



Cumbria
Wildlife Trust

Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Wildlife Highlights 2018–19



Protecting **wildlife** for the Future

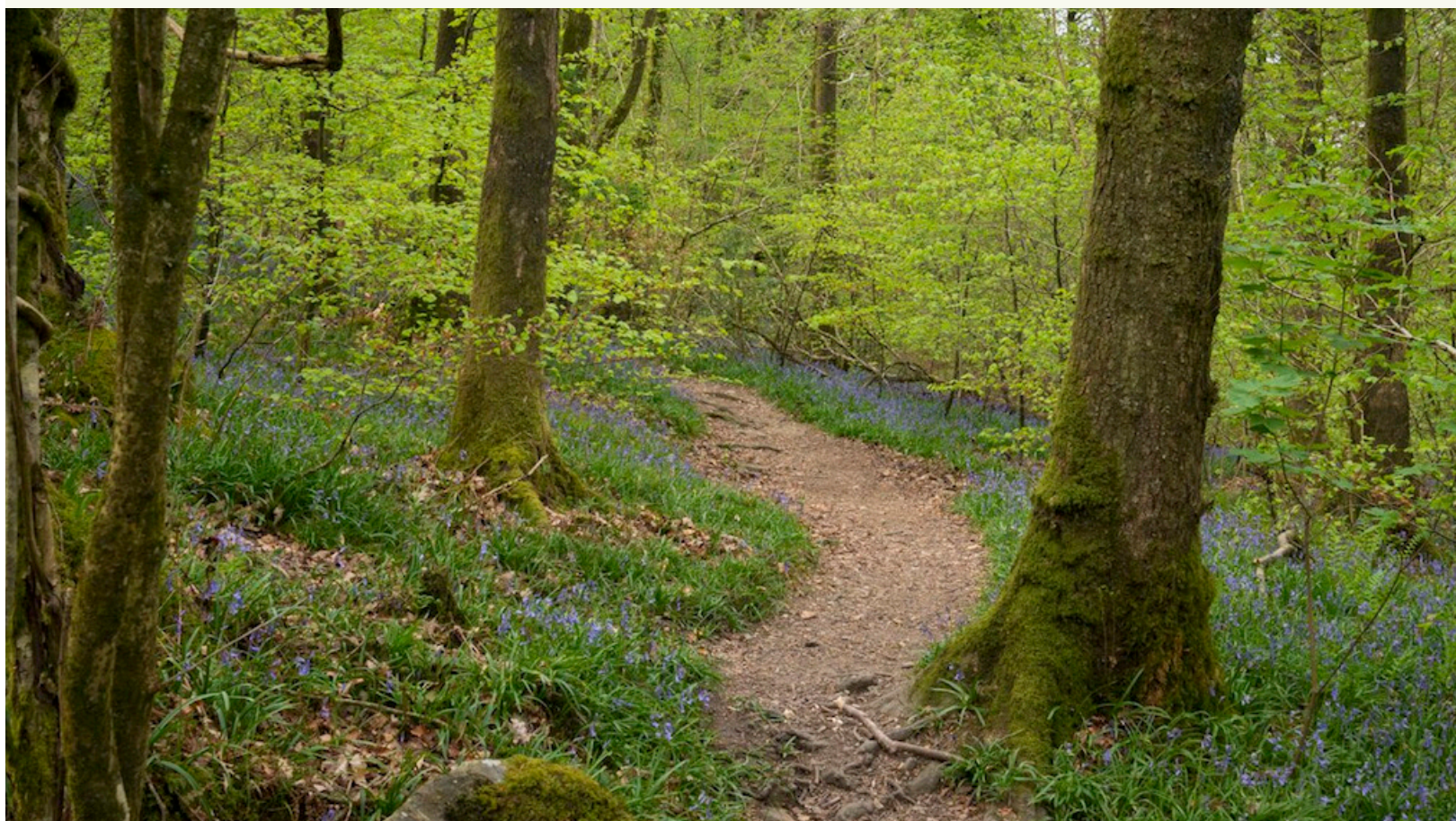
How we are putting nature into recovery in Cumbria

Thanks to your support and involvement, Cumbria Wildlife Trust has been busier than ever, working hard to protect the best of Cumbria's wildlife and wild places.

The key highlight of the year was working closely with the people of Staveley to secure the future of Craggy Wood. This outstanding woodland is perched spectacularly above the village, at the start of the Kentmere Valley. We were staggered by the response and received more than 400 individual donations to help purchase and 'save' the wood for the community.

