

Welcome to the final Newsletter for 2004!!! Where has the time gone? Lots has been achieved this year what with the launch of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, the publication of Best Value and Biodiversity in Scotland, the passage of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, the arrival of the Biodiversity Action Reporting System, the publishing of more LBAPs, the biggest number of events during Scottish Biodiversity Week, the Biodiversity Action Grants Scheme, to name but a few achievements. The review of the UKBAP process is also well under way – for more information on this, please see page 14 for an update from the Biodiversity Information and Reporting Group. If you would like to make any comments or suggestions for the newsletter, please e-mail [Jo Lenthall](mailto:Jo.Lenthall@rspb.org.uk)

Biodiversity Action Reporting System

BARS is now available to those who involved in the trial stages (Dumfries and Galloway, North Lanarkshire, and Edinburgh), and will be available to everyone by mid-December after a couple of weeks of 'stress' testing with these initial users. It is a well-designed intuitive system and should be easy to understand, however online help, a workbook, and training workshops will be available. Four Biodiversity Officers have been asked to volunteer as 'BARS Champions' being the first point of contact for any queries. Training for everyone (including key partners from LBAP Partnerships) will be held in Edinburgh, Inverness, and Stirling during January and February.

Contact: Jo Lenthall, Scotland LBAP Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum
joanna.lenthall@rspb.org.uk

Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004

On 29 November 2004, Lewis Macdonald, the Deputy Minister for Environment and Rural Development, brought into force the bulk of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. As a result, public bodies across Scotland will be required to "further the conservation of biodiversity" as they carry out their functions. The Scottish Executive launched a web-based guidance for public bodies to help them tackle this new duty, accessible at www.biodiversityscotland.org.uk. The Deputy Minister announced the formal designation of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, making it a legally recognised document.

Best Value and Biodiversity in Scotland

A handbook of good practice for public bodies

Of the original 1000 copies printed, only four are left! CDs are being created for events, however the publication is a .pdf at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/environment/bvbs.pdf>. Every Head of Team/Division/Section for every LA in Scotland should now have received a copy of this publication, and copies appear to be sticking to departmental desks. I've now been to over one third of LAs to give the presentation on how to make the links between Best Value and Biodiversity. Do contact me if you'd like a presentation for your LA. Please contact me if you'd like the note from the "Biodiversity and Local Government: making the links" seminar, held on 9 September.

Contact: Jo Lenthall, Scotland LBAP Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum
joanna.lenthall@rspb.org.uk

LBAP/LP seminar, Battleby, 13 October 2004

The SBS and NC(S)A will bring about changes in the context in which biodiversity processes are delivered in Scotland as part of the UK's overall contribution to the CBD. Meeting the requirements of this new legislation will require more effective communication between UK, Scottish and Local

partnerships. Linking local and national elements to improve biodiversity conservation delivery in Scotland, and the UK as a whole, has been the subject of discussion for some time, so the event focused on increasing communication, improving co-ordination and reporting of common data, and exchanging best practice. Please get in touch if you'd like proceedings and outputs from the day.

Contact: Jo Lenthall, Scotland LBAP Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum
joanna.lenthall@rspb.org.uk

Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, Implementation Plans, Research Strategy, and Indicator Sets

The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy has been designated, with effect from 1 January 2005, as the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy referred to in Part 1 of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. The SBF Consultations on the "Implementation Plans", "Research Strategy" and "Developing an Indicator Set" ended on 30 September 2004. The comments received have been very constructive and helpful and will greatly help in finalising these documents. Responses are currently being analysed and discussed with the SBF Working and Steering Groups. A report on the analysis of the responses will be published on www.scotland.gov.uk/biodiversity towards the end of December. The finalised IPs will be published in January 2005 to coincide with the beginning of the first implementation phase.

Contact: Kathrina Mannion, Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum, 0131 244 6328
kathrina.mannion@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Scottish Biodiversity Week 2005 - 21-29 May

Also note that International Biodiversity Day is 22 May. Over the last few years Scottish Biodiversity Week has successfully raised awareness of biodiversity at a local level, by getting the public involved in activities and events, and reinforcing that what is done locally does have a national impact. So if you as an individual, a group, or an organisation would like to run an event next week please get in contact with me for further information and to ensure your event is advertised on the SBF website.

