

# Conservation Update

Spring 2019



*Spring view from E Range, Tregantle Cornwall, which is managed sympathetically and supports many important species including adders and oil beetles (inserts)*

## Ladies & Gentlemen,

The primary purpose of Conservation Update is to communicate conservation and sustainability matters to Ministry of Defence (MOD) Conservation Groups and to reach out to others involved in these disciplines across the MOD estate. Please therefore circulate this document to anyone else you feel may be interested.

## Team Update

After working for five years in the DIO Sanctuary Team Hannah has moved onto gardens new. Many of you will have met Hannah at the Sanctuary Awards in London or at various conservation group meetings. She will be sadly missed by the team at Westdown and we wish all the best in her new conservation gardening venture.

## Volunteering

As Mark Sedwill, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service recently reminded us, volunteering can take many forms, and each has a positive impact. We all have skills and knowledge that can benefit others and for everything you give, in dedicating your time and expertise, you get something back in experience and insight, or in developing skills, particularly engaged leadership and teamwork, which can help you in your career development. So, please do consider taking advantage of the special paid leave you are entitled to. There are countless charitable organisations and good causes, covering a multitude of different activities, that you can support.

The Year of Green Action (YoGA) is about connecting people with nature, and showing how we can all take positive action to improve our environment. <https://www.yearofgreenaction.org/>

It is a year-long drive to help everyone get involved in projects that support nature under the three themes of **Connect, Protect and Enhance** – in our own gardens, schools or workplaces, and as consumers. Everyone can get involved in projects to improve the natural world and YoGA can help you to make a change, one choice at a time.

It can be difficult to organise volunteer work parties on the estate, with health and safety or other constraints, but MOD sites, employees and contractors can consider partnership

projects with our experienced NGOs such as Foxglove Covert <https://www.foxglovecovert.org.uk/support-us/become-a-volunteer>, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust <https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/>; <https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/we-manage-land-wildlife>, Surrey Wildlife Trust <https://www.surreywildlifetrust.org/>; <https://www.surreywildlifetrust.org/support-us/volunteer/conservation-volunteering>, Cornwall Wildlife Trust <https://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/volunteer> and The Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust <https://www.arc-trust.org/Pages/Category/volunteer>

If we could ask the Conservation Group Chairs to think of some suitable events and inform their local Garrisons along with our team who will provide support.

## Some Forthcoming Events:

Maj (Retd) Udai Gurung at Fingringhoe is organising a joint volunteers day comprising of DTE staff, Environment Agency staff, Conservation Group members and personnel within Colchester Garrison to undertake Himalayan Balsam pulling along the Roman River at Friday Woods in July. In line with Invasive Species Week, organisations across the UK are working together to raise awareness and ask everyone to help prevent their spread to protect the environment and recreational spaces for future generations to enjoy! <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=132>

*Himalayan Balsam*





- Beach Cleaning activities are taking place at RAF Valley, Tregantle and Penhale beaches.

- Yardley Chase Conservation Group are holding a wildlife recording event at Yardley Chase Training Area, Northamptonshire, in July 2019. There will be a series of activities going on and visitors can join in with those or under-take their own recording activities. The mix of people that are expected to get involved are wildlife enthusiasts/experts, alongside university students engaged in a range of environmental or ecological studies. It is expected that visitors will contribute to the knowledge of the site. Recording wildlife will be a central theme, but there will be plenty going on and people can join in with whatever they find interesting.



*The ever changing sculpture from beach waste at Penhale. The guardian!*  
© Lt Col (Ret'd) Andy Westcott

- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Water Team <https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/pages/category/the-water-team>

- MOD Volunteers Needed. Through the autumn and winter months Salisbury Plain Conservation Group have hosted team building events removing scrub to support priority species. Why don't you organise your own 'green gym' team building event on a part of the Defence Training Estate near you.

For further information on the above please contact the team.

### Wild Birds: Licences to control certain species

Following recent legal challenge and withdrawal of three Natural England general licences for control of certain bird species, Defra has been consulting the public on alternative provisions <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/use-of-general-licences-for-the-management-of-certain-wild-birds-a-call-for-evidence>

### Bird Protection

Please can we also remind everyone that it is 'bird nesting season' until August and to avoid any disturbance to nests.

