

# Wild

Leicestershire  
and Rutland

Membership magazine

Summer 2021

## OUR OSPREY ODYSSEY

Celebrating  
25 years  
of the Rutland  
Osprey Project



### RETURN OF A SONGSTER

How a nightingale sang for the first time in Leicestershire in 22 years

### JEWELS IN THE CROWN

The brilliant beetles of Leicestershire and Rutland



Leicestershire  
& Rutland

Wildlife Trust

# Welcome



We might remember 2021 as the 'Year of the Osprey' for Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, as we celebrate 25 years of the Rutland Osprey Project!

The return of Maya and 33(11) to Rutland Water on 19th March kickstarted a year of events, activities and excitement for the whole Trust. In early spring we launched our new osprey webcam, which is livestreaming updates from the Manton Bay nest daily to thousands of viewers. With the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in April, we opened the newly refurbished Lyndon Visitor Centre, now decorated with beautiful wildlife murals by the talented GraffWerk street artists, based in Leicester (p18). May sees us share this publication dedicated to celebrating the Rutland Osprey Project and its legacy (p10). Moving forward into summer we will be running online talks and hopefully face-to-face events, as well as once again taking to Rutland Water for Wildlife Cruises aboard the Rutland Belle (p32).

This landmark year also marks 20 years of breeding ospreys in central England and, with 190 osprey chicks fledged over that time, we hope to pass another big milestone this summer, too! We're keeping everything crossed.

Like you, we want to move forward from the COVID-19 pandemic with hope and optimism, whilst keeping our members, visitors, volunteers and staff as safe as possible. Never has nature been so important to our mental and physical health. Thank you for your continued support that enables us to aid nature's recovery at this pivotal moment.

We hope to see and hear more from you soon.

**Tim Graham**  
CEO



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## Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust *Get in touch*

**WILD Leicestershire and Rutland** is the membership magazine for **Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust** and is free to members.  
**Email** [info@lrwt.org.uk](mailto:info@lrwt.org.uk)  
**Telephone** 0116 262 9968  
**Address** The Old Mill, 9 Soar Lane, Leicester, LE3 5DE  
**Website** [lrwt.org.uk](http://lrwt.org.uk)  
**Registered charity number** 210531  
**facebook.com** /leicwildlife  
**twitter.com** /leicwildlife  
**instagram.com** /leicwildlife  
**youtube.com** /user/lrwt56

Protecting and enhancing the wildlife and wild places of Leicestershire and Rutland and engaging people with nature.  
**Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust**  
**Chairman** Tony Clarke  
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**CEO** Tim Graham  
**Head of Conservation** John Clarkson  
**Head of Engagement** Jamie Perry  
**Membership Officer** Josephine Taylor

*The Wildlife Trust Magazine Team*  
**Editor** Lucy McRobert  
**Designers** Yarwood Associates  
**UK Editor** Tom Hibbert  
**UK Designer** Ben Cook

Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor, Director or the Council of the Trust. Articles, letters, photographs and artwork are welcomed on the understanding that no liability for their safe custody or return is incurred and the right to abridge or refuse publication is reserved.



## 6 ways to get involved with Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust

**Gift membership** Give someone the gift of nature and sign them up to become a member. Find out how [lrwt.org.uk/join](http://lrwt.org.uk/join)

**Donate** From purchasing land to vaccinating badgers to helping bats flourish, we rely on your donations [lrwt.org.uk/donate](http://lrwt.org.uk/donate)

**Legacy** You can include a gift in your Will for wildlife and the future of our local natural world [lrwt.org.uk/legacy](http://lrwt.org.uk/legacy)

**Businesses** Become a corporate supporter of LRWT and make wildlife part of your business [lrwt.org.uk/corporate](http://lrwt.org.uk/corporate)

**Wildlife Watch** Inspire a wild child by signing them up for our junior membership, Wildlife Watch! [lrwt.org.uk/wildlife-watch](http://lrwt.org.uk/wildlife-watch)

**Local Groups** Be inspired by walks, talks, events and activities in your local area [lrwt.org.uk/local-groups](http://lrwt.org.uk/local-groups)






## Which Way to a natural partnership?



We are excited to welcome **Which Way Financial Solutions** as our latest corporate member. Support from local businesses makes a huge difference for wild places across the region. By building partnerships in local communities, we can achieve more for wildlife and help more people get closer to nature.

Phil Denton is Director of Which Way. He said "we have worked with The Wildlife Trusts for around 20 years and it was about time we joined our local Trust! As well as being passionate about pensions, we believe nature and the environment are just as important. Engagement in these areas is essential, both from a corporate and personal point of view. In the future, we would like our staff to be able to volunteer in LRWT projects as part of our membership and support their health and wellbeing. We want to support our local Trust and be actively engaged in nature conservation!"

The company, based in Melton Mowbray, works across the East Midlands and beyond, providing advice, support and education on Employee Benefits and regulated financial advice and support to individuals. This could be helping a company with their automatic enrolment pension scheme and group protection arrangements, helping with their pension pots, advising on savings and investments, or guiding someone to and through their retirement planning journey. To find out more visit [whichwayfs.com](http://whichwayfs.com)


 If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a corporate supporter of LRWT visit [lrwt.org.uk/corporate](http://lrwt.org.uk/corporate)

## Marvellous response to save our meadows

At the end of 2020, we launched our Meadows Appeal with the aim to raise £150,000 to secure two threatened wildflower meadows (in the Vale of Belvoir and Charnwood Forest respectively). Sadly, our bid for the meadow in the Vale of Belvoir was unsuccessful and we could not compete with other cash buyers.

However, we have since focussed all our efforts on raising the £100,000 needed to purchase the Charnwood Forest Meadow. Thanks to an incredible response from members, supporters and volunteers, the appeal has raised over £98,000. We are delighted by the outpouring of support and cannot thank you enough.


The Charnwood Forest Meadow is brimming with beautiful wildflowers and provides a vital habitat for insects, birds and mammals. If we secure the meadow, we will be connecting habitats together and creating more space for nature's recovery. Thanks to your support, we are now so close to saving this precious habitat and all the wildlife that calls it home. We soon hope to reach our target and announce the purchase of this amazing site.

 Check our website for updates [lrwt.org.uk/meadows](http://lrwt.org.uk/meadows)



### Donate your photographs

We are looking for good quality, high-resolution digital photographs of our nature reserves, to use online and in our publications. So many of our members take beautiful photographs of their favourite sites, landscapes and habitats, and we would love to be able to share these with more people. Credit will always be given and we appreciate every photograph donated to our library. All photos throughout the seasons are welcome, with a particular focus on landscapes and nature reserves.

 Contact Jordan Linthwaite to find out more and donate your photographs: [jlinthwaite@lrwt.org.uk](mailto:jlinthwaite@lrwt.org.uk)

### Welcoming new faces

We are delighted to welcome some more new faces to the LRWT family. **Jamie Perry** joins us as our new Head of Engagement, leading on developing our public outreach work, engaging new supporters and helping more people get closer to nature. **Hannah Keys** joins us as Green Mentor Youth Assistant, encouraging young people in Leicestershire to take action for their local environment (see p35). **Claire Sambridge** joins our Conservation Team as a Conservation Officer focussing on developing the work within our Soar and Wreake Valley Living Landscape. **Tim Sexton** joins the team at Rutland Water Nature Reserve as Species and Recording Officer, overseeing comprehensive programmes for wildlife monitoring and recording at the reserve.

We've changed the feel of our magazine to make it more environmentally friendly and cheaper to produce, meaning that more of your membership fees will go towards restoring nature.

Thank you

## 30 Days Wild is back!

Get ready to go wild with Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust this June for 30 Days Wild, the UK's biggest and best wildlife challenge! Can you do one Random Act of Wildness every day for 30 days? Join thousands of people taking part in our annual nature challenge.

A Random Act of Wildness is any little thing that you can do that gets you to experience, learn about, or even help nature near you. They are quick and simple to do, but when added together can make a big difference for you and for wildlife. Research has shown that spending time in nature makes us happier and healthier; wildlife and wild places help us to get active and improve our confidence and creativity. Nature can also improve our mental wellbeing, helping us cope with stress, anxiety and depression.

When you sign up, you will get a free pack full of goodies and ideas for how to stay wild throughout June.