Contact: Jo Lenthall, Scotland LBAP Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum, 0131 311 6512
joanna.lenthall@rspb.org.uk for further details.

Biodiversity Action Grants Scheme

In May 2004, the introduction of BAGS was announced at the SBF Conference. A wide range of applicants applied to support projects that benefit biodiversity locally (or nationally) and involve action to implement the SBS. Deputy Environment Minister Lewis Macdonald announced that 33 groups and organisations (from 117 applications) will share the £270,000 pot (the total value of applications was in excess of £1.3m). Additional information on BAGS and successful applications can be viewed at: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Countryside/Wildlife-Habitats/16118/BiodiversityActionGrants.

Local Biodiversity Updates

Argyll & Bute

Contact: Marina Curran-Colthart, Local Biodiversity Officer on 01631 562125 marina.curran-colthart@argyll-bute.gov.uk www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/biodiversity

Ayrshire

Contact: Douglas Gardiner, Recycling Officer, East Ayrshire Council, 01563 554040 douglas.gardiner@east-ayrshire.gov.uk; Ken Gibb, Sustainable Development Manager, South Ayrshire Council, 01292 616288 ken.gibb@south-ayrshire.gov.uk; no current contact, North Ayrshire Council, 01294 324131

Cairngorms

- **Upland Grain Project** - despite the cold, 23 people (majority being farmers or crofters) attended an event celebrating the five-year Upland Grain Project. There were talks from the Biodiversity Officer, FWAG Advisor and a local crofter. John Hood (SEERAD) was present, and many farmers took the opportunity to talk to him. In the project's final year, there are only 4 sites with sacrificial crops (partly due to being unable to harvest the oats and stook them using the old binder because of poor weather, and partly because more farms got into the RSS). 27 farms (42ha) are under management of an RSS scheme with an unharvested crop prescription in Badenoch and Strathspey (compared with nothing 5 years ago, so the project is leaving behind a terrific legacy). Also, as ESA agreements end and farms switch over into RSS, most are expected to take the unharvested crop option; a possible 93 farms over the next 8 years. A proposal currently under consideration is to trial different seed mixes in an unharvested crop prescription to see which seed (or mixture) is most suitable for the area.
- **Non-Native Fish Project** - four lochs in the Spey catchment were surveyed, only one (Loch Beag) was found to contain non-native fish (roach and rudd), whilst pike were found in all. In general, very low numbers of fish were caught during the surveys. American brook charr, which hybridises with brown trout and Arctic charr, was found on the lower Dee. A full survey report and recommendations for action is expected shortly. Awareness raising to the threat of non-native fish, dangers of using non-native live-bait for pike fishing, and a code of practice is ongoing.
- **Highland Red Squirrel Hunt** – this was launched in September (in conjunction with Cairngorms LBAP, Highland Red Squirrel Group and Forestry Commission Scotland), and encouraged the public to undertake cone hunts identifying the presence of red squirrels in woods across the Highlands. An information pack was produced. Records of cone hunts or squirrel sightings in the Highlands can be made to Highland Red Squirrel Group at www.highlandredsquirrel.co.uk or by contacting Ian Collier on 01349 761 327.
- **Butterflies & Moths in the Cairngorms Mean Business** - this new LEADER+ funded project is managed by Julie Stoneman (Butterfly Conservation Scotland). It is a joint project with Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park and has a number of aims:
 - increase awareness of butterflies and moths among local communities
 - encourage local volunteers to play a part in their conservation and promotion
 - give tourists and local people an opportunity to see and enjoy this aspect of Scotland's wildlife.

Julie is recruiting and training volunteers to undertake surveys and monitoring work early next year, is producing a leaflet on Cairngorms butterflies and moths, and undertaking a feasibility study on a butterfly trial. For more information contact Julie on 0870 7706151 or jstoneman@butterfly-conservation.org

- **Biological Record Centre** - negotiations are underway with NESBReC for them to be the LRC for the Cairngorms National Park (they currently cover the Moray and Aberdeenshire parts of the Park). The CNPA, SNH, Inverness Museum Record Centre and the Highland Biological Recording Group support this proposal, which would see NESBReC take over responsibility for Badenoch & Strathspey in Highland and part of the upper Angus Glens in Angus. Subject to

agreement on levels of service and finance, NESBReC could start operating across the Park area in spring 2005.

