

FOREWORD

Welcome to Nature Matters.

I've reverted to an early design of the magazine for this issue.

Time is marching on and winter is almost upon us but there still many things to see and do in the natural world. Here are just a few of the stories making headlines this autumn.

Mike Armitage
Editor

World Wetland Day

It takes place on 2 February 2026, and it's a day when we all come together to celebrate our wonderful wetlands. Globally, 90% of them have been degraded in some way since the 1700s, and we're losing wetlands faster than forests. But wetlands are incredibly important! That's why the UN initiated World Wetlands Day – not just to celebrate the wonder of wetlands, but also to draw attention to the fact they're under threat.

Wetlands act as vital service stations for migratory birds. They offer food stops for fuelling before and during migration, resting places en route, places to breed, and safe places to spend the winter. The UK's wetland network forms the perfect 'service station' for birds using the migratory bird motorway from the Arctic to South Africa, known as the East Atlantic Flyway. We work with partners to protect wetlands all along the flyway.

England's east coast wetlands are a network of wetlands from the Humber to the Thames. The shorelines are teeming with food such as shellfish, and the marshes offer valuable roosting sites.

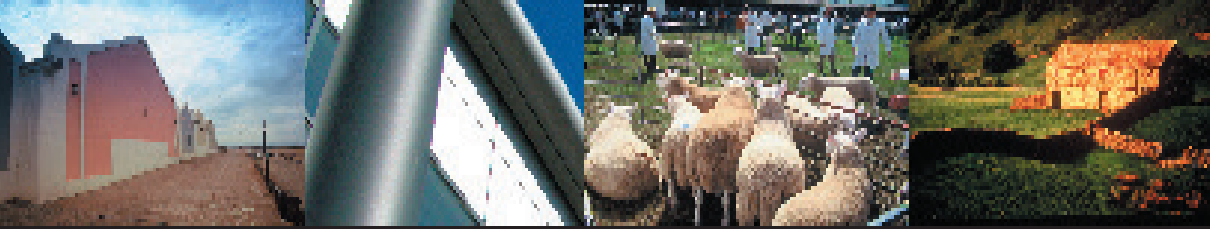
Each winter, more than a million birds visit the area, including four species in internationally important numbers: the Bar-tailed Godwit, Knot, Black-tailed Godwit and the Dark-bellied Brent Goose.

In summer, wetlands are teeming with life as they offer everything a breeding bird might need – sources of food and places to nest close by. Look out for migratory warblers, terns and Ospreys in summer, taking advantage of the conditions. Other migratory birds, such as Swifts and Swallows, use our wetlands too, as they're often a great place to forage for insects.

Though they cover just 6% of the earth's land surface, wetlands provide a home for a staggering 40% of all plant and animal species: not just birds. They're places where you'll find amphibians such as frogs and toads, reptiles, fish, insects, and mammals such as Water Voles. □

Contains Active Weblinks

If you have Adobe Acrobat, you will be able to click on weblinks and e-mail addresses in this document and your browser or e-mail software will launch automatically. □



BOS Foundation

The Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) Foundation is an Indonesian nonprofit non-governmental organization founded by Willie Smits in 1991 and dedicated to the conservation of the endangered Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*) and its habitat through the involvement of local people. It is audited by an external auditor company and operates under the formal agreement with the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry to conserve and rehabilitate orangutans. The BOS Foundation manages orangutan rescue, rehabilitation and re-introduction programmes in East and Central Kalimantan. With more than 400 orangutans (per July 2021) in its care and employing more than 440 people at a 10 sites. BOS Foundation is the biggest non-human primate conservation non-governmental organization worldwide. □

weblink: <https://borneoorangutansurvival.org>

DID YOU KNOW?

Brazil once had the highest deforestation rate in the world, and still shows high rates of deforestation. Between 2001 and 2023, Brazil lost 68.9 Mha of tree cover, and in 2022, Brazilian forest loss accounted for 43% of global deforestation. Since 1970, 700,000 km² of the Amazon rainforest have been destroyed.

