



THE NATIONAL TRUST



# Nature Conservation Newsletter



Volume 6 Number 1

November 2001

Welcome to the November edition of the Nature Conservation Newsletter. For those of you that I have not already met, spoken to and e-mailed I would just like to say hello and I look forward to speaking to you during the course of the year.

Like Helen Meech and Diana Hill, I am from the University of Bath and am working at Cirencester for a year. During this year one of my projects is to compile and edit the NCN, as well as writing model risk assessments for *extraordinary* biological surveys, helping produce guidelines for sea angling and on lake dredging in designed landscapes - not to mention sheep and goat counting on Cheddar, counting deer (and every other grazing mammal you can think of!) on Lundy and not forgetting the bat and butterfly work!!

Articles in this edition of the NCN range from Bugs to Butterflies, Cowslips to Crickets as well as the regional feature on Yorkshire.

Finally, I would just like to thank everyone who has contributed to the newsletter and also to everybody who has made me feel welcome in my new job.

**Jon Flanders, NCN Editor**

**Deadline for contributions to the next issue: 14/01/02**

Please send all contributions to the Estates Department, or by e-mail to: [NCNeditor@smtp.ntrust.org.uk](mailto:NCNeditor@smtp.ntrust.org.uk)

## Birdwatchers Wanted To Find Rare Crickets

English Nature is calling on the skills of the bird watching community, and anyone else interested, to report any hearings of the endangered mole cricket.

Why appeal to birdwatchers?

Surprisingly, the call of the mole cricket, a peculiar-looking creature some 4.5cm long with a velvety-haired body and

spade-like front legs, is almost identical to that of the nightjar. David Sheppard from English Nature explains: "We are worried that the mole cricket may be going extinct. However, because it is either underground or out at night it is rarely seen, but it is quite unmistakable. This is where the birdwatchers come in. Its call is very similar to the nightjar's and if someone hears what they think is a nightjar in an unusual place, it could be a mole cricket and we want to know."

You can hear recordings of both the mole cricket and the nightjar at:

[www.english-nature.org.uk/MPS/molecricket.mp3](http://www.english-nature.org.uk/MPS/molecricket.mp3)

and [www.english-nature.org.uk/MPS/nightjar.mp3](http://www.english-nature.org.uk/MPS/nightjar.mp3)

### Mole Cricket sightings should be reported to:

**Emily Funnell**, Biodiversity Co-ordinator - Invertebrates, UK Biodiversity Programme, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD. Email: [E.Funnell@nhm.ac.uk](mailto:E.Funnell@nhm.ac.uk).

**Bryan Pinchen**, Co-ordinator, Mole Cricket Working Group, 7 Brookland Close, Pennington, Lympington, Hampshire, S041 8JE Email: [forficula@lineone.net](mailto:forficula@lineone.net)

It is important to include information about the circumstances of the discovery, time of year, location of sighting, habitat present and what has happened to the insect now. For more information contact English Nature's National Press Office on 01733 455190, email [press@english-nature.org.uk](mailto:press@english-nature.org.uk) or visit [www.english-nature.org.uk](http://www.english-nature.org.uk).

## Scotney – A Warden's View

Nathalie Muller, Warden, Scotney Estate, Kent.

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I have been working at Scotney for a few months and am only now beginning to get a 'feel' for the property. I was delighted to meet Janet Lister and Keith Alexander from the biological survey team, who came to Scotney in May. They invited gardeners and wardens from all over the region to attend a Phase I habitat survey at Scotney Castle garden and estate. During the course of the day we walked through the buffer zone on the meadows in the Site of Specific Scientific

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Interest (SSSI). The buffer zone, which was created for foot and mouth precautions, had a reasonable selection of wild flowers and even had two green-winged orchids which were thought to have disappeared from the meadows. Had there been sheep grazing, we would have missed them! We also saw a lot of adder's tongue, which is a native fern found on damp grassland, and is not a common plant.

Janet and Keith's visit to Scotney made us realise that there is much room for improvement in nature conservation management on the Scotney estate. Do we reduce the stocking rates? Introduce cattle which create a different sward structure? Or even rest some of the meadows at different times of the year? These are just a few of the points which will need to be considered by all those involved with the management of the estate.

**Leading Partners Of Biodiversity Conservation: Cornish Wild Asparagus**

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As previously mentioned in the last edition of the newsletter (Vol. 5 No.4) a wild asparagus survey was carried out in Cornwall in June 2001. This survey assessed the population sizes and sex ratios at different Cornish sites as part of a joint project between the National Trust and the Botanical Society of the British Isles. The report is now complete and the number of plants found and where is given below:

<b>SITE</b> (Bold = Part NT owned)	<b>No. Plants 1999-2001</b>
<b>Asparagus Island</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Asparagus Ravine</b>	<b>177</b>
<b>Carn Barrow</b>	<b>1</b>
Darvis Point	2
Dinas Head	17
<b>Enys Head</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Enys Head – Asparagus Ravine</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>George's Cove</b>	<b>c. 40</b>
<b>Kynance Cliff</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Lawarnick Pit</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Lizard Lighthouse Area</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Lower Predannack Cliffs</b>	<b>Few</b>
<b>Pen Olver</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Pol Cornick</b>	<b>Few</b>
<b>Rill Cove</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Rill Cove – The Horse</b>	<b>398</b>
Rocky Valley	5
<b>South of Cadwith</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Vessacks</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Tubby's Head</b>	<b>220</b>
<b>West of Asparagus Ravine</b>	<b>5</b>
Total number of plants counted during survey – 1109	

The results highlight how much of this plant occurs on Trust land and will be used to determine how best to progress conservation work for this rare species. Particular effort will probably be made on those sites where numbers are less than 10 plants. Future progress reports will be written in the newsletter as and when appropriate.

**The State of Britain's Butterflies**



Butterflies are valuable indicators of the impact of environmental changes upon our countryside quality and characteristic biodiversity. *The Butterflies for the New Millennium* (BNM) project completed the largest and most comprehensive survey of butterflies in Britain and Ireland between 1995 – 1999. This atlas is summarised in a free A4 colour report entitled 'The State of Britain's Butterflies'. Ten thousand people took part in the four-year survey, contributing over 1.5 million records to the database covering 99% of the 10km grid squares in Britain. Our own data base was updated and fed into the system. By comparing this data with records from the previous national survey (1970-82) and historical data dating back to 1800, this project was able to assess the relative abundance of Britain's butterflies over two centuries.

Since the Nineteenth Century, five of the 59 resident species in this country have become extinct, with more than half (mostly habitat specialists) undergoing serious declines in their distribution. However, fifteen species (mostly wider countryside species) have expanded their range by over 20% - this is thought to be due to global warming and the changing climate. This report shows a biodiversity gradient existing across the country, with more species occurring in the south and east.

Species decline is normally put down to the intensification of agriculture and forestry. Since the 1940's, 97% of lowland flower-rich grasslands have been lost, together with 80% of chalk and limestone grasslands and 50% ancient woodland. However, changes in land management and livestock farming has left key habitats being abandoned in the lowlands and heavily grazed in the uplands. This has also led to fragmentation and isolation of the remaining habitats. Small butterfly colonies are more prone to extinction, with their habitats less likely to be colonised.

A major reform of the Common Agriculture Policy is needed to reverse the decline of common, as well as rarer species. Farm support should be conditional on the maintenance of existing wildlife and landscape features, and agri-environment schemes must be expanded to encourage suitable management and restoration of habitats throughout the countryside.

Conserving butterflies and their habitats is a huge task, and undoubtedly a difficult one. Hopefully, the information produced in this report will give more power to the Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) to be used as a tool in the conservation of threatened species and habitats.

Copies of 'The State of Britain's Butterflies' can be obtained from; Butterfly Conservation, Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset. BH20 5QP. Tel: 01929 400209 E-mail: [info@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:info@butterfly-conservation.org) The Nature Conservation Section has a limited supply which is gradually being given out to countryside staff. Further publications can also be seen on the Butterfly Conservation Web-site: [www.butterfly-conservation.org.uk](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org.uk).

