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Montgomeryshire Moldlife News Spring 2020

The Climate Issue

Who are we?

Since 1982 **Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust** (MWT) has been the leading voluntary organisation promoting wildlife conservation in Montgomeryshire.

Our VISION:

An Environment rich in wildlife for everyone

Our MISSION:

To rebuild biodiversity and engage people with their environment by being an active and influential wildlife champion.

Wildlife Trust Wales:

The five Trusts in Wales, supported by Wildlife Trusts Wales, have 25,000 members and manage 230 Nature Reserves covering more than 6,000 hectares of prime wildlife habitat.

The Wildlife Trusts:

There are 46 local Wildlife Trusts across the whole of the UK, the Isle of Man and Alderney. With 850,000 members and 2,300 natures covering over 80,000 hectares. The Wildlife Trusts are the largest UK voluntary organisation dedicated to the conservation of all UK wildlife.

Contact Details

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Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust

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On The Cover

Wellies Required, by Eley Hart. What looks at first glance to be a river is in fact a lane near Welshpool. Unable to cope with the volume of water coming off the hills the water flows onto the A458 causing dangerous driving conditions.

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Chair's Overview

by Tim McVey

After the wettest February on record it is hard not to see the evidence for climate change accumulating. We can feel powerless to alter such global forces but only through concerted effort can we halt the rise in temperatures and mitigate their effects. MWTs primary focus is on nature and climate change is causing great stress on our wildlife. Some animals can move north to areas more suitable to their requirements but most of the natural world can't do this.

Across the Wildlife Trust movement, we are monitoring these changes; observing, surveying and recording what is happening. As with the recent floods, we cannot categorically say that any change is due to climate change, but it all adds to the evidence. We are trying to decrease stresses on wildlife by providing reserves as safe havens. These are limited areas, but we encourage, advise and support other landowners across the county, for example through the Open Newtown and Deri Woods projects. Nature provides vast resources for carbon sequestration in woodland and MWT has done the research to show the remarkable carbon absorption levels achieved by healthy peat bogs. Their restoration has been the focus of our Pumlumon Project and work undertaken at Cefn Croes.

This winter the team at the Dyfi Wildlife Centre have been building our new visitor centre. Every aspect has been planned to ensure that, instead of producing carbon, the centre will remove carbon from the atmosphere. It is built with timber and recycled materials and energy is produced by means of a large solar array and groundsource heat pump, so it will export power to the grid.

But there is plenty more for us as a Trust and you as individuals to do. Read on to find out more.

Tim McVey *MWT Chair*



When it Comes to Peat, Wetter is Better!

Over the winter, MWT have been involved in a climate change landscape scale resilience project. MWT Project Officer Dewi Morris, with the help of Nick Young (Natural Resources Wales) and Alison Heal (Ceredigion County Council's Ecologist) has had the task of supervising the restoration of the blanket bog and moorland under and around the wind turbines above Llangurig. This has been funded from the landscape restoration funds put aside by Cambrian Wind Energy as part of the planning permission to build Cefn Croes wind farm.



Prior to the wind farm being built the conifer plantation was felled: the main drainage ditches (now as deep as 4 metres in places) and planting ditches for the trees were left unblocked. As a consequence the exposed bog was degrading, reverting to open moorland with the types of plants and trees that you would expect to move in when the water table is lowered.

Dewi has been supervising local contractors to block the ditches in order to raise the water levels on the moor and encourage a good growth of peat forming sphagnum mosses. This has involved contractors driving a 6 tonne tracked 360 digger onto still very boggy terrain. The digger drivers were then asked to block the main ditches every 20 metres and the planting ditches every 10 metres with a dam. The dams,



once complete, were slightly below the level of the current surface of the vegetation to ensure that in the event of huge amounts of rainfall the dams could release their load and not fail catastrophically.

Driving a very heavy machine on about 30cm of vegetation and up to 6 metres in depth of very squishable peat is no mean feat and requires considerable skill. Fortunately, local contractors A W Jones of Dinas Mawddwy and R J Edwards were up to the task as they had considerable experience of such landscapes being from local farming families.



To date both contractors have completed at least 40 hectares of peatland restoration and there are funds to complete the rest of the ditch blocking. The ditch blocking is being monitored for the amount by which the water table has risen using a series of dip wells. Dewi and MWT's Dan Hodgkiss have been measuring the levels of water every month since before the ditch blocking started. Ecological monitoring by MWT staff and volunteers has included breeding bird, Water Vole and vegetation surveys. The results of this monitoring will be compiled and repeated in order to prove that the restoration is moving the landscape back to its original, beautiful, sodden state.

