

annualreview



Herts and
Middlesex

2018-2019



Creating **A WILDER**
HERTFORDSHIRE
AND MIDDLESEX

WREN (C) MIKE FOSSEY



Wildlife Highlights



- Barnacle goose, goldeneye, hobby and crossbill seen at Stocker's Lake
- Regular views of Norfolk hawk dragonfly for visitors to Amwell
- Southern migrant hawk dragonfly was recorded at Rye Meads and King's Meads
- 50 green-winged orchids counted at Hunsdon Meads, our highest number since 2014
- White-letter hairstreak butterfly spotted at Aldbury Nowers for the second year running
- Water Voles found in the Colne at Broadwater Lake, and doing well at Tewinbury and Thorley Wash



Barnacle goose

MARGARET HOLLAND



Green-winged orchid

PAUL LANE



Water vole

RUSSELL SAVORY



White-letter hairstreak

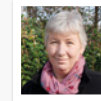
PETER ELTON

Thank You

Over the past year, the Trust has been working hard to protect and enhance wild places in Hertfordshire and Middlesex. The future undoubtedly holds many challenges for wildlife in the UK, including climate change and the need for robust legislation, but we remain committed to creating a wilder future for generations to come.

all weathers to work on our reserves and in the wider countryside to the ongoing support our members and donors - each and every one helps to make Hertfordshire and Middlesex a wilder place, creating havens for rare species and beautiful places to visit.

Thank you.



Lesley Davies



M. McT

The Trust's work is only made possible with the help of our supporters, from volunteers braving

The Trust has



11,982
memberships



22,642
individual members



LEMSFORD SPRINGS (C) JOSH KUBAJE

Wildlife conservation on nature reserves...

JOSH KUBALE
Amwell

Frogmore Meadows triples in size

Thanks to a generous legacy from Gerald Salisbury, we were able to purchase land at Frogmore Meadows to triple the size of the reserve. The extended nature reserve is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and comprises rare water meadows and one of the most biodiverse meadows in the Chess Valley. The Trust has been managing the original nature reserve since 1985 using traditional meadow-management techniques including grazing and haymaking.

Frogmore Meadows sits in a floodplain and the soils found there, when managed correctly, support an abundance of meadow grasses, orchids and wildflowers. In summer, Frogmore Meadows is a mass of beautiful flowers which are an important food source for many insects.

Gerald, who sadly passed away in 2015, had been a long-term volunteer warden at Frogmore Meadows and was

instrumental in helping the Trust care for the reserve. As recognition of his dedication to the site, we have named the original reserve 'Gerald's Meadow'.



Buff-tailed bumblebee at Frogmore Meadows

JOSH KUBALE

Amazing grazers

This year, our flock of sheep was joined by a team of pigs and goats to deliver our conservation grazing programme. The pigs and goats helped us to trial new habitat management techniques at Amwell – respectively turning up the soil around the main viewpoint and helping with scrub encroachment at Hollycross. Meanwhile a new flock of Herdwick sheep has allowed us to graze Patmore Heath and to introduce grazing to a new area of Aldbury Nowers, improving the habitats for butterflies and other invertebrates.

Creating healthy heathland

Hertford Heath is one of the last remaining patches of open heathland in Hertfordshire. In February, we scraped away layers of topsoil, felled trees and cleared scrub, creating ideal conditions for heather and gorse to thrive.

Habitat creation

At Amwell, we have started a large-scale project to keep this site internationally important for wildfowl and other wildlife. In addition to grazing with goats and pigs, Great Hardmead Lake has seen re-profiling work and a sluice has been installed to better control the water levels.



Herdwick Sheep

JOSH KUBALE

... and in the wider countryside

River Mimram

PETER TATTON

Pioneering new research

We are working with Environment Agency, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and Thames Water on a pioneering new project to shed light on ducks' behaviour by fitting them with GPS trackers. The project aims to increase our understanding of how waterfowl use water bodies in Greater London, with particular focus on gadwall and shoveler. The project will help to identify which water bodies are most important for these species and inform recommendations for their conservation management.