## Abergwesyn's Upland Habitats – Condition Assessment And Long Term Monitoring.

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Abergwesyn is a big place - 20 miles from East to West and a total of 6677.55 hectares of remote upland common dominated by purple moor grass, mat grass and heath rush. It does however support significant areas of blanket mire and an adjoining even bigger tract of land owned by the Elan Estate to the north supports important upland bird communities. The National Trust acquired Abergwesyn Common in 1984 primarily for its great landscape importance. It is grazed predominantly by sheep and a limited number of cattle.

This site has great nature conservation potential. However, we needed to make an assessment of its key biological features and how we might monitor these in the long term. A project brief was drawn up and our objectives were as follows:

1. Collate all existing biological data that related to the National Trust owned land.
2. Evaluate the existing biological data to identify a list of key biological features to be resurveyed and/or monitored. This evaluation would also include a presentation of rationales for identifying the key features.
3. For the list of key features identified, request recommendations of methods for measuring the present state of quality/condition, change in the quality/condition and the extent of the identifiable features.
4. Carry out a trial run of a selection of proposed methodologies, agreed at stage three to test their validity and how easily the methodology can be implemented.

We have engaged Penny Anderson Associates with this project. Stage one is well under way. Foot and mouth has restricted access to the common to begin stages two and three. However, we hope to get field visits in to verify the existing data using aerial photographs (use of which has been kindly granted by the National Remote Sensing Centre via Countryside Council for Wales). We will be working in close partnership with CCW and hopefully take the project further through working with the Elan Estate.

We will be looking at using and developing the new condition assessment methodology for monitoring quality of habitat, and then information from aerial photographs for assessing extent.

The assessment of blanket mire will be a priority. The UK Habitat Action Plan for blanket mire sets high targets for protection and restoration. We have a key role to play in this.

This project is primarily focussed on how we can monitor these huge areas of upland common. However, along side this is the need to work closely with the graziers, our neighbours on the Elan Estate, CCW (with the provision of expertise and funding through Tir Gofal) and also the Environment Agency. This will be the start I hope of a new partnership in managing this upland area.

### The Cowslip Count



Plantlife: [www.plantlife.org.uk](http://www.plantlife.org.uk)

PLANTLIFE

In Neolithic times cowslips were found in the sunny conditions provided by open glades and woodland edges. With the onset of farming and grazing livestock the species progressed into the open landscape and became a familiar sight in the British landscape. More recently, over the past 50 years or so, with the onset of intensive farming and selective grazing the cowslip is thought to have decreased by as much as 97%.

In order to get a better understanding of this decline the conservation charity 'Plantlife' organised a Cowslip Count in 2000, to which NT members were invited to contribute. The results of this count are summarised in a A4 colour report entitled 'The Cowslip Count'. The count attracted 673 volunteers who provided a total of 2167 records. The majority of the results were from the South and Yorkshire, but it is unclear if this was due to greater populations of cowslip, or simply due to public enthusiasm in the different regions.

This count revealed that:

- Grasslands are the most important habitat for cowslips, with hedgerows also playing an important part.
- In 'traditional grassland sites' the numbers of cowslip are very healthy, especially in areas of chalk and limestone.
- These sites have reduced in size and quality over the past 10 years.
- Artificial habitats such as motorway verges have become important for the cowslip.

So does the cowslip still have a future? Well yes, and no... Although cowslips are now more widespread, with their numbers in some places still remaining very healthy, there is still cause for concern. Cowslips now grow in more 'marginal' habitats, such as road verges, but, as shown by the government sponsored 'Countryside Survey' there was a 19% decrease in the area of calcareous grassland and a 8% decrease in plant diversity in meadows, key natural habitats for the cowslip, between 1990 and 1998.

The good news is that with good management and less use of agricultural chemicals the cowslip habitat can be restored; so once again we can see this plant returning to the countryside.

For further information of this report contact: Plantlife Bookstore Summerfield Books, Main Street, Brough, Cumbria. CA17 4AX. Tel: 01768 341577.

## Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire – An Ecological Survey

Andy Foster, Invertebrate Ecologist, Cirencester.  
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A recently commissioned ecological survey of the built structures at Fountains Abbey, Mill and Hall was carried out in order to locate and evaluate associated ecological interests, which could then be taken into account when planning future restoration works. The survey, undertaken by Entotax Consultants (U.K.), identified a wide variety of lichens, mosses, liverworts, vascular plants and invertebrates inhabiting the old walls etc., many of which are most frequently associated with rock crevices and other open habitats in the natural environment. The work also pinpointed areas supporting significant species which may be sensitive to restoration works.

The bryophyte flora included seventy two species with the scarce moss *Rhynchostegium megapolitanum* recorded for the first time in Yorkshire, and vascular plants included locally scarce species such as fine-leaved sandwort and hawkweed oxtongue. Although the invertebrate fauna overall proved rather unremarkable nine species with localised distributions nationally were identified, including the woodlouse *Haplophthalmus mengei* and the jumping spider *Euophrys lanigera*.

## The Breeds Profiles Handbook

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This is now out, at last, but please don't order it! Save yourself £15. As the Trust was one of the main sources of funding for the project we are entitled to a fair number of free copies. The aim is to distribute, via Cirencester and the regional offices, free copies to all main countryside staff work bases where grazing is an issue. Copies will also be sent to regional offices (Regional Land Agents) and, where based elsewhere, Farm & Conservation Officers.

The Grazing Animals Project's Breed Profiles Handbook is a succinct reference document on the use of different breeds of cattle, sheep, equines, goat and pig in habitat management for nature conservation. Basic information is given in a standardised manner. Individual profiles are offered for 20 breeds of cattle (plus Asian Water Buffalo), 8 equine breeds and 26 breeds of sheep. Goats and pigs are tackled generically. Information applicable at species level is contained in introductory pages. The publication should be of particular use to site managers wishing to assess locally-available breeds. The individual profiles contain details of wildlife sites where the breeds are in use, together with names and contact numbers. Trust properties and staff figure prominently in these details. Phones will ring.

Note that the information is strongly anecdotal in origin and the handbook does not pretend to be a definitive text book on the potential roles in nature conservation of the UK's 40-odd cattle breeds, 72 sheep breeds and 16 equine breeds, etc.

Also, it does not tell you which breeds to use or avoid. I strongly suspect that, as with the Lowland Grassland Management Handbook, a second edition will be necessary. Enjoy it, but take it with a pinch of salt!

There are some useful appendices, including GAP's detailed Guide to Animal Welfare in Nature Conservation Grazing. This welfare guide is structured around the concept of The Five Freedoms and the Risk Assessment process. It should be of use to a great many countryside staff, not just those with their own stock.

Any queries, together with adulation, approbation, commendation, glorification, laudation and libations should be directed towards me. Criticisms, problems and other nasties should be directed towards my co-editor, Sandie Tolhurst of GAP on [grazinganimalsproject@dial.pipex.com](mailto:grazinganimalsproject@dial.pipex.com).

