking mainly for vertebrae, learned that many fish skull bones are also distinctive and can be used to identify prey species.



Although otters eat fish of different sizes, they tend to eat the smaller prey whole, whilst only consuming the flesh of larger prey. Consequently, many of the fish bones found in spraint are from species of little interest to fishermen, and reference books and research facilities tend to concentrate on fish of commercial value. Picking apart tiny (less than 1mm) vertebrae and miniscule fragments of fish jaw bones requires a steady hand and lots of concentration. The next challenge is to compare the details of the bones to texts and reference samples and then ask an expert. The otter volunteers soon became pretty good at picking out salmonid vertebrae and eel bones but there was a lot of discussion about the smaller marine species such as gobies and blennies, and it became clear that photographic records and preserved bone samples will be very important for reference.



## A big thank you

To everyone who gave up their weekends to attend, especially the course tutors: **Naomi Sykes, Rebecca Nicholson, Sheila Hamilton-Dyer, Andrew Jones, Rebecca Reynolds, and Hannah Russ.**

The weekend workshop underlined the benefits of networking and the huge amount of knowledge available locally which these cross-discipline events can tap into.

**Dave Groves**, volunteer.



# Blue Minds, Happy Hearts

Get involved  
with the  
**Your Shore  
Beach Rangers**

[beachrangers.com](http://beachrangers.com)

Discover more local  
learning projects

[trenanceacademy.co.uk/web](http://trenanceacademy.co.uk/web)



Does the ocean make you happy?

**Jenn Sandiford**, Youth Engagement Officer for the Your Shore Beach Rangers project, explores the concept of Blue Minds, and the importance of connecting young people and communities with their environment.



It's said that wherever you are in Cornwall, you're never more than 20 minutes from a beach. Small wonder that the ocean has such a massive influence on the county's residents and visitors.

I was born and bred in Manchester but fell instantly in love with the ocean on a holiday to St Ives when I was 11. It came as no surprise to my family when I moved down here, drawn by the call of the sea and the way it made me feel.

Today, I work for the Your Shore Beach Rangers project. We support the Your Shore Network, which brings together an amazing community of volunteers all dedicated to protecting the sea and shore.

The aim of our Your Shore Beach Rangers project is to inspire young people and communities to get involved in looking after the environment through engaging events, workshops and training that will increase their skills for future careers.

Through this, we're also achieving something more... something fundamental to wellbeing. We're getting more people interested in the ocean, beach and coastline, not just as something that needs safeguarding, but as something that can actively improve our state of mind.

## A calming influence

In 2014, Dr Wallace J. Nichols published his book *Blue Mind: How water makes you happier, more connected and better at what you do*.

In it he talks of his love for the water and the calming influence it brings, how the ocean reduces stress and the anxiety that can lead to 'toxic stress'. He also writes about the positive impact water can have on what he refers to as 'red mind' — the overload of information and interference we experience through busy lifestyles, city living, technology and social media. He sees it as the root cause of the 'fight-or-flight' feelings that many of us experience at some point in our lives.

I once delivered a wellbeing workshop on the beach to a group of young people, where we spoke about stress. I asked them to join me, as we lay on our backs on the sand, eyes closed, listening to the sound of the waves crashing against the shore and sea birds singing around us. Most of the group had never taken the time to lie still and listen, and some struggled to do so, but we did it and achieved a state of relaxation for the rest of the session.

Personally, I find nothing more therapeutic than snorkelling over a kelp forest, watching it sway back and forth with the movement of the ocean, like a living being peacefully breathing away.

For many people in Cornwall, the positive effect of water may seem like common sense and is something that we perhaps take for granted. We have the most beautiful coastline, but I'm still amazed by the number of people living here who have never been to the beach. It's an untapped, untamed, free resource, there to be used, admired and explored.



I love nothing more than getting those young people on to the rocky shore or in to the sea, to see that expression at the end of the session (usually happiness and sleepiness), allowing them to experience the marine environment first hand, some for the first time in their young lives.

Words which I think are best expressed in a poem by E.E. Cummings which was quoted by the author of *Blue Mind*, Dr. Wallace J. Nichols at his TedxSanDiego talk.

*Maggie and Milly and Molly and May  
Went down to the beach (to play one day)  
And Maggie discovered a shell that sang  
So sweetly she couldn't remember her troubles, and  
Milly befriended a stranded star  
Whose rays five languid fingers were  
And Molly was chased by a horrible thing  
Which raced sideways while blowing bubbles: and  
May came home with a smooth round stone  
As small as a world and as large as alone  
For whatever we lose (like a you or a me)  
It's always ourselves we find in the sea*

## Connecting with nature

**Mullion School Beach Activity Day – discussing strandline finds**



The Your Shore Network comprises groups of like-minded people, volunteering their time to look after their local patch. Many run or attend events throughout the year, engaging with the public, residents and holiday-makers by giving them a guided tour of their playground.

With the emergence of terms such as 'Nature Deficit Disorder' and 'Social Prescription', it has become apparent

that more and more people are becoming disconnected from nature, which is affecting people's health and social welfare. This serves to highlight the importance of continuing the work we do to bridge the gap between people and nature, providing opportunities for everyone to engage with the ocean, in whatever way they feel most comfortable.

Events such as rock pooling, beach cleans, snorkelling and art workshops offer a variety of opportunities for anyone who's interested to interact with the marine environment. They also provide the opportunity for the social interaction that is often lacking within our communities.

## Learning valuable lessons



Our volunteers across the network show a huge commitment to educating young people about the coast, delivering workshops for schools, both in and out of the classroom.

Karl Fice-Thomson from Trenance Learning Academy recently delivered some inspiring Beach

Rangers Academy training on the benefits of using the beach as a 'community classroom', not just to teach young people about the environment, but as a space for all kinds of learning. It allows students to become completely immersed in a natural habitat, bringing them instantly closer to nature and the sea.

The Beach Rangers Project works with several secondary schools, youth groups and colleges in the county, delivering training and getting them down to the beach as often as possible so they can interact with the coast.

I love nothing more than getting those young people onto the rocky shore or into the sea – seeing their happy, sleepy expressions at the end of a session.

I get to watch them experience the marine environment firsthand, some of them for the very first time. It's proof of the power of the sea and I'm proud to help them discover a passion for it.



**Jenn Sandiford**

Youth Engagement Officer for the Your Shore Beach Rangers project, which combines the two things I'm most passionate about – the development of young people and marine conservation.

### UNLOCKING THE SECRET GARDENS

#### Open Gardens

Constantine | Dobwalls

Two more fantastic gardens are opening their gates to visitors through our Open Garden Scheme.

In August, the Trenarth estate, Constantine, invites the public to enjoy the secluded tranquility of its four acre grounds, which include a 16th century courtyard, vegetable garden and woodland area.

The following month sees the developing wildlife haven of South Bosent, Dobwalls, granting access to its diverse range of nature-friendly habitats.

All money raised will go directly to Cornwall Wildlife Trust.



JEREMY PENDELTON

#### JOIN OUR SCHOOL OF ROCK!

#### Rock pools and summer snorkels

August | September | October

Over the coming months, there are plenty of chances to enjoy a great day at the beach and discover the magic of Cornwall's amazing rock pools.

The huge range of marine wildlife found around the county's shoreline guarantees that every stone lifted reveals a unique natural wonder. For an alternative look at life in the shallows, why not check out our night-time event at Polzeath – UV torches provided!

From barnacles to bladderwrack there's always something new to learn about and with experts on hand to throw some light on the contents of your net you'll soon become fluent at reading the living encyclopaedia that lies between the tides.



MATT SLATER

#### UP CLOSE & SEASONAL

#### Photography

Windmill Farm | Allet | St Neot | Idless

Between August and November there'll be many opportunities to take your nature photography skills to the next level, with expert advice and encouragement from some of our most talented digital image contributors, including David Chapman and Adrian Langdon.

The sessions will offer tutorials on the use of macro lenses, which enable the camera to record the details that most of us overlook, and how best to capture the vibrant colours of late summer and autumn.

Whatever your experience level, you'll enjoy a great day in the countryside exchanging tips with fellow snappers and travel home with a hatful of high quality pics!

JON HAWKINS - SURREY HILLS PHOTOGRAPHY



#### SATURDAY 16th NOVEMBER

#### Discovery Day 2019

Heartlands | 10.00am to 3:00pm

With the world gradually waking up to the reality of climate change, environmental awareness is at the forefront of Cornwall Wildlife Trust's agenda for this year's Discovery Day, to be held at Heartlands, a World Heritage Site Gateway set in the shadow of an iconic Cornish engine house.

Join us for a great day out and lively debate about the future of Cornwall's wild places – and how best to manage the county's wildlife and unique natural habitats.

Incorporated into the scheduled events will be CWT's Annual General Meeting, which all members are welcome to attend. For further info and booking form, see page 35.



#### A WILD SUMMER FOR OUR JUNIOR MEMBERS

Wildlife Watch

#### Wildlife Watch

August | September | October | November

A diary-busting twenty-two events exclusively aimed at our younger members have been scheduled over the next four months.

Arts & crafts, gardening, bug-hunting and bird-feeding are just a few of the activities on offer to official Wildlife Watch subscribers.

Other highlights include two opportunities to discover some fascinating facts about owls and an event dedicated to celebrating the humble potato – well, who doesn't love a super spud?!



