



Devon Wildlife Trust



Devon's precious Nature Reserves need your help

DWT's Dart Valley nature reserve, photo: David Chamberlain

Help us take action today, to ensure a brighter future for Devon's wildlife

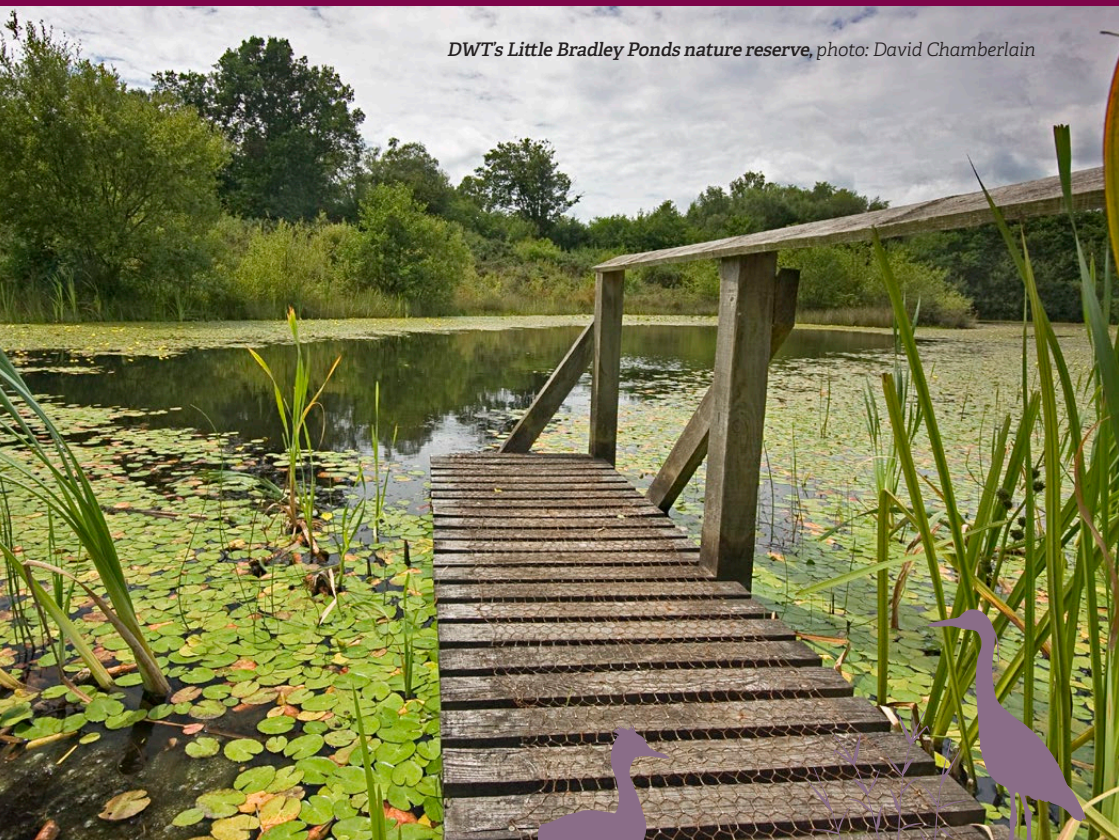
DWT's 57 nature reserves are of fundamental importance to our mission to reverse the declines of Devon's wildlife.

A network of wildlife-rich spaces, managed to protect and increase biodiversity, form the stepping stones to a wilder Devon: a future where wildlife is thriving from coast to coast, from Dartmoor to your back door. DWT's amazing team of dedicated staff and volunteers work year round, in all weathers, to benefit wildlife on these 57 sites.

But they need your help: it costs £50 per day to manage each nature reserve – that's more than £2,000 each day to care for all 57 reserves. DWT can ensure these sites remain havens for threatened wildlife and inspiring places for people – but only with your support.

If you can, please give to the Devon Nature Reserves Fund this year.