## A Future For Bats & BAPs Within The Trust

David Bullock, Nature Conservation Advisor, Cirencester.  
Tel: 01285 884705 E-mail: [xeadjb@smtplib.org.uk](mailto:xeadjb@smtplib.org.uk)

We are delighted to announce two new appointments:

**Bat Conservation Officer: Phil Richardson**, who recently retired as a teacher, and also stepped down as President of the Bat Conservation Trust, will join us part time for a year. Phil's main job will be to take the lead in dealing with the increasing number of bat enquiries that come to the Estates Department. He will also revise both the NT Bat Pack and our Bat Database. Phil is one of the most experienced bat workers in the country. He kick-started both the County Bat Groups system and the Bat Conservation Trust. Equally important, he's shown hundreds of others how to work with bats. He is pragmatic, reasonable and a good communicator/trainer. Phil is hoping to visit each (new) region over the coming year with the specific aim of setting up regional bat contacts. Phil will be starting on the 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Biodiversity Officer:** For some time now we have been aware that the Trust's potential to contributing to the biodiversity process is not being realised. In the past the Trust has not been considered an appropriate 'environmental' charity to join other government and NGO working groups (like Biodiversity Challenge). The position of Biodiversity Officer should fill this and many other gaps. We are therefore looking forward to being joined by **Joanne Hodgkins**. Joanne will be with us for three years to act as the point of contact for a range of biodiversity issues. She will co-ordinate, develop and publicise the Trust's contribution to the UKBAP, Natura 2000 and National Biodiversity Network processes. Of particular concern to the Trust is our lack of engagement with Local Biodiversity Action Plans. Co-ordinating the Trust's contribution to LBAPs will be a priority. Joanne is currently an Environmental Records Officer for Buckinghamshire County Museum, responsible for managing its Environmental Records Centre. She has a broad based

interest in natural history and lots of experience with biological recording. We look forward to Joanne joining the Nature Conservation Section in late November/ early December.

This post is half funded by English Nature.

### WHITE-CLAWED CRAYFISH SURVEY AT KEDLESTON

Andy Foster, Invertebrate Ecologist, Cirencester.  
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Repair works to a weir between the middle and lower lakes at Kedleston were undertaken in September 2000. EMEC Ecology were commissioned to translocate crayfish from the weir pool area, and following the works to investigate whether the crayfish survived at their transfer sites and successfully recolonised the weir pool.

Under licence from English Nature over 900 individuals were transferred from the drained sections of the lake (between temporary bunds) near the weir to remaining lakeside habitats above and below the weir. Six months later only twenty crayfish were found, all restricted to an area just above the repaired weir, though four individuals were juveniles suggesting that a breeding population survives. There is no evidence that the translocated crayfish stayed in other areas of the lakes where much of the habitat was unsuitable due to high levels of sedimentation, extensive growths of filamentous algae, and a lack of suitable refugia such as loose rubble and tree roots where the crayfish shelter.

It is probably too early for the crayfish to have recolonised the weir pool, but EMEC Ecology regard the addition of rubble in sufficient quantity, so that it does not get covered in silt, as likely to aid their recolonisation and survival.

### The National Trust's Management of Trees and Woodlands

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Foot and Mouth-induced imprisonment in the office has had one good outcome: David Russell has produced a package of information, policy and guidance on Trees and Woodlands. The package includes the overall Forestry Policy, a new leaflet for general readers and 15 guidance sheets on different topics. Another 12 guidance sheets are due. The package is available through a nominated contact in each Regional office; it is intended that each property will have a set. They are not yet available on the web site but they hopefully will be.

Here are just a few of the nature conservation implications of the various parts of the package.

# The Forestry Policy continues to have a strong emphasis on nature conservation. Environmental protection

is a main priority, including the contribution of woods to the protection of soils and water catchments.

# 'Natural processes' or woods which are 'lightly managed' are emphasised. Minimum intervention management will apply to most semi-natural woods, excluding coppices. Grazing animals including cattle may be an essential factor in sustaining dynamic woodland ecosystems ( a guidance sheet specifically on Grazing in Woods is due next year).

# New woods should be established on agricultural land where they would contribute to biodiversity conservation, environmental protection (eg flood storage and water quality protection on flood plains) and social benefit, eg recreation.

# Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites are being 'steadily diversified' by the selective removal of trees which are damaging conservation interests, but introduced trees will be protected where they make a positive contribution to conservation. Plantations when felled will not be replaced. Unwanted shade-tolerant low-value conifers should be removed as soon as practicable.

# Old trees, decay and dead wood are valued and protected; the process of decay should be left to run its course; keep cultivation, livestock feeding, cars, forestry and construction equipment well away from old trees (all trees hopefully).

# Climate change and tree planting – carbon sequestration in trees is not a realistic solution to global warming, given that it would take an area twice the size of the UK to sequester all the UK carbon emissions, and that some soils hold much more carbon than vegetation, so the protection of soils (rather than disturbing it for tree planting) is critical.

### BUGS AND BEETLES RULE – OVER ACCESS !

Andy Mayled, Property Manager, Sherborne Estate & the North Cotswolds. Tel: 01451 844257  
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Crickley Hill is a Country Park jointly owned and managed by The National Trust and Gloucestershire County Council. It lies on the Cotswold escarpment overlooking Gloucester and the Malvern Hills and attracts 230,000 visitors a year, many of whom are unaware that the whole site is a SSSI (*Designated 1986*). It contains some of the best unimproved limestone grassland in the county, a rich woodland fauna mainly confined to ancient beech trees, and very diverse fungi.

The Cotswold Way has run through the property since its conception and combines open walking with stunning views for the hundreds of thousands that walk it each year. On one particular area owned by the Trust the path runs through and under a small area of ancient beech. Not only are they some of the oldest in Gloucestershire but they contain Red Data Book species of dead wood invertebrates, such as *Ptenidium gressneri* and *Oligota apicata*. The dead-wood beetle fauna has been assessed as being of Regional (South West England) importance. (*NT Biological Survey 1998*).

The Biological Survey team first identified their importance in 1985 when the property came to the Trust. Initial safety and clearance work accounted for several trees and the subsequent tidying up removed much of the timber. If you combine this with millions of feet compacting and eroding the ground under the beech, they really were surviving on borrowed time. Management was always to favour the trees and to allow natural processes of decay and die-back, but all the time keeping an eye on dangerous limbs, the balance was virtually impossible to manage. Some areas had been fenced to allow natural regeneration of the beech and this compounded the problem even further as it restricted the areas of access.

In the late 1990's it was announced that the Cotswold Way would be one of the last long distance footpaths to be dedicated as a National Trail and it was hoped to keep the route virtually unaltered. Patchy consultation started and the proposed route was approved by the Secretary of State ready for the dedication process to begin.

It was then thanks to the County Council staff at Crickley Hill and our own Trust Warden (Martin Jones) that we flagged up real concerns about this particular section of path being dedicated. It would have totally compromised our position of managing the very things we are charged with protecting. It also happened to coincide with CRoW and so English Nature was involved over concerns that the SSSI status would be affected. Keith Alexander – Head of the NT Biological Survey Team prepared the Trust's case and representations were submitted to the National Trail office in Gloucester. The National Trail staff were supportive and sympathetic to our well argued case and - with us offering alternatives - decided there was a case for moving the National Trail away from the trees, which also meant off Trust property.

The case was based purely on the biological importance of the site backed up by its SSSI status. The dedication of the route would have prevented the Trust from carrying out its legal obligation of permanent protection. It's also worth saying that the members resolution on ancient trees at last years AGM was used as part of our case. We can now manage the site effectively and in line with the recommendations of the Biological Survey team and English Nature.

This whole issue was a real joint effort between the Trust, the County Council, English Nature and the Cotswold Way National Trail Office. Many of us will probably never see the little creatures that finally swung this decision, and who said they aren't important!

### **GORSE CONTROL – EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES**

Lucy Cordrey, Assistant to Nature Conservation Advisors, Cirencester. Tel: (01285) 884757  
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In the last issue of NCN (*Volume 5 Number 4*) Diana Hill summarised the latest report by JNCC on the nature

conservation value of scrub in Britain. She highlighted the report identifies a need for research into the effectiveness of differing procedures for scrub management, including its maintenance and control. This is where you come in. Please could you let me know what method or combination of methods do you use to control **gorse**?

1. Mechanical control?
2. Mechanical and grazing (what species?)
3. Chemical (herbicide) control?
4. Which methods do you find most effective/ have the most impact?

I look forward to hearing from you either by phone or email.

### **Interact with EUROSITE!**

The National Trust is a member of EUROSITE (a large network of organisations who manage Europe's natural heritage) and now has access to the EUROSITE Intranet. This Intranet can be used to share ideas experiences, provide mutual support and gives a European dimension to nature conservation.