Our ground-breaking work at Eycott Hill, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, was recognised in two important reports looking at the successful restoration of the hay meadows and how our management has significantly increased the natural capital value of the site.

Thanks to a team of volunteers, staff and local contractors, we've created a new visitor cabin at South Walney. We welcomed more than 450 people to the opening day. The new seal webcam enables visitors to get a close-up view of the seals. The colony grew this year to record number; the highest count was nearly 500 adults.



▲ Craggy Wood is now a Cumbria Wildlife Trust nature reserve thanks to the fundraising efforts of the people of Staveley.

Our new conservation hub for the north of Cumbria is taking shape at Gosling Sike, and we've created a new wildlife garden to provide a focus for local people.

During the year, we launched our Wilder Future campaign using an animation updating the *Wind in the Willows* story for our times. This spearheaded our work to persuade MPs about the critical importance of introducing effective legislation to secure the future of wildlife on land and at sea as the UK leaves the European Union.

During the year, we also worked closely with the Cumbria Local Nature Partnership, Highways England and other local partners to develop an innovative and exciting new programme for pollinators across West Cumbria. The new project, called Get Cumbria Buzzing, started in May 2019.

Leading the recovery and restoration of Cumbria's peat bogs is one of the Trust's most important activities. We're not only making bogs better for wildlife but also safeguarding stored carbon from being released into the atmosphere. This year, having secured nearly £1M of new funding from Defra and the Environment Agency, we completed work on a series of restoration projects in remote places like the Shap Fells.

Stephen Trotter, Chief Executive

Conserving habitats and species: our reach and impact

Marine Conservation Zones

New Marine Conservation Zones

Nature Reserves ●
New Nature Reserves ▲

Restoration projects:
hay meadows ▲
peat ■

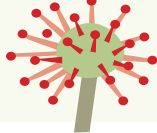
Plumgarths ●
Gosling Sike ●



Habitats cared for and restored

598 hectares of upland wetlands restored, locking in **1,545** tonnes of carbon

Wetlands are home to specialist plant species such as **carnivorous sundew**



Peatlands are the UK's largest carbon store

28.5 million tonnes

are in the Lake District alone

38

nature reserves you can visit



3,844

hectares cared for

Habitats conserved include limestone grassland, lowland raised mires, upland heath, sand dunes, woodland, wetlands, coastal shingle and limestone pavement.

Grasslands and meadows

21.25 HECTARES restored across **14** meadows in **9** locations.



6,345 plug plants

PLANTED BY

91 volunteers



A hay meadow can support an incredible **50** plant species per m^2

This in turn provides habitats for many different animal species including the brown hare, insects such as the great yellow bumblebee, and birds such as skylark, curlew, lapwing and twite.

Foulshaw Moss Nature Reserve restoration

In 2018 a Lancaster University student, Daisy Osborn, analysed water level data collected at Foulshaw Moss Nature Reserve from 2016-2018. The data shows that water levels are within 10cm of the surface of the bog, a majority of the time – an essential level for *Sphagnum* moss to form. This demonstrates that our bunding and damming techniques have been successful, for what has been an experimental, innovative and long term restoration project.

Foulshaw Moss Nature Reserve is home to an abundance of wildlife such as dragonflies and damselflies, including the rare white-faced darter and emperor dragonfly; ospreys, water rail, tree pipit, stonechat, snipe and teal; the nationally scarce argent and sable moth; green hairstreak and large heath butterflies; and reptiles including lizards and adders.

Our impact: species success

Foulshaw Moss Nature Reserve



3 osprey chicks were successfully reared at Foulshaw Moss Nature Reserve.

14 chicks have fledged over 5 years—the most successful location in Cumbria

The reintroduction of white-faced darters

at Foulshaw Moss Nature Reserve has been a fantastic success with over **2,000** exuviae found during monitoring.

This rare dragonfly is a specialist species to lowland raised mires.



At Smardale Nature Reserve in mid-May, before the hot weather started, the **early purple orchid** numbers increased to **117**

It was a phenomenal year for **skylark** at

Rockcliffe Marsh, with **520** pairs counted an increase of **357** pairs from the previous year



97 pairs of **lapwing**



43 pairs of **redshank**

22 pairs of **oystercatcher**



Foulney Island Nature Reserve

46 **little tern** nests



43 **Arctic tern** nests



Little tern chicks fledged at South Walney Nature Reserve, the first since the 1980s

Red Squirrels Northern England Annual Monitoring Programme



300

sites are surveyed each year during spring for red and grey squirrels, across seven counties in northern England, where wild red squirrels are still present.