DWT's Little Bradley Ponds nature reserve, photo: David Chamberlain



A lifeline for species on the brink

DWT's Bovey Heathfield reserve has a new resident: one of the rarest insects in England. The narrow-headed ant has disappeared from so much of its former range that DWT's Chudleigh Knighton Heath nature reserve was its sole remaining English home. Until last winter, when as part of the *Back from the Brink* project led by the charity Buglife, three narrow-headed ant nests were successfully translocated from one DWT heathland reserve to the other. For the first time in many years, the narrow-headed ant is expanding its range.



Narrow-headed ant, photo: John Walters



Andy Bakere, South Devon Nature Reserves Team Lead

“DWT's ongoing management of the heathland at Chudleigh Knighton Heath has ensured the survival of the only narrow-headed ant population in the country. This habitat supports many other threatened species such as nightjars and glow worms. We're delighted to be involved in the *Back from the Brink* project – and the next stage is ensuring suitable habitat for a further narrow-headed ant translocation to a third DWT reserve nearby, Teigngrace Meadow. That means another busy winter of scrub clearance for our team at this reserve too.”

Help vulnerable species thrive on DWT nature reserves



Hedges for life

More than 2,000 species of plant and animal can be found in a well-managed Devon hedge. But for bullfinches, yellowhammers, dormice, butterflies and bumblebees to truly thrive, hedges need to be neither cut back severely nor become gappy and neglected. That's why we undertake a regular programme of hedge management on our reserves. This winter, we need to manage hedges particularly at Vealand Farm in North Devon and we are planning new hedges at Bellever Moor and Meadows, where planting of 500 new plants will benefit moorland birds and small mammals in the heart of Dartmoor.



Yellowhammer, photo: Chris Root



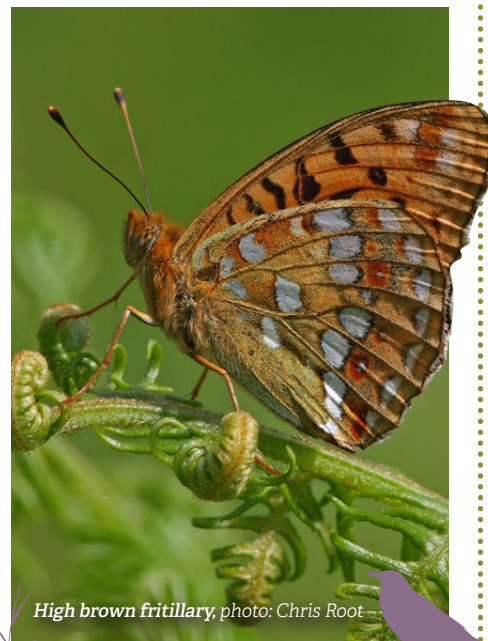
Alice Hedges,
Nature Reserves Long Term Volunteer

"Hedge-laying is one the most satisfying practical tasks I've done as a volunteer. You get to see the hedge regenerated at the end of your day's work. Then even better, next spring you see all the lush green growth and the insects and birds thriving right where you were working away in the cold a few months before."

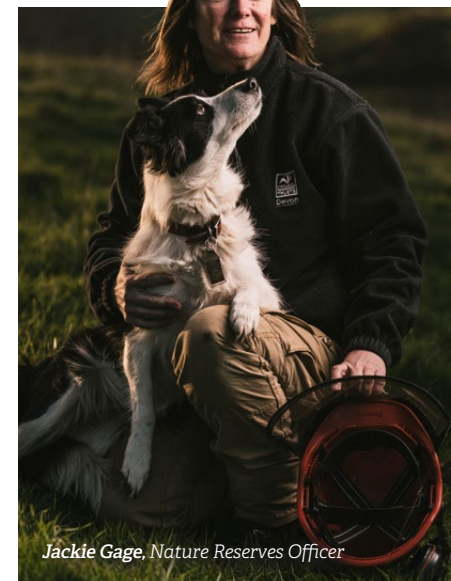
Help us fund hedges for abundant wildlife

