



# Gwent Wildlife Trust

## Ymddiriedolaeth Natur Gwent



# WILD ABOUT GWENT

## AUGUST 2014

## Make your Garden Buzz

Charlene Davies, LEMUR Heritage Trainee

Anyone with a garden can make a difference to wildlife, and it doesn't have to mean turning your green-space into a wilderness!

There are so many benefits to attracting wildlife into your garden. Aside from making a positive impact on the declining numbers of our native species, wildlife-rich gardens have their own natural pest control and avoid the need to spray harmful chemicals all over your garden (as well as saving the pennies!). Bees will help to pollinate crops, so attracting them to your garden would be great if you want to grow vegetables and fruit.

Make your garden wildlife-friendly and reap the rewards! Here are some ideas how:

### Choose plants for wildlife

If you are creating a new garden, it is advisable to look at what grows locally and within other gardens for ideas – floral species need the correct conditions in order to flourish. Try to include plants from the RHS *Plants for Pollinators* list and focus on providing a long uninterrupted season of flowers. Early and late flowering plants provide nectar for insects at critical times, such as just after emergence or prior to hibernation. Annual plants can produce many seeds in late summer and are a good source of nutrition for birds through autumn into winter.

Bees and butterflies love simple, accessible flowers. Bees are one of the busiest garden insects, and play a vital part in flower pollination. Nectar-rich plants are great for adult bees, whilst pollen is collected to feed the young. Provide flowers throughout the bumblebee's lifecycle, from March to September. Good spring flowers include bugle and forget-me-not, whilst snapdragons and scabious make a good summer choice. Why not try lavender or chives, which also look and smell great too.

### Make a home for insects

Insects are a vital part of the garden ecosystem. They pollinate the crop that you eat and the flowers that keep your garden looking pretty (as well as providing a good source of protein that is essential for over-wintering baby birds). Get the kids involved and build a bug hotel! They can make a really attractive garden feature



Bug hotel (Amy Lewis)

whilst being functional for insects. The best part about them is that they can be built out of a variety of natural materials that you can scavenge for around your garden or local green-space, from bamboo, to wooden pallets and stones. Dead wood is especially good for beetles and other insects, as well as fungi and mosses.

### Build a bird a home

Homes for birds are critical during the nesting season, especially for small songbirds like sparrows and tits. Bird boxes can be built or bought and come in a variety of shapes and sizes to accommodate the various species of garden bird. Remember to place your bird box out of reach of potential predators (the local cats for example) and avoid placing your bird box on southern-facing elevations as these areas get too hot on sunny days. And be patient – it will take some time for the nest box to gain residents. You know that you've created a lovely new home for the birds, but they won't know until they explore!

### Shrubs and trees

Why not plant a few fruit trees (don't forget to encourage the insects to pollinate them!). The fruits are nutritional for both you and wildlife alike.

>2

Gwent Wildlife Trust, Seddon House, Dingestow, Monmouth NP25 4DY

Tel: 01600 740600 Fax: 01600 740299 Email: [info@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:info@gwentwildlife.org) Web: [www.gwentwildlife.org](http://www.gwentwildlife.org)

Reg Charity No: 242619 Limited Liability Company No: 812535



Rob in his element  
(Gemma Bodé)

## Missing Rob

**Gemma Bodé,  
GWT Conservation Manager**

Rob Strachan, one of our most inspiring ecologists, died on the 17th May following a short battle with pancreatic cancer. His loss is a terrible blow for nature conservation across Wales and beyond.

Rob's career included working for Natural Resources Wales, the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit and the Vincent Wildlife Trust where his specialism in water vole conservation really developed. Rob's work highlighted the plight of the water vole and led to the publication of the first Water Vole Conservation Handbook, of which the 2011 edition remains a cornerstone for the conservation of this threatened species.

Rob was instrumental in helping reintroduce water voles at our Magor Marsh Reserve. Without his generous help, support and expert advice, the Project would never have happened. He voiced GWT's case for the reintroduction to Natural Resources Wales, ran training days, supported our water vole surveys, and was always available when we emailed him to help us identify numerous tricky footprints and piles of poo!

The amount of information that Rob knew about watery mammals in particular, was enormous and I feel so lucky to have worked with him. I am in no doubt that all those who those were in contact with him through the reintroduction Project feel grateful we were able to gain just a smidgen of his wealth of knowledge.

Thanks to him, the water voles at Magor Marsh are thriving and spreading way beyond the Reserve. We will be more determined than ever to ensure the water voles future is secure across the Gwent Levels as a legacy to Rob. If you wander down to Magor Marsh and you are lucky enough to hear a 'plop' or even see a water vole, have a think about Rob. I, and many others, believe that without his work, this gorgeous mammal would most certainly not have been seen on the Gwent Levels again and may even have become extinct right across Britain.

Rob was a truly inspiring ecologist and one of life's gentlemen. Our thoughts are with his wife, Jane, and family.

**>2** If you don't have enough space to create a mini orchard, consider planting a few trees in some plant pots or berries such as strawberries, raspberries or currants, which all do great in compact spaces.

Planting a small hedgerow could also make a nice garden feature – something a little out of the ordinary. The fruiting bushes used would provide a good source of food for birds and mammals during the autumn and part of the winter. A thicker, well-developed hedge can provide shelter and a nesting site for wildlife.

Shrubs should be cut in late winter and early spring to help retain fruit and seeds for birds and small mammals throughout the winter months, and if feasible, rotational cutting should be employed so as to create a more diverse structure, for a hedgerow that can accommodate different species at different times of the year. A variety of tree and shrub species would provide food sources throughout the year. Ivy climbers grown against walls provide a late source of nectar for insects during the autumn and late winter fruit for birds, as well as providing a dense, evergreen shelter and roosting site for bats.

### Don't be a neat freak

Long grass provides cover for small mammals, reptiles and amphibians. It also is a habitat for egg-laying creatures. Dead matter benefits the birds who gather it to make their nests, as well as the insects that may use them for over-wintering.

### Compost your waste!

Composting is a great way of adding nutrients to your garden whilst reducing landfill and greenhouse gas emissions.

A compost heap also provides a comfortable home for hedgehogs and reptiles and will support thousands of invertebrates! Add a barrel or container and save rainwater for watering your garden.