 Go to [lrwt.org.uk/30DaysWild](http://lrwt.org.uk/30DaysWild)

Are you ready for #30DaysWild?



Share your Random Acts of Wildness with us on social media using [#30DaysWild](https://twitter.com/30DaysWild)

A daily dose of nature is great for your health and wellbeing.





Minke whales are seen regularly off our coasts each summer

UK UPDATE

# Sightings up during seaside staycation surge

## Our 2020 Marine Review

## Seaside Spotting

- More than 30 bottlenose dolphins were seen off the Teeside coast
- Large numbers of Atlantic bluefin tuna were recorded along England's south coast
- A baby Risso's dolphin was photographed off the coast of Anglesey, North Wales
- Humpback whales were filmed off the Yorkshire, Scottish and Cornish coasts



The Wildlife Trusts' Living Seas teams are the eyes and ears of the UK coast, but this year their observations were joined by a surge in sightings from the public, as more people spent time around our coasts.

In this bumper year for sightings, highlights included the first orcas in Strangford Lough, Ulster, since the 1970s, and a rare 'run' of Atlantic bluefin tuna up the English Channel from Cornwall to Sussex. These impressive fish can weigh hundreds of kilograms and were sometimes joined by porpoises, minke whales and dolphins in a huge feeding frenzy.

Joan Edwards, The Wildlife Trusts' director of living seas, says: "In 2020 people flocked to the sea as soon as lockdown restrictions were lifted — they needed the coast like never before. Wildlife Trusts around the country were reporting a surge of public interest in marine life and coastal species — people delighted in seeing marine life and it lifted the hearts of millions in this most difficult year."

It wasn't all good news for wildlife however. Although more people were spotting sea life, the restrictions of 2020 meant a lot of scientific monitoring work had to be cancelled, including more than

100 Trust Shoresearch surveys. These vital surveys help map and monitor the wildlife around our coasts, and the lack of data as a result of their cancellation could make it harder to assess the health of many of these plants and animals.

Wildlife Trusts were also unable to run many of their beach cleaning projects, though they were superceded by the hugely increased efforts of individuals and smaller groups during 2020. Cornwall Wildlife Trust, for example, reported that those people living within walking distance of beaches still carried on cleaning right through the lockdown. Working to clean up our marine environment is essential, with marine wildlife in greater peril than ever from plastic, nurdles, litter, discarded fishing gear and now disposable face masks too.

Better news for wildlife included the successful reintroduction of sand lizards to Fylde sand dunes, Lancashire, making it the most northerly population in England, and the discovery of a previously un-recorded seagrass bed off Northern Ireland's Ards Peninsula.

Read the full marine review, with many more amazing stories from around our coasts, at [wildlifetrusts.org/marine-review-20](http://wildlifetrusts.org/marine-review-20)

UK UPDATE

## Wildlife Trusts welcome new president

Broadcaster and biologist, Liz Bonnin has been elected as president of The Wildlife Trusts. Liz will be championing The Wildlife Trusts' new 30 by 30 vision to protect 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030. Liz says, "It is a critical time for the natural world, and I hope that through lending my voice and support, and by working together, we can help to enforce the changes that must take place in order to secure a brighter future for our wild places."

Alongside Liz Bonnin's appointment, The Wildlife Trusts have also welcomed biologist and Springwatch presenter Gillian Burke as vice president, as well as four new ambassadors: environmentalist and birder, Mya-Rose Craig; actor and presenter, Cel Spellman; actor and



podcaster, David Oakes; and professor of biology and bumblebee expert, Dave Goulson.

LIZ BONNIN © ANDREW CROWLEY, BUFF-TAILED BUMBLEBEE © CHRIS GOMERSALL/2020VISION, BROWN TROUT © LINDA PITKIN/2020VISION



Neonicotinoids are a threat to bees and other pollinators

### Close call for bees

The Wildlife Trusts are relieved that the Government will not be granting an emergency authorisation for the use of a banned neonicotinoid on sugar beet this year. The Government had previously agreed to authorise the use of the bee-killing pesticide thiamethoxam to combat a virus that affects sugar beet, but after an uncharacteristically cold January and February the levels of the virus were not high enough to meet the threshold for its use. While The Wildlife Trusts are

pleased that the Government will not be authorising use of this highly damaging chemical this year, this 'stay of execution' does not change the underlying issue — that the neonicotinoid could be allowed in the future, with potentially devastating impacts on UK wildlife.



To find out more, take a look at our Wild LIVE episode on the use of neonicotinoids [wildlifetrusts.org/wild-live](http://wildlifetrusts.org/wild-live)

## UK HIGHLIGHTS

Discover how The Wildlife Trusts brought wildlife to homes across the UK

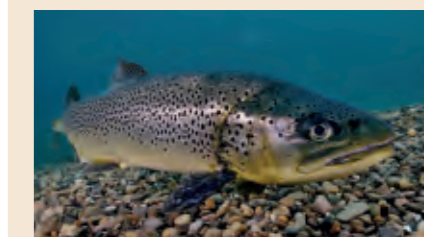


### 1 A dam good job

Ulster Wildlife are using coconut fibre logs to create dams on Cuilcagh Mountain, re-wetting and restoring large areas of peatland. The boggy areas created will capture and store carbon, helping combat the climate crisis, and provide a better habitat for wildlife. This work, done in conjunction with local farmers, is part of a project to restore 16 hectares of degraded peatland on Cuilcagh.

### 2 Shark sanctuaries

Scottish Wildlife Trust welcomed the designation of a new suite of protected areas in Scottish seas. Four new Marine Protected Areas will help safeguard species like basking sharks and minke whales, alongside 12 new Special Protection Areas created to benefit Scotland's iconic seabirds. It is essential now that these areas are backed by effective management measures.



### 3 River restoration

Surrey Wildlife Trust are working with a wide range of partners to restore the natural course of the Rye Brook, near Ashtead, helping to encourage brown trout upstream and capture flood waters. Riverbanks were reprofiled and natural bends and meanders were added, as well as a large riverside pond, to create more habitat for wildlife, including spawning areas for brown trout.

HUMPBACK WHALE TAILFIN © GUDKOV ANDREY/SHUTTERSTOCK, BREACHING MINKE WHALE © TOM MCDONNELL



**Gillian Burke**

@gillians\_voice



## Together for nature

It was *the* best little hide! A hibiscus bush with the perfect little-girl-sized hollow, where I would spend whole mornings, watching butterflies and jewel-like sunbirds flitting and darting nervously from flower to flower. I had no access to field guides and no idea what the birds were called. To be perfectly honest, it didn't really matter because I was quite content with just watching and occasionally trying to draw what I saw in a little notebook. This was my Kenya in the late seventies. No internet, no clubs, no daytime telly, no distractions — just the world outside to explore and discover.

With time and freedom on my side, I got to know the many moods of the natural world. Beautiful flowers hid thorns, lush green grass hid snakes, the same wondrous sun, that gently warmed up the day, would birth violent afternoon storms that, in turn, gave way to the cooling sweet smell of the earth. I loved it all. All this gave me a profound sense, even as a little girl, that everything in nature had its place.

My younger self had yet to learn that this is what biologists call diversity — the single word that describes the infinite possibilities, expressions and connections of life on earth. From a biologist's perspective, all this variety is not just the spice of life, it is the source of nature's resilience and adaptability.

Viewed with this lens it is hard, therefore, to believe that there is still the need to debate

diversity in the conservation and environmental sector but clearly we do. From senior leadership roles to volunteer positions, just 0.6% are from black, mixed and other ethnic groups. This is a famously quoted figure and one that likely extends to under-representation from white working class backgrounds as well.

One thing that we can all agree on is that we have the fight of our lives right now in meeting the twin challenges of the climate and ecological crisis. As 2020 is set to go down in history as 'one hell of a year', there is a precious opportunity to set a course for a truly 21<sup>st</sup> century mind-set. If we are ever really going to walk the walk and actually *do* things differently, we are going to need the full power of diverse voices and perspectives to forge resilience and adaptability in a fresh, new system that serves everyone and everything, and exploits nothing and no one.