Creating space for butterflies

The high brown fritillary butterfly has disappeared from 79% of its former sites in Britain in the last 40 years. Bracken-covered slopes on the high ground of DWT's Dartmoor reserves Dart Valley, Blackadon and Dunsford are critically important homes for the UK's most endangered butterfly. That's why every winter, DWT staff and volunteers clear bramble and scrub. This hard work creates the right mixture of sun and shade to encourage the growth of more dog violets, the food plant for the caterpillars of both high brown and pearl bordered fritillaries.



High brown fritillary, photo: Chris Root



Jackie Gage, Nature Reserves Officer

"Our wonderful South Devon and Dartmoor nature reserve volunteers brave Dartmoor's wind and rain to maintain these habitats for rare butterflies. At Dart Valley the last three summers have seen populations of pearl bordered fritillaries more than double where we've carried out management work, while high brown fritillaries have increased five-fold. Our team also works with partners on nearby land outside the reserve's boundaries, ensuring more joined-up habitat to suit declining insect species like these stunning butterflies."

Help threatened butterflies make a comeback

More light for woodland plants

Halsdon's oak woodland is a wonderful wildlife haven, with a network of paths to explore. But as former plantation and parkland, a huge amount of work has been required to remove ornamental shrubs like laurel and rhododendron, as well as some of the mature oaks that had been planted close together a century ago. Where sunlight had previously been blocked from the woodland floor, now the mixture of light and shade has resulted in more areas of bluebells and other wildflowers, while sightings of woodland butterflies and bats have increased. But the efforts to eradicate invasive plants – and prevent them colonising the wood once more – are ongoing.



Bluebell, photo: Kevin New



Ian Chadwick, North Devon Nature Reserves Team Lead

“Rhododendron is so difficult to get rid of – we’ve tried different eradication methods but still some of it comes back. And the mature shrubs spread across such a wide area, while the fallen leaves make the soil even more acidic, so that hardly any other plants can grow where the ‘rhody’ has taken root. Where the River Torridge runs alongside Halsdon’s meadows, Himalayan balsam is a recurring problem too. Tackling invasive plants so that native wildlife can thrive is something we have to stay on top of every year.”

Help us keep woodlands filled with wildlife



Home on the water



Redshank, photo: Neil Bygrave

Birthplace or temporary home; local restaurant or brief stop-over on a long journey: a wetland nature reserve means different things to different birds. That’s why creating and maintaining freshwater habitats is so crucial. At Meeth Quarry DWT has recently installed two sand martin nesting walls overlooking a lake to encourage this enigmatic bird to breed on site. Transformation of a grazing marsh into saltmarsh through use of a tidal gate at South Efford Marsh has led to increased abundance and diversity of birds. With your support it can remain one of South Devon’s best birdwatching sites.

“New wetland created at South Efford Marsh has been a real boon for wading birds and wildfowl. Hundreds of teal and wigeon over-wintered here last year. The new mudflats created by the high tides have resulted in increases in common waders like redshank and curlew in the winter. More migrant birds use the reserve as a stopping off point than in previous years: this autumn an osprey was feeding on the marsh. We use grazing animals to maintain rough grassland on the edges of the marsh: these areas contain insect prey for birds, including rare circl buntings which are now nesting in the hedges each summer.”

Help us increase chances for birds to thrive



Andrew Warren, Nature Reserves Assistant

**Caring for such
extraordinary places
takes money and time
and is difficult to fund.**

**Please support
the Devon Nature
Reserves Fund**

Your gift, no matter what size,
will make a huge difference.
It will be used to fund vital
work on our nature reserves,
wherever the need is greatest.

You can donate:

By Post

Complete and return the donation
form attached to the letter.