There are already forums discussing management planning, foot-and-mouth disease, site management problems, grassland management, partnerships with farmers and many other subjects as decided by the members.

You can download the EUROSITE Management Planning Toolkit or the latest workshop reports, consult the latest news *EUROSITE*, explore the latest funding and job opportunities and check out the calendar of events for site managers.....i.e. you can interact with EUROSITE!

This virtual meeting room can also be made available to members to host discussion groups or mini-workshops. In future it will be used to complement real workshops to enhance information exchange before and after meetings.

To obtain access:

- Log onto the EUROSITE website: <http://www.eurosite-nature.org>
- Choose your language (how's your French?)
- In the menu on the next page, click on the item "Intranet".
- Enter your ID and Password - any one of the following:

ID: nt1 and password: 2736 ID: nt2 and password: 2747  
ID: nt3 and password: 2758 ID: nt4 and password 2769  
ID: nt5 and password 2770

For further information contact:

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Yorkshire is world-renowned for the beauty and scale of its scenery. Many of the county's most outstanding stretches of coast and countryside are in the care of the National Trust, and are managed carefully to ensure their future protection. I would like to thank Bob Dicker (Property Manager, Bransdale ) for compiling these articles for this feature. During a year hindered by Foot & Mouth and the disruptions of the Organisational Review I am grateful to Bob and colleagues for spending time helping with this feature.

**Bransdale Conservation Scheme**

Bob Dicker, Property Manager, Bransdale, North Yorkshire Moors. Tel: 01751 431693  
E-mail: [yymrwd@smt.ntrust.org.uk](mailto:yymrwd@smt.ntrust.org.uk)

The Bransdale estate is approximately 800 hectares in the heart of the North York Moors National Park. The estate is primarily agricultural with eleven farming tenants, and a further ten non-agricultural tenants.

As with most upland farming, the local agricultural economy is in a poor way. There has been an increasing need for tenants to work "out of the Dale" in order to supplement farm incomes. One or two tenants have taken up Countryside Stewardship but on the whole, take up of such initiatives has been low.

None of this is new of course to those staff working closely with farmers, and the Trust continues to look for new ways of supporting the economy of such areas.

One such initiative is the Bransdale Conservation Scheme. Joint funded by the Trust and the North York Moors National Park Authority, farm tenants are paid to carry out a range of works for which we on the estate do not have resources or where "farming" is the most appropriate way of achieving the objective. Such work includes repair and maintenance of dry-stone walls – a key landscape feature of the Dale, tree and hedge planting, footpath maintenance and management of key habitats such as hay meadows. The scheme is voluntary and we are pleased that all but one of our tenants have taken up the opportunity to date. Standards of work are monitored by Trust and

National Park staff, to ensure good value for money. The overall effect of this scheme on the community is to provide additional opportunities for income for our tenants while keeping the money "in the Dale".

We are now at the end of our first year and have had few teething problems. While such a scheme may not work everywhere, it is a good example of horses for courses where initiatives, rather than always being generated from the top, are shaped to local needs.

**Sexual segregation and differential habitat use by Daubenton's bats (*Myotis daubentonii*) in Wharfedale**

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Recent work on Daubenton's bats in Upper Wharfedale funded by The National Trust and The Environment Agency has revealed an unusual population structure. There appears to be marked sexual segregation, with females occupying the lower reaches of the river, while the upper reaches are populated exclusively by males. Daubenton's bat is heavily reliant on river systems for foraging and the question is why females do not use the upper reaches, since as male density is high, prey is expected to be abundant? The hypothesis is that the mean prey abundance at higher altitudes is the same as that at lower altitudes, but that due to more marked temperature variations, prey are temporally clustered. Males, which can use torpor (a form of temporary hibernation) during periods of low prey availability, can exploit this resource, while pregnant or lactating females are effectively excluded since the use of torpor would slow foetus or offspring development.

In order to assess the reasons behind sexual segregation, it was important to first determine where the bats and insects were and how this varied with elevation. In 1999, as part of my Ph.D., with the use of bat detectors and sweep nets to catch insects, I sampled four sites along the Wharfe at Burnsall, Grassington, Starbotten and Yockenthwaite. At these sites I looked at the foraging and prey distribution of Daubenton's bats and pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) along the Wharfe gradient, in relation to variables such as temperature, wind, water surface state and the presence or absence of bank-side trees. Bat activity was significantly higher in river sections with trees on either one or both banks. Bats avoided cluttered and rapid water, preferring smoother sections. Conversely, insect abundance was not related to water surface condition or the presence or absence

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of trees. Nematoceran Dipterans made up the 98% of the insect numbers, with small numbers of Brachycerans and Cyclorrhaphans. The most predominant families were Chironomidae and Ceratopogonidae. The orders Ephemeroptera, Hemiptera, Hymenoptera, Plecoptera and Trichoptera were also present in reduced numbers.

The conclusions from this research comply so far with our original hypothesis. Bats may have been selecting for trees for several reasons. First and foremost as a predator (e.g. tawny owls) avoidance mechanism, but also to use trees to rest and eat prey between foraging excursions. The avoidance of cluttered water areas and rapids may be for two reasons. It has been suggested that the high level of ultrasonic noise generated by fast flowing water, such as rapids, may interfere with bats' orientation by echolocation. This may result in localised bat activity over calm water. Furthermore, clutter is an obstacle to flight and produces extraneous background echoes that must be distinguished from prey echoes. It may also be more energetically costly, in terms of flight, for bats to weave around obstacles in the water, when long smooth uncluttered stretches are readily available (such as at Burnsall and large areas of Grassington). The reaches of the Wharfe have less suitable foraging habitat and bat densities are also lower at Yockenthwaite than at Burnsall.

I am still in the process of analysing of the 2000 data, but preliminary results show that it is indeed on average 1°C colder at Yockenthwaite and Hubberholme than at Burnsall and Grassington, and the temperature is more stable lower down than higher up. Insects are in more constant supply lower than higher up. These factors are of prime importance for females with young.

Sadly, the current Foot and Mouth epidemic have thwarted future work in Wharfedale. However, the fieldwork there has given me a very good idea on how to construct conservation guidelines important for these species that can be applied elsewhere.

### Dinosaur footprints on the Yorkshire Coast

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Following a phone call from Dr Phil Manning of the Yorkshire Museum, I visited a National Trust site on the Yorkshire Coast North of Whitby to be shown an important fossil. The site was a moonscape of fallen rocks – one of the biggest landslips in recent years involving thousands of tons of sandstone. After half an hour of walking

and scrambling, we arrived at the edge of the landslip approximately 30 metres above sea level.

When sat down to rest Phil said, "Well, what do you think?" I was shocked to discover that the rock I was sitting on contained over a dozen separate dinosaur trails including marks made by a dinosaur's tail being dragged through the Jurassic mud 150 million years ago.

English Nature provided funding for a weekend of work for a team of experts assisted by National Trust warden Richard Hodgson. A fossil measuring 5 x 1 metres has been carefully sliced off the rock and taken to the safety of the Yorkshire Museum in York for scientific analysis and display to the public. It will yield further information on dinosaur behaviour and movement.

Subsequently to this discovery, another local geologist Richard Myerscough was able to show me different dinosaur prints at Hayburn Wyke, 8km north of Scarborough.

### Dinosaurs at Hayburn Wyke.

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As you stand on the beach at Hayburn Wyke on a cold February day it is difficult to imagine that some 175 million years ago there was a **Jurassic tropical deltaic swamp** here! **Yes this is the real Jurassic Park!**

The record of this tropical delta lies in the rocks around you and within these rocks we find the record of **Dinosaurs** as they pass through their space in time and into extinction.