MWT's work at Cefn Croes will:

- Reduce peak flow rates lower down the river catchment area by retaining water during periods of heavy rainfall and releasing water during periods of drought
- Improve water quality within the catchment by acting as a natural filter and reducing the amount of sediment entering adjacent watercourses
- Ensure that the bog remains a net sink of carbon by rewetting the land and preventing the oxidisation of the peat and the release of carbon back into the atmosphere. As the bog returns to optimum health further carbon will be captured.
- Encourage greater biodiversity as the peat bog returns to its original state and is able to support the flora and fauna which thrive on healthy peat bog habitat.

Pumlumon Progress

We have been working on the Pumlumon Project for over 10 years now. I have been asked what have you done and why have you gone so quiet at the moment? The answer to both of these questions is surprisingly encouraging!

It has always been a technical project pulling together new ecological thinking, the economics of supply chains and policy development in the Welsh Government. The idea, however, is simple: the richer our natural environment, the more services it can provide us – and the more it's in our interest to invest in the natural world.

The good news is that it works. We have measured environmental improvement, engaged the farming community and valued the "ecosystem services". All we need to do now is fix the economic policy. Yes, it's as dry as it sounds but over the last 18 months this is what we have been doing, working with ADAS and an economic consultant to prove the social and economic value in restoring nature. This final section of work is more about Welsh Government policy and analysing "supply chains" than it is the beautiful mires and moors of the uplands but if we get this to work we really will have given Wales a workable way to defend people from flooding, absorb carbon dioxide, bring prosperity to the uplands and at the same time make our uplands a place where wildlife thrives.



New Wildlife Centre's Local Focus to Combat Climate Change

The Dyfi Wildlife Centre at Cors Dyfi Nature Reserve is leading by example when it comes to ecofriendly, sustainable buildings that have a positive impact on climate change. But it's not just about the solar panels and ground source heat pump. Repurposing of materials and local sourcing for workers and products are at the heart of the centre's design. Here are some of the ways the DWC is helping reduce the Trust's climate footprint down on the Dyfi:

- The DWC is a **timber-frame building** and the wood comes from Esgairgeiliog forest, three miles away. Timber is a carbon sequester.
- The **roof** of the DWC is tiled with Penrhyn quarry slates, reclaimed from a housing estate in Llanberis.
- The building's **insulation** material is called Warmcell, and is made in Welshpool from recycled newspapers.
- The DWC's new reception desk is made from Welsh oak and slates from Aberllefenni quarry

• **Caffi Tŷ Maenan**, the centre's café, will serve healthy meals made to traditional Welsh recipes, prepared using locally sourced ingredients grown and reared around the Dyfi Valley. The DWC **Shop** will only sell products made in Wales.



- Pews and panelling from Capel Salem in Corris, that were built by Welsh carpenters in 1895, will be transformed by modern-day Welsh carpenters into **tables, booths and chairs** for the new café
- Interpretation at the DWC will incorporate recycled and reclaimed copper, tin, silver, lead and other metals a reference to the mining history and heritage of the Dyfi River
- The main **Staircase** is being made by local carpenter Carwyn from Borth, in the shape of the Mary Evans, the largest ship ever built on the Dyfi River in its shipbuilding heyday around the mid 1860s. Carwyn is using local timber and reclaimed Welsh oak.

Valuing Local Wildlife Sites

As our 'Where the Wild Things Are' project comes to an end, we are thinking about how to put a value on Powys' Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). It might seem gross and even dangerous to put a price on nature but, in our modern world, it can be a powerful way of highlighting how important healthy ecosystems can be for people. Our primary focus will always be the wildlife, but our cherished habitats can also provide other services. If we want to get everyone on board, it's a good idea to use a variety of angles to get our message across.

So what are these ecosystem services? Simply any services which the land provides to human beings. They can be very tangible things like food, timber or water, or benefits to our health and wellbeing through recreation, tourism and education. Arguably more important than those, however, are the so-called "regulating services".

LWS are selected for their value to wildlife; it might be a diverse flower-rich grassland, ancient woodland or peat bog, or perhaps the site has rare species living or growing there. A site which has sufficient quality to pass the

SY21 8DG.

criteria for selection as a LWS, will nearly always provide at least one regulating service. Woodlands and trees are recognised as being particularly good for improving air quality. They can also alleviate flooding and sequester carbon, by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Healthy peat bogs are even more effective at carbon reduction and, provided they are not dug up or drained, will lock that carbon away in deep peat, for millennia. Freshwater habitats can tackle water pollution, as well as being crucial for flood regulation.

