



Cumbria
Wildlife Trust

Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Wildlife Highlights 2019–20



Protecting **wildlife** for the Future

Taken as a whole, 2019-2020 has been a good year for Cumbria Wildlife Trust in spite of the unprecedented levels of crisis and uncertainty that emerged in 2020. The global Covid-19 pandemic cast a dark shadow over the end of the year; bringing huge concern about the health and wellbeing of our members, volunteers and staff, let alone fears about the wider impacts on the county's wildlife.

We're deeply concerned about the impacts of this dreadful virus on all of our members and supporters across Cumbria and beyond, particularly for those who have suffered. We sincerely hope people have come through the experience with at least some positive outcomes.

The pandemic has also had a major impact on the Trust's planned activity, and as we went into lockdown, we adapted rapidly to the situation and were as agile as possible, given the size of our organisation and the level of resources available to us. Within a matter of a week in March, we transformed from an office and site-based charity to one which had more than 55% of our staff on furlough, with the remainder of staff working productively from home.

We owe a huge debt of thanks to all of our trustees, volunteers and staff for their hard work and commitment to our cause during this exceptionally difficult period.

We are especially grateful to all of our members and supporters for your amazing support for wildlife in Cumbria in these difficult times. Thank you.

With the tumultuous events of the year, it is hard to cast our minds back to the pre-coronavirus world and the fantastic achievements we have delivered together on behalf of wildlife in Cumbria during 2019. But, as the details in this report clearly demonstrate, we're having a significant impact and making a real difference for people and wildlife in our wonderful county.

It was great news that the transfer of Bowberhead Farm was finally completed at the end of the year. This is part of one of the most important areas for wildflower-rich meadows in the North of England so we're all thrilled that their future is now secured by the Trust's stewardship and protection.

We're delighted by the success of the first phase of the recovery of Eycott Hill. In February we held a highly successful and well-attended conference which celebrated the amazing five-year Lottery-funded project and looked ahead to the way in which nature can help solve some of the big challenges that face the uplands as we leave the European Union.

This has been a challenging year for the Trust and wildlife in Cumbria but we look forward with your continued support to 2021, and we are confident that we can bring our wildlife back to this amazing county.

David Sharrod, Chair, and Stephen Trotter, CEO

Wildlife habitats restored

200 trees planted at Eycott Hill Nature Reserve

Major hedge laying for all the boundary hedges started at Waitby Greenriggs Nature Reserve

4,660 plug plants **PLANTED BY** **131** volunteers

199,000 m² of meadows restored across **15** meadows in **13** locations

26,000 m² of heathland was restored at Eycott Hill Nature Reserve using **2,400** common heather, bilberry, bell heather and crowberry plug plants

356,900 m² of pollinator habitat restored or created on **8** community sites

310,000 m² of pollinator habitat restored or created on **45** roadside verge locations

2.5 km² of upland wetlands restored, locking in **843** tonnes of carbon

Wildlife habitats cared for

38 nature reserves you can visit **3,844** km² cared for

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

Restoring and conserving wildlife habitats

Marine Conservation Zones

Nature Reserves

New Nature Reserve

Plumgarths

Gosling Sike

Our activity this year

Restoration projects:

Hay meadows

Peat

Pollinator habitat



Delivering natural solutions to climate change

Natural Flood Management

Natural flood management is when natural processes are used to reduce the risk of flooding. Changing the way land is managed to reduce flood risk is also beneficial to wildlife and that is why we undertook a project at Birds Park, to the east of Kendal, to research the effectiveness of slowing the flow of floodwater from Stock Beck East down to the Sandylands estate in Kendal. A series of willow 'hydro-hedges' have been built in the basin of the former Kendal reservoir which could hold back up to 5,000 cubic metres of water during a storm event like Storm Desmond. Any stored water will release slowly after the flood peak, reducing the impact on properties during a storm event. Cumbria Wildlife Trust is working in partnership with the Environment Agency, which has funded the project, to deliver a programme of natural flood management research in the Stock Beck Catchment. Land owned by United Utilities around Birds Park is one of the first locations identified to do this.