The Wildlife Trusts are committed to putting equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of our movement. Find out more:

[wildlifetrusts.org/wild-about-inclusion](https://wildlifetrusts.org/wild-about-inclusion)

### WILDER IS HEALTHIER

Research published by The Wildlife Trusts in 2019 showed that children experience profound and diverse benefits through regular contact with nature. It's essential that all children (and adults) have the opportunity to experience nature in their daily lives. But 42% of people from minority ethnic backgrounds live in the most green-space deprived areas, compared to just 15% of white people\*. We need at least 30% of land to be restored for nature, helping wildlife recover and bringing nature into everyone's daily lives.

**Gillian Burke** is a biologist and wildlife presenter and has recently become vice president of The Wildlife Trusts.

\*England's green space gap. Friends of the Earth

## FOCUS ON... Our Trustees



### Lifelong passion

I've had a lifelong interest in nature. It started from childhood and part of it never left me. When I took up nature photography, I expanded my knowledge, learned even more and that passion doubled. I had been a member of The Wildlife Trusts for years, before volunteering to become a trustee, first at Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and now with LRWT. It's always been interesting and I've never regretted it. My main driver is a desire to see the Trust safeguard nature as an essential part of our daily lives. Even though I'm retired, I bring professional skills from my work life. Being a trustee seemed a natural fit. One of the things I enjoy, in addition to the importance of the work, is the chance to work with people from different backgrounds who share a common purpose.

### Important and rewarding

The role of Council is to ensure good governance as a charitable body. It's important that we get this right; it's how our members, partners and authorities know that we are fit for purpose.

**We have a pledge to increase our diversity and inclusion so we can better represent our local communities.**

Our role covers legal and regulatory requirements as a charity, a company, an employer and a landowner. Trustees also

### Could you contribute to nature's recovery?

We're looking for new trustees to join our Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust Council of Trustees. **Tony Clarke**, our new Chair of Trustees tells us about his own experiences and what you could bring to the charity.

have responsibilities to provide strategic direction and oversight to tackle the challenges going forward. We look at new and creative ways to address the severe loss of wildlife, climate change and their combined impacts on Leicestershire and Rutland. Being part of a successful Wildlife Trust can be very rewarding.

### Diversity and inclusion

To be an effective governing body, we need the right mix of skills, backgrounds and ways of thinking that play into the work of Council. This includes increasing our diversity and inclusion.

You don't need to have had any previous trustee experience. We are looking for people who have the skills necessary to fulfil the role of being a trustee, show a passion and enthusiasm for the work of LRWT, along with a diversity of backgrounds and thinking all of which generates lively discussion and ensures quality decision making.

I'd urge anyone who is interested in helping local wildlife to have a look at the role description. See if it's right for you! If you have any questions or want to find out more, we want to hear from you. You might be able to make a meaningful contribution and we can support you in doing that.

### Find out more

Our trustees bring a diversity of skills, interests and knowledge to Council. We are recruiting for up to four new trustees and we would love to hear from you. You can find out more, apply or contact us for an informal chat.

[Visit lrwt.org.uk/trustees](https://www.lrwt.org.uk/trustees)



TONY CLARKE IS OUR NEW CHAIR OF TRUSTEES © TONY CLARKE



# Our Osprey Odyssey



The osprey nest at Manton Bay is one of the most iconic nests in the UK.



This year we're celebrating 25 years since the start of the Rutland Osprey Project, one of the UK's greatest conservation success stories. The work of the project has led to the triumphant return of this majestic bird of prey to Rutland Water. But its legacy is greater than we ever could have anticipated. Helen McIntyre was there from the start.

16th July 1996. Having immobilised the Anglian Water transit van, we were travelling south from the Scottish Highlands back to Rutland in a BMW, carrying a most precious cargo: an historic (if slightly inappropriate) way to embark on one of the UK's most experimental reintroduction projects. As my next seven years proved, there was no rule book to follow.

**In our lifetime we have observed a catastrophic decline of wildlife, so when we retired 20 years ago, we decided to try and redress the balance. This involved volunteering with the Rutland Osprey Project, which we have seen develop into having a worldwide impact.**

Ann and Tom Price, volunteer

**The most exciting days were when the fronts of the aviaries were lowered and the young ospreys from Scotland were offered their freedom.**

Barrie Galpin, volunteer

Water Nature Reserve, and bird of prey expert Roy Dennis. The team grew from a small band of volunteers to include project assistants, education officers and over 100 volunteers.

### Learning curves

The project consisted of two release sites, one on Brown's Island opposite the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre and another overlooking one of the lagoons. Patient hours were spent coaxing the four-week-old birds to feed on tiny scraps of fish, all by hand, giving us an insight into their characters, with their diurnal activities monitored via a CCTV screen from a tiny hut below. Every wing stretch, interaction and observation was logged.

I was the Rutland Osprey Project's first Project Officer, recruited to care for our first cohort of ospreys. From eight birds in our first year, ultimately 64 chicks were translocated under licence by 2001. Integral to getting the project off the ground were the innovation and drive of Tim Appleton, the warden of Rutland

As the summer wore on, the physical and emotional investment intensified. The responsibility could feel overwhelming, but despite setbacks we learned invaluable lessons and evolved our practises, benefitting from more relaxed licensing conditions that allowed us to take older and stronger birds from →



Ospreys have an oily coating on their feathers to keep them dry - not that this osprey looks to be enjoying the rain!



“Field Officer John Wright and I were welcoming 03(97) back from migration. But what was that trailing underneath him? Metres of baler-twine caught in his talons. As he took off the twine snagged, leaving him dangling, flapping helplessly below the nest. Miraculously, his frantic struggling released him.”

Tricia Galpin, volunteer

smaller broods. The release pens were moved onto Lax Hill, too; the elevated views, sheltered northerly aspect, open access and multiple perching sites made it the perfect base for the young birds to grow in confidence and learn the landscape of their lowland home.

### Hopes realised

We had to wait several tense years before our hopes were realised. One morning in May 1999, a colour-ringed

osprey was spotted in Manton Bay. This was followed by a second, the indomitable 03(97); this male, released in 1997, fathered no less than 32 young over the next eighteen years, earning him the nickname Mr Rutland, his own slot on *BBC Springwatch*, a dedicated following and his own Wikipedia page!

There were many causes for celebration; the first release day, the first returns, the first satellite tracked migration and, in 2001, the first chick to hatch in central

England for 150 years. I also recall the sense of camaraderie, not just from our team, but from the reserve wardens, Anglian Water staff, our volunteers, and the public. The project had not been without its critics; however, I hold a sense of gratitude uppermost in my mind today. In a world where rewilding and reintroductions are more readily accepted, I am proud to have played my part a quarter of a century ago.

**Tim Mackrill was fifteen when he started volunteering for the Rutland Osprey Project. He has worked in bird of prey conservation for his whole career, and now for the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation. He shares the legacy of the project.**

One of the successes of the Rutland Osprey Project is that it completely changed the distribution of the osprey in England and Wales. When 03(97) raised a single chick for the first time in 2001, there were only two pairs of ospreys in

England and none in Wales. The other English pair bred at Bassenthwaite Lake in the Lake District; these have spread south across the Scottish Border, but the establishment of a small population of osprey who regarded central England as home was a step-change in the UK restoration of the species.

As translocated birds returned to Rutland, two males released at the reservoir settled at almost the same latitude at two sites in Wales. 11(98) bred for eleven years in the Glaslyn valley with the peaks of Snowdonia as a backdrop. Together with an unringed female he raised 26 chicks to fledging. Two of their male offspring went on to breed in Kielder Forest, helping ospreys recolonise Northumberland, while another two males have joined the burgeoning Cumbrian population.

Meanwhile further successes in Rutland have provided a valuable source of female birds for the growing Welsh population.



Welsh populations have been bolstered by Rutland ospreys.

Three Rutland females have nested at Cors Dyfi in Montgomeryshire, while two other birds, 24(10) and 5F(12), completed a quintet of Rutland-fledged females that bred successfully in Wales between 2011 and 2020.

### A bright future

By 2020 there were at least 28 pairs of breeding ospreys in England and Wales, with many newly-returned young birds waiting to add to the growing number of successful nests. With the Scottish population now at 300 breeding pairs, the future for ospreys in the UK looks bright.