### Build a pond... of sorts

If there's one feature that is guaranteed to attract wildlife at astounding speeds to your garden, it's a pond! The birds will bath and drink in the shallows, and submerged marginal vegetation will provide somewhere for the amphibians to lay their eggs. A lot of terrestrial insects start their life out in the water. Choose the sunniest site you can. Aside from the aquatic plants thriving in bright sunshine, dragonflies are heat-worshippers, and tadpoles enjoy the warm shallows too. It doesn't have to be a big pond, and it doesn't need to be expensive – even a small stretch of water, in the form of an old sink, glazed pot or even an upturned bin lid, will entice wildlife into the garden.

### In a nutshell:

- Provide as many habitats as possible in the space you have available (avoid cramming)
- Ensure there is a source of food all year round
- Plant nectar-rich, colourful flowers
- A little bit of water will go a long way

### Intrigued? Find out more...

There is so much that can be done to improve the quality of your garden for wildlife, whether you have a small urban garden or a larger green-space. The internet hosts a wealth of information on gardening for wildlife, but there is no substitute for joining your local wildlife trust and gaining advice from an expert.

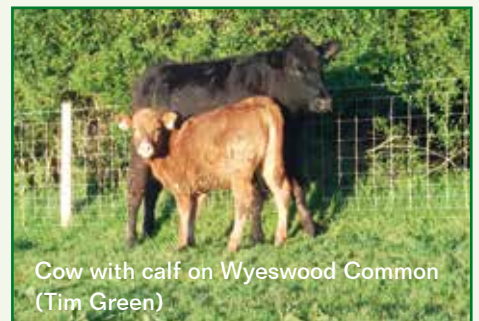
## Cattle Return to Wyewood Common

**Tim Green, GWT Farm & Wildlife Officer**

Following a long absence, GWT has reintroduced cattle grazing onto Penallt's Wyewood Common.

For the past six years, the fields on the former dairy farm have been undergoing a restoration project. A mixture of hay-cropping and sheep-grazing have been reducing the nutrient content of the land. Local wildflower seed harvested from GWT's adjoining Pentwyn Farm Nature Reserve has also been spread on some of the fields (the Common Spotted orchids flourished well last summer).

Since it is now unenconomic to cut most of the site for hay, cattle have been introduced, who will not only eat the grass, but break up the sward and make the land ready for more



Cow with calf on Wyewood Common  
(Tim Green)

wildflower seed sowing later this summer and autumn.

The cattle are used to people, but signs have been erected around the site with some simple *Do's and Don'ts* to keep in mind when walking through fields.





Roger and Julia hard at work, as always (Margaret Renshaw)



Water vole at Magor Marsh 2014 (Andy Karran)

# WINGing it – Celebrating 27 Years Together

## Julia James, GWT Trustee

Twenty seven years ago, my husband Roger came home from a visit to Newport Museum clutching an application form about joining GWT's WING (Wildlife in Newport Group) and an invitation to their Open Day in Allt-yr-Yn.

We decided to go along just to see what it was about. We met people who were as enthusiastic about conservation and wildlife as we were! Roger said that as long as we didn't join any committees (he had had enough of them in the past), we'd become members.

A year later, Roger ate his words and became chairman of WING (and still is) and I became the Treasurer.

Over the last 27 years with WING, I have learnt many things, made lifelong friends and met lots of dedicated people. I have helped to plant and coppice trees, bashed away undergrowth and bracken, cleared areas specifically for bees and butterflies, and built otter holts (in the process discovering that when surveying for otters, the water is always two inches deeper than the height of your wellies!). I've stood outside the Welsh Assembly, campaigning for badgers and against the M4 Relief Road going through five SSSIs with the police avidly taking all our photographs. I campaigned (Roger might call it "nagged") for the protection of wetlands near Nash that became the Solutia Nature Reserve (now known as Great Traston Meadows) – bringing together a global corporation with Newport City Council, the Internal Drainage Board, NRW, Sustrans,

and GWT to help protect and manage one of the last remaining 'natural' areas on the Newport Levels. I have walked for wildlife, given talks for wildlife, run quizzes for wildlife, begged for money for wildlife, and met so many wonderful and interesting people along the way.

In my first years at Allt-yr-Yn we planted trees, and now those trees are much taller than I am. I feel a great sense of achievement when I look up at them.

I have to thank our friend Chris Renshaw, who encouraged Roger's interest in botany and Lepidoptera spending many hours patiently teaching him. When Roger and I were looking for a new house, I surprised the estate agent by looking at the garden of each house first to see if it was suitable to run a moth trap. I think he thought I was crazy, but eventually I did find one and the moth count has exceeded the previous garden.

WING ran a WATCH group for many years that taught children about wildlife. Years later, I was stopped in town by a WATCH mum who said her son had gone on to university to study a degree in conservation and that she would always be grateful for the interest and enthusiasm we had instilled in him. It was great to be able to ring the other WATCH leaders and tell them this.

And did I ever think all those 27 years ago I would meet Sir David Attenborough, John Craven, David Bellamy, Julian Petifer or Iolo Williams? No way. But I have.

The animals, birds, butterflies, moths, plants, and trees cannot speak out for themselves. So I'm happy to be a part of a group of people that can give them a voice.

## Ratty's world comes alive

Alice Rees,  
GWT Water Vole Project Officer

Bring the family to a specially adapted open air performance of *The Wind in the Willows* in the beautiful Magor Marsh Nature Reserve on Thursday 28th August 2014.

Follow the adventures of Ratty the Water Vole, Badger, Mole and Toad in this wonderful outdoor performance in the company of our wild water voles at Magor Marsh.

Ratty's world is brought to life by Bill Cronshaw of the Dreamshed Theatre Company and supported by the Co-operative Membership Community Fund.

There will be two showings of this special performance at 2pm and 7pm. Admission for GWT members is £5 for adults, £2 for children. Non-members are £6 for adults, £3 for children. Under 2s go free. To book tickets or for more information, please call the office on 01600 740 600 or email [info@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:info@gwentwildlife.org)

What better way to celebrate the return of 'Ratty' to the Gwent Levels than by watching a performance of the story which made him famous in the Reserve where it all began...



Dreamshed cast for *Wind in the Willows* (Alexander Caminada)

# Welsh Wildlife

Just a quick reminder that we are no longer sending out Welsh Wildlife as a paper copy with your main mailings.

However, the issues are still available online at [www.gwentwildlife.org/what-we-do/welsh-wildlife-magazine](http://www.gwentwildlife.org/what-we-do/welsh-wildlife-magazine)

## The GWT Grand Summer Raffle

You'll have noticed another round of raffle tickets tucked in with your magazines this issue.