Putting a value on all this is not easy. In fact, a whole new project would be required to estimate the contribution Powys' LWS can make to society. In the meantime, we have to stick to rough estimates to get our point across. For example, a recent Office for National Statistics report estimates the total value of pollution removal by vegetation for Powys at £2.1 million. Clearly some of this vegetation will be outside LWS, but it gives some idea of just one significant contribution they can make.

We are living in challenging times. Climate change has become a very real threat, motivating



"Conflict of interest? Peat bogs and renewable energy generation can both mitigate climate change, but only if the latter does not destroy the former!"

greater urgency in us all to make real changes in our lives. If you are a landowner or land manager. whether you have a LWS or not, you can use your land to help reduce your carbon footprint or mitigate climate change. Many of our habitats are in a damaged or fragmented condition, so you can make the most difference by carefully managing those habitats you already have and by creating new ones. Together, we can create a 'Nature Recovery Network' to benefit the wildlife and the people of Powys.

The Birds and the Bees

Simon Boyes is the new County Bird Recorder for Montgomeryshire. Simon intends to continue the good work of Mike Haigh, who has filled the role for the last seven years. Simon is the third member of the Boyes family to take on a county recorder role in Montgomeryshire. Douglas became butterfly recorder seven years ago at the age of 16; Clare became recorder for bees and wasps last year; and now Simon completes the hat-trick after 50 years of studying birds. Please continue sending your bird sightings and records – including your 2019 records for the annual bird report - to the usual email address (montbird@gmail.com) or by post to Simon Boyes, Bridge Cottage, Middletown, Welshpool, Powys There are over 500 species of solitary bees and wasps in the UK, and Montgomeryshire has very few records for this group. Many species are very small, and it is not always obvious what they are. It would be good if you could collect up any dead bees and wasps from your greenhouses and conservatories this summer and send them to Clare. Clare's polytunnel has already produced many new county records and a bee in Tammy's greenhouse last summer was new for the county. If you are not sure if it is a bee or wasp, count the wings as a starting point. Flies have only one pair of wings whereas bees and wasps have two pairs.

Clare, Simon and Douglas can be contacted at clareboyesvc47@gmail.com, montbird@gmail.com and douglasboyes@gmail.com

More Trees = Good?

By Dan Hodgkiss

Or does it? We humans are very good at seeing the world in simple black-and-white terms, so 'more trees = good' sounds right. People and organisations often pledge to plant trees, but the devil is in the detail. For example, are they just planting one species of tree? If so, they'd be creating a monoculture, prone to attack by devastating pests and disease and offering limited provision of habitat for wildlife. In Wales our most prominent wooded monocultures are forests grown for wood production, the majority of which are non-native tree species such as Western Red Cedar, Sitka Spruce and Douglas Fir from North America, which offer little in the way of food and habitat for native wildlife. Consider the Horse Chestnut tree. This species is native to Eastern Europe but has been in Britain for around 2000 years. It supports just five insect species. By way of comparison, our native

oaks can support 423 different insect species.

Many of these non-native species are soft-wood conifers, which are fast-growing but don't sequester anywhere near the same amounts of carbon as slow-growing deciduous forests. These conifers, with their darker leaves, also absorb more of the sun's energy, which in turn increases the warming effect of climate change. To make matters worse, their shedding needles



Restoring Cors Dyfi from commercial forestry (above) to healthy peat bog (below).



can lead to acidification of nearby soils and waterways, making them unsuitable for many other species.

Many non-native trees are invasive, with the capacity to spread un-hindered into the natural environment, often ousting native species and leading to dramatic species loss. Some are spread by birds (reluctantly, given the high content of cyanide in their berries compared with native ones) such as Wall Cotoneaster, which is a vigorous spreading invasive on our Llanymynech Rocks Nature Reserve. Others, such as eucalyptus and rhododendron, are also allelopathic, whereby the roots secrete chemicals which kill off any competing vegetation, requiring more aggressive measures to root them out.

Management is another challenge with tree planting. We've all seen the classic spindly town trees which never seem to grow. Often, quotas of trees are planted in such density as to kill young saplings (roadside motorways are famous for this). The result is a thick stand of mostly dead young trees, or else a very dense growth of tall, thin trees (known by

Volunteers planting a mixed species hedgerow at Llandinam Gravels





foresters as 'carrots'). If we are serious about planting trees, we need to be planning their future care ahead of time. Involving local community groups to aid with their management ensures a long-lasting habitat, rather than simply 'planting and hoping for the best'.