Ospreys are now so synonymous with Rutland that it is easy to forget that it is only 25 years since Helen drove the first birds south from Scotland. An osprey sculpture adorns one of the roundabouts as you enter the nearby town of Oakham, while a restaurant, beer and estate agent are all named after Rutland's most famous summer visitor. →

“After birding for more than 30 years I was ill with a brain tumour, which amongst other things took away much of my memory. Returning to Rutland Water was a real therapy and helped rebuild my memory. I have been grateful to spend time watching the ospreys and sharing that with others.”

Martin Hathaway, volunteer

Thank you to the many people who have volunteered on the project over the last 25 years and to you, our members, for supporting us.





**Dawn in Manton Bay after a nightshift watching the nest. Mornings as the sun climbs, the horses nuzzle, the cattle chase. Afternoons with excited young Osprey Ambassadors. Nights around the table in West Africa with good friends.**

Ken Davies, volunteer



There is genuine excitement when the first osprey returns after its winter sojourn in West Africa. A self-sustaining population is now established in the area, with ten breeding pairs rearing 24 and nineteen chicks respectively over the last two summers, taking the overall total from 2001 to 191.

**Changing perceptions**

The Rutland Osprey Project now has an international legacy, leading to similar projects across Europe. Osprey translocations have been undertaken in the United States since the late 1970s, but this was the first this side of the Atlantic. Translocation projects, based on the methods refined in Rutland have now taken place in three parts of Spain, as well as Italy, Portugal, Switzerland and France. These projects are helping to restore populations of ospreys where they have been lost due to the impacts of human persecution and pesticides, like DDT.

Perceptions of reintroductions in the UK are changing, too. Early opponents of the project suggested money could be better spent conserving rarer, less charismatic species. While these arguments regularly recur, there is a growing realisation among pragmatic

conservationists and the public, that with a looming ecological crisis we must use all tools available to us, not only to conserve nature, but to restore it. When done properly, the reintroduction of missing species, like ospreys, white-tailed eagles and white storks not only reinstates part of our lost wildlife heritage, but brings hope.

**Working together**

I was lucky to manage the Rutland Osprey Project for over ten years, and can vouch that iconic species play a crucial role in inspiring people about nature. Thousands of people have visited the Lyndon Visitor Centre since the first osprey pair bred at Manton Bay in 2007, and the sense of awe they get is palpable.

Similarly, the osprey education programme has opened the eyes of young people to the beauty and fragility of the natural world, from Rutland to The Gambia, all along the flyway. The Rutland ospreys are international travellers who link communities thousands of miles apart and serve as an important reminder that if we are to conserve the natural world, we must all work together. There can't be many better legacies than that.

Tim Appleton rings osprey 33(10)



**“ All my life I have enjoyed stepping over the line to help nature and take a lead in what I believe is the best way forward for conservation. With the Rutland Osprey Project we took the bold initiative to think outside the box and bring back a species lost to England for more than 150 years. I am delighted to have instigated this with a great team that has gone onto inspire other reintroductions and help to kickstart rewilding across our countryside. ”**

Tim Appleton

**A traveller of the ancient sky-roads. A powerful messenger made from feather, blood and bone. Connecting us with communities across the world, the osprey reminds us that its future and our own, depend upon the shared protection of people and the wild spaces of this planet we call home.**

Gill Lewis, author

**Ospreys challenge us to think about the changing and complex relationships between 'Nature and People'; be that conservation, educational outreach, partnerships, media, ecotourism benefits, conflict avoidance or the power of 'celebrity talons' in a local landscape.**

Dr Rob Lambert, University of Nottingham

**Osprey books**

There are many beautiful books about ospreys for both children and adults to enjoy...

- The Rutland Water Ospreys*, Tim Mackrill (Bloomsbury, 2015)
  - Be an Osprey Expert*, Jackie and Pete Murray (2015)
  - Ozzie's Migration*, Ken Davies (2016)
  - Ozzie's Return*, Ken Davies (2017)
  - Ozzie Leads the Way*, Ken Davies (2017)
  - Sky Hawk*, Gill Lewis (OUP, 2012)
- Available to buy from the Lyndon Visitor Centre and online at NHBS.



**Global SUCCESS**

There could be as many as **HALF A MILLION** ospreys around the world.



From extinction between 1916 and 1959, **c.330 PAIRS** now breed in the UK.



Ospreys from the UK migrate over **3,000 MILES** to winter in West Africa.

The fastest UK-Africa migration recorded took just **11 DAYS**, completed by our own 30(05).

Whilst the average lifespan is just nine years, "Lady" of Loch of the Lowes lived to **29**.

**Partnerships**

This project is made possible thanks to many partners, including Anglian Water, NatureScot, Natural England and the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation.





Taking off again can be tricky for ospreys when they've caught a big fish!

## 6 places to see ospreys

The sight of a fishing osprey can be breathtaking. They hover above the water on flapping outstretched wings, the pale plumage of their stomachs camouflaging them against the clouds in the sky. They spot their meal and stoop swiftly, plunging feet-first into the water before, if they're lucky, emerging with a fish. Using their specially adapted 'zygodactylic' feet, they will turn the fish around to make it more streamlined, before finding a suitable perch to feast. Thanks to osprey projects around the UK you can watch fishing ospreys on rivers, lakes, reservoirs and over the sea. Look for them from March to October, breeding in summer and migrating in spring and autumn.

### Be amazed by ospreys for yourself



- 1 Loch of the Lowes, Scottish Wildlife Trust**  
Hosting breeding ospreys since 1969, this was the home of the famous 'Lady' who nested here for 24 years and raised 50 chicks. A new female osprey arrived in 2015 and is now breeding in her place.  
**Where:** Dunkeld, PH8 0HH
- 2 Kielder Forest Park, Northumberland Wildlife Trust**  
A viewpoint at Kielder Waterside gives visitors an opportunity to watch ospreys perching on a platform at Bakethin nature reserve, providing fantastic views.  
**Where:** Kielder Water, NE48 1BT
- 3 Foulshaw Moss, Cumbria Wildlife Trust**  
In 2014, a pair of ospreys successfully bred here for the first time. There is a viewing platform to watch the birds as they soar above this special habitat.  
**Where:** Witherslack, LA11 6SN
- 4 Cors Dyfi, Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust**  
The Dyfi Osprey Project has a visitor centre and a 360 Observatory less than 200m from the nest. The osprey population here has benefited directly from visiting birds from Rutland.  
**Where:** Dyfi Estuary, SY20 8SR
- 5 Rutland Water, Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust**  
A short walk from the Lyndon Visitor Centre, watch fishing and nesting ospreys at the iconic Manton Bay nest from two hides, with volunteers on hand to help.  
**Where:** Oakham, LE15 8RN
- 6 Ham Common viewpoint, Poole Harbour, Dorset**  
Birds of Poole Harbour partnered with the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation and Wildlife Windows in 2017, aiming to restore a breeding population of ospreys on the South Coast. See them on migration and hopefully nesting here, too!  
**Where:** Poole, BH15 4ZL

### Can't get to one of these sites?

You can watch osprey activity from the comfort of your home on our osprey webcam!  
[lrwt.org.uk/rutlandospreys](http://lrwt.org.uk/rutlandospreys)

*Covid-19*  
Please check with all locations directly before visiting to make sure they are open.



# Take a summer stroll from Lyndon Visitor Centre

The Lyndon Visitor Centre is the gateway to the Rutland Osprey Project and home to a wide array of wildlife, from bluebells to water voles, making it a vibrant place to explore in the spring and summer. Abi Mustard shares her favourite summer stroll...



The Lyndon Visitor Centre is situated on the south shore of the reservoir and is part of the larger Rutland Water Nature Reserve. It was built over 35 years ago and officially opened by Sir David Attenborough. This year, it has undergone a refurbishment with murals and new interpretation and the shop offers locally produced gifts and refreshments along with eco-products that echo our vision of



environmental sustainability. A mixture of meadows, wetland and woodland make it a beautiful spot in the summer.

Begin at the Lyndon Visitor Centre **1**. Take a moment to look at the bird feeders, which are visited by charms of goldfinches, great spotted woodpeckers, siskins and blue tits. You can watch live footage of the osprey nest at Manton Bay.

