ANNUAL REVIEW
2023 - 2024

Dorset Wildlife Trust

Making space for nature

in Dorset

FOREWORD

Brian Bleese
Chief Executive

Against the backdrop of high inflation, a lingering cost of living crisis and worrying global events, Dorset Wildlife Trust has made great progress across a number of areas and celebrated some significant successes. The annual review presents a set of case studies highlighting some of our successes over the past year. I hope they inspire you about the wildlife of Dorset and the work of Dorset Wildlife Trust and show why it is so important that we work together to reverse environmental degradation and address the climate and ecological crises.

At the start of 2021, Dorset Wildlife Trust adopted a new strategy, *A Wilder Dorset by 2030* which included the aim of a 50% increase in our land holding by 2030. With the acquisition of several new sites this year, I am pleased to report that we are now on target to achieve this by the end of 2024.

As the year closed, we completed the acquisition of Lyscombe, a 335-hectare site north-east of Dorchester. Lyscombe was acquired with the support of Natural England's National Nature Reserves Fund and nutrient neutrality scheme together with significant funding from Dorset Wildlife Trust members and supporters. Lyscombe is the largest single acquisition in the Trust's history and offers an outstanding opportunity to bring back nature at a landscape scale.

We have been doing some great work on species recovery too, delivering a project to improve the habitats of ten species that are under threat nationally. These include ladybird spider, sand lizard, heath tiger beetle, great crested newt and greater horseshoe bat. The *Making Space for Nature in Dorset* initiative was awarded a Species Survival Fund restricted grant of £1.1million from Defra. The project will enable habitat restoration work on 18 nature reserves across Dorset with the aim of increasing wildlife abundance, giving a massive boost to our nature recovery ambitions.

Sadly, an outbreak of avian flu on Brownsea Island during the nesting season resulted in the tragic loss of hundreds of Sandwich terns and black-headed gull chicks. However, swift action by the Brownsea team in removing infected carcasses and effectively managing disturbances enabled some chicks to successfully fledge.

Dorset Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Dorset Peat Partnership launched a major peat restoration project involving six partners. A major grant of £750,000 from the Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme will enable the restoration of some 172 hectares of peatland.

The support and loyalty of Dorset Wildlife Trust members have been the bedrock of our success throughout the year. Membership numbers have remained steady at over 27,000 giving us an amazing base upon which to build. Our endeavours thrive thanks to the immense generosity of our members, volunteers, partners, donors, and grant funders, as well as the unwavering commitment of our Board of Trustees and staff. We should all be very proud of what has been achieved over the year. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to making a positive impact for wildlife and people in Dorset.

Brian Bleese
Chief Executive

CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Mark Kibblewhite
Chair of trustees

The pressures on wildlife in Dorset are increasing and the Trust has a huge responsibility to support actions to slow, halt and reverse declines. Working with partners is essential to meet the scale of the challenges effectively. Partnerships delivering very good outcomes include those with public agencies, other NGOs, and businesses. Notable partnership outcomes are land purchases, major projects, and successful outreach initiatives. The importance of partnership is illustrated well by our work with the agriculture sector. Enhancing wildlife in the wider landscape is only possible with more action by individual farmers and their businesses – we have many shared objectives and are keen to help farmers access public funding for nature.

Dorset Wildlife Trust is an active member of the Federation of Wildlife Trusts, which continues to develop progressively. Our engagement with the Federation is increasing and this brings many advantages – it supports our local efforts with supporting evidence and national context and campaigns, it provides access to shared know-how such as digital innovations, and it keeps us close to the initiatives of other Trusts. At the same time, we are making valuable inputs to the Federation, including from our recent successes in accessing green finance for major land purchases at Wild Woodbury and Lyscombe.

The chair of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust generously made a review of our Governance in 2023. It was reassuring that his overall conclusion is that our governance is effective. However, he advised that we need to further strengthen our business planning. This will help us clarify priorities within the many opportunities and challenges that we face and ensure that resources are deployed efficiently. And we are now starting to review and develop our current strategy, which is serving us well but needs to be reviewed regularly.

