



**Cumbria**  
Wildlife Trust

# Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Wildlife Highlights **2021–22**



Protecting **Wildlife** for the Future

This year has been incredibly busy and successful. We've enhanced many of our nature reserves and, because of your wonderful support and the hard work of volunteers and staff, our sites are in excellent shape. We've also been working hard to bring wildlife back across Cumbria and beyond our own sites through many landscape-scale projects.

This is a vital task. Working closely with farmers, landowners and other partners, we're creating a physical network of joined-up nature-friendly landscapes across Cumbria ...but there's much more to do!

Our teams are leading and/or working successfully on many exciting partnership projects that benefit wildlife, people and local communities across our beautiful county. Many of these are summarised in this report.

This year, the Trust and our supporters made influential contributions to policy in Cumbria and beyond. We helped provide input to the forward-looking Environment Act which became law in late 2021 and which we hope will help drive nature conservation and recovery in the years to come. We've also influenced the introduction of new Highly Protected Marine Areas in the Irish Sea with the potential for the Allonby Bay Marine Conservation Zone to be 'upgraded'. Thank you to the many members and supporters who responded to Government in support of these initiatives.

Thanks to our supporters, the Trust had a good year financially but there is no room for complacency as we brace ourselves for an uncertain economic future. We've been able to do more for Cumbrian wildlife as a result of an increase in individual donations and the Trust received several legacies from longstanding supporters for which we are extremely grateful and humbled.

We owe a huge debt of thanks to all of our Trustees, volunteers, supporters, funders and staff for their hard work and commitment to the cause of wildlife in 2021/22.

We are especially grateful to all of our members and supporters for your superb support for wildlife in these difficult times. Without you, none of our work or achievements for people and wildlife would have been possible.

**Thank you**

**Stephen Trotter, CEO**

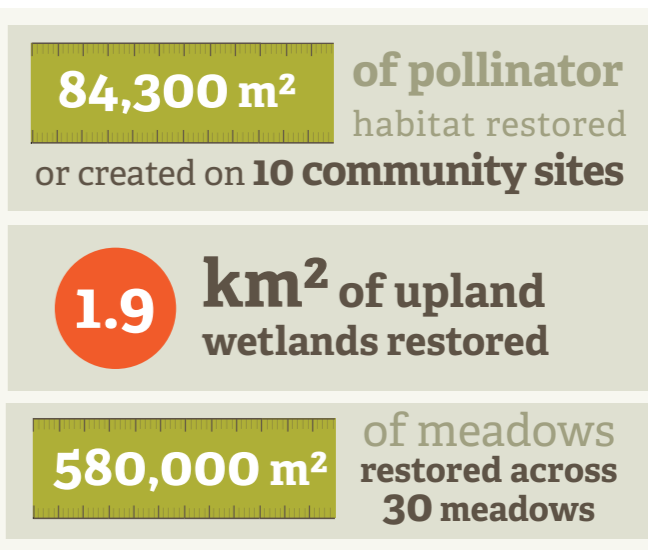
**Wildlife habitats cared for**

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**Wildlife habitats restored**

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**Cold Springs – a new space for nature**

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Ann Clark had always wished to gift land that she owned to Cumbria Wildlife Trust in her Will. She was living with cancer and knew the time she had left was short, so she contacted us to transfer the land so she could live to see it happen. Although the 15 hectares of farmland east of Penrith, known as Cold Springs, is not currently home to much in the way of wildlife habitats or species, there's an opportunity for us to create a haven for wildlife in the future. This is the legacy Ann wished, for herself and in memory of her late husband Brian. Cumbria Wildlife Trust took ownership of Cold Springs in 2021 and our plans are still in the very early stages. We will update our members as these plans take shape. Eventually Cold Springs will be a great example of the benefits of making farmland better for wildlife, which could be wide-reaching for people and for nature. Ann died shortly after the land was transferred to Cumbria Wildlife Trust and it gave her great peace of mind to know that her wishes would live on. If the time is ever right for you to remember Cumbria Wildlife Trust in your Will, please contact Helen Duxbury on 01539 816325 or [helend@cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:helend@cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Restoring and conserving wildlife habitats**