The main feature of Hayburn Wyke is the prominent waterfall over which the local stream noisily falls. The waterfall is formed by a very hard and resistant bed of **sandstone** formed by sand banks laid down by **channels** flowing through the delta. Below the waterfall are softer more **mud rich shales** containing fragments of plants brought to their final resting place by gentle currents within the delta. The plants from the **Hayburn Wyke Plant Bed** include fragments of **Cycads, primitive Pines, Ginkgoes Ferns and Horsetails**. All of these were food for the Dinosaurs that cropped the groves of plants that grew in great profusion in the tropical swamp.

Deltas are dynamic places with sediments being laid down by frequent flooding of the channels and on occasion by the sea. Within Hayburn Wyke there are rocks that indicate the invasion of the delta by the sea. The rocks contain marine fossils and even "fossil" **ripple marks** similar to those found on a modern beach today. These rocks are known as the **Eller Beck Beds**.

**But what about the Dinosaurs?**

We now know more about these ancient reptiles and the Yorkshire coast rivals North America for its **trackways**, but only a few isolated **bones** have been found.

Once again we need to imagine a tropical swamp with areas of sand and mud separating groves of Horsetails and Ferns. On higher and drier areas of the delta grew stands of Ginkgoales and Pines. The air was full of flying insects, such as **Dragonflies** and probably flying reptiles. The river channels supported shoals of fish which were food for **Turtles** and **Marine Crocodiles**. Across the mud flats a herd of large **Sauropods** leave behind their footprints in the mud which then dries under the sun, to produce **sun cracks**. Further flooding by the channels has preserved the prints either on the surface or as a natural cast below the rock above. Small bipedal **Theropod** dinosaurs run around the herd leaving their three toed prints in amongst the large prints of the **Sauropods**. By measuring these prints we can calculate the size and speed of the Dinosaurs.

**But where are the Dinosaurs?**

We know now that on death a Dinosaur's large body is quickly scavenged. The carcass is swept away in the channels and this soon separates out the individual bones, which are rare. We have yet to find the famous Dinosaur Graveyards of North America, but we now know that footprints represent the life of Dinosaurs, while skeletons tell us about the death of Dinosaurs. So next time you stand on the beach at Hayburn Wyke it will never be the same again!

**New Tenancy Opportunity.**

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**L**ow Pasture Farm, which forms part of the Bridestones Estate has been subject to intensive beef and arable production since the mid 1960's when much of the moorland on the site was "reclaimed" in the name of food production. A succession tenancy has meant that any conservation, landscape or environmental improvements since that time have had to be negotiated through conservation clauses in the tenancy and a large amount of management time has resulted in slow and piecemeal improvements.

Earlier this year the tenant at Low Pasture announced his intention to quit the farm, and, with such opportunities arising only infrequently, we are very pleased to be given the opportunity to set up a new tenancy based on those principles about which we have spoken for so long.

The potential for the farm is tremendous with the possibility of "restoration" of moorland/upland grassland vegetation thus taking the adjacent and isolated Bridestones Nature Reserve one step closer to reuniting with the main North York Moors moorland block, a long-term objective in the site management plan. Part of this process may require planting barley as a "nutrient sponge", soaking up residual nutrient from the soil. If this cereal is spring sown, winter stubbles would provide an important winter food source for farmland birds, the serious decline of which we hear so much about.

Another management objective of the new tenancy will be an overall reduction of inputs, reducing nutrient run-off and threats downstream, particularly where this will affect the Bridestones Nature Reserve, an SSSI site.

This is a wonderful opportunity but (and it is a big but) we have to provide a framework which is workable to an incoming tenant. It is easy to talk of sustainability and integrated farming - we now have the challenge of making it work. Much will need to be done working with the new tenant so that there is mutual understanding of and sympathy for one another's objectives. Similarly the Trust and tenant will need to work together making use of initiatives such as Countryside Stewardship or benefits from other partnerships. These principles are already established in the Trust (see Agricultural Policy 2000 and Farming Forward), all we need now is to do it! Watch this space!

**Bats At The Craggs**

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**A**ware that we have a number of bat species at the Craggs, wardening staff were keen to improve their knowledge and commissioned a survey of the property. The aim was to identify which species are present, to locate some of the roost sites and to conduct a baseline survey of bat activity on the millponds, prior to renovation work at Gibson Mill.

Funding was sort and approved from the Estates Department to pay a specialist bat surveyor Geoffrey Billington to work on between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> August. John Altringham, Professor of Biomechanics at Leeds University, and some of his PhD and MSc students also joined us, keen to carry out field work where they could, due to limited access elsewhere during the summer. They made numerous visits to the Craggs through out the summer setting up harp traps, mist nets and night

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sights in order to catch and identify species. Warden staff and volunteers all benefited from their expertise.

MSc student Marian Sutton undertook a comprehensive quantitative bat survey of the property. Aided and abetted by property wardens, her survey involved several walks of specified transects through the property from dusk until the early hours of the morning. Marian used a "time expansion" bat detector through which recordings (on a minidisk) of bat-sounds were slowed down ten times. The recordings were then downloaded onto a computer to produce spectrograms of bat-sounds. Examination of the patterns of sound on the spectrograms can ease identification of the species. Her results have provided us with a good picture of bat activity in the Crag.

Overall the results were very promising revealing that the Crag is used by seven of our sixteen native bat species and 7/9 in Yorkshire. These are; Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii*, Daubenton's bats *M. Daubentonii*, Natterer's bats *M. nattereri*, whiskered bats *M. mystacinus*, Leisler's bats *Nyctalus leisleri*, noctule bats *N. noctula*, and 45kHz (common) pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*.

Five roost sites were located during the course of the survey. All were associated with man-made structures. These were found either as the bats left the roost or at dawn as they swarmed before re-entering the roost, as was the case at Hawden Hall, Hebden Dale and Black Dean. Indications of bat activities were also found during the day inside Gibson Mill. The tunnels supplying the ponds and outflow from the mill were all examined for bat activity but there was no conclusive evidence. The bridge at the mill proved more promising. With many dead and mature trees on the property it is also very likely that there are many natural roosts as yet undetected. There is still plenty more exploratory work to be done.

One intriguing find was two bats caught in a harp trap in Black Dean. They looked like Brandt's and not whiskered bats (these two species are notoriously difficult to distinguish). However, they were both males and if there is one character that separates the two species it is the shape of their penises. These bats had characters (shape of the inner ear and general behaviour) of Brandt's bats but their penises were parallel sided (as opposed to bulbous) which would make them whiskered bats. Hybrids? New species? Only the DNA will tell and a study is undergoing to tease apart the species and any 'in-betweens'.

A very worthwhile study and one which we hope to enlarge upon over the coming years.

Many thanks to everyone involved.

### Upper Wharfedale Best Practice Project – Education

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Currently running in Upper Wharfedale is the Best Practice Project, a partnership scheme led by the Environment Agency involving The National Trust, Yorkshire Dales National Park, English Nature, Yorkshire Water and various other organisations. Its aim is the promotion of good land management to protect habitats and water quality, while encouraging sustainable hill farming. Through European Commission funding several valuable habitat management schemes have been followed through.

Communication of the project aim is seen as a priority. An education group was set up with the remit of identifying ways that catchment-wide landscape management could be successfully and enjoyably explained to identify target audiences.

Two projects in particular were successfully initiated and are briefly described below:

#### The River game - "We Have A River For Everyone"

The game is intended for schools or other interested groups and takes the form of a painted floor mat, nine metres long. The mat features a representation of the valley where "best practice" has taken place. Best practice includes encouraging native woodlands, well-managed moorlands, protecting riverbanks from grazing, and protection of steep sided gills. On top of the mat is an overlay where less good practice has been followed, for instance conifer planting, uncontrolled heavy grazing, eroded footpaths and farm waste pollution. The overlay is divided into eight separate removable panels, each panel with a specific theme.

The idea of the game is for groups to work through a series of questions. Their answers will decide whether a particular overlay is removed or remains in place. The result is the group's own version of their ideal river. There are no right or wrong answers, and the real aim of the activity is to get people talking and thinking about land management.