Some trustees have recently completed their term of office, after many years of work that has benefited the Trust tremendously. We have welcomed new trustees and expect to recruit others in 2024. This process of renewing and refreshing Council is important to ensure continuing effective governance, and connectivity to the fast-changing environment in which we operate.

The competence and motivation of our staff is very high, and the many great successes of the past year would not have been possible without this distinctive feature of the Trust. The Chief Executive and the Directors are providing leadership in testing times.

Ours is a membership-based organisation and the trustees and staff work for the members. They are the foundation of this successful organisation and growing their number and support for our campaigns and as volunteers is a constant priority. We are working hard to further increase our membership and make it more inclusive of all communities.

Mark Kibblewhite

Mark Kibblewhite
Chair of the Trustees

New land for nature

One of our core aims is to make more space for nature by taking direct action to acquire and manage land. This year has seen some major additions to Dorset Wildlife Trust's nature reserve network.

Dorset Wildlife Trust has created 42 nature reserves since 1961, containing 1,400 hectares of some of the country's most important habitats. Through creating new space for nature, we have formed vital hubs that can inspire the delivery of nature recovery networks across Dorset. The job is far from finished. We aim to increase land owned or managed by Dorset Wildlife Trust to ensure wildlife will thrive in Dorset in perpetuity. This year, we have acquired three new nature reserves totalling 370 hectares of land.

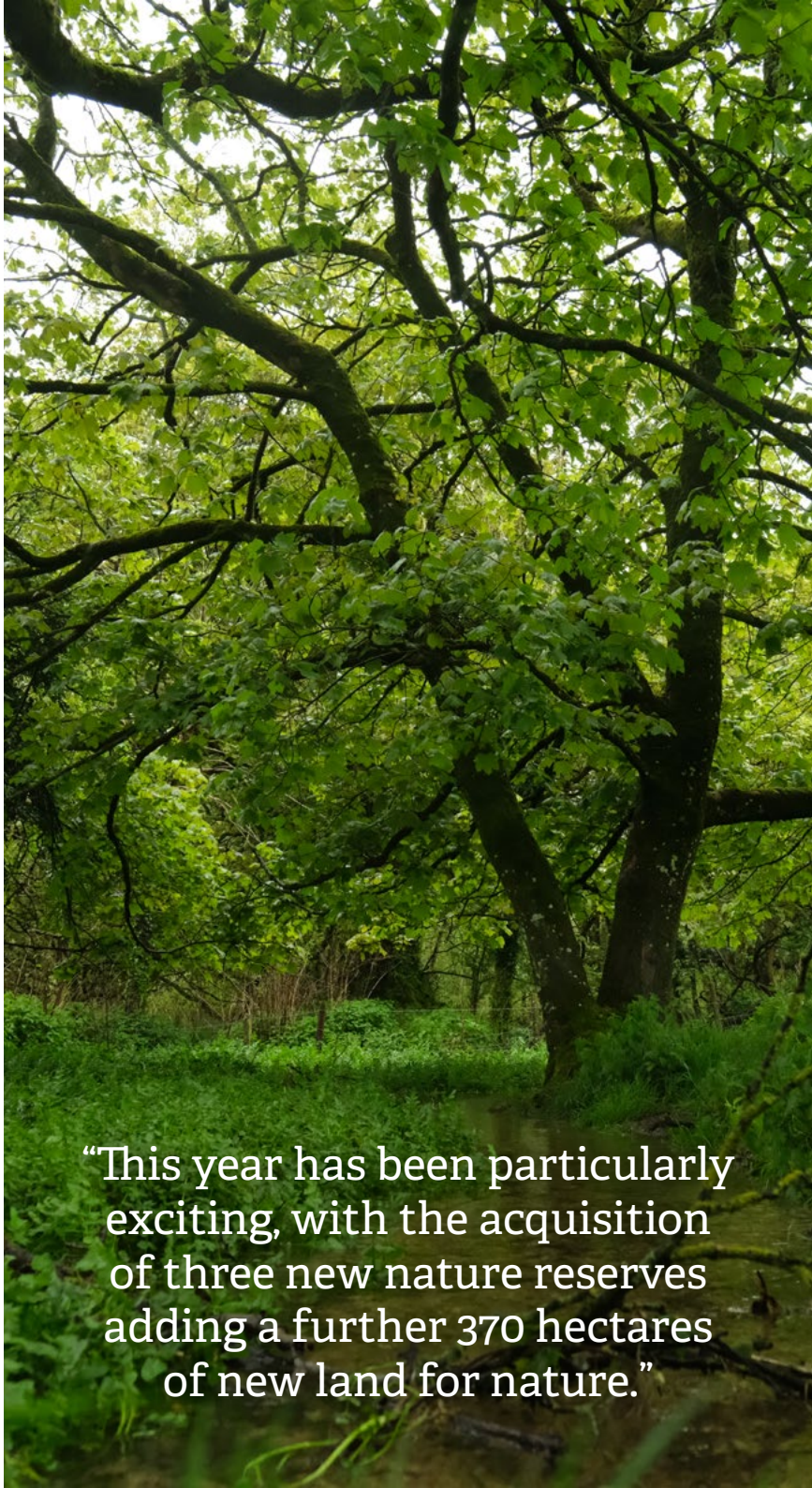
Lyscombe Nature Reserve is Dorset Wildlife Trust's largest single land acquisition to date and represents a wonderful opportunity to restore a wildlife-rich landscape in the very heart of Dorset. In partnership with Natural England through their Nutrient Neutrality Scheme, and with private donors, we now have 335 hectares of farmland ripe for restoration. Alongside traditional management of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) downland and woodland, we will introduce natural processes to currently degraded land. to restore nature and inspire other landowners.