**Our activity this year**

Marine Conservation Zones

Nature Reserves ●


Restoration projects:

- Hay meadows ▲
- Peat ■
- Pollinator habitat //
- Plumgarths ●
- Gosling Sike ●



## Enhancing our nature reserves


### Species success stories South Walney


 **81 herring gull** chicks fledged


 **45 great black-backed** gull chicks fledged


 **A single black-headed** gull chick fledged - the first chick to have fledged at South Walney since 2010. This success is thanks to the installation of a high-grade anti-predator fence.

### New species at nature reserves

 Bird's-eye primrose at **Eycott Hill**

 Greater butterfly-orchid at **Barkbooth Lot**

 Marsh fritillary butterfly at **Eycott Hill**


 Slender-horned horsefly at **Drumburgh Moss**


### New nature reserves


Holme Park Quarry  
Clawthorpe Fell  
Nichols Moss  
doubled in size





### Species success stories Foulney Island


**4**  meadow pipit


 **10** little tern

 skylark chicks fledged **4**



 **22** ringed plover

**11** oystercatcher 

 **1** Arctic tern

 **12** Eider ducklings hatched

Despite the **unprecedented predation pressure**, the first ever **pieb wagtail** nest fledged **three chicks**

 and the **first shelduck pair** since the 70s **hatched three ducklings.** 

## Looking after nature reserves

### At Staveley Woodlands we:

 Planted **600** native trees

 Ran volunteer days for **Kendal College BTEC students**

 Surveyed the woodland with **Staveley Primary School**

 **Surveyed** for ash dieback

We celebrated the **100<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of Meathop Moss, our first nature reserve, with a **guided walk.**



### **2** apprentices

trained with reserve officers to learn **hedge laying, walling, habitat management, species identification, and footpath maintenance.**

The Big Give Double Your Donation Appeal raised **£28,718.75** for Bowber Head Farm

### At Bowber Head Farm we:

Installed a  red squirrel cam

 Installed a **farm cam**

 Repaired **drystone walls**

 Plug planted into the **hay meadows**

Put up **owl boxes** 

 Collected **meadow seeds** to grow on

### Ran a series of events:

**12** guided walks 

 meadow painting

 walling taster sessions

 a **bumblebee walk**

 **conservation days**

a **bioblitz** 

 **wildlife safari**

## 30 by 30 success story: peatland restoration

#30by30

Cumbria Wildlife Trust's survey of bogs in the Lake District confirmed that most have been damaged, prompting action to restore peat. Peatlands are a special wildlife habitat; they store carbon, help to reduce flooding and improve the quality of water.

### Shap Fells Site of Special Scientific Interest

**20 km** of eroding peat banks stabilised & covered in turf

**1.1 km<sup>2</sup>** of the Wet Sleddale reservoir catchment restored

**1,000s** of bog pools created

Sphagnum mosses transplanted into the pools to restart peat formation

This work has **locked in 226 tonnes** of carbon per year

### Coniston

**3,378m** of upland drains blocked with **peat dams, timber dams & stone dams**

Restoration of **rare valley mire habitats** on **2** National Trust farms

**Management plans** for **8.68 km<sup>2</sup>** of peatland written

### Armbboth Fells Site of Special Scientific Interest

**1.692m<sup>2</sup>** of eroding peat hags stabilised & re-turfed

Peat-forming mosses transplanted & **6,300** native moorland plug plants planted

**64,400m<sup>2</sup>** of peatland rewetted with small peat bunds

**1,435m<sup>2</sup>** of eroding peat reseeded



▲ Plug planting on peatland at Armbboth Fell

## 30 by 30 conservation in progress: improving & creating pollinator habitat

#30by30

Cumbria Wildlife Trust is creating wildflower-rich habitat across northwest Cumbria to help boost pollinators. We're working with local communities and local authorities to achieve this.