In the UK, hedgerows also contain vast swathes of tree species and are hugely important wildlife corridors. However, they are in trouble. Many of them have been removed and replaced with fencing, to squeeze as much value out of the land as possible and many more are neglected or over-managed. A hedge which is repeatedly over-trimmed will eventually die, with large gaps appearing and dominance of more vigorous species such as Elder acting as early warning signs. The planting and sympathetic management of hedgerows can be just as valuable for creating 'woodland habitat' as tree-planting.

I mentioned before that some trees contribute towards climate change and nowhere is this more damaging than on upland peat bogs. Peat bogs are constantly wet, acidic places full of lovely sphagnum moss. When a tree removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, it stores it as carbon in wood, which is released when the tree dies. When sphagnum moss removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, it turns it into more sphagnum moss. When this dies, new sphagnum moss grows on top, burying and storing the carbon of the dead moss, which gradually turns into peat. This process acts as a carbon sink, removing far more carbon than a forest could on the same land, as well as providing filtration for our water, habitat for wildlife and reduced flooding downstream. MWT has been working to restore peat bogs for some time, at our Cors Dyfi Nature Reserve (once a forestry site) and Glaslyn Nature Reserve as part of the Pumlumon project.

As part of all our ongoing efforts to save the world, a very simple way to improve your environmental impact is to change your internet search engine. If, for instance, you start to use Ecosia instead of Google, each search you make helps to pay for tree planting schemes the world over and their servers run on 100% renewable energy. Ecosia has produced an informative video on 'how to plant trees, the right way', which can be viewed here: https://blog.ecosia.org/everyonegetting-tree-planting-wrong/. Although largely focussed on various parts of the tropics, the issues are just as relevant here in Wales, perhaps more so than ever.

Wild to Work - For People, For Wildlife

Wild to Work is a six week programme of training and outdoor activities offered in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions to clients of Welshpool Job Centre Plus. The scheme is part of the Job Centre's support to enable individuals to gain the skills and confidence to help them get back into employment. MWT has been delivering these sessions since



May 2019 at our Severn Farm Pond and Llyn Coed Y Dinas nature reserves. Each participant is mentored by MWT staff to develop an action plan setting out personal goals which they will be supported to achieve. Participants gain experience, know-how and confidence while the Trust's nature reserves, and the wildlife who live there, benefit from improved infrastructure and habitat creation. The participants have been

involved with a lot of creative projects up-cycling materials from ex-boardwalks and an ample supply of pallets from neighboring Parry and Evans recycling yard. These materials were turned into much needed seating, worktops, hay baling machines, hedgehog homes, bat boxes and even the furniture for a



mud kitchen. Participants will engage with 5 areas of activity during their time on the programme: Practical Conservation, Wildlife Walks, Bushcraft, Growing projects and Environmental Awareness which fall under the broad heading of eco-therapy.

Deri Woods Volunteers Look to the Future

Deri Woods is an HLF funded project and over its two-year lifespan the Deri Woods volunteers, who meet every third Thursday in the month, have had a big impact on the wildlife and people who use the woodland, located in Llanfair Caereinion. So far, they have completed footpath restoration, step building, drain digging and clearance, handrail replacement and bridge repairs. They have also constructed a sizeable leaky dam! This has made a substantial difference to the rates of water transfer into the main river Banwy. Its branches only obscure two thirds of the channel allowing for free passage of wildlife through this water column. The other third has been blocked with brash which catches a huge amount of the woody debris flowing out to the Banwy. At the peak of the recent rainfall the water level upstream of the two leaky structures was 1/2 metre higher

than that below. The woody material caught by these dams creates crucial habitat for insects, which in turn provide an ample food source for resident and migrant birds.

HLF have paid for the refurbishment of the pump house to be used as a secure tool store. The volunteers, with the help of HLF funds, have brought all the tools and materials that they will need to look after the woods and keep it safe and well maintained in the future. The pump house





has also been fitted with a false ceiling to allow the inclusion of a bat loft within the building. The Deri Woods volunteers are to continue to operate with the support of MWT as a local volunteer group.

Do you fancy getting involved? The Deri Woods Volunteer group is always looking for more members. Find out more on their webpage: https://deriwoods.btck.co.uk/ or contact Dewi Morris at

dewi@montwt.co.uk

UK UPDATE

100 miles wilder

Space for nature should be at the heart of our planning and farming systems. This is the only way we can create a Nature Recovery Network, enabling wildlife to thrive across the landscape and bringing nature into our daily lives.

