

Herefordshire

Nature Trust



HEREFORDSHIRE



Annual Review 2010 - 2011

Helping to Create a **Living Landscape** for Herefordshire

Wildplay on film



WildPlay

In August 2010, the Trust was successful in securing in-kind time from a professional film maker, through the Media Trust's Volunteer Filmmakers charity film initiative. The ambition was to make a film that promoted one aspect of the Trust's activities to potential funders, volunteers and partners and we contributed £1000, as match funding, to this initiative. The Trust chose to focus the film on WildPlay to boost awareness of the need to connect children to the natural world, to attract more volunteers and to encourage new funding partners. The film was completed in March and is gaining wider exposure through effective marketing. We were fortunate in securing Sir David Attenborough in a short cameo role in the film. A DVD of the film will be produced and released next year but the film can be viewed on the Trust's website.



'Kate' and 'David' (HNT)

Creating Wildlife Havens



'What's That Snake?' (HNT)

The land that the Trust manages performs many roles. It offers, in a landscape dominated by intensively farmed holdings, islands of rich biodiversity which shelter many rare species and habitats. Positive management of these reserves is vital to maintain this richness.

To achieve this, the Trust invests in capital improvements such as fencing, hedgelaying, maintaining tracks and paths and planting orchard trees. This year, the harvesting of seed and seeding of less diverse grassland has aided the restoration of some of our meadows and pastures.

Our dedicated volunteers are essential in the ongoing maintenance and development work across our reserves.

Grants from the National Grid, Marek Mayer appeal fund and from Higher Level Stewardship funding are vital in protecting the future of our nature reserves.

The **Community Commons** came to a successful conclusion with seven of the commons in agri-environment schemes, thus ensuring their continued good management. Five Forest Schools are now using the Commons with local youngsters more involved in the environment.

Natural England launched **Integrated Biodiversity Delivery Areas** (IBDAs) which are designed to engage a wide

range of partners and to cover the most important Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species in an area. One of the pilot IBDAs covers the Woolhope Dome Link and this meant the Trust taking the lead on traditional orchards.

What's that Snake Project: During the two years of the project, over 10,000 people have become more aware of their local reptiles, either through school visits, public road shows, local media articles, guided walks or survey training. As an awareness raising campaign about our local wildlife heritage, it has been highly successful.

Wetland Vision: There are three strands of work that have been taken forward during the year;

The **Wigmore Basin** is a small catchment of the River Teme that lies in a natural depression left after the last Ice Age. The project would work to achieve a mosaic of wetland habitats, re-engage communities with their natural environment and with the history of the area.

HNT is working with the River Wye Preservation Trust and the Wentlodge and Caldicot Internal Drainage Board on a project to promote riparian/wetland restoration on the **River Arrow**.

HNT and HART are developing two pond projects, one to develop a network of ponds to allow movement of wetland species, whilst the other is looking at natural ponds, most of which are glacial.

Chairman's Report

Like many other Wildlife Trusts, our watchwords this year have been consolidation and caution, as financial instability continues, and grant monies become ever more difficult to access. However, I am glad to report that the Trust finances remain sound, as the financial statements confirm. Significant progress has been made in repaying the loan used to purchase The Parks reserve, while our membership numbers remain buoyant, with a small increase over the year. Set against this, we have been very sorry to lose Sam Durham, Judy Hart and Nigel Hand, when the popular Community Commons and 'What's that snake?' projects concluded in December because their grant-funding ceased. The highly-regarded LEMUR project is also now in its exit phase, so that development of fresh replacement projects is currently a top priority. Production of our new Strategy and Business Plan covering 2011-2023 has been a key achievement

this year, with the final draft given Trustees' approval last November. This Plan will guide Trust policy over the next 12 years. The Board's Accommodation Group has been busy working on plans to replace our temporary portakabin office and barn/workshop.

Regarding governance, everyone at the Trust was shocked and saddened when our trustee, Kim Biddlecombe, lost his battle with cancer in February. His enthusiasm for HNT and his lively contributions to Board meetings are much missed. Regrettably, Prof. Richard Wise and Stan Gyford decided to step down as trustees and we miss their sound advice and business acumen. However, we welcomed Susannah Garland as a new co-opted trustee in May, and she was duly elected to the Board at the AGM. Planning for the succession of Honorary Officers is an important Board function, and we hope shortly to elect a new Vice-Chair.