**48,650** wildflower plug plants grown in our nursery



**20,934** wildflower plug plants planted

**18,633** pollinator-friendly trees planted

**54** new locations surveyed in preparation for pollinator-friendly habitat works

**145** conservation days welcomed **484** people

**10** community locations restored for pollinators

**121** gardens and green spaces made friendly for pollinators pinned on our online map

**7** art & craft events enjoyed by **619** people

**23** pollinator identification skills workshops delivered to **252** people

**20** educational workshops delivered to **685** children

**524** wildflower seed packets were sent out

**Free downloadable teachers' packs** created for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3

**2** iNaturalist training events delivered to **28** people

Awarded the **National Highways award** for 'Excellence in environment and sustainability' for improving habitats for pollinating insects on Cumbria's A-roads

## Restoring hay meadows

16,106 plug plants planted by staff & volunteers



16 fields surveyed by volunteers covering 300,000 m<sup>2</sup>

92,000 m<sup>2</sup>

wetland

& marshy grassland restored at Warcop and Haybridge

### Working in partnership

We work with a wide range of partners to restore habitats in Cumbria.

Last year we worked with:

Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership



3 fields restored over 50,000 m<sup>2</sup>

National Trust

19 fields assessed



for restoration potential

### Events

We run events and activities to give a greater understanding of rare habitats and to encourage people to take action.

Last year we ran lots of events:

#### Guided walks



National Meadows Day at Piper Hole

During the open weeks at Bowber Head Farm

#### Webinars

Meadows restoration  
Carbon & grasslands  
Engaging young people  
Girls on Fells, a conservation day

### Training and teaching



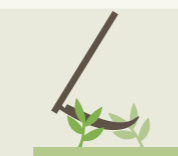
ID training for meadow surveyors



Collecting wildflower seed



ID grass training for beginners



Learn to scythe better

## 30 by 30: protecting wildlife in the Irish Sea

#30by30

The North West Wildlife Trusts (Cumbria, Lancashire and Cheshire Wildlife Trusts) campaign for the designation and management of a network of Marine Protected Areas throughout the Irish Sea and the conservation of the wider marine environment.

We want to see at least 30% of the Irish Sea to be connected and protected for nature's recovery by 2030. Currently, in the areas cared for by these three Trusts, 41% of the sea is 'protected' but only 5% has any sort of protection measures, and 0% is fully protected.

### Irish Sea Network

This new network of Wildlife Trusts around the Irish sea is working towards improving collective impact, communication and knowledge sharing. The network held four meetings to develop a technical assessment of the Irish Sea as well as a high-level vision and policy recommendations.

### Sealife sightings off Cumbria

Scarlet lady & highland dancer sea slugs found off Walney Island

Sightings of bottlenose & common dolphins off St Bees

Stranding of European eels & sea potatoes after storm Arwen

Mass stranding of cuttlebones

### Highly Projected Marine Areas

1 out of 2 site proposals submitted to Government selected as proposed as a Pilot HPMA

7 grey seal pups were born at South Walney Nature Reserve

287 grey seals hauled out on the beach at South Walney. Lower numbers than previous years.

76 volunteers collected 895 bags of rubbish from beaches in west Cumbria

2 Marine Futures Interns supported for 6 months

First 3 years of the internship programme completed, with 100% (5 interns) in employment..