If you've already bought some, thank you! If you haven't, here's your chance to win a fantastic Apple iPad as well as raising much-needed funds for the wildlife of Gwent. If every member household bought just one ticket apiece, we would raise a staggering £4,300 – that's just £1 per household!

Help us raise much needed funds while playing for a new Apple iPad. We've included a FREEPOST envelope to return the stubs and the cheque. If you prefer, you can pay over the phone by credit or debit card, or even online.

## Silent Valley Challenge

A new and exciting 10K multi-terrain challenge.

On Sunday 19th October 2014, GWT will be hosting a brand new and challenging event – the Silent Valley Challenge. Not for the faint-hearted, the race will take you through our beautiful Silent Valley nature reserve, climbing to the top of Mynydd Carn-y-Cefn and back. Chances are it will be muddy. It will definitely be steep but the effort will be well worth as you reach the top! For more information, or to book your place, go to our website to How you can help and follow the links to the Silent Valley Challenge. Entries cost just £14 (£12 for UK Athletic members) but we're hoping you'll get yourselves sponsored to raise even more money for the wildlife you'll see all around you on the Sunday. If you're not feeling that energetic, how about sponsoring someone else? Or we will also be able to use a spare pair of hands on the day with marshalling or other duties. Contact Liesel on 01600 740600 or email her on [ltownley@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:ltownley@gwentwildlife.org)



Part of Blaenafon World Heritage Site post-industrial landscape (Veronika Brannovic)

# Pobl a Natur in the Eastern Valleys

**Veronika Brannovic, GWT People & Wildlife Manager, Eastern Valleys**

In February, Gwent Wildlife Trust received the news that BIG Lottery would be providing funding for the next phase of the *Pobl a Natur / People and Wildlife Project*.

Building on the pilot work carried out between 2010 and 2013 to find effective methods of engaging people in conservation in disadvantaged areas, the second phase will enable us to progress a landscape-scale conservation project across communities in the Eastern Valleys of Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.

One of the biggest problems currently facing wildlife is habitat loss and fragmentation – locally and globally. Current thinking in conservation leans towards a combination of protecting and enhancing habitats and species on existing and new nature reserves and wildlife sites and working with landowners and other partners to create stepping stones, buffer zones and corridors to connect them.

The Wildlife Trusts have a vital role to play in this but cannot achieve it alone. As well as creating physical connections between places, we need to foster connections between people and places. At a recent conference in Sheffield, I heard Dr Jamie Lorimer describe how we have moved into a new era – the 'Anthropocene' – in which humans are influencing almost every aspect of the natural world. People interact with and impact positively and negatively



A guided walk up Silent Valley (Tom Eyles)



Learning in Blaenau Gwent (Anthony Cook)



Making hanging baskets at the ERC (Anthony Cook)

on their environment. It is vital that we find ways to engage as many people as possible in the work that we do and that is the ultimate aim of the *Pobl a Natur / People and Wildlife Project*.



# Abergavenny Bioblitz – Wildlife surrounding the Castle

Andy Karran, GWT Wildlife Sites Officer

In May, the two-day *We Count for Wildlife* event was held in Abergavenny, showcasing the wildlife in and around the town's castle grounds.

Building on the success of a similar event last year at Caldicot Castle, this was jointly organised by Monmouthshire Environment Partnership Board, Monmouthshire County Council, and GWT, along with the assistance of many other organisations.

Over fifty children from three local schools attended the first day of the event at Abergavenny's Castle Meadows, and took part in learning activities such as *Marvellous Minibeasts*, *Fantastic Flowers*, and *Perfect Ponds* (with GWT's education officer Becky Ward being a central part of this with the pond dipping).

We also held a bioblitz – a scientific data gathering event where as many different species are recorded in a given area over a time period (often 24 hours). The beauty of the bioblitz is that everyone can take part from seasoned professional experts to members of the public both young and old. All that's needed is enthusiasm.

Later, focus turned to the castle's bats. A guided walk for families to watch and listen with bat detectors allowed children to zero in on the Common and Soprano (aptly named due to its higher pitched call on the bat detectors) flying around the castle.

We also had two moth trap lights running in the grounds of the castle and as it got darker, moths were drawn towards the lights. Some were captured for a closer look as part of the bioblitz. We caught sixteen species of moth before the traps were packed up at midnight including the very attractive Alder Kitten and the Pale Prominent that has fantastic camouflage.

As well as the moths, many other insects were attracted in by the light including a number of species of caddisfly which we have tried to identify, but failed. Who knew there were 199 British species of caddisfly to choose from? If anybody out there is a caddisfly expert and would like to try identifying them, we have the photos!

The next day there were a series of stalls set up for people to look around, including Gwent Wildlife Trust, Gwent Ornithological Society, Bee Friendly Monmouthshire, Bumblebee Conservation, Monmouthshire Environment Partnership Board, Abergavenny Transition Town, The National Museum of Wales, and



Kingfisher  
(Andy Karran)



Alder Kitten (Andy Karran)

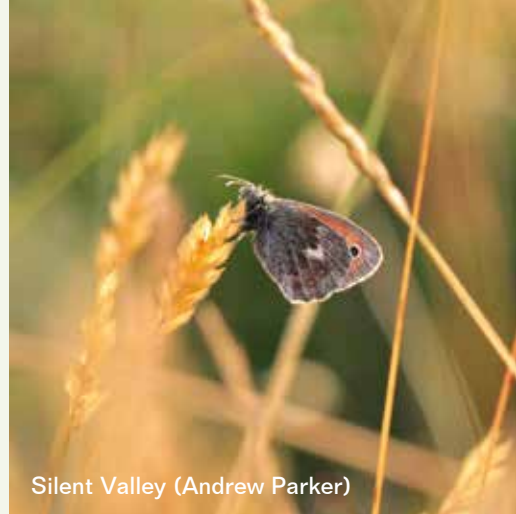


Beautiful Demoiselle (Andy Karran)

the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre.

There were four guided walks led by GWT staff throughout the day. These departed from the Castle, went through Castle Meadows and took in the River Usk. Many wildflowers were identified and the sea of buttercups was truly impressive (with people learning how to tell the different buttercup species apart).

The meadows are now being managed to encourage its growing diversity of wildflowers. An important part of managing the area for wildlife is the control of the Himalayan Balsam which swamps the native flora. Anybody wishing to help with the control of this invader can contact The Friends of Castle Meadows at [friendsofcastlemeadows.wordpress.com](http://friendsofcastlemeadows.wordpress.com)



Silent Valley (Andrew Parker)

## Gwent Wildlife Trust Photography Competition 2014

Rachael Daniels, GWT Membership & Fundraising Manager

Following the success of last year's competition, GWT has decided to run the photography competition again this year.