- **Cairngorms LBAP on the web** – in December 2004, there should be a number of Cairngorms LBAP pages, and an electronic copy of the LBAP (.pdf) on CNPA's website: (<http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/>).

Contact: Stephen Corcoran, LBAP Officer, 01479 870528, stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk
www.cairngorms.co.uk

Clackmannanshire

- **Clackmannanshire Biodiversity Calendar** - currently designing a 2005 biodiversity calendar identifying key biodiversity dates and raising awareness of biodiversity by making the link between local people and local wildlife. A copy will be distributed to every pupil in the LA area and copies made available to local groups, libraries, health centres etc.
- **Wild Bird Cover Project** - this project aims to increase the viability of seed-eating farmland birds in Clackmannanshire by improving over-winter survival and condition. This project involves farmers entering into a four-year agreement to establish 1ha of wild bird cover on set-aside land. Following the success of last years' pilot project involving 2 farmers, Central Scotland FWAG is planning to roll this project out to include a further 4 farmers this year.
- **Northern Brown Argus project** - this 5 year project is in its second year. This summer surveys have been carried out in the Alva Glen region to identify the presence of the northern brown argus (a rare butterfly found in the Ochil hills) and to map the distribution of common rock rose (the caterpillar plant food). Plans are set to revisit these sites next summer involving a local community group in surveys, which will inform the development of management prescriptions to help conserve this rare butterfly.
- **Clackmannanshire Pond Survey** - Craig Macadam has been contracted to carry out this 3-year pond survey. Craig has completed aquatic invertebrate and macrophyte surveys for 21 ponds in Clackmannanshire this summer; he will be identifying samples and writing up the report over the winter months. Craig will be presenting his findings at the next Steering Group meeting set for mid-January 2005.
- **Glenochil Biodiversity Garden** - £200 has been set aside for wildflower plug planting. In conjunction with Land Services we are also preparing an application for the BAGS. The application includes proposals to develop the site as public biodiversity garden involving local schools and community groups in garden design, creation and on-going maintenance.
- **Hedge maintenance event** - a one-day hedge training event (30 Nov) is being organised by Clackmannanshire and Stirling Biodiversity Officers and Central Scotland FWAG. The event will include demonstrations on planting and cutting hedges to enhance biodiversity. Key audience is LA Land Services contractors, local agricultural contractors and farmers.

Contact: Biodiversity Co-ordinator, 01259 452639, lbond@clacks.gov.uk,
www.clacksweb.org.uk/biodiversity

Comhairle non Eilean Siar

- **Biodiversity Posters** - we have been successful in getting funding from the BAGS to produce of a series of three biodiversity posters, based on the first phase of Western Isles habitat and species action plans (native woodland, saline lagoons and the great yellow bumblebee *Bombus distinguendus*). The posters will be aimed at local communities and will be distributed to all primary and secondary schools, colleges, voluntary groups, visitor centres, libraries and other public places. They will provide information about, and issues affecting, the species or habitat and what can be done to help. The posters will be bilingual (English and Gaelic), so they can be used in Gaelic medium education by schools, pre-school groups and colleges. Posters should be available in February 2005.
- We are currently investigating the feasibility of establishing a **Local Record Centre** in the Western Isles.

Contact: Anne MacLellan (Mon, Wed am, and Fri), 01870 602425, amaclellan@cne-siar.gov.uk
www.cne-siar.gov.uk/biodiversity

Dumfries & Galloway

- The LBAP has recently celebrated its **fifth birthday**. In order to assess progress to date, and prior to the switchover to BARS, a concerted effort was made to bring the monitoring reports up-to-date. Information was collected on over 1500 actions, and the results are currently being collated into a Progress Report, which will be published later in the year. Early indications are that progress on all the LBAP's six over-arching objectives appears to have been good, although progress for individual habitats/species is much more variable.
- A large-scale **Heritage Lottery Fund application** for environmental improvements along the Solway coast and its main river valleys has been submitted. A large number of biodiversity enhancements are proposed in the bid and many biodiversity partners, as well as the Biodiversity Officer, have worked together to prepare the application. If approved, the impact of the project will extend well beyond the work on the ground, as the benefits of joint working have already become apparent to those involved.
- As part of the **Dumfries Town Centre Regeneration Strategy**, a report is being commissioned examining current and potential use of the town's greenspaces in the River Nith corridor, to include full consideration of biodiversity. Although Dumfries and Galloway is predominantly rural, there are important habitats and species within the town, and enormous opportunities for public involvement.
- Following the success of the region's first **Wildlife Festival** last year, the Biodiversity Partnership has given the go-ahead for another festival, to be held from 2-17 April 2005. Funding has been offered from the BAGS and events, activities and promotional materials are currently being prepared. Particular effort is being made to target people who have had little involvement with the LBAP to date.