BEN WATKINS

**EVERYONE is welcome to attend ALL events except where specified (e.g. unsuitable for young children).**

**Events are free unless specified (check our website for details), but donations are appreciated.**

**Please bring appropriate clothing and footwear to all outdoor events.**

**If bad weather is forecast, call event organisers to check that activities are still running.**

#### Key to symbols:

- CWT Wildlife Watch event for accompanied children
- Full or partial disabled access
- Sponsored by South West Water



#### IMPORTANT NOTE FOR PARENTS:

Children must be accompanied by an adult at all events, and must remain that person's responsibility at all times. When booking Wildlife Watch events online, please include name of event, date, your mobile contact no. and the names & ages of children attending. **Sorry, no dogs at Cornwall Wildlife Trust Wildlife Watch events.**

## AUGUST

Thursday 1

**Summer Rock Pool Ramble****Hannafore Beach, West Looe** | 12noon to 2.00pm

Meet below the Coastguard Station, Hannafore, Marine Drive, West Looe. Look out for our sail flags. PL13 2DL. (SX255523).

Join volunteers to find and identify some of the wonderful creatures and beautiful seaweeds that inhabit Looe's amazing rockpools.

More details: **Matt Nott 07539 530020** or [looevmca@gmail.com](mailto:looevmca@gmail.com) [looevmarineconservation.org](http://looevmarineconservation.org)

Thursday 1

**Snorkel Safari****Porthpean** | 12.00pm to 3.00pm

**Booking is essential** | Meet at the bottom of the slope to the beach. PL26 6AX

A supervised snorkelling event for **11 – 24 year old locals**. Discover the secrets of the sea and come face-to-face with some amazing wildlife.

Friday 2

**Trevaunance Cove** | 12.30pm to 3.30pm

**Booking is essential** | Meet at the bottom of the slope to the beach. TR5 0RU

Supervised snorkelling for **experienced locals**.

More details: **Jenn Sandiford 07973 728775** [jennsandiford@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:jennsandiford@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Friday 2

**Bat Walk****Kilkhampton** | 8.00pm to 10.00pm

**Booking is essential** | Meet at National Trust Office, Stowe Barton, Kilkhampton, Nr Bude, EX23 9JW

An introductory talk about bats followed by a walk through Coombe Valley with bat detectors.

More details: **Rob Robinson (01288) 321236** or [binsrob@aol.com](mailto:binsrob@aol.com)

Friday 2

**Explore the Shore****Polridmouth Beach, Fowey** | 11.30am to 2.00pm

**Booking is essential** | Directions provided on booking

Join marine biologists for a rock pool ramble with an incredible diversity of marine species! Learn fascinating facts about our amazing rock pool creatures. Supported by South West Water.

More details: **Matt Slater (01872) 302251** or [Shoresearch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:Shoresearch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Sunday 4

**Open Garden - Trenarth****Constantine** | 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Meet at High Cross, Constantine, TR11 5JN

Four acre garden set around a 17th century farmhouse in a lovely pastoral setting with wonderful panoramic views – and not a road in sight or sound.

Contact: **(01872) 273 939** or [info@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:info@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Tuesday 6

**Crabbing Takeover Day****West Looe** | 10.00am to 5.00pm

Meet at Heritage Centre, Old Sardine Factory, Pennyland, West Looe, Cornwall, PL13 2BX.

Delve into the fascinating life of crabs. The day will be comprised of talks, crab-themed arts, crafts and games, and a poster competition.

More details: **Amelia Bridges 07926 091345** or [looevmca@gmail.com](mailto:looevmca@gmail.com)

Wednesday 7

**CSGRT Meeting****Redruth** | 7.30pm to 10.00pm

Meet at the Inn for All Seasons (SW701434)

Updates and seal highlights. Food can be ordered from 6.30pm.

More details: **Sue Sayer** [sue@cornwallsealgroup.co.uk](mailto:sue@cornwallsealgroup.co.uk)

Wednesday 7

**Radical Rock Pooling****Near Cape Cornwall** | 3.00pm to 5.30pm

**Booking is essential** | At National Trust Car Park, Cape Cornwall, near St Just, TR19 7NN

A rock pooling and snorkelling adventure at one of Cornwall's most spectacular locations! Try snorkelling in huge natural tide pools.

More details: **Matt Slater (01872) 302251**. [Shoresearch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:Shoresearch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Saturday 10

**Night Time Rock Pooling****Polzeath** | 8.00pm to 10.30pm

**Booking is essential** | Meet at the Polzeath Marine Centre, opposite pitch and putt green. PL27 6TA

Rock pooling is even better at night. See weird and wonderful creatures under the night sky using UV torches.

More details: **Jenn Sandiford 07973 728775** [jennsandiford@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:jennsandiford@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Saturday 10

**Wild Flowers****Churchtown Farm Nature Reserve Saltash**

10.30am to 1.00pm

Meet at the Cecil Arms by St. Stephens Church PL12 4AR

Discover the variety of wild flowers on the reserve.

More details: **Mary (01752) 843852**

Sunday 11

**Leaf Art & Natural Flag Making****Bude** | 10.00am to 12.00pm

**Booking is essential**

Explore this wonderful woodland, collecting leaves to create leaf masterpieces and flags to take home.

More details: **Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939** or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Wednesday 14

**Strandline Scavenge Arts & Crafts****Nr Durgan** | 11.30am to 1.30pm

**Booking is essential**

Hunt the strandline for interesting flotsam and turn it into creatures. With Wildlife Watch, Helford Marine Conservation Group and Plastic Free Helford.

More details: **Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939** or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Thursday 15

**Newquay Evening Boat Trip.****Newquay Harbour** | 6.00pm to 8.00pm

**Booking is essential** | Meet at Newquay Harbour car park. TR7 1HT Look for Chris' Boat Atlantic Diver.

A ride around Newquay's headlands and then out to sea to look for kittiwakes, fulmars, gannets, cormorants, terns, seals, dolphins and basking sharks.

More details: **Chris Lowe, 07860 927833** or [atlanticdiving@gmail.com](mailto:atlanticdiving@gmail.com)

Thursday 15

**Introduction to Freshwater Invertebrates Workshop****Camborne** | 10.00am to 4.00pm

**Booking is essential**

An introduction to the fascinating ecology of freshwater ecosystems, complete with its own grazers, scavengers, predators and prey.

More details: **Laura Fox (01872) 302246** or [laura.fox@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:laura.fox@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Monday 19

**Rock Pool Ramble****Nr Polzeath** | 1.30pm to 3.30pm

**Booking is essential**

Heather Buttivant, will take you onto the rocks to explore all that live in this watery world this summer. Sponsored by John Bray Cornish Holidays.

More details: **Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939** or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Wednesday 21

**Moth Workshop****Callington** | 10.00am to 4:00pm

**Booking is essential**

An introduction to moth recording aimed at absolute beginners. We will consider the different types of traps and lures and the best ways to use them, as well as de-mystifying the many and varied species of moths that can be found in Cornwall. We will also have the opportunity to sort through the contents of a trap that has been left overnight.

Contact the leaders: **Gary Lewis** or **Laura Fox (01872) 302246** or [laura.fox@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:laura.fox@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Saturday 24

**Life in a Garden Pond****Camborne** | 10.00am to 12.00pm

**Booking is essential**

Join Wildlife Watch and Daena from Wild Wood Eco Garden to learn about what is happening in the pond this summer – from boatmen to frogs, what might you see?

More details: **Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939** or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Sunday 25

**Dragonfly and Macro Photography****Windmill Farm** | 10.00am to 3.00pm

Windmill Farm car park. Take the A3083 south onto the Lizard from Helston. Soon after the left turning to Ruan Minor take a right turn sign posted to a camp site, continue along to the end of this track. TR12 7LH.

More details: **David Chapman (01736 850287)**

Friday 30

**Summer Rock Pool Ramble 2****Hannafore Beach West Looe** | 11.30am to 1.30pm

Meet below the Coastguard Station, Hannafore, Marine Drive, West Looe. Look out for our sail flags. PL13 2DL. (SX255523).

Join expert volunteers for our ever-popular rock pool ramble! Discover some of the wonderful creatures and beautiful seaweeds that inhabit Looe's amazing rock pools.

More details: **07539 530020** or [looevmca@gmail.com](mailto:looevmca@gmail.com)

Sunday 1

**Rock Pool Ramble**

Prisk Cove | 1.30pm to 3.00pm

**Booking is essential** | Meet at Mawnan Church, Old Church Road, Mawnan, TR11 5HY

Investigate the amazing rock pools at Prisk Cove with marine expert Ruth Williams.

More details: Sue Scott (01326) 340961 or [coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk](mailto:coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk)

Sunday 1

**Open Garden – South Bosent**

Liskeard | 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Meet at South Bosent, Dobwalls, Liskeard, PL14 4LX

South Bosent is diverse and features a woodland area and stream, fruit trees, the makings of a wild flower meadow, herbaceous borders and a number of magnolias, camellias and spring bulbs.

More details: (01872) 273939 or [Info@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:Info@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Monday 2

**Feed the Birds**

Saltash | 10.00am to 12.00pm

**Booking is essential**

Come down to the farm – see what birds may be joining you and then make some natural bird feeders to take home.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**For full details of all our events and activities**

Including: prices, age suitability, access information and what to bring and wear.

[cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/whats-on](http://cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/whats-on) | (01872) 273 939

Sunday 8

**Curious & Wild Potato Festival**

Wadebridge | 10.30am to 2.30pm

**Booking is essential**

Crazy and creative potato-based activities and campfire goodies. An uphill 8-minute cross country walk to the woodland.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Monday 9

**Photographic Group Meeting**

CWT HQ Allet | 7.30pm to 10.00pm

Meet at Cornwall Wildlife Trust Five Acres Allet Truro Cornwall TR4 9DJ

Members evening. Suggested donation of £2. Other meetings: **Monday 14 October**

More details: Adrian Langdon (01208) 813440 07702 527603 or [adrian@adrianlangdon.com](mailto:adrian@adrianlangdon.com)

Wednesday 11

**Looe Island Guided Walk**

Looe | 2.00pm to 6.00pm

**Booking is essential** | On-line booking only

During the 3 hour visit we'll help you spot the Island's wildlife. You'll learn about the Trust's work and the challenges of island life. After the walk there's an optional slide show in Jetty Cottage.

Alternative date: **Wednesday 27 September**

[www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/islandwalks](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/islandwalks)

Saturday 14

**Geology**

Churchtown Farm Nature Reserve, Saltash 11.00am to 2.00pm

Meet at Cecil Arms by St. Stephens Church, Saltash PL12 4AR

Discover more about the geology of the reserve.

More details: Mary (01752) 843853

Saturday 14

**Autumn Beach Clean with Beach Guardian**

Padstow | 2.00pm to 4.00pm | **Booking essential**

Join co-founders of Beach Guardian, Rob & Emily, on a beach clean. You will find out about Emily's Marine Biology studies, about marine organisms that use plastic rafts to escape warmer climates as well as create recycled art from beach litter.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Sunday 15

**Beach Clean, Picnic & Swim**

Portnadler | 11.00am to 2.00pm

Meet at the Coastguard Hut, Hannafore, West Looe, PL13 2DL

Want to play your part in cleaning up the oceans? The kit is provided, all we ask is that you come along in suitable clothing and footwear.

More details: 07880 746379 or [looevmca@gmail.com](mailto:looevmca@gmail.com)

Monday 16

**Rock Pool Wildlife Workshop**

Falmouth | 10.00am to 4:00pm

**Booking is essential**

Learn about the ecology of rock pools and gain an understanding of why some shores are better than others for certain species. We will also go down to the shore to see what we can find and identify.

More details: Laura Fox (01872) 302246 or [laura.fox@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:laura.fox@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Monday 16

**Owl Sense**

Bude | 7.30pm to 9.00pm

Meet at Stratton Primary School, New Road, Stratton, Bude, EX23 9AP

This presentation tells the story of one woman's quest to identify every European species of this elusive bird. A search that took her to Spain, France, Serbia and Finland, and to the frosted borders of the Arctic.

More details: Chair CWT Bude Group (01288) 352726 or [cwtbude@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cwtbude@yahoo.co.uk)

Saturday 21

**Strandline Arts and Crafts**

Mullion | 11.30am to 1.30pm

**Booking is essential**

Fun tide line ramble with friends of Polurrian beach, followed by marine-themed arts & crafts back in the warmth of the Polurrian hotel on the Lizard.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Sunday 22

**Snorkel Safari and Barbeque**

Durgan Beach | 3.00pm to 6.00pm

**Booking is essential** | Meet at Durgan Beach, Helford River.

Beach barbeque and get together plus an optional snorkel with marine experts on a guided tour of the Bay. Snorkel places are limited.

More details: Sue Scott (01326) 340961 or [coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk](mailto:coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk)

Wednesday 25

**Volunteer for Marine Life**

Falmouth Art Gallery | 7.00pm to 9.00pm

Meet at Falmouth Art Gallery, Top Floor Municipal Offices, The Moor, Falmouth TR11 3QA

Be inspired to volunteer in marine conservation work, watch films of marine life off the coast of Cornwall and listen to those already active in the many projects taking place in the county.

More details: [coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk](mailto:coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk)

Saturday 28

**Gardening Club**

Nr Truro | 10.00am to 12.00 noon

**Booking is essential**

Join Wildlife Watch volunteers and Perennial-Harvest to grow some winter veg – what's good to sew this time of year.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Saturday 28 - Wednesday 2 October

**Shoresearch Week**

**Booking is essential**

A great week to get involved and make a difference. Open to everyone, no experience necessary!

Help Cornwall Wildlife Trust survey the shore at a selection of Cornish beaches – including 5 of Cornwall's original Voluntary Marine Conservation Areas (VMCAs). Supported by South West Water.

**Saturday 28 September - Helford**

**Sunday 29th September - Polzeath**

**Monday 30th September - Looe**

**Tuesday 1st October - Fowey**

**Wednesday 2nd October - St Agnes**

More details: Matt Slater 01872 302251 or [Shoresearch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:Shoresearch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Sunday 29

**Garden Wildlife at Dusk**

Camborne | 6.00pm to 8.00pm

**Booking is essential**

Join Wildlife Watch and Daena from Wild Wood Eco Garden to see what appears in her magical garden at dusk – look for bats, listen for owls and see what's about in the pond, too.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)



ADRIAN LANGDON

Sunday 29

**Photography Field Trip**

Golitha Falls | 10.00am to 3.00pm

Golitha Falls National Nature Reserve, Treverbyn Bridge, St Neot, PL14 6HG. Meet in the large car park near the entrance to the Nature Reserve.

Fungi, lichens, mosses, autumn colour and the river Fowey as it flows over a series of rocks; good for slow shutter speed photography.

More details: Karin: 07790 613786 [kar1n@madasafish.com](mailto:kar1n@madasafish.com) Becky: 07746 083422, [curtis\\_becky@hotmail.com](mailto:curtis_becky@hotmail.com)

OCTOBER

**Sunday 6**  
**Bonkers about Barn Owls**  
Allet | 10.00am to 12.00pm | **Booking is essential**

Learn what makes a barn owl so special and dissect one of their regurgitated pellets to find and identify the undigested beaks and bones of their prey!

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Saturday 12**  
**Roots, Fruits and Fungi Forage**  
Churchtown Farm Nature Reserve, Saltash  
10.30am to 1.30pm

Churchtown Farm Nature Reserve, near The Cecil Arms by St. Stephens Church PL12 4AR  
Learn about types of fungi and fruits on the reserve.

More details: Mary (01752) 843852

**Saturday 12**  
**Pond and Stream Dipping**  
Falmouth | 10.00am to 12.00 noon

**Booking is essential**

Join Wildlife Watch and Generation Wild volunteers for an autumn pond and stream dip.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Monday 21**  
**UK Bumblebee Conservation**  
Bude | 7.30pm to 9.00pm

Meet at Stratton Primary School, New Road, Stratton, Bude, EX23 9AP

This talk gives an overview of bumblebee behaviour, the threats facing bumblebees and their habitats, and an overview of various UK bumblebee conservation projects and how to get involved.

More details: Chair CWT Bude Group (01288) 352726 or [cwtbude@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cwtbude@yahoo.co.uk)

**Wednesday 23**  
**Autumn Bughunting**  
Camborne | 10.00am to 12.00pm

**Booking is essential**

We return to this popular historic site – let's see what has come out to play now autumn is here.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Wednesday 23**  
**Spooky Wildlife Adventure at Dusk**  
Pendeen | 6.00pm to 8.00pm | **Booking essential**

Take a spooky wander around this fantastic coppice wood and wetland farm.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Thursday 24**  
**Beaver Watch**  
Nr Truro | 5.00pm to 7.00pm

**Booking is essential**

Another chance this year to see the amazing work of two beavers and their kits. We can't guarantee a sighting but you may just be lucky. Strictly 6+

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Saturday 26**  
**Good Seafood & Past Lessons**  
Gweek Village Hall | 7.30pm

Meet at Gweek Village Hall, TR12 6UG

The rich history of Cornwall's fishing industry from the heyday of the pilchard seines to the crawfish bonanza of the seventies, and discusses the lessons learned, which will be important for future sustainability.

More details: Sue Scott (01326) 340961 or [coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk](mailto:coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk)

**Saturday 26**  
**Half Term Rock Pool Ramble**  
Hannafore Beach, Looe | 10.00am to 12noon

Meet below the Coastguard Station, Hannafore, Marine Drive, West Looe. Look out for flags. PL13 2DL.

Discover how to find and identify some of the wonderful creatures and beautiful seaweeds that inhabit Looe's amazing rock pools.

More details: 07539 530020 or [looevmca@gmail.com](mailto:looevmca@gmail.com)

NOVEMBER

**Saturday 2**  
**Fungus & Woodland Photography**  
Idleless Woods | 10.00am to 3.00pm

Meet at car park for the woods. Head north from Truro to Shortlanesend and bear right on entering village; turn right at cross roads; follow road to Idleless here turn left and entrance to car park is on the right after 200 yards. TR4 9QT

More details: David Chapman (01736) 850287

**For full details of all our events and activities**

Including: prices, age suitability, access information and what to bring and wear.

[cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/whats-on](http://cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/whats-on) | (01872) 273 939

**Saturday 9**  
**All about Owls**  
Falmouth | 10.00am to 12.00 noon

**Booking is essential**

Join Wildlife Watch and Generation Wild Volunteers for another chance to find out more about our feathery friends. Take part in an owl pellet dissection too.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Saturday 9**  
**Reserve Clean**  
Churchtown Farm Nature Reserve, Saltash  
10.30am to 12.30pm

Meet at the Wearde Road, Entrance PL12 4AS  
Help litter pick and give the reserve a good clean.

More details: Mary (01752) 843852

**Saturday 16**  
**Discovery Day and AGM**  
Heartlands | 10.00am to 3:00pm

For full details see page 35

NOVEMBER

**Sunday 17**  
**All About Hedgehogs**  
Devoran, Nr Truro | 10.00am to 12.00 noon

**Booking is essential**

Join us to learn all about our very cute prickly friends. Facts, fun and lots more. In partnership with Restrunguet Creek Society.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Monday 18**  
**Enter the Dragons – Reptiles and Amphibians in Cornwall**  
Bude | 7.30pm to 9.00pm

Meet at Stratton Primary School, New Road, Stratton, Bude, EX23 9AP

Nicola Morris' talk will cover the areas where frogs, toads, newts, lizards and snakes live in Cornwall. Find out how we can help to preserve and enhance the habitats in which these fascinating creatures live.

More details: Chair CWT Bude Group (01288) 352726 or [cwtbude@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cwtbude@yahoo.co.uk)

**Tuesday 19**  
**Talk: 'Marine Protected Areas: A Local Success Story'**  
East Looe | 6.00pm to 8.30pm

Meet at Crew Room, Looe Lifeboat Station, West End, East Looe, Cornwall, PL13 1AT

The Blue Marine Foundation is a charity dedicated to creating marine reserves and establishing sustainable models of fishing. In Lyme Bay, BMF have worked to achieve a well-managed marine reserve that benefits fishermen and conservationists alike. Come along to find out how!

More details: Amelia Bridges 07926 091345 or [looevmca@gmail.com](mailto:looevmca@gmail.com)

**Saturday 23**  
**Recycled Art**  
Padstow | 10.00am to 12.00pm

**Booking is essential**

Join co-founders of Beach Guardian, Rob & Emily, on a creative session using the recycled materials collected on their beach travels.

More details: Wildlife Watch (01872) 273939 or [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)



MATT SLATER

**Saturday 30**  
**Lasers, Lights and Tattoos**  
Gweek Village Hall | 7.30pm

Meet at Gweek Village Hall, TR12 6UG

Sam Davis from Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority talks about the lengths and depths their research team goes to in finding answers to managing fisheries and marine wildlife.

More details: Sue Scott (01326) 340961 or [coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk](mailto:coordinator@helfordvmca.co.uk)

# Plan your wildlife-friendly pond for all

We're rapidly losing our ponds, rivers and streams in the UK, so adding a pond is one of the best things you can do to help wildlife in your garden. **Kate Bradbury** explains how to make your pond a haven for animals, large and small.



## Long grass for cover

Allow the grass to grow long around your pond, or grow low-growing herbaceous plants nearby, to provide cover for young frogs, toads and newts and protect them from predators such as birds.

## A mix of pond plants

Add a range of emergent, floating and submerged plants to provide the best habitat for wildlife, offering egg-laying habitat and shelter from predators. Submerged plants oxygenate the water, too.

## Shallow water

This is where the life is! Here, you'll find tadpoles and other aquatic larvae. Shallow areas warm up more quickly in spring, and frogs lay spawn here.

## Landing pad

Water lilies will be used by thirsty insects such as bees. Frogs may rest on them to catch insects and aquatic larvae will shelter beneath them.

## Deep water

In winter, deep areas provide shelter for frogs, which rest at the bottom, breathing through their skin. Toads prefer deep ponds too.

## Emergent plants

Dragonfly nymphs climb out of the water using the stems of emergent plants before transforming into winged adults.

A pond is one of the richest habitats you can create in a garden, providing food, water and a breeding place for a huge range of species, from amphibians to aquatic invertebrates, and birds to small mammals, such as hedgehogs and bats. A pond is also one of the busiest wildlife habitats. Digging one will have an almost immediate effect. Within just two weeks, you might attract water boatmen and pond skaters, bathing birds, thirsty hedgehogs and egg-laying insects, such as dragonflies and damselflies. Amphibians will seek out the water to spawn in spring, and bats will take advantage of the insects dancing over the water's surface in summer.

In the wild, ponds, rivers and streams are being lost and degraded by development, drainage and intensive farming, resulting in a huge loss of wildlife. So garden ponds are an increasingly vital habitat for species that may have lost their breeding grounds elsewhere. They can also act as stepping stones between larger bodies of water, providing a lifeline to species that are unable to travel long distances.

While large ponds attract the greatest number of species, don't underestimate the value of a small pond. A container such as an old tin bath, Belfast sink or even a washing up bowl can provide a home for aquatic insects. Frogs may use the habitat too – just help them to reach the water by making a 'frog ladder' out of stones outside the container. Add more stones at the bottom and plants to provide oxygen and shelter for tadpoles and other aquatic larvae.

Our gardens take up more space than all of Britain's nature reserves put together. If we all provided some form of watery home, we could create a network of wildlife-rich water highways across the country. →



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

 **Working with the RHS, we've produced a booklet that tells you everything you need to know, you can download it free and also add your water feature to our UK pond map at [wildaboutgardens.org.uk](http://wildaboutgardens.org.uk)**

### Somewhere to hide

Make piles of old terracotta pots or loose heaps of stones near your pond to provide shelter for frogs and toads.

### Gently sloping sides

Make sure mammals such as hedgehogs can enter and exit the pond safely to avoid drowning. A sloping 'beach' is perfect and will attract birds to bathe here too.

### Nurseries for eggs

Toads wrap their ribbon-like spawn around the submerged stems of plants such as marsh marigold. Newts fold individual eggs into the leaves of plants such as water-forget-me-not.

### Sheltering stones

In the shallows and deeper areas of the pond, stones provide nooks and crannies for aquatic larvae to shelter from predators. Tadpoles also suck algae off them.



# Ponds for all, big or small

Any wet area is going to be fantastic for wildlife – so the Nature Reserves team do a huge amount to keep our ponds and wetlands in their best condition. On Cornwall Wildlife Trust's nature reserves we look after a huge range of 'wet bits' from ponds to lakes to ditches to puddles! Here is a selection of our favourite wet and wild nature reserves to visit – don't forget your wellies, these sites are WET!



## 1 Windmill Farm Nature Reserve

Every time we dig a pond at Windmill Farm, a new rare species appears – so we keep building ponds! Some of our creations are classed as scrapes, which is like a pond but shallower; you literally just scrape away the ground with a digger, wait for it to fill up with water and then... wildlife! Our early scrapes were great for birds and there are three bird hides and a viewing tower on site where you can birdwatch in comfort. We then started to discover rare plants – pygmy rush, yellow century, strawberry stonewort – in and around the scrapes. There is a small information centre at Windmill Farm with maps that will direct you to the rare plant scrapes, the bird hides and specially designed dragonfly pools.

Due to the reserve's closeness to the coast, many migrant birds pass through in spring and autumn. These include merlin, hobby, greenshank, green sandpiper, dunlin, wheatear, whinchat, yellow wagtail and various warblers and finches.

In winter there are large flocks of lapwings and golden plover around, along with hen harriers, snipe, jack snipe and a variety of wildfowl. The farm's bird list now stands at over 150. Rarities include great white egret, black kite, American golden plover, black-winged stilt, citrine wagtail, Iberian chiffchaff and 'Balearic' woodchat shrike. New species added in 2011 were Bewick's swan, bee-eater, tawny owl, spotted redshank, little gull, greylag goose and Brent goose.



PHOTOS (LEFT TO RIGHT): ANDREW PARKINSON/2020VISION, GILLIAN DAY, JOHN BRIDGES

## 2 Helman Tor Nature Reserve



BEN WATKINS

Beneath the tor is a mosaic landscape of wetland habitats from wet willow woodland to open ponds. This landscape has been created by tin streaming, where the power of water was used to help separate the valuable tin ore. There are large ponds beneath the tor that have lumps of the old tin streaming equipment rising out of the water. This once heavily industrialised landscaped is now teeming with wildlife that love the wet bits that have been left behind. Amphibians, dragonflies and a wet grassland butterfly, the marsh fritillary, can all be seen here.



BEN WATKINS



BEN WATKINS

**3 Chyverton Nature Reserve**

A small nature reserve with a small pond but in the summer months an abundance of dragonflies zip and swoop around the wetland while the more delicate damselflies decorate the vegetation around the pond edge. Although small, Chyverton is a calm oasis that rewards the visitor with a sense of splendid isolation.

**4 Pendarves Wood Nature Reserve**

On some nature reserves we create ponds but at Pendarves we have been uncovering an historic wetland landscape. This nature reserve was once the ornamental parkland for a grand Cornish estate, Pendarves House. A huge clearance project has removed invasive laurel and rhododendron to reveal a system of lakes, leats and streams. Our management now includes allowing native woodland to regenerate around the large lake where you can see a variety of wildfowl all year round.



BEN WATKINS



BEN WATKINS

**Want to learn more about these flying jewels?**  
**26th & 27th July dragonfly course at Bostraze**  
 Check out our website or diary pages in this magazine to book.