▲ Volunteers from Kendal Conservation Volunteers making natural flood defences above Kendal © Cumbria Wildlife Trust.

Species success and challenges

Atlantic salmon returned to Eycott Hill Nature Reserve



16 were recorded for the first time following work to re-naturalise Naddles Beck

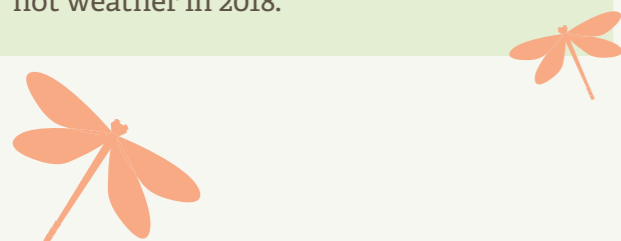


Dragonflies

20 species of dragonfly were recorded on Cumbria Wildlife Trust's nature reserves. These included the nationally rare white-faced darter, re-introduced at Foulshaw Moss, and a migrant from Europe in February, a vagrant emperor.

Another migrant from Europe, red-veined darters, appeared during the summer.

Colonising species such as broad-bodied chaser did well but lower numbers of some residents, such as common hawker, could have been an outcome of hot weather in 2018.



Birds

160 different bird species were recorded at South Walney Nature Reserve.

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

16 chicks have fledged over 6 years the most successful location in Cumbria

Rockcliffe Marsh Nature Reserve

207 pairs of skylark

83 pairs of lapwing

66 pairs of redshank

38 pairs of oystercatcher

Foulney Island Nature Reserve

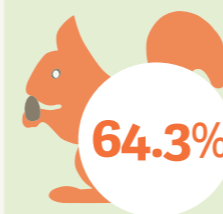
16 little tern nests **8** Arctic tern nests

Eycott Hill Nature Reserve

38 species of birds were recorded

48 meadow pipits & **51** skylark were seen in April

Red Squirrels Northern England Annual Monitoring Programme



Number of sites where red squirrels were detected during surveying, an increase from 57.1% compared to the previous year.

Orchids

Fly and lesser butterfly orchids

It was a poor summer for these orchids at Waitby Greenriggs Nature Reserve due to May rainfall being 30% of normal.

Heath fragrant orchid

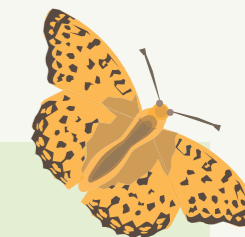
This unusual orchid with white and violet bi-colour flowers was spotted at Waitby Greenriggs Nature Reserve.

Common spotted orchids

Over 80 common spotted orchids bloomed at Augill Pasture Nature Reserve in the summer.

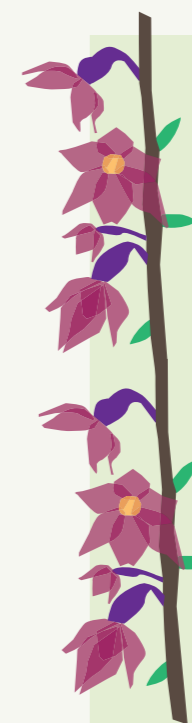


Butterflies



Good populations of northern brown argus, grayling, dark green fritillary and holly blue at Hutton Roof Craggs Nature Reserve.

It was an amazing year for migratory painted lady with unprecedented numbers throughout Cumbria.



Dark red helleborine var. pallens

Two new light coloured forms of this rare helleborine were discovered at Hutton Roof Craggs Nature Reserve, bringing the total to 10.

Dark red helleborine var. bicolor

Over 30 specimens of this variety of orchid thrive on Hutton Roof Craggs Nature Reserve.

Dark red and broad leaved helleborine hybrid

20 of this vigorous hybrid and many weaker ones are growing at Hutton Roof Craggs Nature Reserve. Nowhere else in the UK is it so prolific.

Continuing challenges

We have seen wildlife thrive across our nature reserves this last year, but wildlife continues to decline across the countryside. Nature reserves are vital havens for our rare and unusual species but wildlife needs to be able to live outside these pockets. Two bills, the Agricultural Bill and the Environment Bill were debated in Parliament last year, the outcome of which could have a huge positive impact on wildlife in changing the way that land is managed. The Wildlife Trusts have advised and lobbied Government on ways these bills could have better outcomes for wildlife.