West Holme A further 22 hectares of land near West Holme was acquired in a similar way, through Nutrient Neutrality funding, working with Dorset Council Here we plan to heal intensively managed land, and bring back wetland, wood pasture and woodland through natural regeneration. The land lies within a nature recovery network close to the River Frome.

New land at Kingcombe Meadows This year, we had the opportunity to purchase 13 hectares of land adjacent to Kingcombe National Nature Reserve. Through some very quick work and with the generous support of individual donors, we were able to save three lowland meadows, expanding the wildlife interest in the area and creating new wood pasture and ponds too.

These important sites for wildlife could not have been acquired without the generosity of our members.

Photos taken at Lyscombe © Edward Parrott



"This year has been particularly exciting, with the acquisition of three new nature reserves adding a further 370 hectares of new land for nature."

Focus on traineeships

With generous donations from private funders and grants from the Magnox Socio-Economic Scheme, we were able to continue running our traineeship programme and add new avenues to help upcoming conservationists with a career in conservation.

The traineeship programme has been operating successfully for over 14 years in various guises, through different partnerships and external funding. It continues to change people's lives for the better. Over the last year, we have seen four trainees from the Dorset Wildlife Trust training programme gain employment in their desired sector, two of whom have gone on to become Assistant Wardens in the south and east of Dorset with us. Another trainee has gone to work for the National Trust in a similar position and our ecology trainee is now employed as an Assistant Ecologist.

Through another successful application to the Magnox Socio-Economic Scheme, we secured funding for another three years for six practical traineeships after previously funding three traineeships over three years, demonstrating their confidence in our track record of success.

The practical conservation traineeships have provided a conveyor belt of desirable candidates for assistant warden or similar positions for both us and other employers. The training gives them the necessary professional qualifications, skills and experience needed to hit the ground running when they take that next step. An ecology traineeship was offered last year for the first time and has been equally successful in gaining the qualifications and experience needed to meet the requirements of potential employers.