Follow the track west from the centre; at the gate, take the right-hand fork **2**. The air will be full of birdsong; pause to listen for the tumbling notes of a willow warbler or the fast trill of a wren. Soon, the tracks will converge and split again. Bear right and after fifteen minutes you'll reach Waderscape hide **3** where you can get fantastic views of ospreys. Reed buntings perch on top of the bulrushes and sedge warblers dive through the reedbed.

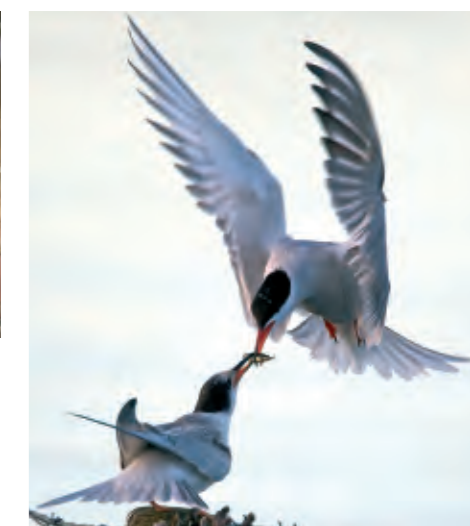
Continue your walk towards Shallow Water hide **4**. Look into the tops of the ash trees for a clattering of jackdaws; this is one of their favourite places to nest. You might see tunnels and footprints made by deer and badgers disappearing into the brambles. From the hide windows, you can follow the graceful flight of a common tern or great crested grebes gliding across the water.

On the way back to the centre, follow the top track with the meadows on your left **5**. Admire the bright colours in the grass, starting with a beautiful carpet of yellow rattle. A closer look will reveal the purples, pinks and greens of orchids and clovers.



There is a picnic area in the car park **6** to enjoy a bite to eat before exploring the rest of the reserve. Returning to the visitor centre, this time head east along the woodland trail **7**. You may be hit with a strong, musky scent of a fox if the wind is in the right direction. Cross over the cycle track and head into the conifer woodland **8**. In the spring, bluebells flower and foxgloves stand tall.

As the path splits, turn left and continue up the hill to Woodland hide **9**. In the treetops, you might spot a small, secretive goldcrest. This is the best place to appreciate the sounds of spring, from the effervescent song of the blackcap to the subtle, high-pitched squeak of a treecreeper. This is one of the most peaceful parts of the nature reserve and a perfect place to complete your visit.



## Fact file

Located off Lyndon Road, on the south shore of Rutland Water. Follow the drive down to the car park. There are toilets, refreshments and a shop. The paths are accessible for users of wheelchairs, walking aids and pushchairs, as are many of the hides. There is an electric buggy available for hire (phone to book). Dogs are welcome on leads - ask for a treat for your companion at the desk! Nearest postcode: LE15 8RN Size: 100ha Entry fee: £6/adult, £5/Concession, £3.50/Children, £16/Family For further information, please see our Nature Reserves Guide or [lrwt.org.uk](http://lrwt.org.uk)



We welcome groups of all ages to Rutland Water Nature Reserve.

Please respect Government social distancing guidelines when visiting our nature reserves and check our website for updates on closures.



# MY WILD LIFE



Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, stay healthy and give something back.

**“It’s a huge privilege to be involved.”**

Maureen, Glen Parva, Leicester

**W**e’re meeting people in Leicestershire and Rutland who are making a difference for wildlife. Lucy McRobert chats to Maureen Jerman from Glen Parva who has been volunteering at the Rutland Osprey Project for ten years.



### What first inspired you to start volunteering?

I started volunteering in 2010, I think, but have done more in the past seven or eight years. I always wanted to volunteer for a conservation project when I retired – well I’m 71 now and still working in the health service, but it’s worth it, even though I’m busy! Tim Mackrill gave a talk to my local Rotary club about the project. It’s all his fault! He was so passionate that it made me want to get involved. When

### “I also volunteer for the winter work parties every week, which is more hands-on habitat management.”

you get started you meet lots of people and they’re so enthusiastic, you can’t help but join in.

#### What activities do you get up to?

There are different areas that you can get involved in. I try to volunteer to do osprey monitoring sessions once a fortnight in the breeding season. This involves watching the osprey nest, making a note of feeding and behaviours, and showing the birds to the public. I also volunteer for the winter work parties every week, which is more hands-on habitat management. I enjoy them so much that I have organised my work life around them. I’ve helped on the Osprey Cruises from Whitwell and I’m part of the recycling team at Birdfair. The ospreys are all characters. We meet different visitors, too; there are those who know more than us and those who are just enthralled, especially children.

#### What’s your favourite thing about volunteering?

I grew up in Leicestershire surrounded by the countryside, so I’ve been interested in nature since childhood. I find the environment at Rutland Water relaxes you, cleanses your mind and takes you back to the beauty of



nature. It’s uncluttered and emotionally very soothing. If your mind is battling problems, it seems to help with resolution. The people I’ve met, especially the project leads, I’ve learned so much from them. Whilst I love chatting to visitors, honestly, my favourite shifts are first thing in the morning when there’s no one about. It’s just about the wildlife doing its thing. It’s so peaceful.

#### What was it like visiting The Gambia with the team?

I’ve visited The Gambia with Rutland Osprey Project four times and it’s a wonderful thing to be involved in.



We leave the materialistic world behind and visit this special place with like-minded people, who just want to experience wildlife. It refreshes my soul. It was an opportunity to go somewhere new with knowledgeable and experienced people. There was a sense of trepidation the first time, because you don’t know what to expect and you’re going with people you don’t really know but getting to know them, making new friends and lots of laughter were the best bits. The flight roughly follows the migration route and to see ospreys in their winter home is amazing; to find a Rutland osprey (without the guidance of a satellite tag) by chance was the icing on the cake.

### “You should give anything you’re interested in a go at least once.”

A typical day usually involves an early rise with breakfast, then we’re out watching birds and wildlife in different habitats. It’s amazing seeing the ospreys fishing over the sea with the tides. It’s very hot in the middle of the day, so we have lunch and then head out later looking for different species. We also visit the local schools that the Rutland Osprey Project works with. We meet the kids and teachers, see the classroom. The children will show us pictures and write poems, and we take them books. They’re all excited and smiling, and they all want to shake hands. It’s so real and rewarding.

#### What would you say to someone who was thinking of conservation volunteering?

You should give anything you’re interested in a go at least once. I’ve learned new skills and lots from other people. I enjoy being part of a team with a common focus and spending time with people who share my interests. Widening your sphere of friends is hugely beneficial, particularly in later life. The Rutland Osprey Project has so much history and I have loved watching it evolve. It has enabled a species to come back and the population to grow. Whilst I’m only a minor part of that, it’s a huge privilege to be involved.



Contact us if you or someone you know could feature in a future issue of *Wild!* We’re looking for inspiring stories from people like you!

# Companion planting

Feed yourself and your local wildlife with these tips from **Kate Bradbury**.

## Nasturtium

*Tropaeolum majus*

Nasturtiums can lure aphids from beans and egg-laying butterflies from brassicas. You can also transfer white butterfly caterpillars on to nasturtiums from your cabbages and kales. Their flowers attract bumblebees, the main pollinator of tomatoes.

## Thyme

*Thymus vulgaris*

This low-growing herb can deter blackfly from broad beans and roses. You can also make a tea from its leaves and spray it on brassicas to prevent whitefly.

## Mint

*Mentha spicata*

Its strongly scented leaves deter insects with a taste for carrots, onions and brassicas, including flea beetle. Best grown in a pot as it can grow out of control in open ground.

## Beans

*Fabaceae*

Brassicas and salad crops need nitrogen-rich soil to grow well. Plant them alongside beans, whose roots fix nitrogen into the soil.

## Marigold

*Calendula officinalis*

Its leaves repel whitefly from tomatoes and can lure aphids from beans. Its flowers attract pollinators as well as aphid predators like ladybirds, lacewings and hoverflies. Its roots work with soil fungi to deliver more nutrients to other plants.

Companion planting is an age-old tradition of organic gardening, designed to help plants grow better, aid pollination, deter insects from munching your crops and encourage the predators that eat them. It basically involves the planting of wildflowers or other crops alongside your main crop — think of them as little friends or guardians, there to keep your plants happy and safe.