Contact: Peter Norman, Biodiversity Officer, 01387 260172, peter.norman@dumgal.gov.uk
www.dumgal.gov.uk/biodiversity

East Dunbartonshire

- The **LBAP was launched** on 7 October 2004.
- **11 Action Plans** are to be carried forward, including mud snail SAP.
- **Wild Bird Cover and Rural Stewardship Scheme** are both being carried forward.
- **Bog HAP** – sundew has been re-established, and 3 of 7 raised bogs have been secured.
- **Hedges HAP**, carrying out butterfly transects.
- **SINCs database**, species are being recorded on site and the information is being linked to GIS.

Contact: Paul Baker, Biodiversity Officer, 0141 578 8642, paul.baker@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

East Lothian

Contact: Stuart Macpherson, Biodiversity Officer, 01620 827242,
smacpherson@eastlothian.gov.uk www.eastlothianbiodiversity.org.uk

Edinburgh

- **Relaunched the LBAP (EBAP)** on 17 November; the original plan had 500 actions, the new one is more streamlined!
- **Biodiversity training** including for Edinburgh In Bloom and school in-service
- Have produced a new set of **display boards**.
- Have created a **Woodland Education Pack**.
- Are working closely with the MoD in the Pentlands on the **juniper SAP**.
- Working with the **Scottish Ornithological Club** with the creation of swift boxes.

Contact: Susan Steel or Caroline Peacock, Biodiversity Officers 0131 469 3920
susan.steel@edinburgh.gov.uk caroline.peacock@edinburgh.gov.uk

Falkirk

- monitoring programme in place for **Young's helleborine orchid**
- currently **drafting SAPs** for the LBAP

- post is now full time, with Anna **job sharing** with Caroline (who is also part-time in Edinburgh)
Contact: Anna Perks and Caroline Peacock, Biodiversity Officer, 01324 504863
anna.perks@falkirk.gov.uk caroline.peacock@falkirk.gov.uk

Fife

Contact: Ross Spalding (temporary contact), 01592 413437 ross.spalding@fife.gov.uk
www.fifedirect.org.uk

Glasgow

- **Early Braes Watercourse Enhancement works** (GCC and Kelvin Clyde Greenspace) - creation of wetland complex of pools; planting of swamp and marsh vegetation; flood storage; water vole monitoring
- **Sowing and Growing Local Schools project** (funded by GCC and SNH) - 1500 school pupils hands-on experience of wildflower seeding at marquee events; biodiversity display boards; ethnobotany booklet on Glasgow's wildflower uses
- **Allotments and Biodiversity Project** (funded by GCC and SNH) - booklet on best practice for allotments and biodiversity; recording on plots for local species, using postcards distributed to raise awareness; study of plots managed for biodiversity versus those which are not
- **Local Provenance Seed Project** (GCC)
- **Glasgow Reptile Survey** (funded by Greenspace Projects) - presence/absence over key identified sites
- **Rural Stewardship Scheme** (Biodiversity Officer and local farmers) - Windlaw, Mid-Netherton and Carnbooth Farms
- **Water vole monitoring** (GCC Conservation and Countryside Ranger Service)
- **Glasgow Farmland Birds Project** (RSPB Scotland, grant from Landfill Tax) - experimental seed strip at Hogganfield Park LNR/Robroyston Park of mustard and rapeseed; winter feeding with grain at 5 sites; 3 farms involved – including habitat creation and management, winter feeding of birds, bird monitoring (winter abundance and breeding birds); birds officer employed to implement the project
- **Wetland creation at Darnley Mill proposed LNR** (mitigation measures from flood alleviation works)
- **Birdboxes in cemeteries** (GCC and BTCV)
- **Onsite biodiversity interpretation for ponds** (Bingham's and Maxwell Park)
- **Naturalisation for Newlands Park pond** (GCC)
- **Parks Education Packs** (GCC) – aimed at primary schools, includes biodiversity information. Also associated park enhancements eg paths and pond dipping platforms
- **Volunteers from 'Heart and Soul' religious community project** – path creation and wildflower planting at various sites in the city (GCC)