Each trainee is allocated a mentor to guide them through their training programme which has been tailored over the years to suit the individual and desired outcome of the traineeship. Passing on experience and knowledge to trainees is rewarding for both mentors and trainees. Exploring and training on Dorset Wildlife Trust nature reserves adds to the spectacular experience with all the wildlife and habitats that we have the privilege of managing in Dorset. With more traineeships on the horizon, we are really looking forward to continuing to help budding conservationists into employment.

Photos: inserts © James Hitchen; main image © Izzy Williamson

Species Recovery Programme

The successful application and acquisition of grant funding from Natural England kicked off the Species Recovery Programme, a major project focusing on ten priority species.

They have each been specifically chosen, with protected and/or endangered status, to enable the facilitation of focused habitat restoration and creation, as well as to carry out species translocations and reintroductions. This will bolster current, rare populations and bring back those that have been lost, securing their future resilience and population longevity locally and nationally. The programme will prioritise the dingy mocha, fly orchid, great crested newt, greater horseshoe bat, heath tiger beetle, ladybird spider, lapwing, marsh clubmoss, pillwort, and sand lizard.

Each practical intervention is bespoke and targeted towards the individual niches of the species, with the aim of creating the perfect conditions in order for them to thrive. From creating dry and wet scrapes which will benefit species like the heath tiger beetle and pillwort, respectively, to restoring an outbuilding to construct roosting habitat for the greater horseshoe bat; the programme covers the breadth of the county across 11 reserves.

The scheduled management will mean that the chosen species will also act as flagships, benefitting a wide range of other species, some of which are also rare and under threat such as the Duke of Burgundy butterfly, scarce blue-tailed damselfly, pond mud snail and heath beefly.

The Species Recovery Programme is in full swing, with the restoration of 10 ponds at Kingcombe Meadows National Nature Reserve for great crested newts, the reintroduction of 25 juvenile sand lizards to Winfrith Heath and the reintroduction of marsh clubmoss across our heathland sites. This exciting programme will be completed in March 2025 and will recover these species for future generations.

Photos: fly orchid and marsh clubmoss © James Cartwright; lapwing © Gillian Day

One of the ten Species Recovery Programme species: dingy mocha

The dingy mocha is a species of moth which is near threatened on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of threatened species, and nationally rare throughout the country. They are localised and mainly restricted to heathland sites and the Species Recovery Programme will focus on all our reserves in which they are found.

Through the historical land use of heathland sites such as heather cultivation for thatch and bracken collection for bedding, these areas had been kept open and free from woodland cover. Heathlands remained in early successional statis. Willows and birches would have been coppiced, with their own material uses, unknowingly creating the perfect habitat for the dingy mocha. However, through practical management changes, new agricultural practices and less of a need for these materials, this rare habitat has disappeared; 85% of the country's heathland has been lost over the past 150 years.

The funding from Natural England for the Species Recovery Programme will help to reverse this decline. Targeted coppicing will be carried out, alongside the creation of deer enclosures, and species monitoring. Coppicing is a regenerative process, whereby larger trees are cut down to stimulate new growth. As the dingy mocha is a bivoltine species, having two broods in a year, there needs to be plenty of the new growth available for them during their larval stage. The habitat restoration work will provide the fresh willow coppice growth that the dingy mocha needs. The species prefers eared and grey willows, and their larvae can be found on these trees under two metres in height, favouring the younger and fresher vegetation.

Photos © James Cartwright

Hemsworth: man vs machine

Four organisations tested different approaches to measuring biodiversity and species abundance at Hemsworth Farm, a 500-hectare, organic farm near Wimborne.

Dorset Wildlife Trust based their survey work on three transect surveys over eight months, augmented by sweep-netting and photography.

Pollenize asked volunteers to upload photos from their mobile phones to the free iNaturalist app where the community helped identify the species.

AgriSound used fully automated monitoring devices to measure wing beat frequency to detect bees and this data was analysed to identify patterns in pollinator activity.

Chirrup installed audio recorders to monitor bird sounds across the farm, which were analysed by the Chirrup.ai algorithm to provide a guide to a bird's frequency.