Although small in size, and with limited resources, our Trust continues to deliver high quality conservation work

Herefordshire Parklands Project



In the last 90 years, half of the West Midlands' historic parklands have disappeared: a loss greater than in any other region in the UK. Despite this decline, Herefordshire still has a rich resource of parklands dating from the Norman Conquest through to the 19th century. Herefordshire Nature Trust's Parklands Project aims to increase knowledge, understanding and appreciation of these designed landscapes within the county. Working with our partners, which include Herefordshire Council, the Woodland Trust and the National Trust, the project will look at the ecological, historical and archaeological features of parklands. The project has received funding from the HLF, the European Union (EAFRD) and Defra through the VITAL Herefordshire LEADER programme.

A team of volunteers will be given training in identification and recording skills, to help them survey a selection of the parklands around the county. This will help build up a picture of how much of the interest of these parklands has survived into the twenty-first century.



Berrington Hall (C Harris)

Inspiring People & Fostering Sustainable Living



Mask making at Kington (J Bainty)

WildPlay Rangers work with children from some of the county's most deprived areas, engaging them in nature play that increases their understanding and awareness of wildlife, helps build confidence and promotes positive social behaviour. New funders enabled

Wildplay to engage audiences at local events and popular locations, and enabled the Trust to retain its pool of expertise and to cross-subsidise play opportunities in the county.

Nature Play Rangers provided children most in need with opportunities to play in their natural environment. It is through childhood encounters with wildlife that a life-long interest in, and love of, nature is fostered, and children grow up with a love of, and wish to care for, the environment. Nature Play Rangers was funded until September 2010 but its success has led to the development of a follow-on project, entitled 'WildPlay Experience' aimed at younger age groups and their parents and carers.

Through the network of **Watch** groups (the Wildlife Trust's junior branch), run by dedicated volunteer leaders, the Trust was able to continue to run a series of informal outdoor environmental education events for children around the county.

LEMUR Project: This pioneering, multi-partnered, and nationally-acclaimed Heritage Lottery Funded project was originally due to end in September 2009 but continued through to 2011 to provide a further 18 bursaries.

The project took a total of 54 people from diverse backgrounds and provided nurtured training opportunities, within which to learn heritage skills that gave knowledge and practical experience to enter employment in nature conservation. LEMUR had a 95% success rate of getting people into paid conservation work.



LEMUR trainee Hayley Herridge (HNT)

throughout Herefordshire. Our portfolio of nature reserves is large and varied, our projects like Wildplay and LEMUR are innovative and nationally recognised. Yet we need to remind ourselves that threats to the county environment we all treasure have not gone away. Rare habitats like wet grassland are always at risk from drainage and agricultural improvement, the River Lugg may be SSSI designated, but still suffers from excessive mineral pollution, while the new breeds of super-pesticides may be responsible for the rapid decline in our honey-bee and bumble-bee populations. Furthermore, every county Wildlife Trust is concerned about the potential threat of climate change, but we need more decisive action from governments to slow the almost inevitable temperature rise. As things stand, in the 2030's, the average world temperature will exceed 2 degrees Celsius above the baseline which has existed since civilisation began, with potentially catastrophic consequences for wildlife and humanity.

Much of the strength of the Wildlife Trust movement lies in its local focus, supported by a knowledgeable, county-wide membership base. So we were particularly sorry when our Membership Officer, Sarah Cole, decided to leave after 11 years excellent service to train as a nurse. We wish her well in her new career, and welcome Beverley Bishop who has taken over from Sarah. Few members were more knowledgeable about plants and Herefordshire than Stephanie Thomson, who sadly suffered a fatal stroke in March. Like her late husband Peter, Stephanie is much missed by everyone.

Finally, I wish to thank all our members, staff, volunteers and Trustees; without your loyal support the Trust could not continue its vital work. I particularly commend the staff for their unflinching hard work and commitment in the face of necessary budgetary restrictions.

*Roger Beck
Chairman*

Severn Waste Services



The Trust is grateful for the continuing financial support from Severn Waste Services, who have helped fund capital improvements on our nature reserves, and who have directly funded work undertaken by our volunteer team over a number of years. The funding benefits 18 of the Trust's reserves by enhancing their public amenity value, biodiversity and landscape importance and have been delivered by both HNT volunteers and contractors. The reserve habitats that have benefitted from this valuable support include unimproved lowland grassland, orchard, ancient woodland, mature hedgerow, wet grassland and open water. The funding has also provided much needed tools, supported training and allowed for management planning on reserves.