In **Cumbria**, the picture was once again very **positive**, with **reds** detected in **57.1%** of sites, much higher than the overall figure.

127

surveys took place in the county, with **47** people involved, **44** of whom were volunteers.

Continuing challenges

Even with nature reserves providing safe havens for wildlife, sadly, wildlife does not always thrive. Weather and climate change, predation, disturbance and food supply all have an effect on how successful wildlife is in any given year.

Butterfly numbers

have continued to decline drastically since the **early 1990s**, with many unusual species becoming locally extinct. Erratic weather conditions continue to have a major impact on most of Cumbria's butterfly species.



The lowest number of breeding gulls ever

were recorded at South Walney Nature Reserve. Numbers have dropped every year since Walney Tip closed in the 1980s – an excellent food source.



The exceptionally sunny and dry spring and summer had a severe impact on the **fly** and **lesser butterfly orchid** populations at Smardale Nature Reserve.

fly orchid fell from **132** last year to **79**

lesser butterfly fell from **119** to **59**



Our impact: protecting wildlife in the Irish Sea

Marine Conservation Zones

Over **2,800** people from the North West responded to the third round of the **Marine Conservation Zone consultation**.

This third round included two proposed Marine Conservation Zones off Cumbria – Solway Firth and West of Copeland.

Razorbills were also recommended for protection within **Cumbria Coast Marine Conservation Zone**.



A byelaw was made to ban bottom trawling in **West of Walney Marine Conservation Zone**.

A voluntary ban on setting fishing nets around **St Bees** during the seabird breeding season was agreed to.

Grey seals

Grey seal pups were born at **South Walney Nature Reserve** for the fourth year in a row, establishing the site as a breeding colony.

The grey seal colony at **South Walney Nature Reserve** grew to nearly

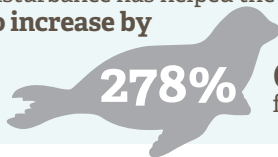
500 seals



This is measured by counting the number of adult seals hauling out onto the beach to rest.

Our efforts to protect the seals from disturbance has helped the colony to **increase by**

278% over four years.



Marine litter and plastics

46 beach cleans were undertaken around Cumbria.

Over **6** tonnes of litter were collected. This amount does not include all the fridges, freezers, vacuum cleaners, fans, chairs, gas bottles, burnt-out motorbikes, bikes, beds, fish crates, traffic cones, tyres and cushions, which couldn't be weighed.

Microbeads were banned from cleaning products and cosmetics in June.



▲ Drone surveys of the seals at South Walney Nature Reserve began in 2015, helping us to gain a more accurate picture of the number of seals hauling out on the beach. The seal colony has grown from 82 in 2012 to 483 in February 2019.

Our impact: inspiring and engaging people to value nature

1,526 people learnt about wildlife at our events

200 people

celebrated **marine life** at our family event, Beached Art

6 apprentices

and placement students gained vital workplace experience

12,839

members supported us with a regular donation



Children had fun at our Wildlife Watch Groups

400

&

400

children engaged with nature through our visits to schools

257 people gained new skills on our training courses

Numbers of people visiting our nature reserves



15,000

Foulshaw Moss



8,000

South Walney



7,000

Eycott Hill



7,000

Smardale

Your contribution



1,450 hours

were given by volunteers in various roles at our Plumgarths office



1,637 days

were given by volunteers to improve nature reserves

1,400 volunteers signed up to help wildlife

Badger's Paw Award

Each year Cumbria Wildlife Trust recognises the outstanding contribution of volunteers with our Badger's Paw Award. This year, the following volunteers were recognised: Peter Barron, Barbara Blatchford, Debbie Coleman, Peter Hearn, John Hooson, Ruth Jeffreys, Steve Matthewman, Yvonne Miller, Maureen Richards, Dyane Silvester, Judith Wallen and Roland Walmsley.

Volunteers help us to achieve so much more than staff alone could. Our volunteer roles and tasks are wide-ranging:

- Honorary nature reserve manager
- Helping with admin, mapping and our membership database
- Tree weeding
- Building our image library
- Dry stone walling
- Responding to volunteer enquiries
- Badger surveys
- Collating species records for reserves
- Heathland surveys
- Building visitor cabins
- Scrub removal to improve wild flowers
- Ride maintenance for butterflies
- Hedge planting
- Welcoming visitors

A special thank you!