Nature in Your Garden

You can get closer to your local wildlife by making your back garden a safe haven for nature. Here are some things you can do in your garden to help birds, insects and mammals:

Let the grass grow

Long grass is one of the rarest garden habitats and by letting some or all of your lawn grow, you will make space for many plant and insect species. Mowing the lawn only once every four weeks gives 'short-grass' plants like daisies and white clover a chance to flower in profusion, boosting nectar production tenfold.

Bird box and feeding

Birds are an important part your garden's ecosystem. Help them thrive by planting trees like rowan and wild cherry, plants such as teasles, and putting up bird boxes. Situate boxes and feeders or bird baths well out of reach of cats and keep them clean.

Provide natural highways and byways

Trees and hedges offer roosting and nesting sites and become natural highways for birds and mammals allowing them to move around safely, as well as providing valuable shelter and cover from inclement weather and possible predators. Even piles of cut branches, twigs and compost can be fantastic places for animals and insects to live, feed and hibernate.

Build an insect hotel

Leave piles of rocks, twigs and logs in your garden, or arrange them into interesting stacks. These will provide shelter for all sorts of important insects, such as beetles and spiders. Dead and rotting wood is a habitat that is in very short supply.

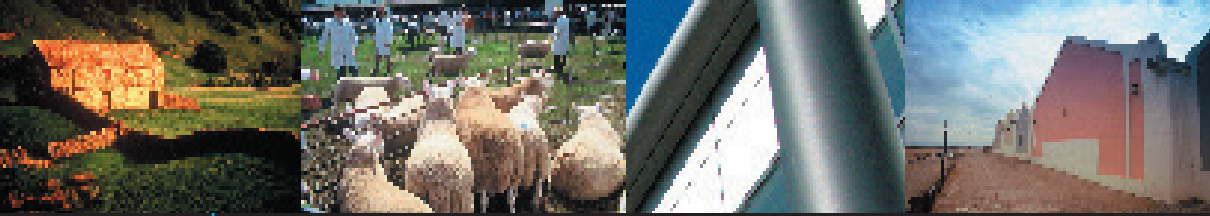
Create a pond

A pond is a real boost for wildlife. It doesn't have to be huge – you can use a bucket or trough sunk into the ground. If you do want a big pond however, make sure it has sloping sides to allow wildlife to get in and out. Fill your pond with unchlorinated rainwater from a water butt if possible and plant it up with native species.

Leave a gap in your fence

Don't lock out hedgehogs and frogs. Make sure your garden fences have some gaps at the bottom that can allow wildlife to move through from plot to plot. This will help link different habitats together. □

weblink: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/gardening-tips/how-to-build-a-wildlife-friendly-garden>



Glyndwr National Park?

NRW has set in motion the first steps in creating a new National Park in the north east of Wales based on the existing Clwydian Range and Dee Valley National Landscape.

If approved, this would be the fourth National Park in Wales, and the first new National Park to be established in Wales since 1957.

But, as well as having some support, there is a great deal of local opposition to the idea. ☐

Tributes for chimpanzee expert Jane Goodall who died aged 91

British animal rights campaigner and primatologist Dame Jane Goodall died aged 91 on 1 October 2025. She died in California where she was staying as part of her US speaking tour, the Jane Goodall Institute announced. Paying tribute, her institute called her a “tireless advocate” for the natural world, as the United Nations said she leaves “an extraordinary legacy”. ☐

weblink: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/c9qyw2ewl2nt>

Inspirational Thoughts on Sustainability

Here are some powerful quotes that inspire thoughts on sustainability:

1) “The future of the Earth starts with you.”

This quote highlights the crucial role each individual plays in promoting sustainability.

2) “There is no Planet B - save the one you are on.”

A reminder that our actions today directly impact the health of our planet for future generations.

3) “We don’t have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world.”

This emphasizes that every small effort counts in the larger fight for sustainability. ☐

Comments

Like what you see or have a point to make? Like to have something included in the next issue? Contact me.

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weblink: www.naturematters.org.uk