## 30 by 30: protecting wildlife in the Irish Sea

### My Local Catch

**1,705** people reached across all project activities

Marine survey group launched, covering



citizen science schemes in West Cumbria

**3** youth programmes run for Brathay Trust, Whitehaven Harbour Youth Project & Whitehaven Academy

**13** community events were attended by **1,070** people

800 samples of local sustainable seafood given out at

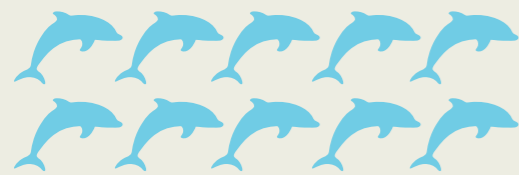


events & food festivals

**SeaFest:** West Cumbria's festival of the sea launched, with 250 attendees at the inaugural event



### Wildlife highlights



**10** dolphins, both common & bottlenose, spotted from Whitehaven in July survey

**Starfish,** sea urchins & velvet swimming crabs found in the rockpools at Parton



**Initial surveys**

planned for extensive honeycomb worm reef patches in Harrington & Maryport



## 30 by 30 conservation in progress: sand dune restoration

2020 saw the start of our work to restore sand dunes in locations across west Cumbria. This work is part of Dynamic Dunescapes, a national project to restore dunes over four years.

**6** new pools created for natterjack toads & other specialist species



**1** pool restored for natterjack toads & bund created to limit sea water inundation



**7** walks & talks



**2** areas of invasive *Rosa rugosa* removed & treated



**50,000 m<sup>2</sup>** of bare sand created as new pioneer habitat at risk of loss



"Through my placement with Cumbria Wildlife Trust and Dynamic Dunescapes I have been able to develop my understanding and skills in the conservation sector that will help me prepare for a future in conservation. Being given the opportunity to interact with people of various ages and backgrounds has improved my interpersonal skills when it comes to talking to others about the importance of looking after nature. Additionally, learning with Dynamic Dunescapes about new and improved management strategies for dune habitats has given me a close personal insight into how conservation is always adapting and expanding and how we as conservationists have to also adapt with these changes." Sophie Smith

**1** student placement supported

**20,000 m<sup>2</sup>** gorse scrub removed to rejuvenate dune slacks & grassland



**2** herds of cattle to improve dune grassland biodiversity, grazing 1 km<sup>2</sup> of new area



**2** schools completed John Muir Award on the dunes



**1** community arts project



involving 5 public events, a performance, 4 school workshops & an art exhibition

Worked with **9** schools reaching 322 pupils



**458** volunteers on dunes working with partners



**944** people engaged through events, stalls, talks and training



**10** beach cleans



**8** youth taster sessions



**1** teacher training course



## Nature for Wellbeing

The natural world is the foundation of our health, wellbeing and prosperity. Evidence shows that a thriving, wildlife-rich environment benefits both physical and mental health. People with nature on their doorstep are more active, mentally resilient and have better all-round health. Every day, we're working to bring wildlife to more people, and more people to wildlife.

### Helping people to enjoy nature reserves

**Geology of Eycott Hill film created** 

**New welcome panel installed at Humpery Head**

**13 online talks attracted 1,588 people**

**Welcome New welcome & interpretation in the new wildlife hide at Drumburgh Moss**

**Welcome Interpretation & signage survey undertaken**


**New signage, interpretation & improved trail markers at South Walney**

**319 events attended by 1,939 people**

### Cumbria Wildlife Trust works with other groups to bring nature to more people

#### The Bay: A blueprint for recovery

The Bay is a Nature and Wellbeing Programme, offering people living around Morecambe Bay the opportunity to get outdoors and connect with nature. It has been set up to tackle the feelings of isolation and loneliness after the global pandemic. The Bay hub locations are Barrow-in-Furness, Morecambe and Fleetwood. Cumbria Wildlife Trust is leading on activity in Barrow.

 **28 people most impacted** by **social exclusion** and **isolation** engaged in regular positive activity, feeling happier & better connected

**1,056 people at risk of social exclusion and isolation** directly engaged in positive activities with an understanding of how to go on to self-serve access to nature

**5 awareness sessions** held for partners & NHS staff, **engaging clinicians with the importance of nature connectedness**

### Gosling Sike garden and plant nursery

This is a place that nurtures more than plants alone. It's somewhere that people meet, socialise, volunteer and visit for the wellbeing benefits that access to nature and community brings. Through volunteering at Gosling Sike, people and nature grow together, wildlife and friendships thrive, and the community makes a real difference to the natural world and each other. A group from Mencap regularly work in the gardens and the wildflower nursery.