Contact: Keith Watson or Carol MacLean, Biodiversity Officers on 0141 287 5665
keith.watson@land.glasgow.gov.uk carol.macleane@land.glasgow.gov.uk
<http://wildlife.glasgow.gov.uk>

Highland

- LBAPs have been produced for Caithness, Sutherland, Wester Ross, Ross & Cromarty (East), Skye & Lochalsh and Lochaber. The **Inverness & Nairn** LBAP was launched on 11 September and will be available and distributed later this month.
- **Phase 1 of the Highland Biodiversity Project is now complete** and the funding partners are considering options for a second phase. In the meantime funding has been secured for biodiversity projects in each of the LBAP areas in Highland. Over the next few months, the biodiversity group for each area will be assisted in identifying projects and working up these projects by next spring. There is an additional fund for each group to publicise their project locally and share their experiences with the other Highland biodiversity groups.

Contact: Alice Brown, Biodiversity Officer (Maternity Cover), 01463 702274
alice.brown3@highland.gov.uk www.highlandbiodiversity.com

Midlothian

Drafts for the five different broad habitats are underway. These include:

- **Woodlands** - Gorge Woodlands HAP, Ancient and Semi Natural Woodlands HAP, Parkland, Wood Pasture and Veteran Trees HAP, Plantation Woodland HAP
- **Freshwater** - Lochs and Ponds HAP, Rivers and Burns HAP, Bogs HAP
- **Urban and Rural Settlements** - Golf Courses HAP, Green Spaces HAP, Business and Industrial Sites HAP, New Developments HAP, Brownfield HAP
- **Farmlands** - The HAP will be highlighting general prescriptions for various farmland habitats and management practices tying into grant schemes.
- **Geodiversity** - This section will be highlighting the geology of Midlothian giving information on the substrate and rock formations that have been formed over millions of years.
- **Biodiversity Education and Awareness Raising Group** - The group is currently looking into target groups, relevant biodiversity messages, and appropriate vehicles for delivery.
- The **website** is live www.midlothian.gov.uk/Article.aspx?TopicId=7&ArticleId=16975

Projects include:

- The creation of a **Lothian-wide Forest Habitat Network Plan**
- Helping to set up a **community recording and monitoring programme**
- Production of a **guidance document for developers**

Contact: Helen Dunlop, Biodiversity Officer, Midlothian Council, 0131 271 3462

helen.dunlop@midlothian.gov.uk www.midlothian.gov.uk

North East Scotland

- **Farmland** - the Farm Group developed a full-colour Tractor Cab Sticker to raise awareness about threats to wildlife from farm machinery. 750 were produced with 50% funding from SNH, and have now been distributed across the region.
- **Species-rich grassland** - Aberdeenshire Council have continued to manage selected road verges for biodiversity. Butterfly notices, stating "Road verge managed for Biodiversity", have been put up at various sites. Easter Anguston Farm, Aberdeen is supplying a wide range of wildflowers grown from local provenance seed suitable for small-scale projects (eg wildlife gardens). The scheme is expanding with the aim to supply larger scale projects. SNH has 50% funded a 2004 road verge survey covering sites identified as requiring a survey in the 2001 report, to include a few Moray sites.
- **Wood pasture, parkland and boundary trees** - draft Action Plan currently out for consultation until 27 October 04. The Group arranged a Wood Pasture Training Day for professionals and interested amateurs (19 August, led by Mike Smith, SNH and Fiona Milne, NTS) at Crathes and Drum with kind permission of the NTS. 23 attended.
- **Rivers and Burns** - the Rivers Action Group arranged 2 awareness-raising walks. One led by Aberdeenshire Council Flood Prevention Officer to see flood prevention measures and biodiversity on the Carron and Cowie River at Stonehaven on 17 August (8 attended). The second to Tarland, with Macaulay, 3 Dee Vision Project and MacRobert Estates to look at river restoration and water quality work in the Tarland catchment in September. 12 attended, public and professionals.
- **Coast** - Estuarine and Inter-tidal Habitats HAP out for consultation until 27 October 2004. Coastal Cliff and Heath, a new group has been formed and an initial draft of plan prepared.
- **Water vole** - Laura Taylor, Water Vole Conservation Officer started February 2004 (funded by SNH, Aberdeenshire Council, and SEPA) and focussing mainly on the Ythan and Deveron catchments. To carry out water vole, otter and mink surveys (including mink trapping as needed) and following up on any new sightings of water voles. To encourage reporting of mink sightings and extending the raft project to landowners, land managers, fishing/game managers. Current funding is to 31 Jan 2005. BAGS application for continuation was unsuccessful, so other funding sought.
- **Red squirrel** - partners are mainstreaming red squirrel actions into their work programmes eg FCS Kincardine Forest District have been actively removing young beech and breaking up corridors of mature beech. All new planting on Deeside and around Bennachie contains no large masted broadleaves, oak being the exception, and most now include Norway spruce, Scots pine