Most companion plants are strongly scented and therefore can deter insects in search of their host plant. Others attract more beneficial insects, such as ladybirds and lacewings, which then prey on aphids and other crop eaters. Some companion plants are 'sacrificial', meaning you grow them so that insects lay eggs on them instead of your prized crop. Others can benefit the soil, such as nitrogen-fixing legumes, which help leafy plants grow better, or calendula, whose roots work particularly well with soil fungi, which aid the uptake of soil nutrients. All of this helps you work in harmony with nature, protect your crops and help them grow better. What's not to like?

On my allotment I grow calendula with tomatoes, onions and garlic with carrots and parsnips, and nasturtiums with beans and brassica crops. I also grow nettles, fennel, teasels and other wildflowers

along my allotment boundaries. These are fantastic wildlife plants, and so bring in a range of insects and birds. Nettles give me a head start on other allotmenters: coming into leaf early in the year, nettles attract the nettle aphid, *Microlophium carnosum*. This feeds only on nettles and emerges from hibernation sooner than other species, so attracts aphid predators — such as ladybirds, hoverflies and lacewings — early in the year. This means the predators are already on hand when the blackbean aphid starts breeding on my broad beans. Then in summer, fennel flowers attract hoverflies, which then lay eggs on aphid clusters — I rarely have a problem with aphids. Other wildflowers attract pollinating bees, which stay to fertilise my bean and tomato flowers. I also like to grow caterpillar foodplants for moths and butterflies because they're nice to have around. I like to think of them as my companions, so companion planting can benefit the gardener, too!

Gardens and allotments are a vital habitat for many of our struggling insects. Get tips for helping them at:

 [wildlifetrusts.org/take-action-insects](https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/take-action-insects)



**Kate Bradbury**

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

ILLUSTRATION BY HANNAH BAILEY, PHOTO © SARAH CUTTLE



# Return of a Star Songster

*Conservation officer Chris Hill shares the story of the first nightingale recorded in Leicestershire for 22 years.*

In 1924, BBC Radio broadcast Beatrice Harrison playing her cello accompanied by a nightingale. It was the first time wildlife was broadcast live and would run every year until World War Two.

A highlight of my job is chatting to visitors on our nature reserves, exchanging wildlife news and sightings. So, when someone said “there’s a nightingale up there. Top of the track on your left, singing from time to time” I couldn’t quite believe it. Rutland Water had three singing males in 2020 and I have heard them at Ketton Quarry in the past. But Cossington Meadows? I wanted to believe him but didn’t. I still feel guilty.

As I approached, I could clearly hear it: a nightingale buried deep in the undergrowth, bubbling away, doing its best to attract a passing female.

If you’ve never heard a nightingale, imagine a combination of whistles, trills and gurgles, often much louder than other birds of a similar size. Only unpaired males sing regularly at night, with older birds having a larger repertoire of songs. Once paired, singing during the day is assumed to be important in defending the bird’s territory. When the young have hatched, the male will join in feeding them and cease singing altogether. Birds singing in June are probably unpaired males attempting to attract a late season female.

**“...a nightingale buried deep in the undergrowth, bubbling away, doing its best to attract a passing female.”**

Slightly larger than a robin, plain brown with a reddish tail and buff-to-white below, the ‘little-brown-job’ plumage might fool you into mistaking the nightingale for something more common. In fact, they are a long-distance migrant chat, in the same family as the robin. They spend the winter in tropical West Africa and the four summer months in the UK. You’ll be incredibly lucky to see one because of their habit of skulking in thick scrub.

## Decades of decline

Data from the BTO suggests that nightingales have declined by 90% since 1970 and are on the Red List for species of conservation concern. Between 4,000 and 5,000 pairs breed in the UK. Unsurprisingly, their range has contracted enormously with southeast England being their only stronghold. →



## Scrubland songsters to listen out for this summer

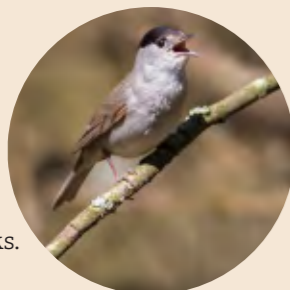
### SONG THRUSH

Proudly sings in repetitive phrases of twos and threes, perched in the open.



### BLACKCAP

Fluty, fluid and very melodic. A series of relaxed whistles without scratches, rasps or clicks.



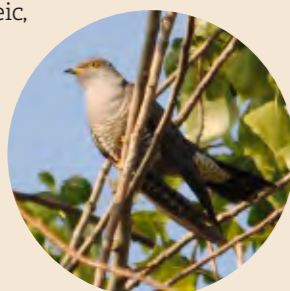
### WHITETHROAT

Scratchy and raspy without a true melody. Often sings in flight a foot or two above hedges.



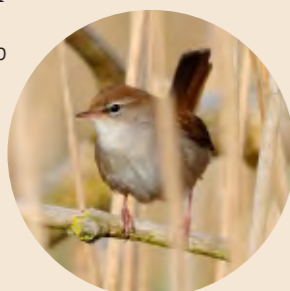
### CUCKOO

Onomatopoeic, will call its name from trees loudly and repetitively. Now sadly uncommon.



### CETTI'S WARBLER

An explosion of melody in a short sharp burst, the singer often buried in the bushes.



**“Cossington Meadows has some attractive features for scrubland birds. Areas that may appear untidy are vital.”**

at the scrub base, so if we left the trees to grow unchecked, they would eventually predominate over brambles and woody shrubs such as hawthorn, blackthorn and buckthorn.

One site in southern England is perfecting its pioneering management techniques, working with nature to restore habitats through rewilding. At Knepp Wildland near Horsham, West Sussex, nightingales, turtle doves, cuckoos and purple emperor butterflies are flourishing. This 1,400ha farm is bucking the trend in catastrophic wildlife declines.

It is easy to get carried away when something so rare and so much of a part of British folklore turns up, but we cannot get complacent. More hard work is needed across our counties, for nightingales and a myriad of other species. One evening last year, a resident of Sileby camping in their back garden was lucky to hear the nightingale. I hope, in 2021 and beyond, they will once again be serenaded nightly by the sound of a singing nightingale. 📻

*With thanks to Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological Society and the British Trust for Ornithology.*

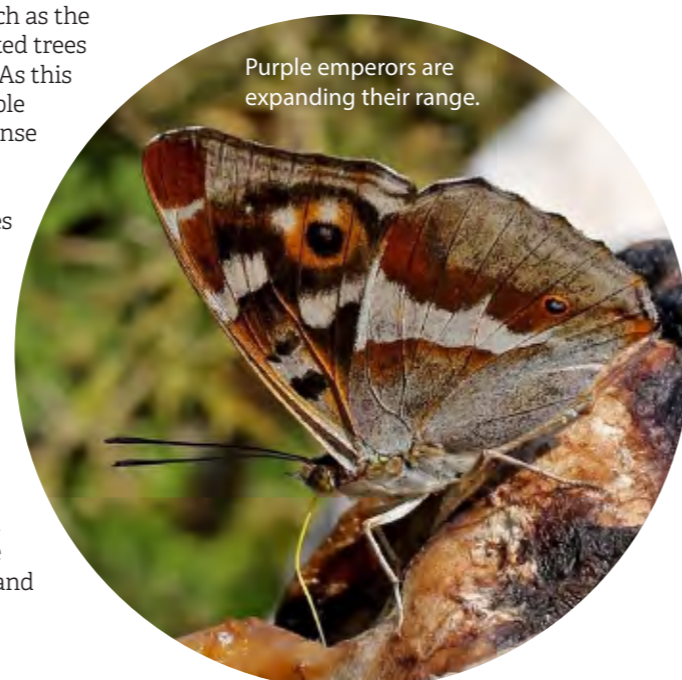
Cossington Meadows has a mosaic of habitats, including some luscious 'messy' bits - perfect for scrubland birds.

For every ten birds singing 50 years ago, there is only one now. This is the first heard in Leicestershire for 22 years.

It is thought that nightingales once inhabited thorny patches in areas where grazing by large herbivores, such as the auroch and wild horse, prevented trees from forming a closed canopy. As this habitat was lost, it was inevitable that species which relied on dense patches of scrub and open woodland would see their population shrink. Nightingales adapted accordingly, moving into managed woodland, but the cessation of woodland coppicing, coupled with mechanisation that enabled unproductive land to be cleared for cultivation, led to stark declines.