**5 Bostraze Nature Reserve**

This nature reserve is part of the largest wetland in West Penwith – Bostraze Bog. The ruins of a remote watering hole are still visible at the appropriately named Bog Inn. Sadly you can't get a drink here anymore but there is an abundance of wetland wildlife to see in the nearby ponds including rare and colourful dragon and damselflies.

**6 Maer Lake 'The Pool' Nature Reserve**

Maer Lake has always been known as 'The Pool' by local people in Bude, and indeed this name seems to have given the settlement of Maer its name. Mere is an old English word, still commonly used for a pool. It appears to have been an area of wet grazing shared by the farmers of the adjacent tenements in the post medieval period.

The nature reserve is internationally acknowledged as an important resting and feeding site for migrating birds. Spring highlights have included spoonbill and marsh harrier. In autumn, birders have been delighted with Wilson's phalarope and semi-palmated sandpiper. Large groups of golden plover and lapwing are an exciting sight to see at this lake that has been around for centuries.

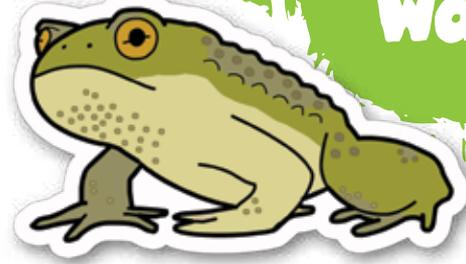


DAVID TIPLING/2020VISION

Visit [cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves](http://cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves) for details of all our nature reserves or download our NEW Leaflet at [cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/explore-near-me/nature-trails](http://cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/explore-near-me/nature-trails)



# Life-changing adventures



From pond dipping to reptile and bug hunts, there is something at every point in the Cornwall Wildlife Trust calendar to capture a child's interest. But what if that one wild experience sparks a lifetime passion, or even a career path?

**Heather Buttivant** shares how her early experiences with us as a child member shaped her entire future... including her work for us now as a Wildlife Watch leader.



I still remember my mum taking me to my first pond dipping event when I was around seven years old. The woodland floor squelched under our wellies as we all ran to the edge of the mysterious waters clutching our little nets, brimming with excitement. Within minutes we had a tray full of alien-looking creatures, but there was nothing our expert leader couldn't identify.

I saw my first baby dragonfly that day – a strange, dark, crawling nymph that would soon transform into one of the most colourful creatures of the summer.

On other Fox Club trips (as Wildlife Watch was known back then) I would meet my first grass snake, make homes for insects and develop my lifelong passion for rock pools.

Every event leader I met sparkled with knowledge and enthusiasm about the natural world and nothing could have been more inspiring to my young mind. Those experiences shaped my future as I became involved in environmental issues, especially on climate change, before returning to Cornwall where I now write and teach about marine wildlife.

I feel privileged to now have the chance to share my love of the wild with the next generation of young Cornish naturalists as a Wildlife Watch leader. I am constantly amazed at the levels of knowledge and enthusiasm that young people bring to my events and we have found the most amazing things in our sessions, from huge spiny starfish and colourful clingfish to a strange barnacle that lives on shore crabs.

My own son spends so much time on beaches with me that he often acts as my assistant at events, and he has also discovered his own passions for fungi, carnivorous plants and geology through joining in with Wildlife Watch activities.

Cornwall has a fabulous range of habitats and wildlife, and there's no doubt that spending time outdoors makes us happier, healthier and more caring. As the great marine filmmaker and conservationist Jacques Cousteau once said: "We only protect what we love."

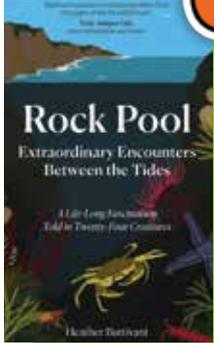
At a time when some children don't spend much time playing outdoors, Wildlife Watch can make a huge difference to their lives. One in ten children in the UK have never been to the beach and even more have never built a sandcastle or held a shell to their ear 'listening to the sea'. I want to do my bit to change that. The programme of Wildlife Watch events seems to grow all the time and coincides with lots of schools and youth groups taking action on marine litter, with children's voices ringing out against climate change. I am sure there are more exciting times ahead.

I couldn't be happier to be a part of Cornwall Wildlife Trust's work and I have lots of fun sharing the wonders of the shore through my Cornish Rock Pools blog.

**A huge thank you to Heather for all she has done for us. Her work is helping to shape the future by protecting our wildlife and wild spaces.**

share your passion

If you would like to share your wildlife passion with the next generation, become a volunteer with us, or just find out more about our family membership, please contact Jo Arvor: [wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:wildlifewatch@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)


Heather's first book **Rock Pool: Extraordinary Encounters Between the Tides** was published in May 2019. It is available from all good booksellers.



**Heather Buttivant**  
Rock pooler, writer, environmentalist and educator.  
Sharing a love for Cornish Rock Pools. Follow her on twitter @CornishRockPool.

# Wilder CORNWALL

## Cornwall's Wilder Future

**Saturday 16th November 2019** | 10am – 3pm  
Heartlands, Pool, Redruth, TR15 3QY

### PROGRAMME

10.00am – 10.30am  
**Annual General Meeting of  
Cornwall Wildlife Trust 2019**

11:00am to 3:00pm  
**Discovery Day 2019  
Cornwall's Wilder Future**

The world is waking up to the climate change and ecological breakdown crisis. Environmental awareness is increasing at a pace never seen before and demands to help nature recover are high on the agenda. So how do we help nature recover? Are Cornwall's wild places enough – should they become **Wilder Places**? Is rewilding an answer? How can we all become **Wilder People** and take action to create a **Wilder Cornwall**? What does **Cornwall's Wilder Future** look like? Join us for talks and lively discussion.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust will be at Heartlands this year, a World Heritage Site Gateway in Cornwall, and set in the shadow of an iconic Cornish engine house. Heartlands is a visionary social enterprise project with a regional and national audience, that goes out of their way to champion local innovation and environmental sustainability.

[www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/discovery](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/discovery)

### Discovery Day is £15 per person

Includes vegetarian  
pasty, tea and coffee.

Free Parking at  
Heartlands, on  
main bus route, bike  
stands on site.

**All welcome**

Cornwall  
Wildlife Trust



DISCOVERY  
DAY 2019

AND

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## DISCOVERY DAY 2019 BOOKING FORM

Fill in the form below or book online at:

[www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/discovery](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/discovery)

email [info@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:info@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk) or call (01872) 273939

Return this booking form with your cheque made payable to Cornwall Wildlife Trust no later than **Friday 8th November 2019** to **Carolyn O'Hagan**.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Five Acres, Allet, Truro, TR3 9DJ.

places at £15.00 = £  Dietary requirements:

I enclose a cheque for £  **payable to Cornwall Wildlife Trust** \* Please note that no tickets are issued but you will be signed in on the day

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email:  Tel:

Are you a Cornwall  
Wildlife Trust member? Yes  No

Cornwall Wildlife Trust would love to keep you up to speed with our wildlife  
news and events. Please tick this box if you'd like to receive our email updates:

Any personal information given to us is protected under GDPR and will only be used for the purpose of membership administration and fundraising for Cornwall Wildlife Trust. To find out how we use and protect your personal data, read our Privacy Policy: [www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/privacy-policy-and-tc](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/privacy-policy-and-tc)

Please cut  
off and  
return



# Thank you to all our wild fundraisers!

**Jack Barton** and **Katy Westerberg** are fundraising throughout summer in preparation for their big adventure in September. We speak with them to find out more about what they've chosen to do and why.



**Jack and Katy, tell us a bit about yourselves and why you've chosen to fundraise for Cornwall Wildlife Trust?**

We've had the privilege of living in Cornwall for three years while at university, where we studied zoology with a particular passion

for marine wildlife. Now pursuing careers to help protect it, we wanted to give back and help protect Cornwall's wildlife.

**And what will you be doing to fundraise?**

This September, we'll be embarking on a three-week, 300 mile hike along the South West Coast Path from the Hartland Cornwall Heritage Coast in the north to the River Tamar in the south and camping in our trusty tent.

**This sounds like a great way to observe marine wildlife while fundraising for it too**

Yes, absolutely! There's thousands of species in Cornish waters from cetaceans to corals, basking sharks to bluefin tuna, seahorses to starfish as well as a diverse array of marine ecosystems. We're excited to explore every inch of Cornwall's coastline and raise money too.

**So you're particularly interested in marine wildlife, what interested you about Cornwall Wildlife Trust's work with marine environment?**

We first encountered Cornwall Wildlife Trust through university, attending talks, Seaquest Southwest days, boat trips and Marine Recording. We were inspired by the work of the charity, particularly their pro-active approach to current issues and wanted to help however we could.

**We'd love to stay updated along your fundraising journey! What's the best way to support you?**

You can donate via our Just Giving Page, where the money will go directly to Cornwall Wildlife Trust. [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jackandkatycornishwalk](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jackandkatycornishwalk). We will post regular updates along the way via our personal Twitter accounts [@jackhbarton](https://twitter.com/jackhbarton) and [@katywesterberg](https://twitter.com/katywesterberg).

# Thank you

Thank you to **Mount Pleasant Eco-Park**, **South West Water** and the thousands of you that made our Wilder Festival on Sunday 26th May such a special day to remember.