and larch, specifically with red squirrels in mind. Aberdeen City Council are moving beech and sycamore at Hazelhead Park, and restocking with species beneficial to red squirrels. The group secured business sponsorship to set up a NE Squirrel website and to publish a leaflet promoting the needs of red squirrels in North East Scotland.

- **Daubenton's Bat** - the Bat Action Group are developing a "North East Bats and Bridges Guidance Relating to Bridge Works" note for bridge repairers and Council staff. Will receive 50% funding from SNH.
- **Business and Biodiversity Project** - "Business and Biodiversity Advice Notes" was published in spring, funded by Scottish Enterprise Grampian and distributed to 250 businesses via the SEG and LBAP mailing lists. It is on the website www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/business
- **BAGS** - NE Scotland LBAP Partnership (c/o SWT) was successful getting two out of five applications submitted, both in Aberdeenshire. The Gartly lay-by project aims to involve the local community in enhancing the biodiversity of grassland under the name "The Hedge Doctors", and The Better Boddam Project is designed to improve existing public spaces in a coastal community.
- Moray Council secured funding for raising awareness of **The Wards Wetland** (local Area Action Plan) by improving access and interpretation.

Contact: Fiona Cruickshank, temporary contact, fiona.cruickshank@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk

North Lanarkshire

- The **Awareness and Education Working Group** had a brainstorming meeting to come up with ideas for a local education and awareness plan - very useful with many opportunities to consider. A draft plan will be produced soon and circulated for consultation.
- **Farmland** - few farms are in Agri-Environment schemes in North Lanarkshire, which has been recognised to be a major blockage as schemes are the most effective way to progress action for farmland biodiversity. A meeting next year (probably May, free pie and a pint style) with all farmers in the Kelvin Valley (a key area for floodplain grazing marsh and breeding waders) to try and encourage as many as possible to apply for the RSS. Group bids will be judged at the level of the application with the most points making them very likely to be successful and the Kelvin Valley is rich in wildlife and habitats.
- **BAGS bids** – four projects were submitted, with one being successful - the farmland bird cover project - so it is full steam ahead on that at the moment. North Lanarkshire received funding for five projects out of a total of 33.
- **Action Plan review** - all NLBAP's 18 HAPs and SAPs will be reviewed this coming winter and revised. The idea is to update the information in these plans and rationalise the actions they contain.

Contact: Jonathan Willet, North Lanarkshire Biodiversity Officer, 01236 780636
willetj@northlan.gov.uk

Orkney

Contact: Nadine Russell, Orkney Biodiversity Officer, 01856 888760
nadine.russell@orkney.gov.uk www.orkneybiodiversity.co.uk

Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde

- **Biodiversity events** for spring/summer 2005 particularly Biodiversity Week
- Applying for sponsorship for **Juniper Action Plan**
- Contributing to **Statement of Case** for Corlick Wind Farm inquiry (potential loss of heathland, unimproved grassland and hen harrier habitat)
- **Awareness strategy** for within council departments, biodiversity for business and education package
- Trying to set up various **projects with biodiversity themes** (tree seed/nut collection/planting convalescence/respice care, heath restoration etc)
- Organising **volunteer** opportunities
- **Website** maintenance

