



Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Northamptonshire

.....
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WILDLIFE
TRUST BCN CORPORATE MEMBERS
.....

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WILDLIFE AT WORK

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THANK YOU

Rainbow on the Great Fen
Credit: Guy Pilkington

Thank you for staying with us

Here at the Wildlife Trust BCN, we have always valued and appreciated all the local companies which have supported our work through corporate membership. During the current coronavirus pandemic, we appreciate your help more than ever.

Despite serious pressures on their business and employees, the majority of our corporate members have dug deep and stuck with us. They have found the time and funding to ensure that we have the resources to continue our work for local wildlife, for the benefit of everyone. If you're one of the companies which has renewed its subscription since the crisis started, we are truly grateful.

Even with this year's interruptions, we are continuing to see the results of our work and your support. Input from our staff saw Cowslip Meadow in Luton named as a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). This new status will ensure the long-term protection of a species-rich grassland habitat. In April, a pair of avocets were sighted repeatedly at Irthlingborough Lakes and Meadows in Northamptonshire, reportedly making it the

species' longest stay in the county. Our dormouse surveys have recently been completed and during winter the team will be focussed on analysing the data and getting groups involved in building more dormouse boxes. It's also been inspiring to see so many members of the public visiting our reserves and the increased engagement with our social media throughout lockdown, proving how important nature and local wild spaces have been this year. None of these achievements would be possible without your commitment to local wildlife and your support for our work to protect it.

Although we have been unable to meet in person or arrange networking events such as our popular bat safaris and Chalk and Cheese evenings, we hope you have felt included in our work to help protect nature and aid its recovery. We continue to strive towards inspiring everyone to get outdoors and enjoy the benefit that wildlife brings. Corporate support is vital to our work, and we thank you for helping us to help wildlife.

With thanks from all of us at the Wildlife Trust BCN



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Cover image taken and kindly supplied
by Sophie Baker

Contact Us

For more information on how your business can support the Wildlife Trust visit www.wildlifebcn.org, call 01954 713 500, email corporate@wildlifebcn.org, or contact

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30BY30 FOR CORPORATES

Sunset over Irthlingborough Lakes and Meadows
Credit: John Abbott

Thanks to an employee of Scott Bader Co. Ltd. who nominated us, we recently received a donation from their Commonwealth Fund. If you have a similar scheme, please consider proposing the Wildlife Trust BCN!

The Wildlife Trusts recently launched 30by30 – a bold mission to start putting nature into recovery across at least 30% of land and sea by 2030.

Nature has suffered serious declines for decades, with many species including hedgehogs, red squirrels, bats, turtle doves, cuckoos, water voles and basking sharks at risk. The collapse in the abundance of nature and lack of wild places has a disastrous effect on many of our ecosystems. Only 10% of land is protected in the UK and much of this is in poor condition.

Craig Bennett, CEO of the Wildlife Trusts movement, explains the plan further:

“We’ve set ourselves an ambitious goal... We will buy land to expand and join up our nature reserves; we’ll work with others to show how to bring wildlife back to their land; and we’re calling for nature’s recovery through a new package of policy measures including big new ideas like Wildbelt.

The next ten years must be a time of renewal, of rewilding our lives, of green recovery. We all need nature more than ever and when we succeed in reaching 30by30, we’ll have wilder landscapes that store carbon and provide on-your-doorstep nature for people too. Everyone can support and help us to succeed.”

How can businesses get involved?

- Manage 30% of your land or grounds in a wildlife friendly way
- Encourage colleagues to convert 30% of the garden space into a wildlife haven – there are lots of wildlife gardening tips available at wildlifebcn.org/wildlife-gardening
- Create an employee fundraising drive towards the 30by30 campaign
- Make a donation to support a 30by30 project

Please get in touch with us at corporate@wildlifebcn.org to let us know about or to discuss any ways that your organisation would like to get involved and help us reach this crucial goal of 30by30. We’d love to hear your ideas too!



Wildlife-friendly grounds
Credit: Robert Enderby



Wet planting day at the Great Fen
Credit: Alistair Grant



WET PLANTING DAYS AT THE GREAT FEN

The new wet-farming beds on the Great Fen are beginning to fill up quickly with the trial crops thanks to a steady flow of willing and hard-working volunteer groups.