Chirrup's approach recorded 52 bird species while Dorset Wildlife Trust totalled 109 bird species over a longer period. Pollenize only identified two bird species, highlighting a shortcoming in the iPhone-based approach. Pollenize and Dorset Wildlife Trust recorded similar numbers of plant species but there was a marked difference in insect species with Dorset Wildlife Trust's recording of 1,215 species compared to 224 by Pollenize. Agrisound delivered a precise measure of overall pollinator activity and habitat preferences, but little differentiation between bee species.

Dorset Wildlife Trust's traditional survey method produced the most information but relies on the knowledge of the surveyor with limited opportunities for volunteers. Pollenize used freely available technology, achieved some impressive results and is very suitable for citizen science participation. Chirrup's technology provided a good overview of Hemsworth's breeding birds while Agrisound's innovative wing-beat monitoring gave a precise measure of pollinator numbers, but not species diversity. The overall conclusion was that there is clearly considerable scope for using technology but for the foreseeable future, a human ecologist is required to provide overview and context for the collected data.

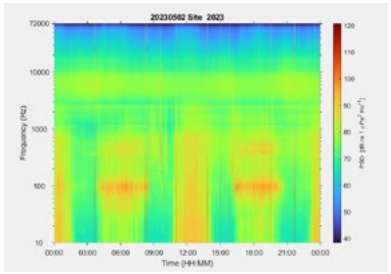
Photos: dingy skipper, marbled white, hornet grabber © Hamish Murray

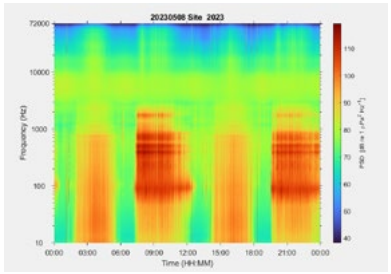
"Alongside volunteers watching from the clifftops, we deployed an acoustic porpoise detector (F-POD) off Durlston Head near Swanage."

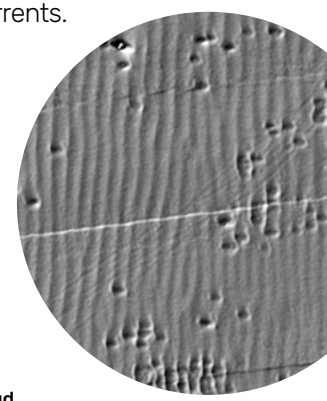
Mixing technology and volunteering

There's a long history of dolphin watching from Durlston Country Park. Between 2012 and 2023 dolphins were spotted from here on average 22 days each year. By contrast, the more elusive porpoises were recorded less than once a year. So, are the low numbers due to not being able to spot them or are they really not there?

To understand this, we used a mixture of technology and volunteer observation. Alongside volunteers watching from the clifftops, we deployed an acoustic porpoise detector (F-POD) off Durlston Head near Swanage in 2023. A sound recorder was deployed alongside the F-POD, recording ambient sound continuously. The equipment was deployed in an area of strong tidal currents. When the tide was running hard, it proved to be too noisy to detect porpoises.







Spectograms showing the six-hourly loud-quiet cycle on a neap tide (left) and spring tide (right). Red is loud.

Over the 87 days when the F-POD was recording, there were three days when porpoises were detected. None was seen from the shore. By contrast, another F-POD deployed in Lyme Bay for a similar period (though a different time of year) recorded porpoises roughly every other day.

The scarcity of porpoises at Durlston could be down to the seabed habitat. Around Durlston it is very rocky whereas the Lyme Bay site was on a shipwreck surrounded by sand. Sandeels are a key component of porpoise diets as the high oil content is necessary to maintain their high metabolic rate. Recent research in the North Sea has concluded that millions of shallow pits in the seabed are caused by porpoises excavating the seabed in search of sandeels. Similar pits have been detected in Lyme Bay and it may turn out to be an important feeding ground for these elusive creatures.