We're looking for great photos that highlight the beauty and magnificence of the wildlife or landscapes in Gwent. This year we have expanded the competition to include an additional category – the video competition.

The rules are very straightforward. Submit one photograph or one three-minute (or less) video per person, taken at any time, but within the boundaries of Gwent. The entry should be on a theme of wildlife or Living Landscapes in Gwent. We have a 16s and over category and an under-16s category. You are welcome to enter either or both photo or video competitions.

The short-listed finalists will go on display at our 2014 AGM in September where the overall winner in each category will be announced.

To enter, simply send your photograph or video on the theme of wildlife or Living Landscapes to [photocomp@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:photocomp@gwentwildlife.org) between the 15th and 31st August 2014, including your full name, contact email address, date of birth if entering the under-16s category and the location of your photograph or video. We'll be in touch if you have been shortlisted. For full details of the terms and conditions, please go to [www.gwentwildlife.org/how-you-can-help/photography-competition](http://www.gwentwildlife.org/how-you-can-help/photography-competition)



Himalayan Balsam (Andy Karran)

## LOCAL GROUP CONTACTS

### Abergavenny Local Group

Keith White 01873 852036  
keith.white@tesco.net

### Blaenau Gwent Local Group

Jeff Smith 01495 371423  
jeff@marinestreet.fsnet.co.uk

### Chepstow Local Group

Hilary Lee 01291 689326  
hilary-lee@tiscali.co.uk

### GWT Office

01600 740600  
info@gwentwildlife.org

### Monmouth Local Group

Alison Willott 01600 740286  
alisonwillott@hotmail.com

### Torfaen Local Group

Vicky Hannaford 01495 759139  
v.hannaford@hotmail.co.uk

### Usk Local Group

David Gale 01291 673141  
david@gale4241.fsworld.co.uk

### Wildlife in Newport Group

Roger James 01633 263374  
smallranunculus@btinternet.com

## Corporate Members

### Platinum

Caldicot &  
Wentlooge Levels  
IDB  
TATA Steel  
General Dynamics

### Gold

Advanced Elastomer  
Systems  
Eastman

### Silver

Pinnacle

### Bronze

Ancre Hill Vineyard  
TriWall Europe  
Frank Sutton  
Mandarin Stone  
Marshalls



**TATA STEEL**



**EASTMAN**  
Newport

**GENERAL DYNAMICS**  
United Kingdom Limited

# August to December 2014

To book on any GWT event, contact GWT on 01600 740600 or email us at [info@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:info@gwentwildlife.org). Full and up to date details of all these courses can be found on [www.gwentwildlife.org](http://www.gwentwildlife.org)

## ■ AUGUST

### Drawing & Painting the Marshlands of Magor Marsh

Tutor: Jenny Joice

Wednesday 6th August, 10am – 3pm

Magor Marsh, near Newport  
Cost: £25 members, £30 non-members  
BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Forest School Family Funday

Hosts: Tom Eyles & Becky Ward

Wednesday 6th August, 11am – 3pm

Silent Valley, near Ebbw Vale  
Cost: FREE members, £5 per family group non-members  
BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Eastern Valleys Guided Walk

Leader: Chris Hatch

Thursday 7th August,

10am – 4pm

Tirpentwys Local Nature Reserve, Torfaen  
Cost: FREE members, £3 non-members  
BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Decay Fungi in Trees

Tutor: Steve Wadley

Saturday 9th August,

10am – 2pm

Pentwyn Farm, near Monmouth  
Cost: £10 members, £15 non-members  
BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Marshy Mondays

Leader: Petra Mitchard

Monday 11th August, 1pm – 3pm

Magor Marsh, near Newport  
Drop in sessions at Magor Marsh (children accompanied by adult) for a spot of pond dipping, bug hunting, or bird watching  
Cost £2 per child (£1 for members)  
No booking necessary just turn up between those times.

### Gwent Wildlife Trust Open Day

Host: Helen Bosanquet

Tuesday 12th August, 11am – 4pm

Dingestow Court, near Monmouth  
Cost: FREE but donations always welcome

### Walk on the Wild Side

Leaders: Tom Eyles & Becky Ward

Wednesday 13th August, 11am – 2pm

Silent Valley, near Ebbw Vale  
Cost: FREE members, £5 per family for non-members  
BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Rockpool Ramble

Leader: Tom & Lauren Eyles

Friday 15th August, 1pm – 4pm

Rhossili Bay, on The Gower  
Cost: FREE members, £3 non-members  
BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Plant Identification & Recording V

Tutors: Stephanie Tyler & Elsa Wood

Saturday 16th August, 10am – 4pm

Venue: Rogiet Countryside Park

Contact: BSBI,

steph\_tyler2001@hotmail.com

Cost: FREE

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Bat Walk & Talk

Leader: Alexandra Pollard

Saturday 16th August,

8.15pm – 10pm

Great Traston Meadows, near Newport

Cost: £4 members, £6 non-members

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Marshy Mondays

Leader: Petra Mitchard

Monday 18th August, 1pm – 3pm

Magor Marsh, near Newport

Drop in sessions at Magor Marsh (children accompanied by adult) for a spot of pond dipping, bug hunting, or bird watching

Cost £2 per child (£1 for members)

No booking necessary just turn up between those times.

### Minibeast Adventures

Leaders: Tom Eyles & Becky Ward

Wednesday 20th August,

11am – 3pm

Silent Valley, near Ebbw Vale

Cost: FREE members, £5 per family for non-members

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Bees Galore

Host: Veronika Brannovic

Wednesday 27th August,

11am – 3pm

Silent Valley, near Ebbw Vale

Cost: FREE although there may be small charges for some of the activities

## ■ SEPTEMBER

### Dusk Bat Walk at Llanmelin Hill Fort

Leader: Denis Jackson

Thursday 11th September, 7pm – 9.30pm

Llanmelin Hill Fort, near Caerwent

Cost: £3 members, £5 non-members

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Creative Wildlife Photography Workshop