Inspiring and engaging people to value nature

2,416 people learnt about wildlife at our events

13,103 members supported us with a regular donation



20 & **1,000** children had fun at our Wildlife Watch Groups
children engaged with nature through our visits to schools

7 apprentices and placement students gained vital workplace experience

Numbers of people visiting our nature reserves



20,000

Foulshaw Moss



12,000

Smardale



10,000

Eycott Hill



9,000

South Walney

Your contribution



1,325 hours were given by volunteers in various roles at our Plumgarths office



2,155 days were given by volunteers to improve nature reserves

1,616 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: Janet Antrobus, Ruth Carling, Sue Gibson, Laurence Carlyle, John Gorrill, Ann and Philip James, David Stevenson and Alison Whalley.

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.

Eycott Hill Nature Reserve

"The original visit to site inspired wonderful ideas, it was amazing to see those ideas transformed into a script and then a performance. Thank you to everyone involved. The children loved performing outdoors."

Braithwaite Primary School after their outdoor theatre performance at The Hill of Dreams at Eycott Hill Nature Reserve.

"I just wanted to say a HUGE THANK YOU for all the fantastic experiences that working with Cumbria Wildlife Trust over the last four years has brought, we have thoroughly enjoyed every moment."

Greystoke Primary School after their outdoor theatre performance at The Hill of Dreams at Eycott Hill Nature Reserve.

"The experience has been fantastic, the children enjoyed the performance a great deal and got so much out of it. As a teacher it has been a pleasure to watch the children develop their skills to the point where they could perform to complete strangers yesterday! The children have a much more developed understanding of the local environment and how precious it is which I was delighted with. I was so proud."

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School after the completion of the four-year long project with Prism Arts and Cumbria Wildlife Trust.



▲ Distington School. Photo Prism Arts



15 guided walks during 2019 with **140** people taking part



56 art workshops

139 school children, and **22** adults with learning disabilities took part



121 students took part in the John Muir Award

59 people took part in



5 different skills courses

2 Discovery Days where **80** people attended

26 Conservation Days involving **186** volunteers, completing a total of **930** hours work

1 outdoor theatre performance with over **120** performers and an audience of **95** people

Staveley Woodlands Nature Reserve

65 people are growing trees for the woodlands at their own homes

3 family events were attended by **14** families

"I have been involved with the Staveley Woodlands project from the beginning as a fundraiser and then as a volunteer. It is so lovely to be part of a project which will increase the biodiversity and area of woodland close to the river Kent. I and many others have learnt plenty of new skills, dry stone walling, planting new saplings, fungi and moss identification and collecting seeds to try to grow more trees to be planted out later. The residents of Staveley are delighted to have Craggy Wood as a publicly owned woodland and part of the Staveley Woodlands group, and feel empowered to help in its upkeep and development because of the engagement that Cumbria Wildlife Trust has made with them over the past few years. We all enjoy walks in every season through the woods. Thanks to Cumbria Wildlife Trust for their commitment to this project."

Anne Salisbury

130 people volunteered

32 local school children are helping regularly

36 people volunteered in the tree nursery

Gosling Sike

12 students from the University of Cumbria undertook filming for their course

539 volunteer days were carried out in the garden

33 pupils from Houghton C of E Primary School visited to learn about bees and pollination

The Lost Words Wildlife Garden was created at Gosling Sike

A wild flower nursery was built by the **Get Cumbria Buzzing** team

Providing access to nature

A new car park, visitor cabin and information boards were created and installed at **Smardale Nature Reserve**

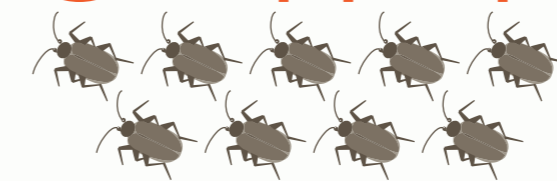
600m of new boardwalk was built by volunteers at **Drumburgh Moss Nature Reserve**