#### The About Being Stroke Group

The group works with dance artist Susie Tate and students from the University of Cumbria. They used the garden at Gosling Sike, and the wildlife found there, as inspiration for movement and dance to help their recovery.

#### Thriving Communities Carlisle

A partnership supporting communities recovering from the impact of Covid-19 by providing social, arts, culture, nature-based and wellbeing activities. It's a social prescribing project where people can connect with others and try new things, such as noticing-nature walks, planting trees and flowers for wildlife, and creative activities inspired by the natural world. The most important thing is people feel more connected to, and supported by, their communities.



▲ The About Being Stroke Group take inspiration from wildlife at Gosling Sike to aid recovery. Photo Guy Broome

▲ Volunteers at Gosling Sike Nursery grow wildflowers for our restoration projects

### Local Support Groups

Our local support groups are instrumental in bringing nature to people around the county through talks and walks. Although these events were limited by Covid-19 restrictions, groups did start to hold talks and walks at the beginning of 2022, and most have been incredibly popular. Our thanks go to all volunteers running events and activities – if you'd like to get involved with your local group please do get in touch or look at the volunteering pages on our website.

### Your contribution



**1,400 hours** were given by volunteers **working from home**, helping with a range of tasks



**1384 days** were given by **volunteers** to improve nature reserves

# Thank you

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Donations are the financial backbone of Cumbria Wildlife Trust, and we are grateful to our 15,000+ 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.

## Big Give double your donation appeal

Thank you to all our supporters who donated to the Big Give appeal, giving £16,338.75 in just 7 days. This was matched by a donation of £12,380 from The Oglesby Charitable Trust, the 'project champion', who increased their pledged donation from £10,000 because of the response from you, our supporters. The Big Give appeal raised £28,718.75 in total for restoration works at Bowber Head Farm Nature Reserve.

## Thank you to businesses supporting us with donations this year

- Ticket Tailor donated a percentage of their profits, totalling £22,000.
- Lakeland Trails' charity of the year & donated £2,000.
- Percentage of sales, fundraising or in-kind donations made by Derwent Pencils, Fern + Fell candles, Edie & Beau, Grasmere Gingerbread, 2 Sisters Food Group, Park Cliffe Camp Site, and author Alex Mularkey.

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

**Platinum:** inov-8, Lyon Equipment.

**Gold:** Dalefoot Composts, The Roselands Charitable Trust, United Utilities.

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

**Bronze:** Arnison Heelis Solicitors, Cedar Manor Hotel, Center Parcs, The Cumbria Grand Hotel, HolidayCottages.co.uk, Larfarge Tarmac, Storrs Hall Hotel, University of Cumbria, O'Neil Architects.

**Standard:** Aggregate Industries, Alpkit, The Daffodil Hotel, English Lakes Ice Cream, Fern Howe Guest House, Fortis Remote Technology, Good Life Cottage Company, Lakeland Cottage Company, Lakeland Hideaways, Lakeland Limited, Lakelovers, Langdale Hotel & Spa, Pure Leisure Group, TheLakeDistrict.org, Wildroof Landscapes.

**Complimentary:** Aerial Artwork, Cumbria Waste Management, Radiata Trees, 2 Sisters Food Group, Vine House Farm.

## Wild Work Days

Many businesses also contributed to Cumbria Wildlife Trust through a donation and staff volunteering on one of our Wild Work Days. Thank you to all those who came along. You can find out more about our Wild Work Days on our website.



▲ O'Neil Architects collected litter at South Walney Nature Reserve on one of our Wild Work Days

## Gifts in Wills

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During the year we were grateful to receive new legacies from Christine Nuttall, Anne Hollingsworth, Valerie Whincup, Sidney Clare, John Watmough, Joyce Bell, Audrey Cockshott, David Hill, Michael Lamb, John Frost and Marjorie Mellor.