Examples of the sort of work carried out include new stock fencing, gates, hedgelaying, woodland management improvements including coppicing and deer fencing, pollarding of old willow and oak trees, creation of better water supplies for livestock, and biodiversity survey and monitoring.



Hedgelaying (HNT)

Acting as Wildlife Champions



Peacock butterfly (C. Harris)

We are taking forward the work on **climate change** and land management through our regional Conservation and Reserves group. This is made up of the six Wildlife Trusts in the West Midlands region and is developing a regional monitoring programme for specific

species and habitats on nature reserves. This will integrate with the national monitoring guidelines being developed by The Wildlife Trust's and the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) as part of our Living Landscapes initiative.

The final report on the current regional state of play with **Special Wildlife Site** systems was produced and has been circulated to partners around the region. In Herefordshire, the Trust continued to support the Council work on delivering their National Indicator 197 duty (the "*proportion of Local Sites where positive management has been or is being implemented*"), by helping to deliver the management plan for Roadside Verge Nature Reserves, and working with a sub-group of the Local Sites Partnership to revise the selection criteria.

The Trust continued to support the work of a range of other local organisations and initiatives, including the Herefordshire Biological Records Centre, the Local



Southern Marsh orchids, The Sturts (C. Harris)

Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership and HART. It supported regional forums and representatives have attended conferences such as the Grazing Animals Project National Conference. Through partnerships, it provided professional support to key conservation initiatives. In return, the Trust's staff, volunteers and members and Trustees were kept up-to-date on conservation, ecological thinking and best practices.

The Trust continues to play a key role in the Herefordshire Environment Partnership and monitoring progress with Herefordshire Councils Place Shaping Paper, part of the Local Development Framework.

Future Plans

During the next year we hope to:

- manage and enhance our nature reserves for wildlife and people
- develop the Wigmore basin project
- develop a full application and business plan for the Orchard Origins project in partnership with Herefordshire MIND
- deliver the first phase of the Parkland Project
- develop pond projects with HART
- develop a funding bid for a community education and engagement project on the Trust's Lugg Meadow reserve
- develop funding strategies to allow the continuation of adult training projects, like LEMUR.
- develop funding proposals that will enable the continuation of WildPlay, Nature Play Rangers and Watch events
- increase our profile through a new Marketing Strategy
- seek resources to improve the designation, management and monitoring of Wildlife Sites
- keep under close scrutiny any plans for Hereford bypass and work with others to ensure that any proposals do not destroy our natural heritage
- celebrate 50 years since the Trust's founding
- expand our corporate membership scheme
- commence preparatory work for the repairs to Lower House Farm

Statement of financial activities for the 12 months ended 31st March 2011

| Income and expenditure | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | Total Funds 2011 £ | Total Funds 2010 £ |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| INCOMING RESOURCES | | | | |
| Incoming resources from generated funds | | | | |
| Voluntary income | 94,091 | 5,938 | 100,029 | 73,789 |
| Activities for generating funds | 149,566 | 93 | 149,659 | 150,336 |
| Incoming resources from Charitable activities: | | | | |
| - Nature Reserves | 123,419 | 20,250 | 143,669 | 222,452 |
| - Conservation Development | 4,858 | 128,860 | 133,718 | 183,786 |
| - Education | 30,664 | 304,647 | 335,311 | 153,840 |
| Total incoming resources | 402,598 | 459,788 | 862,386 | 784,203 |
| RESOURCES EXPENDED | | | | |
| Costs of generating funds: | | | | |
| Costs of generating voluntary income | 1,610 | - | 1,610 | 1,703 |
| Fundraising trading: costs of goods sold and other costs | 72,093 | - | 72,093 | 55,357 |
| Investment management costs | 1,109 | - | 1,109 | 250 |
| Charitable Activities | | | | |
| - Nature Reserves | 140,468 | 43,357 | 183,825 | 152,864 |
| - Conservation Development | 66,803 | 129,857 | 196,660 | 258,739 |
| - Education | 122,734 | 263,444 | 386,178 | 218,250 |
| Governance Costs | 15,683 | - | 15,683 | 12,016 |
| Other resources expended | 10,721 | - | 10,721 | 11,339 |
| Total resources expended | 431,221 | 436,658 | 867,879 | 710,518 |
| NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES before transfers | | | | |
| | (28,623) | 23,130 | (5,493) | 73,685 |
| Gross transfers between funds | | | | |
| | 62,011 | (62,011) | - | - |
| Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses | | | | |
| | 33,388 | (38,881) | (5,493) | 73,685 |
| Other recognised gains/losses | | | | |
| - Gain/(Loss) on revaluation of investments | 17,508 | - | 17,508 | 78,833 |
| Net movement in funds | 50,896 | (38,881) | 12,015 | 152,518 |
| RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | 608,960 | 1,743,091 | 2,352,051 | 2,199,533 |
| TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD | 659,856 | 1,704,210 | 2,364,066 | 2,352,051 |

