

# Sussex Biodiversity Partnership

## Autumn 2008 Newsletter

### A new face in Sussex

Hi everyone. My name is Laurie Jackson and I have recently moved to Sussex to coordinate the Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan. My last job was with the Wildlife Trust in Bedfordshire, where I took the lead in all things relating to forward planning and development control. As well as my work for the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership, I am taking an MSc in Countryside Management; I'm currently writing up a thesis on arable plants. I have met some of you already and hope to meet more of you in the near future, and I look forward to working with you all as we progress the Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan.



### Target Area Consultation

The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre is currently working on a project to identify and map target areas for biodiversity action in Sussex. They are holding a consultation on September 18 (wetland areas) and 19 (non-wetland areas) in Haywards Heath. Please contact Henri Brocklebank, Biodiversity Record Centre Manager to book a place on 01273 497553.

### Biodiversity Reporting



2008 marks the fourth UK-wide reporting round for national and local Biodiversity Action Plans. These triennial reporting rounds allow assessments to be made of progress towards targets, and data collected during 2008 will also be used to report on our European and International 2010 commitments.

The web-based program BARS (Biodiversity Action Reporting System) will be used to report on all the Local BAPs, a process which must be complete by the end of September. If you have any actions to report on please head to the BARS website today; any problems contact Laurie 01273 497551. <http://www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk/>

### Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change

In December 2007, Communities and Local Government published its national policies relating to Planning and Climate Change. It sets out how the challenges of climate change may be mitigated and adapted to through the planning system. Key planning objectives include the preparation of spatial strategies that: *conserve and enhance biodiversity, recognising that the distribution of habitats and species will be affected by climate change.* In selecting land for development planning authorities should take into account: *the effect of development on biodiversity and its capacity to adapt to likely changes in climate.*

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/ppscclimatechange.pdf>

### The Marine Bill



A draft Marine Bill was published in April 2008. The Bill aims to ensure clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas, by putting in place systems for delivering sustainable development of marine and coastal environments. Consultation on the draft Bill has now closed and the final Bill should be introduced to Parliament during the autumn. Included in the Bill are provisions for setting up a Marine Management Organisation, designation of Marine Conservation Zones, creation of a strategic marine planning system and policy statement, and improvements in recreational access to the English coast.

## How valuable are our Ecosystems?

In December 2007, Defra published an Introductory Guide to Valuing Ecosystems Services. This sits alongside ongoing work on the ecosystems approach to biodiversity conservation, and aims to ensure the true value of ecosystems and the multiple services they provide is given full account in policy decision-making.

[http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/natres/pdf/eco\\_valuing.pdf](http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/natres/pdf/eco_valuing.pdf)

## And talking of money...

Researchers in environmental economics at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth are mid-way through a one year Defra research contract on the Economic Valuation of the Benefits of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

## Problem Tourists

There are 2271 non-native species in England and invasive non-natives are considered the second biggest threat to biodiversity after habitat destruction. Climate change could further exacerbate this and in May 2008 Defra launched a strategy aiming to reduce the threat posed to Britain's native biodiversity by invasive non-native species such as Floating Pennywort and American Mink. The Strategy covers education, development of a web-based directory of invasive species, and provision of a framework for responding to detection of invasive species.



[http://www.nonnativespecies.org/documents/Invasive\\_NNS\\_Framework\\_Strategy\\_GB\\_E.pdf](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/documents/Invasive_NNS_Framework_Strategy_GB_E.pdf)

## Climate Change

The Climate Change Bill is currently progressing through the House of Commons with the aim of receiving Royal Assent during autumn 2008. The Bill sets targets for reductions in carbon dioxide emissions and makes provision for setting up an advisory Committee on Climate Change. Defra will shortly be publishing an Adaptation Policy Framework to coordinate adaptation activities in response to climate change across sectors and agencies.

## Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund: 2008/9 Grant Scheme

Natural England has launched the latest round of Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund. This fund aims to support projects that reduce the effects of aggregate extraction on local communities and the natural environment. **The deadline for applications is 15 September.**

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/conservation/grants-funding/alsf.htm>

## New Priorities

In May 2008 Defra published the list of habitats and species of principal importance in England, in accordance with section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. There are now 56 habitats and 941 species that assume priority for biodiversity action in England. <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/biodiversity/sect41-nerc.htm>

## Measuring Local Authority Performance

In October 2007 Communities and Local Government announced the 198 national indicators it would be using to measure local authority performance. These include NI197-Improved Local Biodiversity, which measures the proportion of Local Sites (SNCl) where active conservation management is being achieved, and NI188-Planning to Adapt to Climate Change, which measures progress in assessing and addressing the risks and opportunities of a changing climate. The first reporting round is in March 2009.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/finalnationalindicators>

## Counting Bats

On International Biodiversity Day (May 22) 2008 Defra announced two new additions to the UK and England Biodiversity Indicators. Bat and wintering waterbird numbers will now be used alongside existing indicators as a measure of the wider health of the UK's biodiversity and the effectiveness of BAP delivery.

## Upcoming Events

**September 3-5:** The British Ecological Society Annual Conference takes place in London. Themes include effects of climate change on biotic interactions, and human induced evolutionary change.

[http://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/articles/meetings/current/2008\\_annualmeeting/](http://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/articles/meetings/current/2008_annualmeeting/)

**September 8-10:** A conference on Orchard and Groves: Their History, Ecology, Culture and Archaeology takes place in Sheffield. Traditional orchards are now a BAP Priority Habitat.

[http://www.ukeconet.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=37&Itemid=26](http://www.ukeconet.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=37&Itemid=26)

**September 8-10:** The Society for Ecological Restoration is hosting the 6<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Ecological Restoration in Ghent. The conference aims to share knowledge, experience and good practice in ecological restoration, particularly relating to the Natura 2000 network. <http://ser2008.be/default.html>

**September 9-11:** The National Heathland Conference 2008 takes place in York. The conference themes include climate change, and housing and development.

<http://www.keystone-group.co.uk/heathlands/>

**September 10-11:** The 6<sup>th</sup> UK Biodiversity Partnership Conference takes place in

Aberystwyth. Its theme is sustainable development. <http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/>

**September 17-18:** The 2008 World Green Roof Congress takes place in London to discuss the challenges and opportunities faced when implementing green roofs.

<http://www.worldgreenroofcongress.com/>

**September 25-30:** The Seventh International Dormouse Conference takes place in Somerset to enable dormouse researchers and enthusiasts to keep up to date with current research.

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/mammal/conferences.shtml>

**October 5-14:** The IUCN World Conservation Congress takes place in Barcelona. Its objective is: ideas, action and solutions for a diverse and sustainable world.

[http://www.iucn.org/news\\_events/events/congress/index.cfm](http://www.iucn.org/news_events/events/congress/index.cfm)

**October 21:** A conference on Soil Management for Biodiversity takes place in London to provide an overview of the draft soil strategy for England and the importance of soil properties in determining plant communities.

<http://www.soci.org/SCI/events/writeups/2008/pdf/ev1203.pdf>

**October 29-31:** The Scottish Natural Heritage conference on Species Management: Challenges and Solutions for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century takes place in Edinburgh. Themes include strategic and adaptive approaches to management, and the control of invasive non-native species. <http://www.snh.org.uk/conference2008/>

**November 12:** The Association of Local Government Ecologists AGM and Conference takes place in Liverpool.

**November 20-21:** Halting the Global Decline in Amphibians. This symposium in London will bring together researchers and practitioners to discuss threats and potential solutions to continuing global amphibian decline. <http://www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo/whats-on/amphibian-declines-symposium,293,EV.html>

Is there something we should know about? Got an article you would like us to include?

Email Laurie with the details if you would like something included in a future newsletter  
The deadline for submissions for the next edition is 21 November 2008.

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