Photos: harbour porpoises © Niki Clear; shallow pits on the seabed in Lyme Bay – a porpoise feeding ground?; F-POD and SoundTrap ready for release © Peter Tinsley.
Special thanks to Sonardyne, Chelonia Ltd and Natural England for the loan of equipment.

Wildlife recovery at Wild Woodbury

The continued restoration of natural processes at Wild Woodbury has transformed the site into a dynamic, heterogeneous mix of habitats that are supporting high levels of species diversity and abundance.

The introduction of wormer-free dung from cattle and ponies has brought back a nutrient recycling system missing from much of the wider landscape: dung beetles. You can no longer pass dung without seeing these soil engineers burying away, helping influence structure and composition of the soil, whilst being food for several other species.

Species including ragwort, marsh thistle, and poppies have become more widespread in 2023, diversifying the vegetation structure and crucially providing more food and cover. Our butterfly abundance increased by 60% compared with 2022, and silver-studded blue butterflies colonised and bred on site. Dormouse and water shrew were new additions to the wealth of small mammals tunnelling through our fields, the latter taking advantage of the 40 hectares of restored wetland on the site.

The wetland mosaic has also benefitted several other species groups. Amphibians are now widespread across the site, our dragonfly and damselfly diversity has increased, and we supported large numbers of lapwing, snipe, Jack snipe, and woodcock over the winter.

Increased prey and a lack of disturbance has undoubtedly aided the increase in reptile numbers too. Grass snakes have been seen hunting through the wet fields; we now have two locations of breeding adder, and slowworms are being seen under more reptile tins. These tins have also attracted double figures of glowworm, who will be feeding on molluscs, another group whose population has exploded in the last year.

We now have 28 birds on the Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern using the site, with 12 of those successfully breeding, including spotted flycatcher, tree pipit, and marsh tit. Our overall bird species list has grown to 122, with additions such as nightingale, pied flycatcher, and corn bunting in 2023.

Photos: snipe, adder and nightingale © Daisy Meadowcroft

Nextdoor Nature Project

Funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Nextdoor Nature project has collaborated with disadvantaged communities across the Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole (BCP) conurbation.

Alongside every wildlife trust in the UK, the project aimed to bring nature to communities across the UK, as a legacy to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Staff were trained in community organising and this was embedded into a way of working for the Wilder Communities team. The first step was to listen to people and organisations already working within communities and having conversations about how to increase nature on their doorstep.

Turlin Moor is an area of high unemployment, social housing, and antisocial behaviour. It is also a community of hard working, proud, and friendly people who live in an area backing onto Lytchett Bay. Many micro projects were carried out here, including resident street food growing and community wildlife gardening. Young people participated in a major film project with 200 students from Bournemouth Poole College and then the College designed a second film project around our suggestion of an environmental dystopian theme. A community mapping project was developed with a group of textile makers on the Moor and has gained wide support from nursery children, the school and youth club.

Nextdoor Nature supported a community garden project in Poole town centre, which led to further requests for guidance at other locations. Poole BID's annual garden competition now includes a community category after hearing about Nextdoor Nature's work in the town centre and could provide us with valuable opportunities in the future.

Nextdoor Nature has been a learning opportunity and informed our successful bid for a grant from South Western Railway, enabling us to maintain the connections with communities we have already worked with in both the Urban Green and Nextdoor Nature projects.

Gillingham Royal Forest

With funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, South Western Railway's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund and sponsorship by Southern Co-op, we have been working in partnership to involve people in the natural and historical heritage of Gillingham Royal Forest.

Said to have been King John's favourite hunting ground, Gillingham Royal Forest was established after the Norman Conquest in 1066. Situated on the edge of Gillingham, the boundary includes the parish of Motcombe and reaches Shaftesbury, covering an area of over 3,000 hectares. Within today's rich mosaic of farms, hedges, ponds, chalk stream headwaters, ancient woodland and veteran oaks, many features remain that reveal its distinctive past. It remains important both as an area of countryside for local people, supporting wellbeing, and for rare wildlife such as Bechstein's and Daubenton's bats, great crested newts, otters, water voles, dormice, and barn owls.