> But current proposals for developing the land between Oxford and Cambridge do not have nature at their heart. Without proper assessment, government cannot know whether the area

could support the current proposals for housing, road and rail and stay within environmental limits for nature, carbon and water.

Special habitats are under threat, including ancient woodland and grazing marsh, which supports rare and declining wading birds like curlew and redshank.

The Wildlife Trusts have created an alternative vision for this land: 100 miles of wilder landscape in which people can live, work and enjoy nature. By protecting and connecting the wildest places, we can introduce a new way of planning that has nature and people's wellbeing at the centre. Find out more **wildlifetrusts.org/100-miles-wilder**

New leader for The Wildlife Trusts

The Wildlife Trusts are delighted to welcome Craig Bennett as their new Chief Executive Officer.

One of the UK's leading environmental campaigners, Craig joins The Wildlife Trusts from Friends of the Earth, where he was Chief Executive.

In a conservation career spanning over 20 years, Craig has led a movement to end peat cutting on important moorlands, helped secured better wildlife legislation through The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and, more recently, led successful campaigns to highlight climate change and to protect and restore



bee populations.

Craig Bennett says: "The Wildlife Trusts are an extraordinary grassroots movement that is uniquely placed to work with local communities to make this happen and ensure a wilder future, and I could not be more pleased to have been asked to lead them at this incredibly important moment." wildlifetrusts.org/new-leader

An insect apocalypse

A new report, *Insect Declines and Why They Matter*, commissioned by an alliance of Wildlife Trusts in the south west, concluded that drastic declines in insect numbers look set to have far-reaching consequences for both wildlife and people. The report concludes: "if insect declines are not halted, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems will collapse, with profound consequences for human wellbeing."

wildlifetrusts.org/urgent-action-insects



UK HIGHLIGHTS

Discover how The Wildlife Trusts are helping wildlife across the UK



1 Inspirational youth

Over the last year, over 2,800 young people aged 11-25 rolled up their sleeves to help nature thrive in their local area. The Grassroots Challenge project, led by Ulster Wildlife, gave young people the opportunity to unleash their passion, creativity and potential to make a real difference to their environment and community. ulsterwildlife.org/news/inspirationalyouth

2 Attenborough appeal

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust launched an appeal to raise £1 million to safeguard Attenborough Nature Reserve, a wild oasis at the edge of Nottingham that's home to large numbers of wildfowl. The appeal was supported by Sir David Attenborough and raised over £900,000 in the first month. nottinghamshirewildlife.org/ lifelineappeal

3 Spooky sighting

A ghost slug was discovered in the gardens of Devon Wildlife Trust's Cricklepit Mill. The origins of this mysterious species are uncertain, but it's thought to be a native of Ukraine. Since ghost slugs were first discovered in the UK in 2007, there have been a scattering of sightings, mainly from South Wales. It's a predator of earthworms and may cause problems for our native worms if it becomes established.

devonwildlifetrust.org/news/ghost



UK NEWS

Natural Carbon SOLUTIONS **BY JOANNA RICHARDS**

Peatland

Peatlands cover just 3% of the earth's surface, but store more carbon than any other habitat on land (more than twice the carbon of all the world's forests put together). But when damaged, as in the UK, they release carbon, contributing to climate change - so restoration is essential.

We face a climate emergency. Extreme weather events are on the increase and the impacts of a warming climate are becoming evident on our beloved wildlife, with some UK species being pushed to the furthest limits of their natural ranges. To tackle a crisis of this scale, it is imperative every tool in the box is used, and this includes the natural solutions offered by our planet. Over half of all carbon emissions released into the atmosphere by humans are re-absorbed by the Earth's natural systems. And yet, many of these systems are broken, the habitats providing them damaged and degraded. Restoring these systems would allow even more carbon to be absorbed - and The Wildlife Trusts are playing a leading role in helping this happen.

At sea, the Trusts fought for the Marine Act 2009: properly implemented it restores our most important carbon absorber and the wildlife that lives within it, including kelp and phytoplankton. On land, 9% of the UK's surface is a huge carbon store with carbon locked up in wet peat. Carbon is also stored in organic rich soils, especially those under grasslands and woodlands. For decades, The Wildlife Trusts have pioneered peatland restoration and sustainably managed woodlands and grassland meadows. This work continues, thanks to our supporters, helping in the fight against climate change.