Tutor: Chris Hatch

Saturday 13th September,

10am – 2pm

Magor Marsh, near Newport

Cost: £20 members, £25 non-members

BOOKING ESSENTIAL



## Seasons in the Monmouthshire Countryside

**Speaker: Colin Eliot**

**Monday 15th September, 7.30pm**

Monmouth Town Shire Hall,  
Monmouth

Contact: GWT Monmouth Local Group,  
01600 740286

Cost: Suggested donation £2

## Plant Identification & Recording VI Tutors: Stephanie Tyler & Elsa Wood

**Wednesday 17th September, 10am – 4pm**

Venue: Beech woods near Crumlin

Contact: BSBI,  
steph\_tyler2001@hotmail.com

Cost: FREE

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

## Gwent Wildlife Trust Annual General Meeting

**Speaker: TBC**

**Wednesday 17th September, 7pm – 9pm**

Glen-yr-Afon House Hotel, Usk

Cost: FREE

Please join us at our AGM. We hope to engage a speaker to talk to us about Alfred Russel Wallace as well as having presentations and displays of our work this year. Teas and coffees will be served

## Sheepy Shenanigans at Silent Valley

**Tutor: Tom Eyles**

**Wednesday 24th September,  
10am – 12.30pm**

ERC, The Works, Ebbw Vale

Cost: FREE

## ■ OCTOBER

### An Introduction to Dormice

**Tutor: Jan Kinchington**

**Saturday 4th October, 10am – 11.30am**

Croes Robert Reserve, near Monmouth

Cost: £5 members, £8 non-members

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### WING Work Task TBC

**Sunday 5th October, 10.30am**

Meet at the top car park of the Newport Civic Centre

Contact: Roger James, 01633 263374

### Castle Meadows Bioblitz & AGM

**Speaker: Sue Parkinson (Environment Coordinator)**

**Tuesday 7th October, 7.30pm**

St Michael's Centre, Abergavenny

Contact: GWT Abergavenny Local Group,  
01873 852036

Cost: £2

### Gwent Nature

**Speaker: Colin Elliot**

**Tuesday 14th October, 7.30pm**

The Ballroom, Glen-yr-Afon House Hotel, Usk

Contact: GWT Usk Local Group, 01291 673141

Cost: £2, accompanied children under 16

FREE

### The Magic of Meadows

**Speaker: Dr Stephanie Tyler**

**Wednesday 15th October, 7.30pm**

Chepstow Leisure Centre, Chepstow

Contact: GWT Chepstow Local Group,  
01291 689326

Cost: Members £2, non-members £3

Tea and coffee available

### Wildlife Photography – Autumn Colours & Fungi Workshop

**Tutor: Chris Hatch**

**Saturday 18th October, 10am – 2pm**

(note date change from Events Guide)

Pentwyn Farm, near Monmouth

Contact: GWT, 01600 740600

Cost: £20 members, £25 non-members

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### Silent Valley Challenge

**Host: Liesel Townley**

**Sunday 19th October, 10.30am**

Silent Valley Reserve, near Ebbw Vale

Cost: £14 (£12 for UK Athletic Members)

Online booking available: see

www.gwentwildlife.org

### British Trust for Ornithology's Garden Bird Watch Scheme

**Speaker: Mick Bailey**

**Monday 20th October, 7.30pm**

Monmouth Town Shire Hall, Monmouth

Contact: GWT Monmouth Local Group,  
01600 740286

Cost: Suggested donation £2

### From Source to Sea – Wildlife of our Local Rivers

**Speaker: Chris Hatch**

**Wednesday 22nd October,  
10am – 12.30pm**

ERC, The Works, Ebbw Vale

Contact: P&W Team,  
01495 307525

Cost: FREE members,

£5 per family group non-members

### GWT Blaenau Gwent Local Group Annual General Knowledge Quiz

**Wednesday 22nd October, 7pm**

The Bailey Arms, Cwm

Contact: GWT Blaenau Gwent

Local Group, 01495 371423

Cost: £3

### Autumn Fun Day

**Host: Kathy Barclay**

**Saturday 25th October, 1pm – 4pm**

Magor Marsh, near Newport

Cost: £1 children, adults FREE

### Wildplay @ Magor Marsh

**Leaders: Caroline Williams,**

**Becky Ward, Kathy Barclay &**

**Tom Eyles**

**Thursday 30th October, 10am – 3pm**

Magor Marsh, near Newport

Cost: £15 per child

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

## ■ NOVEMBER

### WING Work Task TBC

**Sunday 2nd November, 10.30am**

Meet at the top car park of the Newport Civic Centre

Contact: Roger James, 01633 263374

### Upland Wildlife & Habitat Management

**Speaker: Nicholas Beswick**

**Tuesday 4th November, 7.30pm**

St Michael's Centre, Abergavenny

Contact: GWT Abergavenny Local Group,  
01873 852036

Cost: £2

### Swans

**Speakers: Ellen & Peter Kershaw**

**Tuesday 11th November, 7.30pm**

The Ballroom,

Glen-yr-Afon House Hotel, Usk

Contact: GWT Usk Local Group,  
01291 673141

Cost: £2, accompanied children under 16

FREE

### GWT Monmouth Local Group Talk

**Speaker: TBC**

**Monday 17th November, 7.30pm**

Monmouth Town Shire Hall, Monmouth

Contact: GWT Monmouth Local Group,  
01600 740286

Cost: Suggested donation £2

### Batty about Bats

**Speaker: Steve Wadley**

**Wednesday 19th November, 7.30pm**

Chepstow Leisure Centre, Chepstow

Contact: GWT Chepstow Local Group,  
01291 689326

Cost: Members £2, non-members £3

Tea and coffee available

### ERiCas Exhibition

**Thursday 27th to Saturday 29th**

**November, 10.30am – 4.30pm**

ERC, The Works, Ebbw Vale

Contact: P&W Team, 01495 307525

Cost: FREE

## ■ DECEMBER

### Crafts & Carols at Magor Marsh

**Hosts: Kathy Barclay with Magor Church**

**Saturday 6th December, 2pm – 5pm**

Magor Marsh, near Newport

Cost: £1 children, adults FREE

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

### WING Work Task TBC

**Sunday 7th December, 10.30am**

Meet at the top car park of the Newport Civic Centre

Contact: Roger James,

01633 263374



Warriors at Common-y-Coed



New Grove Meadows (Chris Jones)

## Warriors Get Creative for Conservation!

Kathy Barclay, GWT Magor Marsh Community Officer

Gwent Wildlife Trust's Wildlife Warriors group is transforming a community council-owned field into a wildlife habitat.

This nature-loving youth club for 10-16 year olds has been running for five years and they have now been kindly invited by the Magor and Undy Community Council to get their hands dirty and help to create a wildlife haven in Common-y-Coed near Magor.