Nightingales are at their northern limit in Britain and it was thought that, with climate change, their range would expand

further northwards and their numbers would begin to rise, a pattern seen in other species. Some butterflies like the purple emperor have expanded their range, the



Purple emperors are expanding their range.

small red-eyed damselfly has moved impressively through England and little egrets stand shoulder-to-shoulder with grey herons.

Sadly, this hasn't been the case for the nightingale. Continued habitat loss, overzealous hedge cutting and a rising deer population have had a detrimental effect on the dense understorey. An increased use of insecticides and cattle wormers coupled with issues on their migration routes and at wintering grounds have impacted populations still further.

### A haven for birds

Cossington Meadows has some attractive features for scrubland birds. Areas that may appear untidy are vital. The proximity to water may also help but is not thought to be essential. Grazing is integral to the management of the reserve. Too many cattle and woodland regeneration is inhibited; too few and the site would eventually be covered in a dense canopy of trees. Nightingales require structure



COSSINGTON MEADOWS © DAVE CUNDY, GREAT WHITE EGRET © ANDREW COOPER

SONG THRUSH © BOB COYLE, BLACKCAP © JON HAWKINS, WHITETHROAT © ANDREW PARKINSON/2020VISION, CUCKOO © & CETTI'S WARBLER AMY LEWIS, PURPLE EMPEROR © BRIAN HOLLAND



# Jewels in the Crown



**Graham Finch is the county recorder for beetles in Leicestershire and Rutland. He shares some of his star species and what you can do to support these humble creatures.**



Beetles make up more than a third of all known species on earth: around 400,000 worldwide. They are unbelievably diverse in shape, size, colour and habits and live in almost every habitat. Out of the 4,131 species found in the British Isles, nearly half have been recorded in Leicestershire and Rutland. The earliest reliable records are from the late 18th century, when the celebrated poet George Crabbe wrote his *Natural History of the Vale of Belvoir*; in this, he lists 41 species. In those early days it was about collecting specimens, but now the emphasis is on recording.

Our database currently stands at over 88,000 records and comprises over 2,000 species; even so, we are only scratching the surface with our knowledge of our beetle fauna. Beetles haven't yet attracted the attention they deserve, and I think this is a great shame! There are so many beetles and so few recorders! As such, whilst it is relatively straightforward to record new species in the region, it's far more difficult to determine whether one has gone truly extinct.

## New arrivals

First recorded for the county in 2018, the alder leaf beetle *Agelastica alni* now has a steady string of records, the majority concentrated around Albert Village Lake in northwest Leicestershire. A bright beauty measuring approximately seven millimetres, this large and shiny blue-black beetle is most likely to be found on alder leaves.

Not particularly welcome by gardeners but a handsome beetle all the same is the rosemary beetle *Chrysolina americana*. As the name suggests, it feeds on rosemary, as well as thyme and lavender. Originally from southern Europe, the rosemary beetle has been colonising Leicestershire since 2012 and steadily spreading ever since. Not surprisingly, virtually all our records come from gardens!

*Rhinocyllus conicus* was once mostly found in the coastal regions of southern England. This weevil has been spreading northwards and was added to the county list in 2014, where a mating pair were recorded at Croft Pasture Nature Reserve. It has rapidly become widespread and is found on various thistles in open situations anywhere in the area. →



AGELASTICA ALNI © GRAHAM FINCH



RHINOCYLLUS-CONICUS © GRAHAM FINCH

The rosemary beetle has spread rapidly since first being found breeding in central London in the late 1990s.



Green tiger beetles are one of our fastest insects.

GREEN TIGER BEETLE © CHRIS LAWRENCE



### Locals icons

The open sandy tracks created by the trampling of visitors to Bradgate Park provide the perfect conditions for the green tiger beetle *Cicindela campestris*. A ferocious predator, they hunt spiders, ants and caterpillars on heaths, grasslands and sand dunes. It is one of our fastest insects and can also be seen along the well-worn paths at Ketton Quarry Nature Reserve.

The bronze *Carabus granulatus* can be elusive, but when found it's frequently found in numbers, particularly along the River Soar floodplain. A large metallic ground beetle, it is regularly discovered

under deadwood on the ground. It is also habitually found during flooding, taking refuge above the water line under the bark of partly submerged logs.

The large and ferocious-looking lesser stag beetle *Dorcus parallelipedus* can be frequently seen throughout the counties inside the wet soft rotten branches of deciduous trees. The adults are excellent fliers, mainly nocturnal and are occasionally attracted to moth traps.

**“Out of the 4,131 species found in the British Isles, nearly half have been recorded in Leicestershire and Rutland.”**



CARABUS GRANULATUS © GRAHAM FINCH



LESSER STAG BEETLE © GRAHAM FINCH

PLATYCIS MINUTUS © GRAHAM FINCH



### Specialist survivors

A species of dung beetle, *Onthophagus coenobita* is usually found in herbivore dung, so unless you are poking around in cowpats, you are not likely to encounter one! Dung beetles play a vital role in our ecosystems, both eating and burying dung and pumping valuable nutrients back into the soil. Without them we would be, very literally, in a mess.

*Platycis minutus* is another specialist. It is one of the saproxylic species, meaning it relies on dead, decaying or fungus-infected broad-leaved wood: the older the trees the better! The elytra are red with raised longitudinal lines, whilst the head and legs are black.



ONTHOPHAGUS COENOBITA © GRAHAM FINCH



*Cryptocephalus aureolus* is a dazzling bright metallic green, in contrast to the yellow buttercup flowers it is usually found on. Ketton Quarry is the most reliable site, found from early May and throughout the summer. Uncommon and local in Leicestershire and Rutland; before March 2015, there were only four records for this species. 🍷

### Resources

- 1. NatureSpot & Leicestershire Entomological Society**  
Record your sightings and learn more at [naturespot.org.uk](http://naturespot.org.uk)
- 2. The Leicestershire Coleopterists, 200 Years of Beetle-Hunting**  
Derek Lott (Loughborough Naturalists Club, 2009).

## Bring back our beetles!

This year, The Wildlife Trusts have teamed up with the RHS to celebrate beetles in our gardens. You can learn more about the vital role that beetles play in our ecosystems and about how you can help them by downloading our Wild About Gardens booklet.



### How you can help

- 1. Ditch the pesticides** and encourage natural predators instead, like predatory beetles, hedgehogs, birds and frogs.
- 2. Create habitats** like log piles, rock piles, ponds, wildflower patches, compost heaps and areas of long grass.
- 3. Try companion planting** to look after yourself and your garden naturally; find out how on pp22-23!

Find out more [wildaboutgardens.org.uk](http://wildaboutgardens.org.uk)

CRYPTOCEPHALUS AREOLUS © GRAHAM FINCH



Get outside with the whole family this summer.



# Events Programme


May - September 2021



## Local Group Online Talks

Book your place: [lrwt.org.uk/online-talks](http://lrwt.org.uk/online-talks)

Our Local groups have put together a wonderful programme of online talks with some fantastic speakers. We are delighted to offer these for free; however, with all Local Group events cancelled, any donations you can give will support our work and help cover costs of running the talks. Visit [lrwt.org.uk/donate](http://lrwt.org.uk/donate).

Help us celebrate 25 years of the Rutland Osprey Project, with some of our online events themed around these fascinating creatures! Look for the osprey symbol. 

More events will be added throughout the year, so check our online programme for new additions.



### Local Groups

#### Charnwood Local Group

Woodhouse Eaves.  
Contact Kate Moore on 01509 891005, [katemooore123@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:katemooore123@yahoo.co.uk), or John Spencer on 0116 236 4279.

#### Great Bowden Local Group

Great Bowden.  
Contact Bruce White on 01858 467976.

#### Humberstone Local Group

Humberstone.  
Contact Alison Gardner on 0116 241 3598.

#### Melton Mowbray Local Group

Melton Mowbray.  
Contact Peter Dawson on 01664 852119, [peter.dawson69@ntlworld.com](mailto:peter.dawson69@ntlworld.com).