ELLIE SMART



Kindly supported by:



# Wilder FESTIVAL

ELLIE SMART

# Thank you to all our appeal supporters

NIALL BENWIEZ/2020VISION



This is our chance to thank you for your **generous donations** and let you know how your contribution is making a real difference to our appeal work

Proceeds from the **Bottlenose Dolphin Appeal** in 2015/16 enabled us to gather sightings records and images to aid photo identification research work, which led to us being able to say we have a distinct inshore resident pod of 28 bottlenose dolphins. But these animals are still under threat and they are not currently afforded the protection they need.



Our **Marine Strandings Appeal** has given us the funding to collect strong evidence that dolphins and porpoises are still being caught in fishing nets. We are actively campaigning and working with government agencies, as well as local fishermen, to put practical solutions in place, but this isn't happening quickly enough.



Our **Protecting Cornwall's Mammals Appeal** provided the funds to coordinate species monitoring on our nature reserves. We have been carrying out significant improvements at Pendarves Wood near Camborne, where rhododendron and laurel had been cleared from large areas and the appeal has enabled us to replant with oak trees, blackthorn and hawthorn. We have also opened-up previously shaded

areas along the streams, and the resident bats will benefit from a predicted increase in their flying insect food source. The appeal also enabled us to survey badgers on our nature reserves, with a view to providing vital baseline data before the vaccination programme.

Our **Nature Reserves Fund**, which is open year-round, continues to receive support for work across our 57 nature reserves. In particular, it has helped to manage the wet heathlands at Helman Tor Nature Reserve where we have seen a record year for marsh fritillary butterflies.

The fund also paid for work at the fantastically diverse Windmill Farm Nature Reserve that recorded another rare dragonfly, the southern migrant hawkler.



We originally planned the 2019 **Badger Vaccination Appeal** to primarily fund badger vaccination on our nature reserves. However, while publicising our vaccination proposals, a group of farmers contacted us wanting to vaccinate on their land in and around St Stephens, in mid-Cornwall. We wanted to support these farmers, so we expanded the appeal to buy equipment to use across the 20 square km area. We are delighted as this has now catalysed a mid-Cornwall farmer-led vaccination project (see page 11), a huge unplanned bonus that could have a far-reaching positive impact. This has been one of our most well-received appeals to date, leading to a wider project on farmland that might encourage other farmers and land managers to follow suit.

If you love Cornwall's wildlife and want to do something to know you've made a difference, please visit our website [cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/support-us/support-our-appeals](http://cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/support-us/support-our-appeals)

# At home with nature

We put a lot of effort into making our gardens wilder, and rightly so. But what about our houses and flats themselves? In a world where the wild places are shrinking, every inch of space we can make for nature is vital.

Whether it's the joyful song of a robin drifting through an open window, or the colourful flash of a peacock butterfly just beyond the glass, it's always a delight to glimpse the wild world just beyond our walls.

But our wildlife is in trouble. Natural habitats are shrinking, becoming fragmented and isolated by roads and other developments. With every tree that is lost, there are fewer natural cavities in which bats and birds can roost and nest. Nature no longer has the space it needs to thrive.

Nature reserves are invaluable, but to keep these protected areas from becoming wild oases in an impoverished landscape, we need to use every single space to help wildlife. Our gardens, streets, road verges and even houses can become part of a wild network, creating vital green corridors and stepping stones that connect larger wild spaces.

Every home, new or old, can play a part. The Wildlife Trusts have a vision for future housing and work with some developers to make new builds as green as possible, with built-in features that complement the habitats around them. But existing homes can do their bit, too. With just a few mostly inexpensive adjustments, we can make our roofs, walls and even windows a little more wildlife-friendly.

From bee bricks and bat and bird boxes that provide safe roosting and nesting spots, to walls blooming with climbing plants, there are lots of great ways to turn the outside of your house into a wildlife sanctuary. The best results will come when they complement the surrounding landscape, so take a look at the habitats around your house and choose the best features for your location – bats are more likely to use a roost close to a hedgerow or line of trees, and birds need to be able to find enough food to feed their hungry chicks.

Together, our homes and gardens take up more space than all of the UK's nature reserves put together. So let's make every inch count!

 Visit our website for handy guides to helping wildlife, from building bat boxes to attracting bees [wildlifetrusts.org/actions](https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions)



## Window-mounted feeders

Even with no garden you can still feed the birds. A window-mounted feeder gives them a helping hand and lets you enjoy their antics from your armchair.

## House martin nest cups

Invite house martins to move in under your eaves with a specially made nest cup. They're especially useful when martins can't find enough mud to build their own.

## Hanging baskets and window boxes

Wildflower-filled hanging baskets and window boxes make the perfect pit stop for passing pollinators.

## Hedgehog holes

Hedgehogs can travel over a mile each night as they forage and look for mates. A 13cm x 13cm hole in your fence helps keep the hedgehog highway open.



**Bat boxes**

By fixing a bat box to your wall you can provide the perfect resting spot for your local bats. It's important to avoid directing any artificial lighting onto the box.

**Swift box**

Modern houses leave little space for swifts to nest, but swift boxes create a home for these summer visitors. Broadcasting a recording of their calls encourages them to move in.

**Green wall**

From a simple climbing plant to a trellis laden with different species, a green wall adds colour to a house, creates vital habitat and helps regulate pollution and rainfall.

**Water butt**

Using less water helps keep our wetlands healthy, so set up a water butt to catch rainfall. You can use the water to clean your car and water your plants.

**Window stickers**

Placing stickers on your windows gives birds a better chance of spotting the glass, reducing the chance of a fatal collision. You can buy them or cut out your own.

**Bee box**

Bee boxes offer nesting space for some species of solitary bee. If you're having work done on your house, you can even fit a built-in bee brick!



**Melissa  
Harrison**

## We're all nature's guardians



How did you first learn to look after nature? Moving to a flat with a garden did it for me. Not only was it the first bit of habitat I felt responsible for, but it also meant that I could get a dog. Going

out on twice-daily walks in all weathers, year after year, broadened my sense of custodianship to take in two urban parks and a common near my house; so as well as feeding my garden birds, planting pots up with nectar-rich species and fitting nestboxes, I found myself discovering which of my local parks' nettle patches always had the most small tortoiseshell caterpillars, where on the common the fox den was, and which hollow trees were hibernacula for bats. Before long, I found that if any of those green spaces had been threatened with development, I would have fought for them tooth and nail; not for the theoretical 'ecosystem services' they provided, but because I loved them and knew them, every inch.

Cultivating a localised sense of custodianship could prove key to preserving and connecting our threatened natural environment – and going by the way people have spoken up for nature recently, from protesting against anti-bird nets to protecting wildflower verges from being mown, I think it's already happening, right across the UK. We all have a 'home patch' we care about, whether it's a single street tree, a garden, park, village green or other open space. Getting to know what happens in it year-in, year-out not only grounds us in nature and the seasons in a way that's proven to have deep physical and psychological benefits, but also makes



us more likely to step in and act when it's threatened: when builders block off the eaves of our local supermarket so returning swallows can't nest, or an avenue of much-loved trees is in danger of being felled.

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the scale of the issues we're dealing with, and helpless in the face of structures so large as to seem unassailable. But caring for a home patch is a win-win thing: not only can you achieve tangible results that benefit nature, but the sense of connection and fulfilment you can derive from protecting local habitats so they remain rich in life is huge.

Imagine if, instead of waiting for someone or something else to turn things around, we did it ourselves: an army of parents and park runners, nature fans and dog-walkers looking after our nearby ponds and hedgerows, verges and bramble thickets and scrappy little woods. We've been taught to think that if we don't own the land, we don't own the problem. But a world rich in wildlife is everyone's right – and everyone's responsibility, too.

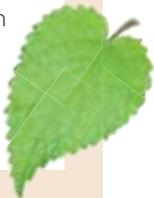


**Show your support** People taking action in the places closest to them is the foundation of the grassroots movement that is The Wildlife Trusts. Join our campaign for a Wilder Future and help nature recover. [wildlifetrusts.org/wilder-future](http://wildlifetrusts.org/wilder-future)

### A LITTLE BIT WILD

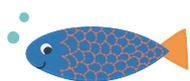
#### Let them grow

Nettles are an important food source for many moths and butterflies, and they make great fertiliser. Leave a patch to grow, if you can, then harvest it for compost just before it sets seed.



**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.

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# Arable plants: Pests or the key for wildlife survival?



Cornwall is home to some of the most significant areas for arable plants in the UK, but these ecological essentials are in rapid decline. **Liz Cox** shares the names and whereabouts of some rare gems and explains how you can help by spotting and recording them.



→

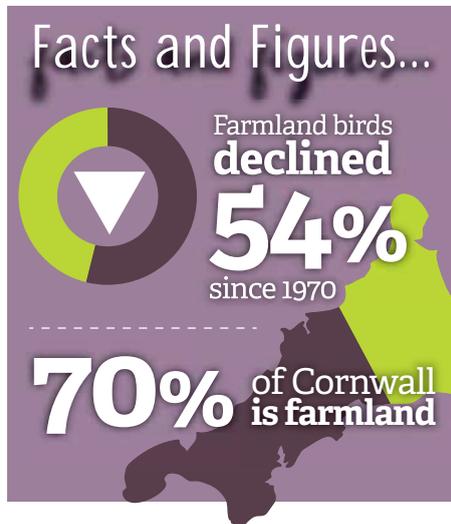
## Arable land is a major part of Cornwall's farming landscape — but when you hear the term arable, what images spring to mind?