A new bird hide and osprey shelter were built at **Foulshaw Moss Nature Reserve**

Get Cumbria Buzzing

3,557 wild flower plug plants were grown

9 pollinator-friendly gardening workshops & **43** people took part



13 art and crafts activities took place and were enjoyed by **436** people



3 schools created pollinator friendly gardens in their school grounds

32 pollinator conservation days took place & **394,300 m²** of pollinator habitat was restored or created for pollinators

6 pollinator identification skills workshops were held & **52** people took part



100 Highway England roadside verges were restored for pollinators



"My role was to work closely with Cumbria Wildlife Trust and Highways England to deliver habitat restoration works on A66/A595 verges. Working collaboratively helped bridge the knowledge gaps, so that my team were able to deliver the best outcomes for pollinators, and road users. I was keen to be involved from the onset, it was technically challenging and the benefits for pollinators are immense. I've learnt a lot, as a result we've created a company webpage to demonstrate what can be done on road networks to support pollinators. I'm also working with my local community to create wildflower verges in our village."

Mark Wakeman, Lead Contractor, Ground Control

21 education workshops were held in **6** schools

506 children took part in pollinator related activities

2 new Marine Conservation Zones were designated off the Cumbria coast
Solway Firth MCZ
West of Copeland MCZ

Razorbills were also protected in Cumbria
Coast MCZ



4 more MCZs were designated in the wider Irish Sea

Wyre & Lune MCZ, Ribble Estuary MCZ
 Queenie Corner MCZ & South Rigg MCZ

3 basking sharks were sighted from Cumbria

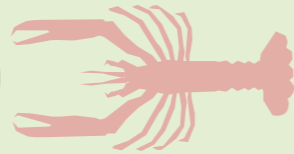
7 grey seal pups were born at South Walney Nature Reserve

The grey seal colony at South Walney peaked at 412 hauled out on the beach

Dublin Bay prawn creel fishery

A trial to test the feasibility of a Dublin Bay prawn creel fishery in the West of Walney Marine Conservation Zone resulted in

340



prawns caught in 203 creel pots. Bottom trawling for these prawns is very damaging to marine wildlife on the sea bed

69 beach cleans collected **1,138** bags of rubbish across Cumbria



▲ Photo John Gorrill

Thank you

Donations are the financial backbone of Cumbria Wildlife Trust and we are grateful to our 13,000+ 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, University of Cumbria.

Standard: Aggregate Industries, AlpKit, Daffodil Hotel, 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, CanOWater.

Gifts in Wills

During the year we were grateful to receive new legacies from Marjorie Higham, Margaret Albon, Albert Watson, Marjorie Shaw, Maureen Forshaw, Kathleen Wilson, Geraldine Braithwaite, Katharine Griffin, David Stewart, Christine Cochrane, Royston Jackson, Derek Hall and Walter Matthews.

The enormous gift of a love of nature

There are many expressions of genuine thanks that we both give and receive in an average year. But this year we came across a note of thanks in a Will that was so heartfelt and touching that we would like to share it.

Dr Rosemary Maine was not a member of Cumbria Wildlife Trust, so the confirmation of a gift left in her will was a very welcome surprise. The wording within her Will describes that the gift is being made 'in memory of my dear parents who endowed me with the enormous gift of a love of nature'. How wonderful of Rosemary to acknowledge this gift that has given her so much pleasure throughout her whole life.

And so, to all of you who have endowed children with this gift, and passed on a love of nature to a younger generation, thank you. It can clearly have a huge impact on someone's life.

When Rosemary's gift is received, we will place a memory leaf expressing her thanks to her parents at an appropriate site, as was Rosemary's wish.

Our thanks go to Rosemary and all those who have benefitted wildlife through a gift in their will.

Where our income came from

Total £3,342,561

Grants £1,429,156

Donations £880,738

Membership £594,642

Legacies £308,686

Other income £129,339*

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

What your financial support means

80% of our expenditure created living landscapes, secured living seas, and inspired people to care for the natural environment.

20% was spent on membership scheme costs and fundraising.