Gadwall at Rye Meads with GPS tag

PAUL ROPER

River wildlife

The Living Rivers Project achieved a huge amount to protect Hertfordshire's rare chalk streams in the last year. Through the project we have continued to co-ordinate eight river partnerships, supported riverfly monitoring, coordinated new projects on the Rib and Ash, prepared management plans for a variety of landowners and worked with fisheries such as Amwell Magna and delivered the annual River Lea Catchment Conference.

The Water Vole Project has trained volunteers to support surveys for water voles and organised two annual conferences on water voles and invasive non-native species, covering the Lea and Colne catchments. Water vole surveys have found encouraging signs in the Colne at Broadwater Lake and the populations at Tewinbury and Thorley Wash are thriving.



Water vole

RUSSELL SAVORY



Barbastelle bat

SHUTTERSTOCK

Going Batty

The **Hertfordshire Barbastelle Bat Project**, in partnership with the Herts & Middlesex Bat Group, has carried out surveys and used remote detectors in several woodlands. The second ever maternity colony of barbastelle bat to be found in Hertfordshire was discovered using radio tracking at Ashridge. We are working closely with the Ashridge Estate to ensure these are findings taken into account.

A Wetland Vision for Bats focuses on research into *Nathusius' pipistrelle* populations in the Colne Valley. The project is a partnership of the Trust, Lee Valley Regional Park, Maple Lodge Nature Reserve, Three Rivers District Council and the Hillingdon Natural History Society. Twelve *Nathusius' pipistrelles* were caught and ringed at study sites and one female was radio tracked to a mating roost, which is the first roost ever recorded in the area.

Standing up for wildlife

Impact on housing and infrastructure proposals

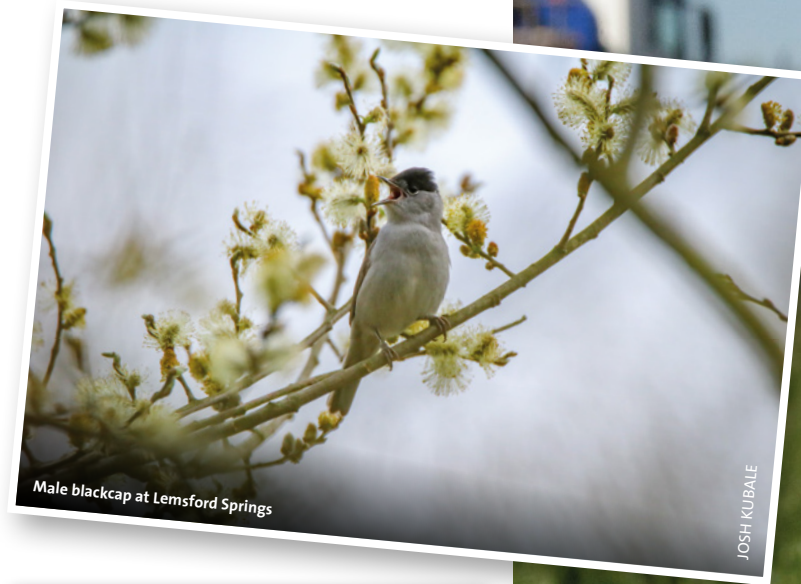
Over the year, we have been checking 23,000 planning applications, giving close scrutiny to 1,200 of these and commenting on over 200, including 125 objections. In the vast majority of cases, our comments and objections resulted in positive changes. The Trust's recommended policies on biodiversity were included in the East Herts District Plan, giving protection to wildlife and wild spaces and ensuring they are properly taken into account within the planning process. We are encouraging other authorities in our area to take the same approach, which is being used as a national exemplar by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts and Natural England.