Some might picture a romantic vision of scarlet poppies and bright blue cornflowers dotted about a golden field of corn, for others it might conjure up a sterile monoculture with little beneath. Either way, it may surprise you to learn that arable land supports the fastest-declining group of plants in the UK. Even more threatened than the wildflowers growing in our hay meadows or wetlands, arable plants (often referred to as arable weeds) are vital for the survival of farmland wildlife.

Traditionally, arable fields supported a wide range of these 'weeds' such as fluellen, corn marigold and mayweed, which cannot survive without the regular disturbance of cultivation. However, these fascinating and often overlooked plants are now threatened by the arable farming on which they depend for survival. These days, arable fields are sadly far less diverse, as the increased efficiency of modern-day farming – with seed cleaning, more competitive crop varieties, and wider use of herbicides and fertilisers – reduces the chances of these plants taking hold and surviving.

Changes in farming practices have an effect too, such as the move from arable to grassland farming – a trend seen particularly in the South West. Changing from spring to winter-sown crops means that arable plants germinating in spring don't have the opportunity to become established in the first place.

Since these plants are at the bottom of the arable farmland food chain, their decline has serious knock-on effects for wildlife. They're an important food source for insects, and research shows that the amount of insects eaten by farmland birds is highly dependent on the cover and range of arable weeds present.



These plants' seeds are also vital for the winter survival of seed eating-birds like the linnet and yellowhammer – and it's no coincidence that numbers of farmland birds have declined notably in recent decades.

Cornwall has some of the most significant areas for arable plants in the UK, particularly along parts of the coast, with such rarities as broad-fruited cornsalad *Valerianella ramosa*. This inconspicuous relative of lamb's lettuce has tiny lilac flowers and is classified as endangered in the UK. Broad-fruited cornsalad only occurs in a handful of fields across the

country and was thought to be extinct in Cornwall until it was discovered at three sites at the turn of the millennium.

Another rarity with a stronghold in Cornwall is small-flowered catchfly *Silene gallica* (the name catchfly is due to its covering of sticky, insect-ensnaring hairs). A smaller relative of the common red campion, *Silene gallica* is a Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species, restricted to the far West of Cornwall – particularly the Isles of Scilly – and unfortunately also a feature of the endangered list.

Found more frequently in Cornwall, though still vulnerable nationally, the intriguingly named weasel's-snout (so-called because the flower looks like, well, a weasel's snout) is one of the spring-germinating arable weeds threatened by the move towards winter-sown crops.

Another group of arable plants you may see on a farmland walk are the fumitories. The name comes from the French 'fume terre' meaning 'smoke of the earth' due to their greyish leaves and wispy appearance.

Fumitories have unusually shaped flowers ranging from white to pale pinks and purples. Several species of fumitory have a stronghold in the West, including the Nationally Scarce western ramping fumitory, *Fumaria occidentalis*. This species is entirely restricted to Cornwall and doesn't grow anywhere else in the world.

Like many of our arable plants though, it is at risk of changes in arable practices, such as herbicide treatment and habitat loss.



Small-flowered catchfly is another rare arable weed with a stronghold in Cornwall.



Western ramping fumitory is only found in Cornwall.



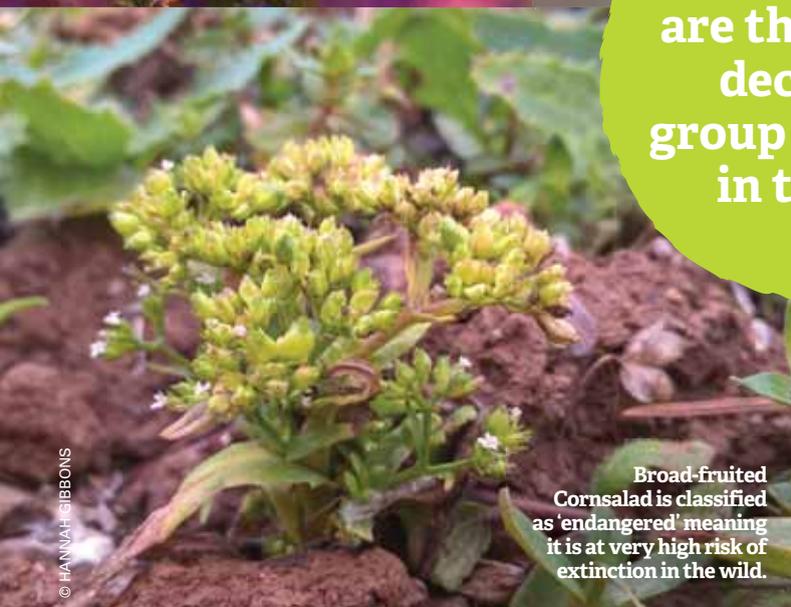
DAVID CHAPMAN

Purple viper's bugloss showing its fuchsia-coloured stamens which look like little snake tongues.



Arable plants provide important food for farmland birds like yellowhammer

MARK HAMBLEN/2020/VISION



© HANNAH GIBBONS

Broad-fruited Cornsalad is classified as 'endangered' meaning it is at very high risk of extinction in the wild.

# Arable Plants are the fastest declining group of plants in the UK



© HANNAH GIBBONS

Arable plants tend to be confined to the edges of fields and often only persist where land managers and farmers chose to make space for them.

Although many arable plants are small and inconspicuous, some species are downright flamboyant. A prime example is purple viper's bugloss, with bright fuchsia-pink stamens poking out like little snakes' tongues from its vibrant purple-blue flowers. Purple viper's bugloss only grows as native in the extreme west of Cornwall near St Just, in a handful of fields managed specifically for arable weeds.

The Red Data Book for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly documents our county's rare species and lists a number of these arable plants in its pages. Some are so rare they are teetering on the brink of extinction, but few arable weed sites have any protection at all. Arable plants tend to be confined to the edges of fields and often only persist where land managers and farmers choose to make space for them, with many farmers simply unaware that their arable fields could support such rarities.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust's ecologists and farm advisers work with farmers right across the county, encouraging them to enhance their farmland for wildlife. Our surveys aim to raise awareness of important wildlife on each farm and we offer free, useful advice – including help getting farms into agri-environment schemes that provide financial support to manage land for wildlife, such as arable weeds.

The Trust is also making links with Plantlife's Colour in the Margins project that works with farmers and landowners to survey and manage rare arable plants. They are searching for suitable reintroduction sites for certain species such as small-flowered catchfly. This summer the Trust will be working with the project to survey arable fields managed for farmland birds at our Windmill Farm reserve on the Lizard.

To find out more about Colour in the Margins including volunteering opportunities to survey arable plants visit: <https://naturebftb.co.uk/the-projects/colour-in-the-margins>

As with all wildlife, records are vital to building a picture of the distribution of arable weeds, which helps inform our conservation work, so do send us your records using the Online Recording Kernow and Isles of Scilly website: [www.ORKS.org.uk](http://www.ORKS.org.uk).

From fumitories to weasel-snout, we want to hear about what you see on your farmland walks.



**Liz Cox** is an ecologist on the Trust's Upstream Thinking project. She loves walking, cycling and climbing and is passionate about getting children outside to experience wildlife.



# St Austell Print Company

**Amanda Moody**, Director of St Austell Print Company (SAPC) shares her passion for Cornwall's wildlife and the importance of making a difference on your local patch.



Trust Marketing Manager Ella Clark welcomes SAPC to the Business Supporter scheme

SAPC

Since 2013, on one of the main routes into St Austell, people have been welcomed to the town by the iconic St Austell Printing Company Factory, which stands proudly overlooking the bay.

Although the factory is a familiar sight, as people drive past they will not always appreciate the story behind the flourishing grounds in which it sits.

When it was looking for a new home, SAPC chose to develop a site full of slag (waste) from the adjacent disused Old Baal China Clay Pit. After the pit closed in the 60s, the future SAPC site was classed as brownfield for nearly forty years, becoming a marshland where nothing grew.

Amanda, SAPC Director and environmental champion explains the vision. "When we developed the site, we didn't want to just construct a building and car park. We wanted to create a space that our staff, visitors and tenants wanted to come to as well as create an environment in which the wildlife could thrive.

“ It's important that we created a work environment that everyone would be proud of. We also wanted to reflect the unique eco-system and nature that surrounds our business park. ”

Plants and flowers include iris, forget-me-nots, geraniums, grasses, oxide daisies, ragged robin and sea buckthorne. Some of the native trees on site include hawthorns and sorbus. SAPC planted natural hedges to surround the site and wildflowers are allowed to germinate and spread naturally.

SAPC worked with fellow Business Supporter, Imerys, on the best species to plant.

"The plants were chosen as they could survive and thrive in the winds and harsh elements that our exposed location sometimes has to endure."

"It was also that they were bee and butterfly friendly. Encouraging more insects to the site attracts more wildlife such as birds. By choosing the plants carefully, we've endeavoured to create a self-sustaining eco-system that's teeming with wildlife."

To that end, SAPC proudly declare that they don't use any chemicals on site and all the gardens are hand-weeded.