## Calendar of Environmental Days and Projects

### Earth Day

Earth Day 2019 "Protect Our Species" started on 22nd April and aims to draw attention to the rapid extinction of species in the world today, which is directly linked to human activities; including climate change, deforestation, habitat loss, trafficking and poaching, unsustainable agriculture, pollution, and pesticides <https://www.earthday.org/>

### No Mow May

Plantlife is urging Britain's lawn lovers to leave their mowers in the shed for May and let their grass grow. Our famous green lawns will transform into an urban patchwork of mini meadows of daisies, dandelions and buttercups buzzing with nature. On the 25th-27th May the charity will hold a national Bank Holiday Weekend count, inviting everyone to count the flowers in a random square in their lawn <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/about-us/news/plantlife-launches-no-mow-may>



Example of a 'No Mow' area



Green Hairstreak butterfly

### The Tree Council Walks in May

During May, people across the country get out to celebrate their local trees for Walk in the Woods month. It's an opportunity to celebrate your local trees by getting out to the woods, walking in a local park, or just appreciating tree-lined streets. Being part of Walk in the Woods is simple. Just get out there and enjoy your local trees! You can do this by attending a local guided walk, organising your own, or simply gathering together friends or family and getting out under your local trees. To see what is going on in your area, check out the events listed on our interactive map <https://www.treecouncil.org.uk/Take-Part/Near-You> If there is nothing going on near to you, why not consider organising your own walk!

### Clean Air Day 20 June

Air pollution is real and harms the health of millions but there are lots of simple things we can do to improve air quality. Join a local event or organise your own workplace event, learn more about air pollution, share information and help make the air cleaner <https://www.cleanairday.org.uk/>

### The Plastic Challenge - Go Plastic Free in July

Can you go a month without plastic? More than 8 million tons of plastic are dumped in our oceans every year. Half of it comes from disposable plastics that are only used once before being thrown away <https://www.mcsuk.org/plastic-challenge/>

### **National Moth Week 26-28 July**

This will be the 20th Moth Night and the themes for the event will be Clifden Nonpareil and Migrants, and of course it will be an opportunity to celebrate the 20th Moth Night since the launch of the event in 1998 <http://www.mothnight.info/>

### **International Bat Night 24-25 August**

This annual celebration of bats sees bat events for the public taking place across the country. Bat groups, park rangers and community groups organise fantastic bat walks and talks at dusk, as well some daytime fun days! This celebration of bats is held by bat groups and the Bat Conservation Trust, to coincide with International Bat Night (formerly European Bat Night) which is organised by Eurobats. The aim is to encourage thousands of people across the country to see and hear bats in their natural environment by taking part in a range of events organised by local bat groups, wildlife trusts, countryside rangers and other organisations across the country <https://www.bats.org.uk/support-bats/international-bat-night>

### **The Great British Beach Clean 20-28 September**

The information the volunteers have collected over the last 25 years has helped make some of the most significant impacts on beach litter ever - the plastic bag charge, microplastics banned in personal care products, better wet wipe labelling, and massive support for a tax on 'on the go' plastic single use items <https://www.mcsuk.org/beachwatch/greatbritishbeachclean>

### **Hedgehog Street**

Unfortunately we have just missed hedgehog week <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/hedgehog-awareness-week-2019/> but they still need your help; perhaps you could create a hedgehog highway <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/>

### **Plots for Pollinators**

Fight butterfly and moth declines with flowers. Find out how you can make a difference with just 1 square metre of outdoor space <https://butterfly-conservation.org/how-you-can-help/plots-for-pollinators>

### **Keep Britain Tidy**

The Great British Spring Clean was held from 22 March – 23 April 2019, in partnership with community organisations, businesses and the government. You can continue to care for your local environment year-round by joining a [Keep Britain Tidy volunteer project](https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean) near you <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean>

### **Citizen Science**

The Pollinator Monitoring and Research Partnership (PMRP) aims to establish how insect pollinator populations are changing across Great Britain.

Working with existing recording schemes that focus on pollinating insects, they have established two new large-scale surveys under the UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme banner (PoMS).

PoMS is the only scheme in the world generating systematic data on the abundance of bees, hoverflies and other flower-visiting insects at a national scale (currently across England, Wales and Scotland). Together with long-term occurrence records collated by the [Bees, Wasps and Ants Recording Society](#) and [Hoverfly Recording Scheme](#), this data will form an invaluable resource from which to measure trends in pollinator populations and target conservation efforts.

### **Species Recording**

The team recommend using BTO BirdTrack for recording birds on the Defence Estate and iRecord or other county approved scheme, such as Living Records for all other species.

A plea to all project managers, please ensure that all data collected by environmental consultants is forwarded to County Records Centres.