The mat is a very impressive and colourful piece of work, although it needs a knowledgeable facilitator and a large room to be used in. In good weather or at local agricultural shows it is robust enough to be used outside. It is available for use free from the Yorkshire Dales National Park office.

**The Leaflet** – “Working with the Land to help the Water and Wildlife in Upper Wharfedale”

The main audience identified for this leaflet was the visitor. The leaflet offers a guided walk of 6.5 kilometres through the beautiful limestone scenery of Wharfedale, most of it on the National Trust estate. Using plenty of colourful photos it explains the complexities of landscape and habitat management, the organisations involved and the concerns that affect areas such as Wharfedale. It is suitable for education groups, but accessible enough for visitors to pick up and use, and hopefully learning something in the process. The leaflet will be available free to local Bed & Breakfasts and information centres.

The game, and leaflet, deal with issues that are particularly relevant, with the floods of last winter still strong in our memories, the aftermath of foot and mouth around the corner, and maybe agricultural change pending. It will be interesting to see how successful they are.

**The Lady’s Slipper Orchid**

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The lady’s slipper orchid *Cypripedium calceolus* has been a victim of its own distinctive allure: as a result of collecting, especially in Victorian times, it has declined to near extinction. Always confined in the UK to the northern limestone from Morecombe Bay to the Yorkshire coast, only one long-established site now exists in the wild. Plants can take years to flower and can live for decades (some say longer). Unlike many orchids, the need for the seeds to be associated with a fungus in a mycorrhizal association is not strong. This has perhaps helped with cultivation and propagation.

In an initiative to safeguard the future of these plants, English Nature, in partnership with the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew and with funding from Sainsbury’s, has been culturing new plants using genetic material from the four known wild genotypes. Today there are hundreds of seedlings that could be reintroduced to sites where the species used to occur in the wild.

Some years ago potential sites for reintroduction were assessed on National Trust land in the Yorkshire Dales but none of these were judged suitable or practical at the time.

In the meantime, a group of seedlings of the lady’s slipper orchid, supplied by Peter Corkhill (English

Nature Site Manager – North and East Yorkshire), have been nurtured in the garden of Sizergh Castle – a Trust property in Cumbria. The result of six years collaboration between Peter and Malcolm Hutcheson (the then Head Gardener) is a strong specimen established in the garden’s limestone rock garden.

It was planted in autumn 2000 from a split taken from the “Hornby” wild plant stock



(originally taken from the wild at Ingleton Falls). This plant is accessible to the public in a way that a majority of wild reintroductions will never be, and provides a source of divisions to produce more plants.

To explore the feasibility of extending this approach to safeguarding the species, we set off to Yorkshire to look for garden sites within the species’ natural range where it might be possible to introduce the orchid. Our main objective was to provide a second safe haven for the species which could be used as a source of material for reintroduction to the wild. In addition, in the long term, we hope to provide people with a chance to see one of Britain’s rarest and most beautiful flowers. There would also be good a opportunity to raise awareness of this species and plant conservation in general.

Before looking around the potential sites in Yorkshire, the trip began with a pilgrimage to the plant at Sizergh Castle, followed by a very helpful meeting with Peter Corkhill. Foot and Mouth Disease precautions prevented access to one of the sites we had hoped to see – the rock garden at Tarn House, Malham where several young plants have been reintroduced following a theft in 1970s. However it was possible to get to one site in Ingleton, where EN have already introduced a group of the seedlings on a semi-shaded, moist but stony bank. It was interesting to see that whilst the introduced plants needed continuing care and protection (slug pellets and a low wooden barrier) the site is right by the public path and there is a notice explaining that rare orchids are being grown within the fence. Perhaps fortunately, the leaf of the lady’s slipper orchid is very similar to both ramsons (wild garlic) and lily of the valley. Given these plants will not flower for years there is plenty of time in which they can build up their resources in disguise before revealing their true identity.

The first Yorkshire garden sites visited were Nunnington Hall and Rievaulx Terrace in the Rye Valley. Jan Hoyland, the Gardener-in-Charge with responsibility for both locations, was enthusiastic about the proposal. Nunnington did not have

anywhere with suitable conditions, but several places in the half-shade of the steep banks below Rievaulx’s dramatic terrace looked promising. Additionally, with the commitment of Jan and Assistant Warden Rob Caton, there is also scope to set up a small nursery area to grow on young plants in relatively secure surroundings. The last stop on the tour was Studley Royal – the designed landscape setting of Fountains Abbey. Here, a bank already rich in other lime-loving native flora was identified as another potential site.

Growing the lady’s slipper orchid in a garden might well be ‘second best’ to seeing it reintroduced in the wild, but it’s encouraging to know that, with enthusiasm of Trust staff and the support of our partners (the Cypripedium Committee of English Nature), the initiative looks set to strengthen this remarkable plant’s chances of survival.

See The National Trust’s environmental web-site ([www.ntenvironment.com](http://www.ntenvironment.com)) under gardens for this photograph of the lady’s slipper orchid in flower.

### Yorkshire Nature Conservation Appraisal

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In common with other Regions, Yorkshire is preparing a Nature Conservation Appraisal. The appraisal has five aims:

1. To set out what the National Trust in Yorkshire holds in terms of important habitats, species, earth science features and examples of natural processes.
2. To set out what the Trust in Yorkshire is most important for in Trust wide and national contexts.
3. To identify which of the interest features the Trust has a special responsibility for at the Regional and National level.
4. To identify the nature and degree to which the interest features are threatened.
5. Taking account of the responsibility and degree of threat, identify the priority habitats, species and other interest features for the Trust in Yorkshire.

Not surprisingly, in terms of habitats, blanket bog and limestone pavement stand out. In terms of species, the twite is important because of the breeding population on or around our property at Marsden Moor. In terms of properties, Fountains Abbey & Studley Royal is nationally important for bats and invertebrates of dead and dying timber. On the coast, the earth science interest is high but not particularly threatened (although on this dynamic coast it may be threatening).

The appraisal will be ready early in the New Year.

### IFAs: Important Fungus Areas

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[Greatly plagiarised, not to say copied, from a report written by Martin Harper, Plantlife, October 2001, and with thanks to John Malley, South Peak Estate, for telling us about IFAs in the first place!]

No one knows where the best sites for fungi are in the United Kingdom. No-one even knows how many species of fungi occur here. A conservative estimate is about 12,000, but it might be nearer 20,000. A single site may support more than 2,000 species. Many of these are microscopic, and accessible only to specialists. The best surveyed fungi are the agarics, or toadstools, along with other macro-fungi like gasteromycetes, tooth-fungi, bracket-fungi and cup-fungi. These, too, are dauntingly diverse.

Relatively few sites are well recorded. Surveying fungi is fraught with difficulty, not only because many cannot be reliably identified in the field but because only a proportion of them will be visible on a visit. There is no fungi recording scheme, Atlas nor published Red List. New fungi are being recorded all the time, even from regularly visited sites. In the absence of any records, it is possible to assess at least the potential of a site by the presence and condition of habitats of known mycological interest, such as short, open unfertilised grassland, undisturbed woodland soil (including banks), mature trees in grazed parkland, active duneland and snow-beds on mountains. However, it is important that a start is made on providing site dossiers so that important sites can be identified, and then managed and protected accordingly. Consequently, Plantlife, with the financial support of the Association of British Fungus Groups, Countryside Council for Wales, English Nature and the Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland is currently compiling a provisional list of Important Fungus Areas for the United Kingdom.

The broad objective of the Important Fungus Areas concept is to support, inform and underpin existing protected area mechanisms designed to conserve the UK flora. It should be stressed that it is not anticipated that the IFA concept be developed as a formal designation.

There are various methods already in use for assessing importance of fungi sites. For example, wax-caps (*Hygrocybe* species) make useful indicators of habitat quality, since most of them seem intolerant of agricultural fertilisers. Hence they occur mainly in unimproved, semi-natural grassland, and sites can be ‘scored’ on the number of species. Other taxa can be used in a similar way. It may be possible to use ‘indicator fungi’ as a means of assessing the quality of woodlands for fungi. It is a remarkable fact that many genera of larger fungi tend to live together, so that you find often very localised areas that have outstanding assemblages of tooth fungi, boletes, earth-stars, truffles or slime-moulds.