- Article for **FWAG Scotland newsletter** to improve contact with landowners
 - **Mad March Hare** awareness raising
 - **Tree Planting at Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park**, Tuesday 30 November, join the Park Rangers for an afternoon of tree planting and other woodland management tasks. Full instruction and tools provided. Ken McGinigal, 01505 842803
 - **Trees Matter Plant Them, Gleniffer Braes Country Park**, Sunday 5 December, suitable clothing and footwear required, Glen Lodge, Glenfield Road, Rangers Office 0141 8843794
- Contact:** Petrina Brown, Local Biodiversity Officer, 0141 842 5281
petrina.brown@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Scottish Borders

Contact: Andy Tharme, Natural Heritage Officer, 01835 826514 atharme@scotborders.gov.uk

Living Shetland

- Looking to create a sectoral **Marine Biodiversity Action Plan (MarBAP)**. A working group has been established and a template agreed upon.
 - **Nicky has moved** to LA offices in Lerwick. New address is: Living Shetland, SIC Infrastructure Services, Grantfield, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0NT. Other details below.
 - Plans are now in the **implementation stage**, and receiving positive feedback. Nicky has had meetings with all partners and produced reports on progress of each partner and plan.
 - An **art project** for May/June 2005. A series of one-day artist and ranger led guided walks in three locations spanning the length of Shetland, to be held over consecutive weekends. The rangers will discuss issues such as countryside access, agriculture and crofting, flora and fauna and biodiversity. The artists will work with the guides and lead art activities at various sites on the way creating temporary artworks in the land using only materials found en route. The artworks will respond sensitively to the landscape and the work will be documented by local photographers, then left in the landscape to naturally decay. The photographs will then be displayed locally.
 - The long-awaited **AgriBAP** has been completed and launched. To implement this SCFWAG, with Living Shetland, have received £450,000 to achieve objectives set out in the plan.
 - Several communities across Shetland have requested **talks and guidance on tree planting**. Nicky has gone out alongside woodlands officer to talk with the interested communities.
 - A **business plan** is being developed for existing and potential fund providers, and aims to take the "project" out of "Living Shetland Project" to make it more sustainable and aims to make the work of "Living Shetland" a long-term investment to Shetland.
- Contact:** Nicky Davies, Biodiversity Officer, 01595 690832, livingshetland@fwag.org.uk

South Lanarkshire

- **Braehead Moss NNR Open Day** (5 August 2004) was run by SL Countryside Ranger Service, in conjunction with SNH and other partners. Up to 70 members of the public from SL and beyond participated in various activities including "Make your own bog", games, arts and crafts (eg natural dyes). A ranger led walk across the NNR allowed participants the opportunity to learn about the development and biodiversity of Lowland Raised Bogs and the threats to this habitat, including the use of peat for horticultural purposes.
- **Clyde Valley Woodlands LIFE Project** - work is now complete across all of the 11 SAC woodlands (except Chatelherault Country Park near Hamilton, although this work will be complete by end 2004). Operations included felling of non-native tree species (sycamore, beech), control of rhododendron and Japanese knotweed, livestock fencing, and removal of dumped rubbish. Six skips worth were removed in September from beneath a bridge where the A71 crosses the Cander Water near Stonehouse, involving an elaborate operation with a crane! For more information on this project visit www.clydevalleywoods.org.uk.
- **Biodiversity Banks** - through 11 workshops this year, a further 9 wildflower meadows were created bringing the total number of biodiversity banks to 18. Approximately 1,000 individuals have now been involved and interest among the communities where these wildflower meadows have been established remains high. Key to our success has been the support of SL Land

Services who have been willing to adapt their maintenance regimes to accommodate the biodiversity need. For a leaflet on this project, please contact Scott.