The youngsters have already spent time surveying the wildflowers, animals and trees in the plot and thinking of ways that they could improve and manage it for wildlife whilst making it more accessible for small groups to visit. Some of the rotten trees have been felled to allow the undergrowth to sprout up and the Warriors were tasked with moving timber and making log piles.

Paul Cawley, local councillor, Gwent Wildlife Trust trustee, and Wildlife Warriors volunteer leader has spearheaded the partnership project and has encouraged the youngsters all the way.

"I can't believe the commitment and energy they are giving to this project," Paul says. "It seems to have captured their interest and I know this is something worthwhile for them to be involved with and it will be great for them to see their plans take shape."

GWT would like to take this opportunity to thank Paul Cawley and Beverly Reed from the community council for giving their time and energy to seek funding and for helping the children to be involved in this worthwhile and long-term local project.

Wildlife Warriors is run by Tom Rugg at Magor Marsh from April to October on Wednesday evenings from 6.30-8.30pm. For more information, contact us on [magormarsh@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:magormarsh@gwentwildlife.org)

# New evidence of vanishing grasslands

The Wildlife Trusts & Gemma Bodé, GWT Conservation Manager

A dramatic decline in our remaining wildlife-rich grasslands has recently been highlighted by The Wildlife Trusts. Reports collated across the country tell a story of devastating losses.

Wildlife-rich grasslands provide great benefits to society and are vital resources: for bees and other pollinators on which we all rely; for the abundance of nature which depends on wild grasses and flowers, from butterflies to barn owls; for securing soils and enabling landscapes to hold and filter water, preventing flooding and pollution; for carbon storage, and as living museums which have evolved over millennia. These beautiful and valuable habitats are vanishing – and the dazzling variety of species that depend on them are under threat.

"Wildlife-rich grasslands have been in trouble for decades, but our newly collated information shows that the remaining hay meadows and flower-rich pastures are still at risk," says Stephen Trotter, The Wildlife Trusts' Director for England, "We're seeing an insidious yet catastrophic decline. The pressures are enormous: from development and changes in agricultural practices, to neglect. The Government is currently making decisions on how it will implement the greening measures of the Common Agricultural Policy and how it will target grants to farmers in the future. We are calling on Ministers to take full account of the value of our remaining wildlife-rich grasslands and the threats they face as they make these decisions."



Honey suckle at New Grove Meadows (Chris Jones)

The Wildlife Trusts are also calling for a review of protection for environmentally important grasslands – more must be done to strengthen policy and regulations to prevent further losses.

The Wildlife Trusts have been collecting information on the state of valuable grassland sites such as ancient meadows, pastures and road verges. The information gathered so far has provided a snapshot of the situation on the ground. The data is startling. For example:

- In Worcestershire, a county renowned for its classic traditional lowland hay meadows, it is estimated that 48 sites (24%), comprising around 240 hectares, out of a total of 200 grassland Local Wildlife Sites have been lost, damaged or reduced to sub-optimal conditions since 2005.
- In Cumbria, surveys of upland hay meadow Local Wildlife Sites between 2008-2011 led to the de-selection of more than a quarter of the region's 128 sites. At 15 of the sites, the traditional hay meadows previously present had





Great Tit  
(Amy Lewis)

completely disappeared. In the Lake District National Park surveys of 223 hectares of hay meadow wildlife sites between the late 1970s and early 2000s led to a staggering 183 hectares (82%) being de-selected as Local Wildlife Sites.

There are many more examples of grasslands being lost altogether or no longer meeting the criteria for selection as Local Wildlife Sites. Local Wildlife Sites are wildlife-rich places selected locally for their nature conservation value based on important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species. In many parts of the country, they are the principal wildlife resource, but their designation is non-statutory and their only protection comes via the planning system. The fact that these officially-recognised grasslands are in decline is an indication of a severe problem across the wider landscape.

Here at Gwent Wildlife Trust, we are part

of the UK wide Coronation Meadows Project which last year led to New Grove Meadows, near Trellech, being selected as Monmouthshire's Coronation Meadow. Each Coronation Meadow across the UK is now being used as a donor site for seed collection this summer. The rich wildflower seed harvested will be used to recreate grassland at our Wyewood Common reserve.

Since Wyewood Common was purchased back in 2008, we have been patiently managing it to decrease the soil fertility ready for some wildflower seed to be applied to help the long term plans for its restoration to flower-rich grassland. This year we will be harvesting seed and green hay from the wonderful meadows at New Grove Meadows and applying it to Wyewood Common. If you would like to know more about the Project or would like to volunteer to help please contact Gemma Bodé, [gbode@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:gbode@gwentwildlife.org)

## M4 Relief Road Rundown

Sorrel Jones,  
GWT Conservation Officer

GWT is still waiting for the outcome of the December 2013 consultation. As *Wild About Gwent* heads to press, we're anticipating an announcement by the Welsh Minister for Science, Economy and Transport, Edwina Hart, regarding the government's preferred option.

In the meantime, CALM members have given evidence to the Environment and Sustainability Committee, who are investigating the M4 consultation process carried out so far, and considering the 'Blue Route' put forward by Professor Stuart Cole, as an alternative measure. The Blue Route is supported by transport and economy academics, and the Federation of Small Business. Natural Resources Wales have highlighted significant concerns about the Government's preferred route. Committee members have visited the Gwent Levels to see the area which could be affected if the motorway goes ahead.

To see the Blue Route, and find out more about this cheaper and more environmentally friendly alternative, visit [www.wtwales.org/wildlife/m4-road-proposals](http://www.wtwales.org/wildlife/m4-road-proposals)



Common Hawker  
(Chris Hatch)

## New Direct Debit System

Rachael Daniels,  
GWT Membership & Fundraising  
Manager

We've had a very challenging year in our admin department as we prepare our computers and ourselves to be able to handle our Direct Debit instructions and payments in-house.

We were supported in this venture by the Heritage Lottery Fund, via their Increasing Capacity Grant, that gave us £10,000 to help us improve our membership processes. Part of that included the purchase of specialist software which will enable us to handle Direct Debit payments ourselves, rather than using an expensive third party. Not only will this pay for itself within a couple of years, it will reduce the chances of errors when we submit new instructions to the bank and will enable members to pay by Direct Debit when they join by phone or online.