Access improvements have been made, new signage and information boards installed, and eight new walking trails promoted to enable people to explore and understand the natural landscape. Conservation work parties have involved 60 people with tasks such as tree planting and restoration of the River Lodden. Over 250 people have undertaken wildlife survey training, including bat box checks and plant recording, and over 500 people involved in events and rural skills training in charcoal making, hedge laying, coppicing, and willow weaving.

After four years, and with funding ending in March 2024, the partnership is celebrating its achievements. The legacy of the project will continue via a new steering group for North Dorset towns with a focus on sustainable tourism and storytelling. As part of this initiative, our latest achievement was the installation of running boards at the station promoting Gillingham as 'Home of the medieval Royal Forest and gateway to North Dorset' and we look forward to continued collaboration.

Photos: Gilshed © Mitch Perkins, checking bat boxes at Duncliffe © Mariko Whyte, Thorngrove bat boxes group © Mitch Perkins

Dorset Peat Partnership - action on the ground to restore Dorset’s precious peat

Dorset Peat Partnership successfully secured £787,320 from the Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme in September 2023. Additional match funding of £262,500 was received from private funders and project delivery partners: BCP Council, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Forestry England, Natural England, The National Trust, RSPB, and Holme Estate.

With a delivery window to restore 16 degraded peatland sites over a 172-hectare area by 31 March 2025, it was full speed ahead to deliver the year one site works in one of the wettest winters on record. A key objective of the first phase was winter felling and scrub clearance works to support peat forming habitats because they remove water and carbon. On sites in Ringwood Forest and west Dorset managed by Forestry England, heavy machinery with flail heads and tree shears has been used to remove densely packed gorse and scrub as well as mature crop trees. On one site, volunteers from the Friends of Udden and Cannon Hill Woodlands (FoUCHW) community group have undertaken all the work. The second phase of works in late summer 2024 will involve infilling the drainage channels.

The National Trust has undertaken restoration works at Agglestone and Greenlands mire. Peat and heather bale dams have been built to block old drainage ditches and contour bunds created to form walls to store water behind. Solid timber dams, plastic piling and leaky log dams help to slow flow and re-divert water across the site more naturally. On the Upper Agglestone mire, an area of high tussocky Purple Moor grass (Molinia) was sensitively mulched using specialist machinery with extra wide tracks and ultra-low ground pressure. The peatland restoration works have shown instantaneous results with rewetting and pooling of water, which proves that the interventions using peat really do work in slowing the flow and locking up water for storage.

Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) project

The SNCI project recognises sites considered to be of at least county level importance for the rich variety of habitats and wildlife they support. Since the early 1990s, sites have been surveyed, selected, and monitored as part of a rolling programme which aims to update our knowledge of the status and condition of these sites every six to twelve years.

With over 1,300 sites covering 12,400 hectares (4.7% of Dorset's land area), this is a challenge! Over the last few years, Dorset Wildlife Trust have been developing the role of volunteers to support staff. During the 2023 survey season, 12 volunteer surveyors were actively undertaking independent surveys of SNCIs, contributing 70 days of volunteer time. In total, 79 sites were surveyed, 28 of these being surveys of existing SNCIs by volunteer surveyors. In addition, 10 sites were monitored as part of three SNCI survey training days delivered in partnership with the Dorset Flora Group which enabled a further 15 volunteers to participate in SNCI monitoring. The remainder of the sites were surveyed by Dorset Wildlife Trust and Dorset Environmental Records Centre (DERC) staff. Updated survey data allows us to monitor long term changes on sites and landscape-scale trends, advise landowners on management and support grant funding applications.

Work to digitise the paper SNCI records and upload them to a cloud-based storage system was finally completed in 2024. This has facilitated the provision of information to landowners and surveyors as well as informing decision-making. Work is still ongoing to digitise and maintain site and landowner records. In 2023-24, over 40 days of volunteer time has been devoted to this work. Going forward, training for both office-based and survey volunteers is being delivered to improve consistency in reporting and to reduce the time that staff need to spend on admin.