Water Works is a project looking at ways to develop a more sustainable future for fenland resources – its soil, water and people. Through the project we are trialling new farming methods designed to protect our precious peat soils and water resources. Find out more about the Water Works project at www.greatfen.org.uk/big-ideas/wet-farming

Since the wet farming beds were completed, the next significant stage of the Water Works project has been planting. And this has meant all (socially-distanced) hands on deck! We have been delighted with the eagerness with which volunteer groups have sprung into action throughout the autumn. With winter approaching planting will pause until the spring, but the team will be busy monitoring the crops' health and their reactions to the local environment and wildlife.

Kate Carver, Great Fen Project Manager, says: "We'll be excited to begin planting our 'wonder crop' sphagnum moss in the

spring, and Covid permitting, welcoming more volunteer parties to help. It's been really fantastic seeing how interested and involved our volunteer planting parties have become. There is nothing like spending a day in the open out on the Fen, getting tired, wet and dirty, to bring home the fact that working together we can make a real difference to the fight against climate change."

If you are interested in getting a group out to the Great Fen to help us with this ground-breaking project to protect peat soils and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, there will be many more opportunities in the spring. Please do get in touch at corporate@wildlifebcn.org for more information about these plug-planting days. It's very rewarding to see the progress being made and we will need all the help we can get!



WILDLIFE TALKS GO ONLINE

This year we have really missed the opportunities to get out and meet people while delivering wildlife walks and talks for our corporate members - whether specific Fungi Forays, nature walks around our members' grounds or talks about our work more generally.

We realise that, although some restrictions have lifted, it is still very complicated to arrange events, but that doesn't mean we can't organise anything at all. While meeting people out on reserves has been impossible, we have been working on organising online talks via MS Teams for our corporate members' colleagues.

As an example, we recently organised a talk about wildlife gardening which was very popular and received great feedback from those who took part. Over 50 of the company's employees were able to attend the lunchtime session and we have just had a second, successful talk about our Cambridgeshire reserves for the same partner.

These online talks allow your colleagues to learn directly from, and ask questions of, an expert in the area. An online event can make it easier for more staff to attend than we might often see for a regular walk or talk and we are very



Corporate members' Fungi Foray, Granta Park

happy to discuss options for topics that will be of most interest to your staff, from more general talks about our work to specific wildlife topics, like wildlife gardening.

Please do get in touch at corporate@wildlifebcn.org if you are interested in arranging a virtual talk about our work or a specific wildlife topic. It is an excellent way to engage your staff with our partnership, while our usual walks aren't possible.

TOP RESERVES TO VISIT IN AUTUMN

Autumn walks are surely one of the best things about this time of year.

At Pegsdon Hills in Bedfordshire you might see flocks of birds feeding on seeds in the hedgerows and fields, and there are great views over the countryside. Beechwoods and Hardwick Woods in Cambridgeshire both have beautiful autumnal colour, whilst Titchmarsh in Northants has a heronry and you can often spot starling murmurations and waders. Or you could head over to Holme Fen at the Great Fen and hunt for fungi... why not explore somewhere new each month?



Little egret
Credit: Paul Wyer



SAVE THE DATE

Winter Solstice Celebration - Mindfulness of Nature – Saturday 19th December

Join Claire Thompson, author of Mindfulness and the Natural World and Becky Green, Senior Ranger for Trumpington Meadows, to celebrate the winter with a gentle afternoon and evening of mindfulness at Trumpington Meadows, followed by a campfire.

This event will include walks around the reserve, games and discussions in a safe, open and relaxed setting.

Self Guided Trails and Virtual Walks

You can now join our community engagement teams virtually for self-guided walks, which are a great family autumnal activity. These trails are available around various reserves including Blows Down, Totternhoe & Cambourne and you can find out more about how to get involved at www.wildlifebcn.org/events.

All scheduled events are subject to any changes in the government's Covid-19 guidance.



Trumpington meadow in the mist
Credit: Sarah Osborne

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