Some fungi have been specially targeted for conservation under the BAP and this is leading to a much better understanding of the ecology of some groups, for example

the tooth fungi. It is good to know that field mycology is in a healthy state today, signified by the appearance of a journal, *Field Mycology* and the formation of county-based fungus groups organised through the British Mycological Society and the Association of British Fungus Groups. Helped also by better field guides, and specialised monographs, there is a growing number of experienced mycologists able to contribute to foray records.

The importance of sites nominated by the voluntary recording community will be assessed according to broad criteria:

- **Criterion A:** *The site holds significant populations of rare fungal species which are of global, European or UK conservation concern.*
- **Criterion B:** *The site has an exceptionally rich and well-recorded mycota in a UK or European context.*
- **Criterion C:** *A site which is an outstanding example of a habitat type of mycological importance.*
- **Criterion D:** *A site which is considered to be important but for which further information is needed to make an adequate assessment of quality.*

The provisional list of sites will be submitted to the Fungus Conservation Forum in November 2001. A summary of the project will appear on their web-site in due course – the address is [www.fungusforum.org.uk](http://www.fungusforum.org.uk). Look at this for more information on the project, or if you would like to submit a site which you think is important for fungi. In The National Trust we have made a good start with surveying fungi in parklands, thanks mainly to the expertise of Ted Green, but as yet have hardly done any grassland fungi survey. We are endeavouring to find some good surveyors, so if you have a site you would like surveyed, or even better happen to know of someone who has done a good survey for you, please let us know at Cirencester.

### In The Heart Of The Hafod Garegog National Nature Reserve

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The sun is shining, it's baking hot, and the air is alive with dragonflies, butterflies and the powerful scent of bog myrtle. At least it was in 1996, when I started working at Hafod Garegog National Nature Reserve (NNR). Since then our summers haven't been quite so kind.

This has meant that there's been a reduction in the number of silver-studded blue butterflies (the most notable species on site). But we're not worried as there is still a very healthy population and thanks to cattle grazing and tree felling, the habitat is improved, and the range of the butterflies has increased.

This year our captive zoologist has volunteered her services to carry out the invertebrate monitoring. This involves walking about very slowly, while trying to distinguish how many male and female butterflies/damselflies come within a metre of you (without counting the same ones twice, naturally). Of course, the raft spiders also need to be noted

(and avoided). They are quite easily spotted at this time of year as they are about eight centimetres across, very meaty, and are sat on raised nests containing thousands of baby spiders.

She is also netting dragonflies in order to identify all the species present. Although it is yet to be confirmed, she has found two species (keeled skimmer and banded demoiselle), which were expected, but not previously found on site.

We are now hunting high and low for the scarce blue tailed damselfly, which should be present but hasn't yet been found. The reason it is so difficult to find this species is that it is almost indistinguishable from the common blue tail. Believe it or not, the only way to positively differentiate between the two is to examine their nether regions under a magnifying glass!

If we can confirm these extra species, it would put the number above twelve, making Hafod Garegog a notable site for dragonflies. This would be on top of being a notable site for bats, butterflies, damselflies, spiders, and more habitats than I can list. Now, if we could only find those Welsh Clearwings...

N.B. Since this piece has been written we have been told



that the silver-studded blue has had an excellent season at Hafod this summer, as its flight season coincided with a long hot spell. Moreover, it spread wonderfully into nearby cleared

areas. (Matthew Oates, Nature Conservation Advisor, Cirencester)

### Progressing Herp Conservation within The National Trust

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The Trust wants to progress herp (amphibians and reptiles) conservation on its properties and enhance links with other relevant bodies working on herps, such as Froglife and the Herpetological Conservation Trust. To this end, a meeting is being organised for next spring 2002 to bring all these relevant bodies together in Cirencester. One element to discuss will be the needs of our properties. Please could you give me an indication of what you think would be useful for you in order to progress herp conservation on your property? This, for example, might include advice on pond management, funding, and / or training in habitat management and herp identification and survey. I look forward to hearing from you.

# The National Trust Environmental and Conservation WEBSITE New in November

The Environment web site has just been updated with...

### Garden Culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – conference proceedings.

Taking place at the Assembly Rooms, Bath, from 30 April to 3 May 2001, the Trust's first major gardens conference brought together delegates and speakers from the fields of horticulture, garden history, conservation, the heritage sector and journalism to answer the big questions that face gardening today. These proceedings are a lightly edited but comprehensive transcript of the presentations.

### Forestry guidance notes, information notes and instructions.

Written for staff but published here in order to illustrate the Trust's working practices, these practical guidelines support the Trust's policy document, Woodland Management in the National Trust.

### The Arkell Fellowship 2002.

The National Trust invites young people aged between 18-35 to apply for a research fellowship to study a subject of significance to conservation, heritage or tourist management in Europe.

## COURSES, EVENTS & PUBLICATIONS....

David W. Macdonald & Fran Tattersall (2001)  
**Britain's Mammals:  
The Challenge For Conservation**  
Commissioned by The People's Trust for  
Endangered Species for the launch of **Mammals  
Trust UK**, April 2001

This book brings together the biology and the policy that affect the conservation of the 106 or so species, of land, air and sea, that comprise the UK's wild mammal fauna. It is a conservation journey between subjects, from natural to social sciences and beyond to ethics. With the UK's diverse wildlife, richly populated with mammals, this report is aimed at contributing information for setting an agenda that brings about the future of mammal conservation. This book is split up into five chapters which include:

1. The status of Britain's mammals.
2. The issues big and small: *conflict with non-native species, toxic habitats, disappearing habitats and conflict with people.*
3. Britain's mammals- introducing the species: *an excellent insight into all of Britain's mammals.*
4. Framework for the future: *legal and policy framework, monitoring and research, restoration, welfare and wildlife conservation.*
5. Managing for mammals- visions for the future.

For more information or to order a copy (cost of £25), please contact: Mammals Trust UK, 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London. SW8 4BG. Tel: 020 74985262 or visit: [www.mammaltrust.org.uk](http://www.mammaltrust.org.uk).

**Position Statement On Fossil Collecting**

English Nature have revised their policy statement regarding fossil collecting from the May 1996 version. Copies of this can be obtained from: English Nature, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA Tel: 01733 455100 or visit: [www.english-nature.org.uk](http://www.english-nature.org.uk)

**WILD FLOWER SEED MIX**  
Katherine Hearn, Adviser on Nature Conservation

We don't normally promote the use of wild flower seed mixtures, preferring natural colonisation as this will in the long run provide a more natural sward suited to the site and soils, and will most closely approximate whatever semi-natural sward is represented in the area. Only a small 'source' is necessary, such as a field edge or bank. However, if there is absolutely no seed source available, or for some other reason a seed mixture is required, and if the site is a lowland calcareous clay or loam, then the seed mixtures developed by Miriam Rothschild at Ashton Wold, Northants, are likely to be good value at £20 - £25 / kilo, and are certainly guaranteed British ! For initial enquiries contact the Head Gardener, Peter Scott, in the evenings, tel. 01832 - 272216.

### Eurosite Workshop (19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> May): Restoration Of Wet & Dry Meadows

The report on the Eurosite workshop is now available, this workshop aimed to:

1. exchange information on wet and dry meadow restoration projects through active field visits and indoor discussions, and to learn from this individually and collectively.
2. to establish as far as possible common lessons for the restoration of wet and dry meadows.

For copies of this report contact Jon Flanders, Cirencester, Tel: 01285 884710 E-mail: [NCNeditor@smtp.ntrust.org.uk](mailto:NCNeditor@smtp.ntrust.org.uk)

## Wise Ways With Conservation

The Game Conservancy Limited Advisory Service's (with sponsorship from The Dulverton Trust) two-day conservation and land management course called 'Wise Ways with Conservation' has been postponed to Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February – Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2002 from 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> October 2001, in Fordingbridge, Hampshire. Cost £190 (excluding accommodation).