It's taken nearly nine months, a fair few grey hairs and a considerable amount of Cadburys to get us through this, but we're finally there with our bank approving us to go live. The down side (and isn't there always one?) is we may have to ask a small number of our members to resubmit your Direct Debits. We're hoping the number will be vanishingly small, fingers crossed, perhaps even zero. But don't worry, you won't need to do anything just yet. If we run into a problem, we'll be in touch and will



walk you through the process. All we ask is for your patience. It will definitely be worth it in the end.

Nearly 92% of our members pay by Direct Debit, which is wonderful for GWT. It radically reduces our costs and reduces the amount of administration. It means that our members don't need to worry about renewing their membership, knowing that it is taken care of automatically. And of course, members are protected by the Direct Debit Guarantee – in particular, you can cancel with your bank at any time and no more payments will be taken, so full control stays with the member. So for all of you who are still looking for the cheque book and working out who to make it payable to, why don't you talk to us about paying by Direct Debit? It's more convenient for you and certainly cheaper for us. When your next membership subs are due, there will be a form with the letter which you can use. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us on 01600 740600.

# Nature Conservation... Where Next?

Sorrel Jones, GWT Conservation Officer  
& Ian Rappel, GWT CEO

You may have noticed that nature conservation is entering a new, jargon-filled era. A lot of terminology has appeared – ecosystem services, biodiversity offsetting, natural resource management, and many more.

Underpinning this is a new way of thinking about the natural world and how we protect it. Here is our basic guide to the new terminology, followed by our Conservation officer/CEO's views on how GWT can keep up with the changes.

## Ecosystem

An ecosystem is a term describing a group of plants or animals, and how they interact with each other and their environment. We can have a woodland ecosystem, or the ecosystem of the Severn Estuary. It sounds quite simple, but ecosystems are very complicated – they include everything from the genetic codes of each species to the physical processes at work in the soil.

## Ecosystem Services

These are the benefits we gain from the natural world. Some are obvious, like our food and water; others are subtle, like soil processes or air cooling. Some affect us directly (the air we breathe); others are indirect such as tourism opportunities arising from wildlife interest. Some ecosystems provide more services than others, but our biodiversity underpins them all.

## Ecosystem Approach

This is an approach to land management that supports the ecosystem as a whole, rather than targeting one habitat or species. The Ecosystem Approach usually focuses at a landscape scale, looking at a whole river catchment for example. It's important to realise that people are part of ecosystems too, so a true ecosystem approach should take social and economic factors into account.

## Natural Resource Management

This is a term developed by the Welsh Government, to describe *'a planning and priority setting process that coordinates the maintenance, enhancement and uses of natural resources so that the long term benefits are optimised for the people, environment and economy of Wales.'*

## Biodiversity Offsetting

This is a planning-based approach, whereby unavoidable impacts on ecosystems are accepted, provided that biodiversity elsewhere is enhanced. This aims to ensure there is no net loss of biodiversity as a result of development. It is also intended to streamline and speed up the development process, by having areas for enhancement already in place. There are currently six planning authorities in England piloting a Biodiversity Offsetting approach.

## Payment for Ecosystem Services

These are schemes that seek directly to reward land managers for the value of nature's services, above and beyond normal market incentives or subsidies, so that these services can be maintained and enhanced. For example, farmers could receive payment in recognition of their maintenance of the landscape, as well as for their crops.

## Sorrel writes:

**So how can GWT respond to these new concepts and trends?**

The Wildlife Trusts started their Living Landscapes and Living Seas campaigns long before governments grasped the idea of looking at the environment as a whole. GWT is already embracing an ecosystem approach – from encouraging landowners across the Gwent Levels to manage the ditch network for wildlife, to using natural resources to empower young people in the valleys. Our work looks beyond hedges and fences, engages communities, and restores failing ecosystems.

However, it is becoming increasingly clear that in order to maintain our relationships and funding, we are going to have to engage with the new terminology and demonstrate that our work delivers a whole range of ecosystem services. Providing a home for biodiversity is no longer enough – we must show that we are delivering social and economic benefits. The fact that biodiversity underpins all ecosystem function is apparently not enough.

Payment for ecosystem services could be a new income stream for GWT, and we should be ready to capitalise on this should new opportunities arise. We can easily demonstrate how low-impact farming methods on our reserves preserves soils and maintains water cycling. Nevertheless, we should be wary of placing economic values on ecosystem services. Some are more easily identified and quantified than others. What if ecosystems are only protected if they are delivering multiple services? Are we then under pressure to squeeze the maximum benefit for people out of nature? And who is to say what that looks like?

I hope that GWT will be able to defend our natural resources from over-exploitation, whilst still being able to benefit society. We need to work out our place within this new framework. It seems to me that now is the time for GWT to look and plan ahead, but also to decide where we stand, and quickly, before the tide of new terminology sweeps us away.

## Ian writes:

At the heart of the environmental ethic lies an understanding that we are part of nature. As such, in society, we depend on our functioning interrelationship with nature. In order to explain the need for environmental sensitivity in our relationship with nature, many



conservationists have outlined the various ecological benefits that we gain from nature. Today, partly in an effort to use a familiar language, these benefits are framed as 'ecosystem services'. These are generally broken down into four types of service:

- **Provisioning services** – eg food, water, fuel
- **Regulating services** – eg pollination, climate regulation, water quality
- **Cultural services** – eg spiritual, recreational, aesthetic, socio-economic
- **Supporting services** – eg soil formation, nutrient cycling

This ecosystem services agenda carries some potential advantages. The promotion of ecosystem services provides new opportunities to fund conservation, as Sorrel notes above. But it could also sharpen our relevance and effectiveness. There is a growing body of evidence of the health and mental health benefits of exposure to wildlife and green spaces. We can use these ecosystem services arguments to illustrate and fund projects that therapeutically reconnect people with nature. Attention to social and economic ecosystem services will also help us to root ourselves more firmly within communities. Socioeconomic conservation projects can illustrate the value of wildlife and conservation for training and jobs, and enhance green space protection. Many of the simplified 'wildlife vs. jobs' arguments that we face from developers will be countered as we actively demonstrate how a green economy can be promoted.

Out in the wider environment, the ecological function of our own nature reserves and Local Wildlife Sites can be highlighted. We can illustrate how functioning habitats and biodiversity can positively influence water quality and reduce flood risk for instance (see April's *Wild About Gwent*). With diligence, we can argue for Living Landscape projects that will enhance soil conservation, reduce air pollution and even help us adapt to climate change.