#### North West Local Group

Ashby-de-la-Zouch.  
Contact David Maltby on 01530 222934 or Margaret Mabey on 01530 412410.

#### Oadby & Wigston Local Group

Oadby.  
Contact Stuart Mucklejohn on 0116 281 0835, [owgroup.lrwt@gmail.com](mailto:owgroup.lrwt@gmail.com).


#### Rutland Local Group

Volunteer Training Centre, Hambleton.  
Contact Becky Howard on 07908 252271.

#### Leicestershire & Rutland Badger Group

Contact Dr David Duckett on 0116 259 7231.

### MAY


Thursday 13th May, 7:30pm  
**Abi Mustard, Rutland Osprey Project**   
*A look back at the Rutland Osprey Project*

**Oadby & Wigston Local Group**  
Friday 28th May, 7:30pm  
**Marcial Felgueiras**

*Ria de Alvor: a day's journey of discovery, history and conservation fights in Portugal's Algarve*

### JUNE


Wednesday 9th June, 7:30pm  
**Richard Pegler**  
*Tales of Damsels and Dragons (Damselflies & Dragonflies in VC55)*

Tuesday 15th June, 7:30pm  
**Ralph & Brenda Todd**   
*Mysteries of Migration*

Wednesday 30th June, 7:30pm  
**John Clarkson, LRWT Head of Conservation**  
*The Murder, Mystery and Mayhem of a Reintroduction of Large Blue Butterflies*

### JULY

Monday 12th July, 7:30pm  
**Martin Cooke**  
*Journey through Cloud Wood Nature Reserve*

Wednesday 28th July, 7:30pm  
**Ken Davies**   
*Searching for Ospreys in Senegal and Gambia*

### AUGUST

**Great Bowden Local Group**  
Wednesday 11th August, 7:30pm  
**Bruce White**  
*A Birder's Year Part 2: Autumn & Winter*

Wednesday 25th August, 7:30pm  
**Ken Davies, Rutland Osprey Project**   
*Historical ospreys (from Aristotle to Mackrill)*

### SEPTEMBER

**Oadby & Wigston Local Group**  
Thursday 2nd September, 7:30pm  
**Katrina van Grouw**  
*Unnatural Selection - evolution at the hand of man*

Tuesday 14th September, 7:30pm  
**Ralph & Brenda Todd**  
*An Antarctic Adventure*

**We offer an interesting and varied programme of events for all ages to get involved with, organised by Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust and our Local Groups.**

We are continuing to monitor the ongoing COVID-19 situation carefully. To allow for flexibility in changing dates, venues and times, we have moved our events programme online for now. We will adhere to Government guidance and encourage others to do the same. All events advertised online contain details of times, dates, venues, booking, prices where applicable and useful information. Anyone booked on an event or volunteering activity will be notified of any changes. This programme is liable to change or cancellation, for which LRWT can accept no liability. Members and non-members are welcome unless otherwise stated.

 Our full events programme is available at: [lrwt.org.uk/events](http://lrwt.org.uk/events)



RWNR EVENT © TERRY WHITTAKER/2020VISION, FAMILY IN MEADOW © TOM MARSHALL

RWNR EVENT © TERRY WHITTAKER/2020VISION



Our staff and volunteers can't wait to welcome you back to our nature reserves safely!



## Other events we hope to offer this summer

 [lrwt.org.uk/events](http://lrwt.org.uk/events)

### Guided activities at Rutland Water

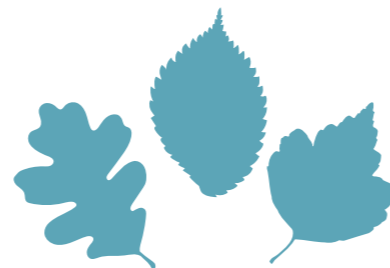
From guided wildlife walks to weekend courses, wildlife photography workshops to identification classes, family drop-in sessions to interesting talks. Events run from the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Lyndon Visitor Centre or the Volunteer Training Centre.

### Fun for all the family

Exciting outreach and education programmes for children, families and young people, including Wild Forest School; our Osprey Education programme; Wildlife Watch events; Wild Tots and Wild Play for younger children and holiday clubs; activities, events and courses, plus sessions for home-educators.

### Osprey Cruises at Rutland Water

Wildlife Cruises at Rutland Water are the ultimate way to experience ospreys and other wildlife. Set sail aboard the Rutland Belle at dawn or in the afternoon for a 90-minute cruise, offering a unique perspective of the reservoir. Meet at the Whitwell Car Park (LE15 8BL). For prices, booking and more information visit: [lrwt.org.uk/osprey-cruises](http://lrwt.org.uk/osprey-cruises)



### Wild Walks, identification courses and activities

Our expert staff and volunteers offer Wild Walks on nature reserves and identification courses on specific taxa and species. You'll learn about the flora and fauna of the area, as well as interesting facts about our nature reserves, how and why we manage them, and benefit from tips on field craft.



# Wildlife Watch

Wildlife Watch groups and family events will restart when Government COVID-19 restrictions and guidance allow, hopefully this spring. To ensure social distancing and COVID-secure safety measures, our events and group meetings will have limited numbers and booking is essential. **Our two Wildlife Watch groups are currently fully booked.**

Please check the monthly Go Wild family eNews, website or *Wild Times* newsletters with the seasonal *Wildlife Watch* magazine mailing for more information.

### Wild Play

We hope to run outdoor nature-themed play sessions for 5-12-year olds in the summer school holidays, including fun sessions on water, minibests, mud, fire, shelters and wood. Come along and get back to playing in nature.

Dates and venues to be confirmed. Further details and how to book will be in the monthly Go Wild Family eNews closer to the time.

All events will be organised in line with the current Government COVID-19 guidance.

### Monthly Wildlife Watch Award Challenges

Take part in the Wildlife Watch awards by completing fun wildlife-themed activities to get creative, explore nature and help your local wildlife. The **Hedgehog Award** is for 5-8-year olds and **Kestrel Award** is for aged 8 and over.

Check out the Family Members Hub with a challenge each month to inspire you. Be in with a chance to win a set of UK Wildlife Top Trumps too!

Contact Rachel Ibbotson for more information [ww@lrwt.org.uk](mailto:ww@lrwt.org.uk)

### Wildlife Watch Members Hub

Keep up to date with all things Wildlife Watch on the new section of our online Members Hub, including activities, events and campaigns, plus the monthly Wildlife Watch challenge.

Find out more: [lrwt.org.uk/members](http://lrwt.org.uk/members)

Sign up for the Go Wild Family eNews: [lrwt.org.uk/learn-and-discover/families](http://lrwt.org.uk/learn-and-discover/families)



## Green Influencers inspire young people in Leicester

Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust is delighted to welcome Hannah Keys as the new Green Mentor for Leicester. This exciting new position will enable young people to lead the way as 'Green Influencers' on social action projects in their communities. This could involve campaigning, fundraising and volunteering, enabling young people to make a positive difference in their communities, whilst developing their skills and knowledge.

Green Influencers aged 10 to 14 will spring up from across Leicester and surrounding areas. Together they will turn words into action to protect and enhance the local environment and tackle climate change. Hannah said "We're thrilled to be a host organisation for the Green Influencers Scheme which is being rolled out across England. It is a great opportunity to empower young people and promote effective and sustainable youth social action. We are

excited about the future because we know this will make a real difference to our communities."

Over the next two years, The Ernest Cook Trust will support Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust to fund the Green Mentor post, as well as ensuring lasting change across our communities. The scheme is match-funded through #iwill, which is supported by The National Lottery Community Fund and Department of Culture, Media & Sport. In total, there will be 40 Green Mentors employed across England by 36 organisations.

We look forward to welcoming young people to the scheme. Anyone interested in finding out more or joining the Green Influencers Scheme should contact **Hannah Keys: [hkeys@lrwt.org.uk](mailto:hkeys@lrwt.org.uk)**

For more information on the Green Influencers Scheme, visit:

 [lrwt.org.uk/green-influencers](http://lrwt.org.uk/green-influencers)

1 – 30 June



#30DaysWild



Are you  
ready for

#30DaysWild?



Can you  
do something  
wild every day  
for 30 days?

Sign up online  
to take the challenge!



[lrwt.org.uk/30dayswild](http://lrwt.org.uk/30dayswild)