Online

Visit www.devonwildlifetrust.org/nature-reserves-fund

By telephone

Please call 01392 260845
(lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

Devon Wildlife Trust

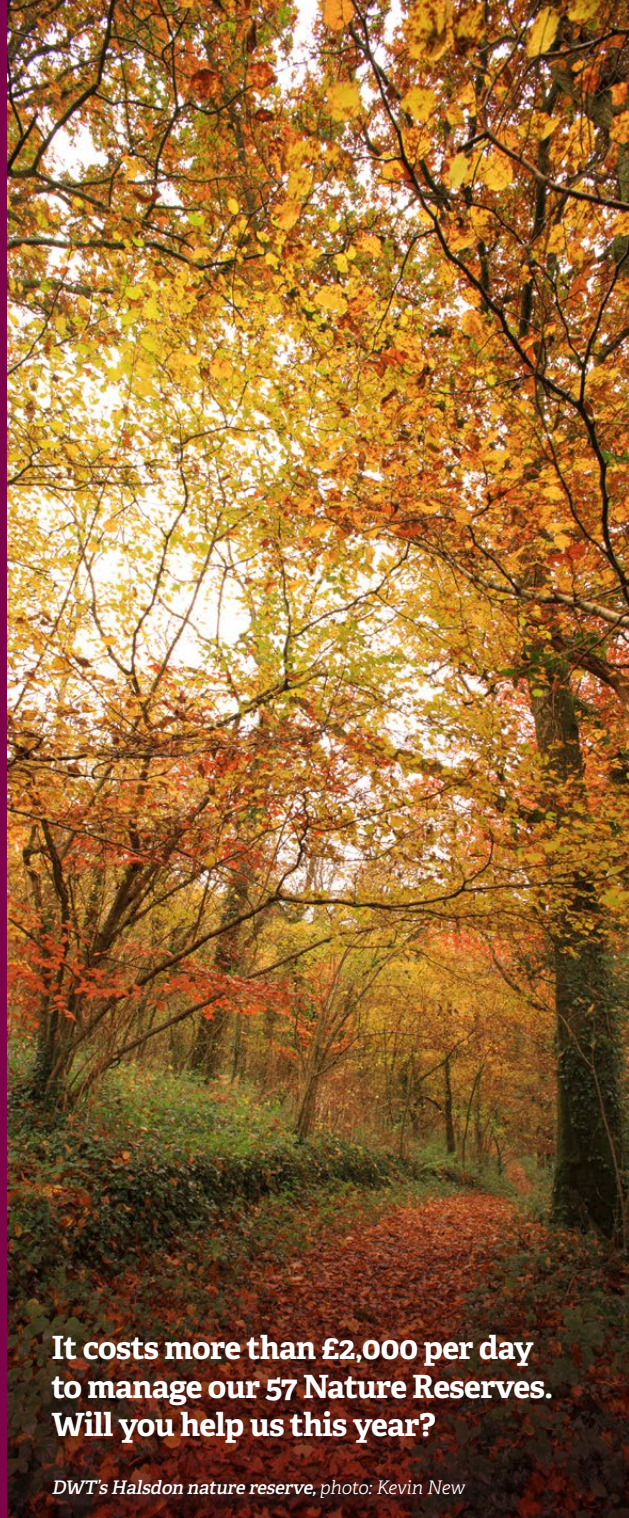
Cricklepit Mill, Commercial Road,
Exeter, EX2 4AB

Registered Charity Number: **213224**

DWT depends on voluntary income,
including gifts in Wills, to keep working
every day for Devon's wildlife. Leaving
a gift to Devon Wildlife Trust in your
will – however large or small – will
help to protect Devon's wild beauty
for generations to come. For more
information please contact Hannah Best
on 01392 279244 or email giftsinwills@devonwildlifetrust.org



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



**It costs more than £2,000 per day
to manage our 57 Nature Reserves.
Will you help us this year?**

DWT's Halsdon nature reserve, photo: Kevin New