Photos © Mariko Whyte

"There are over 1,300 SNCI sites covering 12,400 hectares of Dorset's land area."

"Seals spotted in Dorset have also been recorded in Hampshire, Devon, Cornwall, France, even Norfolk.."

Ten years of the Dorset Seal Catalogue

Our Dorset Seal Catalogue is celebrating its tenth anniversary with a grand total of 126 seals on record.

Detailed photos of each seal's unique set of markings and fur patterns enable us to identify individuals and monitor their movements. We've discovered that 60% of seals are only spotted once with a further 15% recorded a few times in quick succession indicating that most seals are transient. Around 20% of seals have been seen over multiple years and just 5% are more regular visitors.

The first ever seal added to the catalogue in 2014 has been recorded every year since; over 60 times in total. The project has also revealed just how far these intrepid mammals travel. Seals spotted in Dorset have also been recorded in Hampshire, Devon, Cornwall, France, even Norfolk, some 400 miles away if following the coast.

The UK is vitally important for seals, home to approximately 35% of the global population of Atlantic grey seals and around 30% of the European harbour seal population. While Dorset may not have the large aggregations of seals that you might see on beaches in Cornwall, Wales or Scotland, people are often surprised to learn that both grey and harbour (also known as common) seals are regularly spotted along the Dorset coast.

Although a marine species, seals are innately tied to the land, needing to come ashore (also known as hauling out) to rest, digest food, pup, and moult. Remote cameras installed at a location in Poole Harbour give an insight into this haul out behaviour, with up to six seals at a time observed using one resting spot. Seal activity at the haul out is greater during the summer rather than during the winter which coincides with the seals' annual moult where they lose and replace their entire fur coat.

Membership and Engagement

27,395 members in total

1,852 new members

330 Species of the Month reports

220 entries in the photo competition

362,000 visits to our website

Volunteering

312 volunteer hours for the Beaver project

1,056 riverfly monitoring volunteer hours

621 volunteer hours for Water Guardians

Nextdoor Nature

15 community-based projects

479 people engaged including 80 at Bournemouth Arts event

272 young people involved in Nextdoor Nature projects

1 in 4 people taking action for nature by 2030

Making space for nature

We have acquired
370ha
of land to help nature recover

3 new nature reserves:

335ha
at Lyscombe

22ha
at West Holme

13ha
of land adjacent to Kingcombe Meadows

SNCI project

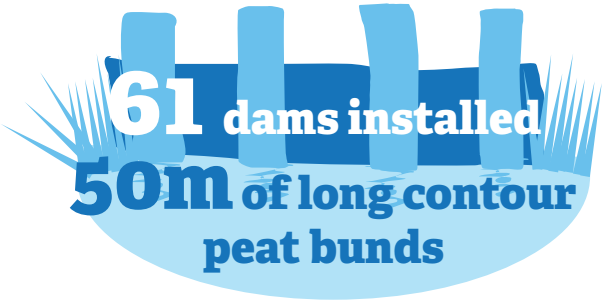
SNCI sites
across Dorset

hectares
of land

sites surveyed
this year

volunteer
days

Dorset Peat Partnership



30% of land and sea managed in favour of nature by 2030

Wild Woodbury

1,540 volunteer hours

25 youth engagement visits

46 guided walks

Total species recorded **1,800**

40ha of wetland created

16ha of land opened for public access and **3km** of footpath maintained

Habitats and species

16ha of SSSI lowland heathland habitat restored on Upton Heath

10 ponds restored for great crested newt

Over 20 dry scrapes created across heathland sites for reptiles including the sand lizard and for the heath tiger beetle.

8,000 wildlife records generated across our reserves

Record count of **65** violet helleborine at Girdlers Coppice

1,800 silver-studded blue recorded at higher Hyde Heath

1 new spider discovered at Tout Quarry (only 7th record in UK)

30% of land and sea managed in favour of nature by 2030