As part of the ecology plans for the business park, a wildlife pond has been created to provide opportunities for other wildlife to find a home.



## Species spotted at SAPC

Deer, rabbits, frogs, butterflies, dragonflies and kestrels.



INSET IMAGES: BEN WATKINS, MARK HAMBLEN/2020VISION, GILLIAN DAY, LUKE MASSEY/2020VISION.

JON HAWKINS - SURREY HILLS PHOTOGRAPHY

There are no fish in the pond, but it provides a home for thousands of invertebrates, dragonflies, damson flies, water boatmen, newts, tadpoles and of course frogs. "The great thing about having frogs on site is that we never have any issues with slugs!" Amanda laughed.

As well as being a favourite spot for SAPC staff, tenants from the business park also regularly use the pond and outside space for breaks and meetings.

"Our staff enjoy the outdoor space and we feel it's important to give them the opportunity to get away from the demands that working for a busy company bring"

"We feel that this is a gift not just a to nature, but also to our staff and local community, enabling people to enjoy what was – until very recently – wasteland."



St Austell Printing Company (SAPC) is widely acknowledged as one of Cornwall's sustainability

leaders. The family-run company moved from their town centre location, their home since 1981, to a brand new sustainable factory, which was rated 'excellent' by BREEAM, the world's leading sustainability assessment for buildings.

Featuring its own solar panel array, rainwater harvesting and natural ventilation, it's one of Cornwall's most sustainable factories and was developed alongside a brand new business park and conference centre.

SAPC's ongoing commitment to the environment meant they were recognised as one of the area's most sustainable businesses at last year's Cornwall Sustainability Awards.

SAPC is one of Cornwall Wildlife Trust's Wildlife Partners.

Proud to support **Cornwall Wildlife Trust**



## Building better

We are facing a climate and ecological crisis. We need to create resilient landscapes to withstand the effects of climate change and increase biodiversity.

Our team of ecologists and landscape architects work together to design inspiring environments that are great for people *and* wildlife.

**Invest in nature:** CEC is Cornwall Wildlife Trust's consultancy. We work with developers to help mitigate their impact on the natural world and support the Trust's vision for a *Wilder Cornwall*.

01872 245 510 enquiries@cecenvironment.co.uk [www.cecenvironment.co.uk](http://www.cecenvironment.co.uk)

# A day in the life...

Beth from South West Lakes Trust clearing tree guards at Argal Reservoir with Andrew.

CREDIT FOR ALL STANLEY HESSER



Volunteers are the beating heart of our organisation. We benefit massively from their endeavours and they enjoy a huge amount of satisfaction. This is **Andrew's** 'wild volunteering' experience: he's a volunteer with the Upstream Thinking project and goes out with our Falmouth reservoirs group which is run for us by our partners South West Lakes Trust.

Please allow me to introduce myself. I'm a man with sons and cats...

That's my take on the opening line of a famous song from the Rolling Stones – the same band who claimed they 'can't get no satisfaction'. Well, perhaps they should have tried some voluntary conservation work as members of Upstream Thinking. I did – and found tremendous pleasure and, yes, satisfaction.

An Upstream Thinking day typically starts around 9.45am when we meet, usually on a Thursday, at that day's project venue. My first day was at the Flicka Foundation Donkey Sanctuary where I joined eight volunteers clearing and digging a very weedy patch before spreading wildflower seeds to establish a brand new meadow. Result!

Looking back, I recall that I arrived with very mixed emotions. I was excited at the prospect of some healthy outdoor activity, but also anxious about how well I'd integrate with the other volunteers. As a blind person, I always join groups of sighted people with some trepidation, never being certain of the reaction I'll receive.

In this case my anxiety quickly faded as I discovered that conservation work for Cornwall Wildlife Trust attracts some very friendly and supportive people. Usually, it's rare for people to approach me and introduce themselves but on my first day with Upstream Thinking members of the team went out of their way to come over and have a quick chat. I found their actions really welcoming.



Removing tree guards

Another concern was that I would be put on light duties on the presumption that my visual impairment might prevent me from working

independently or tackling more strenuous activities. I needn't have worried. Beth, our team leader, believed I could have a go at almost anything I wanted and, once we established that I was comfortable and safe, I did the same jobs as all the other volunteers. That really did make me feel valued and that I was making a truly worthwhile contribution.

I've learned that a lot of conservation effort is dedicated to keeping dominant plant species at bay, to give less vigorous plants a chance to survive and even flourish. On one occasion, a group of us scythed and cut back thickets of bramble on a smallholding close to Argal Lake. The area we cleared will allow other grasses to grow and provide a habitat essential for harvest mice to build their nests.



And, it turns out, I've developed a passion for attacking huge swaths of bramble! I love finding a sapling such as oak or ash which is being swamped by brambles or blackthorn bushes and clearing a large patch that will give a young tree the chance to flourish.

Recently we were tasked with removing the protective sleeves that are put around young trees to retain moisture on sunny days and shield them from drying winds and animal damage.

What could be better than keeping fit, enjoying the sights and sounds of the Cornish countryside and doing so in the company of like-minded people?

See what I mean about satisfaction?

Upstream Thinking is a project in collaboration with South West Water.

The 'Wild' volunteer groups carry out hands-on conservation in the three Upstream Thinking catchment areas every Tuesday and Thursday.

If you would like to find out more, please contact David May on [david.may@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:david.may@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk). For other volunteering opportunities with Cornwall Wildlife Trust, check the volunteering page on our website

# The future is everything and so is your legacy

Make a Will for Wildlife – free this October

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## You can help nature thrive for the next generation.

Your legacy will support our wildlife conservation projects in Cornwall, from running wildlife events for children and families, to helping us to buy and manage the land needed to expand our precious Nature Reserves.

## Book your free appointment early

This October, we've joined forces with solicitors throughout Cornwall, making it easy and convenient for you to write or update your Will, for free.

Please do consider contacting any of these solicitors, who have kindly offered their services at no cost for Will for Wildlife month in October. You do not need to be a member of Cornwall Wildlife Trust, but please mention that you are a supporter of our work.

There are a limited number of free Wills available this October, so please book early.

**Camborne – Walters and Barbary**  
Sarah Painter on **01209 712454**  
sarah.painter@waltersbarbary.co.uk

**Helston – Borlase & Co**  
Justyn Thomas on **01326 574988**  
jt@borlase-co.co.uk

**Truro – Carlyon & Son**  
Katrina Granville on **01872 278641**  
katrina.granville@carlyonandson.co.uk

**Truro, Plymouth and home visits  
– McClure Solicitors**  
Hayley Bayfield on **0800 852 1999**  
contactus@mcclure-solicitors.co.uk

**Redruth – Grylls & Paige**  
Mark Heywood on **001209 215261**  
markh@grylls-paige.co.uk

If you would like to speak to somebody at Cornwall Wildlife Trust, please contact **Emma Miller** on **01872 273939**  
[emma.miller@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:emma.miller@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)  
[www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/willforwildlife](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/willforwildlife)



Cornwall  
Wildlife Trust

# Wild Cornwall

2020 charity calendar



Love Cornwall, love its wildlife

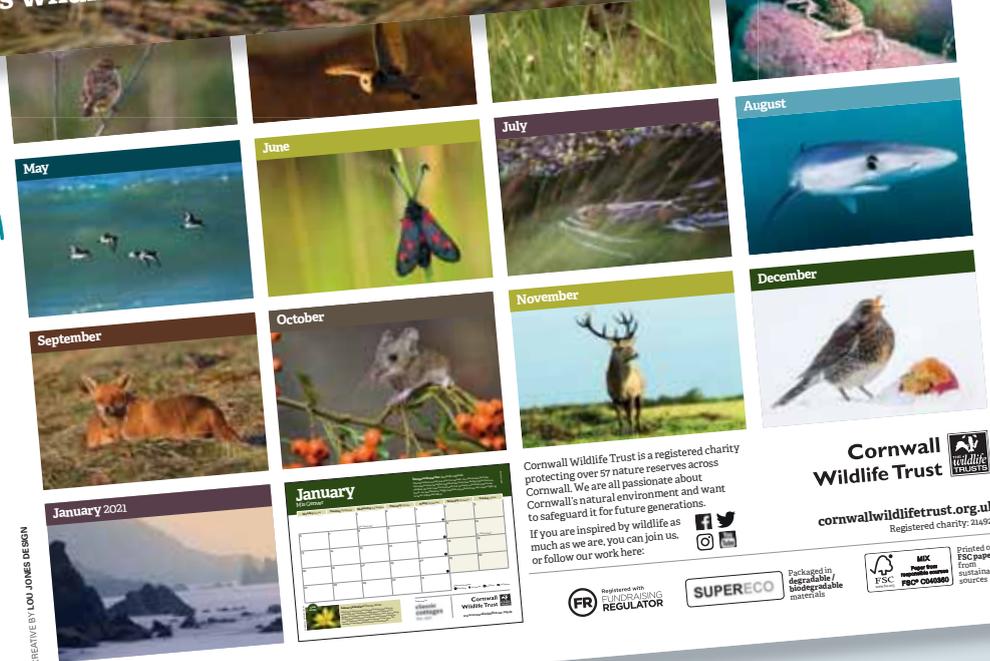
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ADRIAN WOODSON

## We love Cornwall and its wildlife,

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