



**Leicestershire
& Rutland
Wildlife Trust**

Spring 2017

Please contact the
Wider Countryside
team for advice on
any conservation
management issues, or
to make an appointment
for a free site visit.

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You can find out more
about the Charnwood
Forest Living Landscape
Project on our website
including downloadable
leaflets about the project
and how to encourage
more wildlife into your
garden.

If you know of someone
who might be interested
in receiving the newsletter
or if you would prefer not
to receive it please let us
know.

Charnwood Forest Living
Landscape is supported by:



Charnwood Forest Living Landscape News

Welcome; since our last newsletter, the Wildlife Trust has been busy working to conserve and enhance the unique wildlife, geology and character of the Charnwood Forest as part of our Living Landscape Project. This has included the routine management of our Nature Reserves, working with other landowners and plenty of surveying across the Charnwood Forest. We have also produced a new Local Wildlife Sites leaflet.

This latest edition includes a snapshot of some of this work along with information about an under-promoted environmental concern that could have a severe impact on our local wild places. We hope you find the contents of interest.

Is it Time to Talk About Nitrogen?

Plantlife have just published a short booklet highlighting the negative impact of nitrogen pollutants on nitrogen sensitive habitats in the UK. The report suggests that acidification and nutrient enrichment of soils resulting from increased atmospheric pollution and agricultural fertilisers is damaging our native flora.

This is supported by research undertaken on behalf of the DEFRA and the Joint Nature Conservancy Council (JNCC) showed that around 2/3 of the UK's nitrogen-sensitive habitats receive higher levels of nitrogen than can be tolerated by many of the species found within them.

Although these effects will be apparent across the UK as a whole, more locally it is within the Charnwood Forest where the greatest impact is likely to be felt due to the high concentration of sensitive habitats and species including rare lichen and bryophyte communities in this area.

Further details including a link to this new publication can be found at www.plantlife.org.uk.



Cladonia uncialis subsp. biuncialis - a rare lichen sensitive to high nitrogen levels, locally restricted to the Charnwood Forest. Photo by David Nicholls.

More Boots on the Ground to Help Seasonal Surveys!



Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust has made efforts over the past year to develop our Charnwood Forest monitoring scheme.

Volunteers have been learning botanical, bird, butterfly and aquatic invertebrate survey techniques that will help monitor and assess the quality of local habitats.

Now with 43 volunteers swelling our ranks, we are hoping to collect lots of data in this upcoming survey season!



New Local Wildlife Sites Leaflet

Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust have a new Local Wildlife Sites Leaflet. This is based on the national Wildlife Trusts leaflet but gives a local outlook. The leaflet answers questions about Local Wildlife Sites such as what they are and why they matter. It also provides some facts and figures relating to Leicestershire and Rutland's Local Wildlife Sites and details of who to contact for advice.

The leaflet will be available to view and download from our website soon through the Local Wildlife Sites tab at www.lrwt.org.uk

Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership Heritage Lottery Fund Bid

A Project Officer has been employed by the National Forest Company to write a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid to develop a landscape partnership across the Charnwood Forest Regional Park (CFRP). A working strapline for the project is '*made by volcanoes, shaped by people*' and it will follow three main themes to protect and celebrate the Charnwood Forest. These themes are:

- **Explore:** get in to and experience more of Charnwood, with high quality facilities and places to eat and stay.
- **Understand:** find out more and celebrate the area's many special qualities.
- **Care for:** play an active role in looking after the area, restoring wildlife habitats, traditional buildings and archaeological sites.

To inform the bid, LRWT contacted a number of Charnwood Forest Local Wildlife Site (LWS) landowners with a short questionnaire to ask their views on how this bid could help support LWS owners. The results of which will help identify relevant projects to help deliver improvements to wildlife and habitats in the Charnwood Forest. If successful, the project will last 5 years starting from April 2019 following an initial two year development phase. Further details can be found at www.nationalforest.org

Going Batty in the Charnwood Forest

Following the acquisition of some new surveying equipment, we have been able to spend a little time focussing on what can be a tricky order to monitor - bats!

This has included car and bicycle mounted monitoring kit alongside static recording equipment tuned to pick up passing bat echolocation calls. On one site at least seven species were recorded including the rare Nathusius' pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*) which prefer to forage in structured forest habitats.

We hope to build a better picture of bat populations in the Charnwood Forest with further surveys where resources allow, so watch this space!