### **Conservation Group Grant**

The Conservation Group Grant consists of £10,000 of Conservation Stewardship Funding which is ring-fenced solely for the use of MOD Conservation Groups. Conservation Group Chairs can bid for monies to pay for items such as tools, wildflower seed or bird ringing tags to be used by their Conservation Group.

An application form can be obtained by emailing [DIO-ConservationGroups@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DIO-ConservationGroups@mod.gov.uk) for 2019-2020 financial year. Please could we ask you to bear with us as applications may take longer to process due to staff shortages.

### **Conservation Group Meetings**

We kindly ask that Conservation Group Chairs send us an invitation to their Conservation Group meetings as soon as possible. We are also keen to use Smarter Ways of Working to better engage with Conservation Groups. We would like to Skype or dial (through spider/conference call phone) into any Conservation Group meetings that we cannot attend in person and are subsequently encouraging Conservation Groups to provide a Skype facility for Conservation Group meetings. If you can provide this, please do let us know via email.

### **Sanctuary**

Many thanks to everyone for their Sanctuary articles and submissions for Sanctuary Awards. We are now busy putting the magazine together and it looks like it will be another good one.

### **Subscribe to Conservation Update**

Subscribers of Conservation Update receive each issue of this publication via email. The mailing list contains only email addresses. If you wish to subscribe for the first time, or alter your subscription please email our team who will be happy to assist.

### **Contact Us**

For all enquiries relating to Sanctuary magazine and Sanctuary Awards [DIO-Sanctuary@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DIO-Sanctuary@mod.gov.uk)

For all Conservation Group queries or questions regarding the content of this publication [DIO-ConservationGroups@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DIO-ConservationGroups@mod.gov.uk)





Photo: Nadine Mitschunas

The **Pollinator Monitoring and Research Partnership** (PMRP) is analysing existing insect records alongside new systematic survey data to measure how insect pollinator populations are changing across Britain. Two new surveys have been established to form a **UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme** (PoMS).

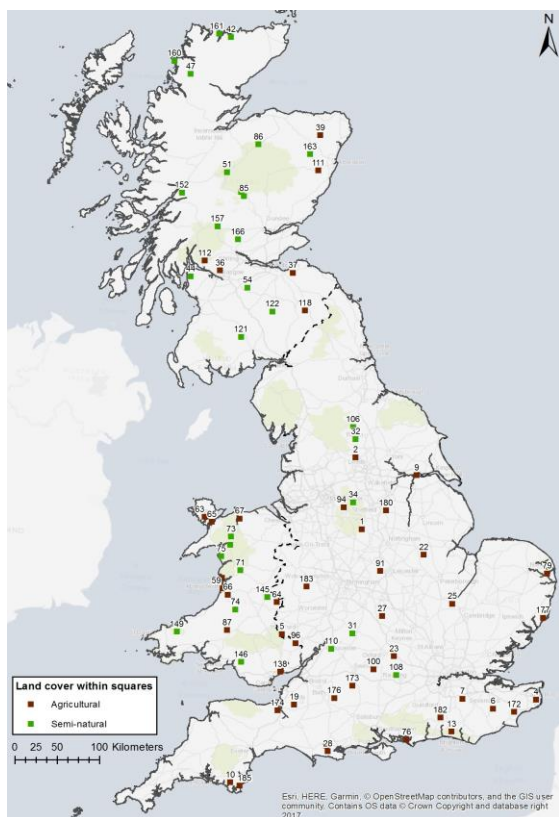
## Can you help?

**FIT Count:** The “Flower-Insect Timed Count” is a simple survey, counting all the insects that visit a patch of target flowers during ten minutes. Insects are identified to broad groups (e.g. bumblebees, hoverflies etc.). You can do a FIT Count almost anywhere flowers grow:

[www.ceh.ac.uk/pollinator-monitoring](http://www.ceh.ac.uk/pollinator-monitoring)



Photo: Claire Carvell



**1km square surveys:** This survey of pollinators and flower resources runs across a set of 75 one-km squares (see map), requiring four visits to each square across the summer. Could you help by ‘adopting’ a square near you, and carrying out pan-trapping and flower surveys? For more information please contact [poms@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:poms@ceh.ac.uk)

**More information and FIT Count Guides are available on the website:**  
[www.ceh.ac.uk/pollinator-monitoring](http://www.ceh.ac.uk/pollinator-monitoring)

**PoMS on Twitter: @PoMScheme**