Saltmarsh

Like peatlands and grasslands, intertidal saltmarsh provides an important carbon store in its soils. Saltmarshes also act as a buffer against coastal erosion - although this and rising sea levels is leading to the loss of this habitat, with only 15% of its historic range remaining.

Woodland

As they grow, trees absorb carbon from the atmosphere, storing it in their trunk, boughs and roots and as organic matter in woodland soils. So, new woodland creation - through natural regeneration for example helps to combat climate change.

Seagrass meadows

These aquatic flowering plants are responsible for around 10% of all carbon buried in the ocean, despite covering less than 0.2% of the ocean floor. They store carbon 35 times faster that rainforests, but estimates suggest that globally we are losing an area of seagrass the size of two football pitches every hour.

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UK NEWS

Urban

Urban greenspaces help make cities better in a world that's getting hotter. Young street trees take up carbon dioxide and urban woodlands help control the local climate by providing shade and reducing the street temperature. Pleasant greenspaces can also encourage people to walk and cycle rather than jump in a car!

Grassland

Healthy grassland soaks up and stores carbon in its roots and the soil. Grasslands that are undisturbed by arable agriculture and protected from soil erosion through sustainable management are important stores. Yet in the UK, we've lost 97% of our semi-natural grassland and they continue to be at risk.

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Seaweed and kelp forests

Kelp grows incredibly quickly, sucking up carbon as it does. These underwater forests provide critical short-term carbon stores. When they die, bits of kelp sink into the deep sea, where they remain for a long time.

Marine sediments

Phytoplankton – miniscule marine algae – absorb carbon as they grow. When they die, some of the carbon they've taken up sinks to the ocean floor, where it can remain for thousands of years.

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UK NEWS

A bottlenose dolphin leaps clear of the water in the Moray Firth

UK UPDATE

A big splash for UK seas - our 2019 marine review

Together, the Wildlife Trusts form the UK's largest marine conservation organisation. Our Living Seas teams are the eyes and ears of the UK's coast. Throughout 2019, with the help of over 5,000 volunteers, they did wonderful things for the wildlife in our seas.

Careful monitoring revealed some fantastic good news stories around our shores, from bumper breeding seasons to amazing discoveries.

A new citizen science project logged 320 sightings of cetaceans off Yorkshire's east coast, including minke whales, bottlenose dolphins and harbor porpoises. There was good news for seals too, with Cumbria Wildlife Trust counting a site record of 483 grey seals at South Walney, including seven pups. Elsewhere, an individual seal, nicknamed Tulip Belle, was discovered commuting between the Isle of Man and Cornwall.

Lara Howe, Manx Wildlife Trust's marine officer, says: "It shows that seals will swim great distances for food and a place to pup, highlighting the importance of a network of Marine Protected Areas around the UK, so that wherever marine wildlife goes there are healthy seas to support them." Our fight to secure this network saw a huge victory last summer, with the designation of 41 new Marine Conservation Zones.

2019 also saw a welcome boost for some of our struggling seabirds. On Handa Island, Scottish Wildlife Trust counted 8,207 razorbills, the highest number since 2006, though the population is sadly still in trouble. In North Wales, Sandwich terns had a bumper year, with 800 chicks fledging compared to just 180 in 2018.

Sadly, it wasn't all good news. Several Wildlife Trusts reported an increase in disturbance. Jet skis, kayakers, boats and drones have all been recorded causing distress to marine wildlife like dolphins, seals and seabirds.

Plastics, ocean litter and discarded fishing gear also continue to devastate marine wildlife, though Wildlife Trusts around our shores cleared up huge amounts of litter, including 2.5 tonnes picked up by the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust.

All of this was made possible by the fantastic support of all our volunteers and members. For more amazing stories head to **wildlifetrusts.org/marine-review-19**

2019 IN NUMBERS

Over 5,000 volunteers

supported coastal Wildlife Trusts with beach cleans, surveys and shore-based events.

More than 200 sharks, skates and rays were tagged as part of Ulster Wildlife's SeaDeep project, helping us monitor these vulnerable animals.

 Two giant gobies were among 1,310 species recorded in just
24 hours as Devon Wildlife Trust's Wembury Marine Centre celebrated its 25th anniversary.

27 tonnes of litter and fishing gear collected by fisherman for Yorkshire Wildlife Trust's Fishing 4 Litter.

Get involved We need to put nature into recovery on land and at sea. Join us on our campaign for a wilder future: wildlifetrusts.org/wilder-future