Influencing decision makers

We continue to champion wildlife through our advocacy work with local government, MPs and business leaders on specific subjects such as the impact of Brexit and the future of agri-environment funding and wildlife legislation.

Working with local authorities remains a

priority for the Trust in terms of having local impact and benefiting local communities. We are very pleased to continue working with Harpenden Town Council and to have started a new partnership with Stevenage Borough Council, through which we are delivering a programme of community engagement and conservation activities.



Male blackcap at Lemsford Springs

JOSH KUBALE



Laws Farm

JOSH KUBALE

Herts Environmental Records Centre

Herts Environmental Records Centre (HERC) continues to build its evidence base; the total number of records currently stands at over 2.4 million, having increased by 5,000 records over the past year. Data from HERC has been used to inform Neighbourhood Plans and ecological reports for planning applications. HERC continues to support the Local Wildlife Sites partnership and plays an important role in helping to shape the management of our nature reserves.



PAUL HOBSON

Connecting people with wildlife

Festival of Wildlife

CHARLOTTE HUSSEY

Volunteering

Our Volunteer Wardens and their assistants play an invaluable role in helping to manage and monitor our nature reserves.

The Nature Reserves and Wildlife Sites Trainee programme had another successful year, with trainees learning practical conservation and ecological field skills.

Our new volunteer fundraising team has been developing and has started to bring in vital new income for the Trust.

Many more volunteers support us, including wildlife surveyors, community speakers, the office and wildlife gardening team at Grebe House, event leaders and the Mid Herts Local Group.



Volunteers at Lemsford Springs

AFFINITY WATER

687
volunteers

gave

18,509
hours

2,644
days

worth

£161,007

Engagement and Events

Over 5,400 people, including more than 1,200 children, enjoyed our programme of walks, talks and events which included the Festival of Wildlife and Apple Day. New events such as smartphone safaris, wildlife cruises along the River Lea and river dipping for adults have been well received. Our paid-for events programme has continued to grow and included training workshops, wildlife events in partnership with The Grove and Puddingstone Distillery, and our ever popular badger hide programme at Tewin Orchard.

The Affinity Water People & Wildlife Project based at Stocker's Lake, Springwell Reedbed and Hilfield Park Reservoir has been delivering

a busy programme of conservation and community engagement. Activities have been engaging children at local schools, scout and guide groups. Our new practical conservation work days for families have proved very popular. Guided walks and talks have been given for a wide variety of community and interest groups, alongside a busy programme of public Go Wild events at the sites.

In the summer of 2018, we worked with Tring Natural History Museum, Butterfly Conservation and two local art collectors to celebrate the life of local, renowned artist and conservation champion Gordon Beningfield including a weekend of activities in Great Gaddesden.

5,400
people



enjoyed

219 events



ROB JORDAN/2020VISION



CHARLOTTE HUSSEY

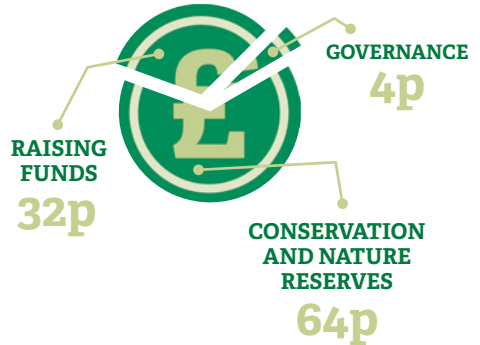
Funding our work

Income

Membership subscriptions: **£1,030k**
Grants (restricted): **£215k**
Fees and contracts: **£396k**
Donations, gifts and grants (unrestricted): **£40k**
Legacies: **£129k**
Fundraising activities: **£97k**
Investment and other income: **£44k**
TOTAL: £1,951k

Expenditure

TOTAL **£1,876k**
For every £1 the Trust spends...



Thank you

We are very grateful to all our members, donors, grant funders and other supporters over the year. Details of external funders can be found in our Trustee Report and Accounts at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk.