Of course, as with all things, for every potential advantage, there's potential disadvantage. The idea of ecosystem services provides some clarity of thought but is pretty simplistic at the moment. Many of the contributions to the discussion are strong on generalisation and weak on scientific evidence – especially in the area of how biodiversity and individual species can influence ecosystem services. There are some interesting scientific surveys underway – particularly the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Sustainability project being run out of the Universities of York and Cardiff. But these will take time to process, and we need to be careful about allowing human economics or a wholly anthropocentric view of ecosystem systems to define our approach in the years ahead.

We also need to be careful not to contradict ourselves. Any given ecosystem service (from food to culture) is the product of ecology in the round. The 'ecosystem approach' is correctly holistic, but the focus on particular services, particularly as they translate into 'payments for ecosystem services' could tempt the economists amongst us to disaggregate ecosystem outputs and establish competing markets for ecosystem services.

Whatever the advantages and disadvantages of the ecosystem services approach, we need to recognise that translating ecology or wildlife into pound signs is difficult and sometimes controversial. As we know from our Living Landscapes work, nature doesn't recognise human concepts such as county or national boundaries. It could be equally dismissive of economics and money. It's probably worth remembering too, that many of us join membership conservation organisations like GWT because of our ethical views. If we want to see some of our hard-earned money go towards wildlife and ecosystem conservation, it's because we have a bigger picture in our heads and hearts when we do so. As the American geographer David Harvey notes, "*We have loaded upon nature, often without knowing it, in our science as in our poetry, much of the alternative desire for value to that implied by money.*"



Polecat (Frank Greenway)

## ■ National Polecat Survey: Have you seen a polecat?

Lizzie Croose, Vincent Wildlife Trust Project Support Officer

Have you seen a polecat, polecat-ferret or feral ferret? The Vincent Wildlife Trust (VWT) has recently embarked on a national polecat survey and is appealing for people to report records of polecats and polecat-like animals from all over the UK.

The polecat is closely related to the pine marten, stoat, weasel and otter, and is one of the least-known and least-studied members of the mustelid family. The polecat is the wild ancestor of the ferret, which was domesticated over 2,000 years ago. Polecats may breed with feral or escaped pet ferrets and produce hybrids, called polecat-ferrets. Distinguishing between true polecats and polecat-ferrets can be problematic but the latter tend to be paler and usually have more extensive pale facial markings than true polecats. Polecats typically inhabit farmland where they den in burrows, log piles, and haystacks and prey on rabbits and rats.

The polecat population in Britain declined during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries owing to persecution and they became confined to a small area of mid Wales and the English border counties. The population has been recovering since the mid-twentieth century and has re-colonised much of Wales and central and southern England, with outlier populations, originating from reintroductions, in north-west England and parts of Scotland. In south-west England, polecats are now well-established in Dorset and have begun to re-colonise parts of east Devon.

### How you can help

The VWT has initiated its third national survey to gather up-to-date information on the current distribution of polecats, polecat-ferrets and feral ferrets and is keen to receive records of these animals during 2014 and 2015. The most common evidence of the presence of polecats is as road kills, although some people are lucky to see live polecats, for example, those who find polecats denning in their garden. Records should ideally include the date and grid reference, and if the animal is dead, a photo and/or carcass. Carcasses will be used for rodenticide analysis and genetic studies. VWT can supply a postage box in which the carcass can be sent free of charge.

To report your sighting(s), please email [enquiries@vwt.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@vwt.org.uk), phone 01531 636441 or visit [www.vwt.org.uk](http://www.vwt.org.uk). The Vincent Wildlife Trust is a charity working hard to safeguard the future of mammals in Britain and Ireland.



Ponds, post-road construction – you can see the new retaining wall and acoustic fence (Veronika Brannovic)



Wren (Steve Waterhouse)

## Post-industrial pleasures

**Veronika Brannovic, GWT People & Wildlife Manager, Eastern Valleys**

The People and Wildlife Team are back at the Environmental Resource Centre in Ebbw Vale and making plans to enhance the grounds and assess opportunities for people and wildlife.



Ponds at the ERC (Veronika Brannovic)

Since the ERC opened in 2010 on a former steelworks site (with Iolo Williams cutting the ribbon for us), we have been surrounded by construction projects. Generally, this didn't create too much of a problem until 2012 and the council's need to install a Safe Route to School through our grounds. This proved very disruptive and had quite an impact on our ability to run workshops for schools at the ERC. Just when we thought it was safe for us to start again, plans for a link road were presented. At that point, the difficult decision to move the team temporarily was taken and an interesting

twelve months followed.

Now we're back and we've been slowly restoring the site, even starting a new wetland area to accommodate the extra water from a broken drain. Life has returned to the ponds (newts have been spotted in Tadpole Alley) and we have planted a hedge along the new fence line. Directly outside the building, we have planted an orchard of Welsh fruit trees and plan to develop this as a wildlife garden. It's also a really nice place to sit and have lunch. At the moment, we're enjoying the sight of around seventy orchids growing on an island in one of the ponds. When I started working at the ERC, there was just a single orchid so I'm pleased to see them spreading.

We have also taken on some additional land to the north of the building which we plan to manage with the help of volunteers. We're hoping to get the site ready for a re-launch in September – if you'd like to be involved, please get in touch. **You can email me on [vbrannovic@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:vbrannovic@gwentwildlife.org) or call the office on 01495 307525.**



Orchids at the ERC (Veronika Brannovic)

## Corporate 50 Challenge 2014

GWT were very excited to announce the launch of their second year of GWT's Corporate 50 Challenge in June.

The Challenge is open to all businesses and organisations with the principle being to raise as much money as they can for GWT in just twelve weeks, given £50 seed money. The launch was very kindly hosted by Ancre Hill Estates, who entertained us with an interesting tour of the vineyard, detailing their highly innovative, holistic, and environmentally sustainable methods of farming and tempted us with wine tasting and cheese.

**The candidates in this year's challenge are:**

- Ancre Hill Estates
- Barclays
- Carillion Civil Engineering
- Gabb & Co Solicitors
- NFU Mutual
- SET Office Supplies
- South Wales Argus
- UHY Hacker Young

Most companies were able to attend the launch event and it was clear that competition was afoot with individuals trying to outguess their rivals! The challengers will be looking to raise money any way they can, so long as it is ethical and legal. It could be anything from a donation pot on their reception desk to a sponsored cycle to Paris and back! In twelve weeks' time, we'll be calling in the fundraisers and seeing how well they all did. What this space or go to the website for more information. If you wish your company had joined in, fret not. Contact Liesel Townley who will give you the low down on the next challenge, where you will be able to flex your creative muscles in the race to be the top fundraiser 2014.