Cumbria Wildlife Trust's Local Support Groups help us to reach out into our communities and bring people closer to nature through the many events they organise each year. We'd like to thank the group committees, which are entirely run by volunteers, for their ongoing commitment to the Trust.

The Lost Words Garden at Gosling Sike

“I enjoy volunteering at the garden ultimately for the sense of purpose and belonging that I get from it. I find it particularly satisfying because it’s a new project and there is plenty of opportunity to contribute and I see the outcome of a day’s work. I feel a particular connection to the community engagement and social inclusion aspects of the project and have found it rewarding to work alongside other groups and with other volunteers. The combination of outdoor work, interaction with other people, connection with nature and giving something back as a volunteer all align perfectly with achieving good wellbeing.”

Chris, Garden Volunteer

“All of the children had a great morning and it really fits in well with our topic of ‘How Does Your Garden Grow’. The activities were super learning opportunities as well as fun and engaging. The children came back to school desperate to find out ways that they could help save the bees at home and in school so we continued our learning by researching bees and how to help them. Thank you so much for such an amazing opportunity.”

Lauren, Year 1 Class Teacher, Houghton CofE School



Exploring Carlisle’s natural heritage with Carlisle Youth Zone



▲ “Our partnership work with Cumbria Wildlife Trust has been hugely successful. The opportunities and experiences it has given the young people as well as opening their eyes to the beautiful scenery around Cumbria have been invaluable. They have actively asked to be more involved in outdoor activities and trips involving wildlife.”

Matt, Carlisle Youth Zone, Team Leader

3 young people completed their **John Muir Award**



29 young people visited at least one nature reserve

Eycott Hill Nature Reserve

“After training as a walk leader I now do regular guided walks around the reserve. It’s really satisfying to talk to people about the work we’re doing and the progress made and see people who’ve been on a guided walk return again later to see more for themselves.”



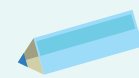
▲ “As a volunteer I’ve learned all sorts of new skills, and Cumbria Wildlife Trust has provided professional training for things like dry stone walling and livestock monitoring. So as well as giving my time to help wildlife, there are great opportunities to learn in the process. And of course it’s great to work as part of a such a friendly team of people in such beautiful places.”

Alex Heron, volunteer

147 people enjoyed guided walks



52 art workshops



260 school children, and **59** adults with learning disabilities took part



46 events took place at the nature reserve

Thank you

Donations are the financial backbone of Cumbria Wildlife Trust and we are grateful to our 12,000+ members who make it possible for us to do so much for wildlife in the county. Thank you to all our individual, joint, family, child, life and corporate members and to those who have left us a legacy, either in their Will or as a living legacy. Our thanks also go to the grant-giving organisations which have supported our projects throughout the year.

Thank you to our Corporate Members who have supported us this year

Platinum: Center Parcs, The Lakes Distillery.

Gold: Lyon Equipment, United Utilities.

Silver: AvantiGas, Cyclife UK Ltd, H&H Reeds Printers Ltd, WCF Ltd.

Bronze: Arnison Heelis Solicitors, Cedar Manor Hotel, The Cumbria Grand Hotel, Holiday Cottages.co.uk, Lafarge Tarmac, Predator Experience, University of Cumbria.

Standard: Aggregate Industries, AlpKit, Castle Green Hotel, Daffodil Hotel, Eden Insulation, English Lakes Ice Cream, Fortis Remote Technology, Good Life Cottage Company, Lakeland Cottage Company, Lakeland Hideaways, Lakeland Limited, Lakelovers, Langdale Hotel and Spa, Pure Leisure Group, TheLakeDistrict.org, Wildroof Landscapes.

Complimentary: Cumbria Waste Management, Furness Building Society, Radiata Trees, 2 Sisters Food Group, Vine House Farm.

Gifts in Wills

During the year we were grateful to receive new legacies from John Holland, Isabel Martin, Ann Molesworth, Iain Richardson and Gillian Thorne.



Where our income came from

Total £2,822,824

Grants £1,685,232

Membership £581,381

Donations £335,645

Legacies £114,802

Other income £105,764*

*This includes income from Local Support Groups, our lottery, merchandise sales, fundraising events and investment income.

What your financial support means

85% of our expenditure created living landscapes, secured living seas, and inspired people to care for the natural environment.

15% was spent on membership scheme costs and fundraising.