The course will discuss best practice in creation and management of habitats, covering topics that include: field boundary habitats, arable crops and field margins, set-aside, grasslands, moors, woods, wetlands, rivers and streams, and management of predation. Interested? Contact Liz Scott on 01425 651013 or email [lscott@gct.org.uk](mailto:lscott@gct.org.uk).

### Praise for NT wildlife awareness

Under a recent report on 'The current status of Churchyard Lecanactis (*Lecanactis hemisphaerica*) in Britain', written by English Nature and Plantlife, the National Trust was praised for giving its 'full commitment to wildlife awareness'. The Wildlife and Buildings courses which the Trust ran for its staff earlier in the year was also mentioned.

Under the Trust's Guidance Note on Disturbance of Plants and Animals Protected by Law, Churchyard Lecanactis is itemised under plant species, as occurring on walls and as having full legal protection. It is now looking likely that English Heritage is also considering possible legal implications of works involving buildings on EH sites. Copies of this paper can be obtained from: English Nature, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA Tel: 01733 455100 or visit: [www.english-nature.org.uk](http://www.english-nature.org.uk).

### The Nature Of Grazing

R. Harris & M. Jones in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage and The Scottish Wildlife Trust

This series of ten management notes are principally based on the practical experience generated by the Loft and Hill of White Hamars Grazing Project: they reflect practical techniques that have been applied under field conditions and found to be effective. The topics covered are:

1. A background to grazing management for nature conservation.
2. Integrating conservation grazing with commercial sheep production.
3. Grazing management for the Scottish Primrose, *Primula scotica*.
4. Conservation grazing management for wet meadows and marsh.
5. Conservation grazing management for maritime heath.
6. Conservation grazing management for maritime grassland.
7. Fencing patterns for nature conservation grazing management.
8. The use of sheep grazing to control weeds of grassland.
9. Supplementary feeding strategies and nature conservation grazing management.

10. The grazing impacts of sheep and cattle.

Copies are available from: The Reserves Manager, The Scottish Wildlife Trust, Cramond House, Kirk Cramond, Cramond Glebe Road, Edinburgh EH4 6NS. Tel: 0131 3127765

### Groovy Powerpoint Presentation

Need a powerpoint talk about bats that you can tailor make for local consumption? If so contact David Bullock, Nature Conservation Advisor, Cirencester. Tel: 01285 884705 E-mail: [xeadjb@smtpl.ntrust.org.uk](mailto:xeadjb@smtpl.ntrust.org.uk)

### Habitat Management For Bats A Guide For Land Managers, Land Owners And Their Advisors By JNCC

Bat numbers across the UK have declined. This has been attributed to destruction of roost sites, alterations in the countryside (destroying bat habitats), and changes in agricultural practices (reducing the availability of insects for the bats to feed upon). For example a quarter of hedgerows and three quarters of ponds were lost during the period 1984 to 1990; and since the 1940's half our ancient woodland has been lost.

As a result The Joint Nature Conservation Committee has produced a manual to provide land owners, land managers and their advisors with both general and specific guidance on how to manage areas to benefit foraging bats. This book is divided into three main parts: the first (Managing habitats for bats) deals with general habitat management advice to assist foraging bats; the second part (Habitat management for bat species) provides specific habitat advice for each of the 16 breeding bat species found in the UK. The final section and the annexes provide details of the law protecting bats in the UK, how and where to find out more information and some sources of financial assistance for habitat management that can help bats.

Useful in a generic sort of way, copies of 'Habitat management for bats' (Priced £15, ISBN: 1 86107 528 6) can be obtained from: NHBS Mail-order Bookstore, 2-3 Wills Road, Totnes, Devon. TQ9 5XN. Tel: 01803 865913 or visit: [www.nhbs.co.uk](http://www.nhbs.co.uk).

### Changing Seasons

Is global warming having an impact on our seasons? Scientists have revealed that spring is beginning earlier and earlier, this is highlighted by trees coming into leaf, emergence of hibernating animals, return of migrating birds etc. More information is needed to help monitor the climate change and the impact it has on our seasons. The Woodland Trust and the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology need the publics help in the recording of natures events in the spring. The Woodland Trust believes that the climate change is the

'single biggest threat to what little remains of woodland heritage,' and by monitoring the changes in nature's calendar it will illustrate the full impact on wildlife habitats.

For more information on this scheme or to order a form contact: The Woodland Trust, Autumn Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LL. Tel: 01476 581111 or visit [www.phenology.org.uk](http://www.phenology.org.uk).

### The Mammal Society Announces November Conference On Mammal Monitoring

The Mammal Society is running a two day symposium on Mammal Monitoring on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> November and Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November at London Zoo. This will provide a forum to:



- Discuss the types of monitoring approaches that can be used for mammals.
- Review what has been learnt from existing national mammal monitoring schemes and from national bird monitoring schemes.
- Compare and contrast methods, principles and problems related to monitoring different mammal groups.

Other highlights include:

- The National Bat Monitoring Programme.
- Identifying individual animals with molecular markers.
- Live trapping to monitor small mammals.

Tickets are available from the Mammal Society on 020 7498 4358. This costs £70 for both days, £50 for members of The Mammal Society and £25 for students. One day tickets cost £36 or £26 for members and £13 for students.

### The Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award 2002

The Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award was established in 1996 at the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention of Wetlands. This award recognises and honours the contributions of individuals, organisations, and governments around the world towards promoting the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Nominations are encouraged of persons, organisations, or government agencies that have taken initiatives which have contributed significantly to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of a wetland site or group of wetlands, especially those initiatives which might serve as inspirational or practical examples to others.

Nominations should be forwarded to the Bureau of the Convention of Wetlands, before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2001, using the form available upon request from the Ramsar Bureau, or

on the web-site. The Award will be presented on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2002 at the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties in Spain.

For nomination forms, or to view the selection criteria, contact the Ramsar Bureau: Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland. Tel: (+41) 22/999 01 70. Web-site: [www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org).

### Eurosite Workshops 2002

#### Fire & Nature Management

13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> March . Organised by Fundtip in Catalunya.

#### Spoonbill & associate Waders

19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> April. Organised by NatuurMonumenten in Texel.

#### Habitat/Species Management

29<sup>th</sup> May – 1<sup>st</sup> June. Organised by Danube Delta in Uzlna.

#### Eurosite AGM: Habitats Directive

26<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> September. Organised by Kampinoski Park in Vaersovie.

#### Management and reconciliation in a conflict

October. Organised by Parc des Marais in Vendée.

#### Disabled: Wkp 3

2002 or 2003. Organised by SBB in Texel.

For more information visit:

[www.eurosite-nature.org/intranet/news/internal\\_news.htm](http://www.eurosite-nature.org/intranet/news/internal_news.htm).

### Rooted in History: Studies in Garden Conservation

The National Trust owns the largest and most important collection of historic gardens and cultivated plants in the world. This is the first book to examine their management and conservation. In a series of papers written by National Trust staff and specialist advisors, the issues surrounding the conservation of historic parks and gardens are examined in the light of the Trust's unique experience.

Covering subjects as diverse as the ongoing search for 'authenticity' in garden conservation through the need to balance preservation with public access and wildlife in gardens, this book culminates in an assessment of potential future challenges and opportunities.

Published by National Trust Enterprises Ltd. Available from: Sophie Blair, Publications, The National Trust, 36 Queen Anne's Gate, London. SW1H 9AS

Price: £19.99 ISBN: 0707802997

### REGIONAL FEATURES:

For the next three editions of the newsletter we are proposing to cover East Anglia (Feb), Northern Ireland (May) and Thames & Solent (August). I will be in touch with the relevant staff about this soon. However, if in the meantime, anyone has any suggestions or views on these features please let me know – NCN editor.