Balance sheet at 31 March 2011

| | £ Unrestricted | £ Restricted | £ Total Funds 31.3.11 | £ Total Funds 31.3.10 |
|--|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| FIXED ASSETS | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 3,106 | 1,587,901 | 1,591,007 | 1,596,361 |
| Investments | 376,447 | - | 376,447 | 359,061 |
| | 379,553 | 1,587,901 | 1,967,454 | 1,955,422 |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | | |
| Stock | 3,309 | - | 3,309 | 1,892 |
| Debtors | 76,646 | 74,524 | 151,170 | 125,509 |
| Cash at bank | 297,234 | 95,174 | 392,408 | 421,315 |
| | 377,189 | 169,698 | 546,887 | 548,716 |
| CREDITORS | | | | |
| Amounts falling due within one year | (96,886) | (53,389) | (150,275) | (85,319) |
| NET CURRENT ASSETS | 280,303 | 116,309 | 396,612 | 463,397 |
| TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES | 659,856 | 1,704,210 | 2,364,066 | 2,418,819 |
| CREDITORS | | | | |
| Amounts falling due after more than one year | - | - | - | (66,768) |
| NET ASSETS | 659,856 | 1,704,210 | 2,364,066 | 2,352,051 |
| FUNDS | | | | |
| Unrestricted funds | | | 659,856 | 608,960 |
| Restricted funds | | | 1,704,210 | 1,743,091 |
| TOTAL FUNDS | | | 2,364,066 | 2,352,051 |

Report of the Independent Auditor's to the Trustees of The Herefordshire Nature Trust Limited

We have audited the financial statements of The Herefordshire Nature Trust Ltd for the year ended 31 March 2011 on pages five to twenty three. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charitable company's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the trustees; and the overall presentation of the financial statements.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2011 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Thorne Widgery
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors
33 Bridge Street
Hereford
HR4 9DQ

The summarised accounts shown have been extracted from the annual accounts which were recommended for approval by the Finance Committee on the 28th July 2011 and are available on the Trust's website.

THANK YOU

The Board of Trustees would like to thank all individuals and organisations who have contributed to the Trust during the period 1st April 2010 - 31st March 2011.

The Trust has been extremely fortunate and grateful to receive a wide variety of generous grants, donations and bequests in the 12 month period to 31st March 2011. The major such items credited to income in this period were:

| | £ | | £ |
|---|--------|--|---------|
| Donations | | | |
| Proffits' Trust Fund | 11,197 | Manor of Ewyas Harold (donation) | 125 |
| Gorgeous Gardens (net - many thanks to various individuals) | 754 | Ewyas Harold Commoners Society (donation) | 125 |
| Mr. J. Colley | 1,000 | | |
| Mr. & Mrs. P.J. Smith | 600 | Herefordshire Reptile Community Project | |
| Woolhope Club for History of Lower House Farm book | 1,000 | Heritage Lottery Fund | 3,695 |
| J. Gould for History of Lower House Farm book | 200 | Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | 1,275 |
| | | | |
| Charitable Trusts | | Herefordshire Parklands Project | |
| The Jordan Foundation | 5,000 | Heritage Lottery Fund | 25,000 |
| Four Winds Trust for Watch | 500 | Leader + | 14,692 |
| Mark Fitch Foundation for History of Lower House Farm book | 500 | | |
| Statham Family Charitable Trust for Wildplay | 2,000 | LEMUR Bursary Scheme | |
| Herefordshire Community Foundation for Playbuilder | 500 | Heritage Lottery Fund | 281,215 |
| The Ratcliff Foundaton for The Parks nature reserve | 1,500 | | |
| The Cornus Trust for The Parks nature reserve | 1,000 | Nature Rangers (Play Strategy) | |
| The Oakdale Trust for The Parks nature reserve | 400 | Herefordshire Council | 20,682 |
| | | | |
| In Memoriam | | Nature Reserves | |
| Mr. Jones | 65 | NE Countryside Stewardship | 5,391 |
| Mrs. K.J. Mackenzie | 230 | Higher Level Stewardship - Capital | 49,766 |
| Mrs. F.J. Collins | 154 | Single Farm Payment Scheme | 11,888 |
| Mr. N Griffiths | 192 | Higher Level Stewardship | 32,978 |
| Mrs. M Giles | 137 | Lantra – Women and Work Grant | 450 |
| | | | |
| Legacies | | Playbuilder | |
| Mrs. J.L. Buckley | 19,733 | Vodafone Foundation | 2,750 |
| | | | |
| Grants/(Donations) | | Wild Herefordshire: | |
| Community Commons | | Severn Waste Environmental Services | 20,000 |
| Heritage Lottery Fund | 83,199 | | |
| Butterfly Conservation (donation) | 750 | | |

Additionally the Trust is grateful to Amey Wye Valley and Healing Herbs for their assistance and contributions under the corporate membership scheme.

Volunteers

Volunteers again gave thousands of hours of their time to the Trust during the year. Their valuable commitment ensured that we were able to take practical action on the ground to protect wildlife and to provide adults and children alike with opportunities to learn about and experience nature. Many other volunteers worked tirelessly behind the scenes helping to administer the Trust and fundraise for its activities. The Trust is extremely grateful to everyone who volunteered for it during the year and would especially like to thank the following groups for their help:

Watch Leaders
Nature Reserve Practical Work Parties and their Leaders
Reserve Wardens
Publicity and Marketing Group
Conservation Advisory Group
Volunteer receptionists and administration team at Lower House Farm
Newsletter Deliverers
Branch Committees

Trustees

Mr R Beck (Chair), Mrs M Clarke, Mr R Underhill (Treasurer), Mrs R Athay (Company Secretary), Mrs B Winser, Mr T Davies, Mr L Smith, Mr. M Pollitt, Professor R Wise (resigned 7.7.10), Mr K Biddlecombe (deceased 22.2.11), Ms E Lloyd (resigned 14.4.10), Mr S Ashton, Mr C J E Harris, Ms J Webb (appointed 9.10.10), Ms S Garland (appointed 9.10.10), Mr S Gyford (appointed 9.10.10 resigned 12.1.11).

Staff

Full Time

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Colin Cheesman</i> | Chief Executive |
| <i>Valerie Bagley</i> | Administration Manager |
| <i>Phil Burton</i> | Learning Manager |
| <i>Francesca Griffith</i> | Conservation Manager |
| <i>Neville Hart</i> | Reserves Manager |
| <i>Tim Breakwell</i> | Parklands Project Manager (from 06.09.2010) |
| <i>Sam Durham</i> | Community Commons Project Manager (to 24.12.2010) |
| <i>Judy Hart</i> | Community Commons Project Officer (to 31.12.2010) |
| <i>Jo Dainty</i> | Senior Nature Play Ranger |
| <i>Katrina Preston</i> | Nature Play Ranger |
| <i>Douglas Lloyd</i> | Reserves Officer |
| <i>Hayley Herridge</i> | Vodafone World of Difference volunteer (3 months) |

Part Time

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| <i>Nicola Inkersole</i> | Finance Officer |
| <i>Sarah Cole</i> | Membership Officer (to 10.02.2011) |
| <i>Bev Bishop</i> | Development Officer (to 31.12.2010) |
| <i>Bev Bishop</i> | Membership Officer (from 04.01.2011) |
| <i>Sue Holland</i> | Reserves Officer |
| <i>Nigel Hand</i> | What's that Snake Project Officer (to 31.12.2010) |
| <i>Anastasia Calder</i> | LEMUR Project Officer |

Herefordshire Nature Trust, Lower House Farm, Ledbury Rd, Tupsley, Hereford, HR1 1UT.

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