- **Forth Gateway Project Wildflower Meadow** - a partnership between Forestry Commission Scotland and the Forth Gateway Community Project, which will oversee the creation and management of a lowland wildflower meadow. This will be achieved through the BAGS in conjunction with similar projects in Fife and Falkirk. For further information on this project contact: emma.stewart@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
 - **Bogs, Bings & Beasties Exhibition** - Kitchside Museum of Scottish Country Life, East Kilbride is to host the Bogs, Bings & Beasties Exhibition from 4 December 2004 to 29 May 2005. As at Hamilton Low Parks Museum this year, the exhibit will be supported through a series of events. Details have yet to be finalised.
 - **Aspen Species Action Plan** - FCS have released results of genetic analysis for 11 aspen stands in SL, essentially the upper Clyde valley. Cuttings revealed that 10 stands represent separate clonal communities, indicating that we have a reasonably good gene pool from which to draw future planting stock. The literature suggests a minimum of 10 clones per ha in new woodland planting. We plan to acquire root cuttings in early 2005. For more information on aspen conservation: www.treesforlife.org.uk/tfl.aspen_info_resource.
- Contact:** Scott Riddell, 01355 806858, scott.riddell@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Stirling

- On 30 November, will run a **hedge-training event** in conjunction with FWAG Scotland and Clacks Biodiversity Partnership. This event will have about 30 invited guests including farmers, smallholders, contractors and council service workers. This ties in with the installation of an 80m native hedgerow at Plean country park, being the first phase of 750m of new hedgerow envisaged for the park over the next few years.
- **Central Scotland Squirrel Group** - chaired the October meeting, redrew the group's aims and objectives (survey/monitoring and control of greys), and set to tie our monitoring into the new national squirrel survey. Events planned for next year. The group was formed over a year ago, is unconstituted, and has no funding sources. The group, which up until now has been largely focused on the Clacks area, is expanding with interest in Stirling and Fife.
- **Garden Birds DIY day** - 28 November at Plean Country Park. An event showing public how to construct and site feeders, fat balls etc. with the LBAPO giving guided walks, trying to spot some of Plean's avian tenants.
- **Stirling Biodiversity Grant Scheme** is starting to gain momentum, with many more interested parties than in the past (totalling about 20 separate projects). The Scheme was relaunched in May rising from the ashes of the Community Environment Grant Scheme. There is a pot of £20,000 available (50% SNH, 50% Stirling Council). 100% funding can be offered up to £4,000. The target group for the new scheme has been broadened; initially only advisory and community groups were eligible, whereas individuals and landowners can now apply. Awards already finalised are for an extension of the Biodiversity Garden at the Smith Art Gallery in Stirling and a Wild Bird Cover Project (RSPB Scotland and FWAG Scotland partnership project).
- Revised dates have been set for consultation and publication of **Volume 3 of the Stirling LBAP**. It will hopefully out to consultation before Christmas (HAH!)Watch this space folks....!
- **Urban Woodland Strategy** - this project aims to audit the urban woodland resource in and around the City of Stirling, which should provide an assessment of the nature conservation, landscape, amenity and cultural value of this resource on a site-by-site basis. It will result in the production of an Urban Woodland Strategy and the preparation of fully costed management plans for the sites. This will be overseen by a Woodland Strategy Steering Group comprising of representatives from SC, FCS, SNH and interested others.

Contact: Chris Waddell, 01786 442875 waddellc@stirling.gov.uk

Tayside

- **"Wild and Wonderful"** biodiversity exhibition at Perth Museum: running May to Dec 2004. So far 16,000 visitors.

- **Green Graveyard Project** has been a bit quiet this year, but more plans for 2005, including a lichens ID course to be linked in with it.
- The **Red Squirrel Group** in Perthshire and Kinross has been revived. A proposed “Red Line” has been suggested to stimulate grey squirrel management. This would be at a point near Dunkeld and would involve the Cairngorms LBAP Partnership.
- The **Barn Owl Survey and Project** is expanding, especially in Angus. Great interest being shown.
- Funds have been allocated for a **Tayside biodiversity website**, due to be launched early in the New Year.
- Following a comprehensive **Japanese knotweed survey** by the local community in Dundee, there is likely to be a joint Management Plan drawn up between Dundee City and Angus Councils for invasive species management on the Dighty Burn.
- Two future projects are currently being discussed – **Juniper Survey and Management; Veteran Tree Survey and Management**.
- The **Planning Manual** is at a first draft stage. The document is aimed at planners, developers, architects and land managers. There will be a large information sheet section at the back of the document. All this will go on the website in due course.
- The **“Building Better Biodiversity”** series of seminars has included Jo Lenthall’s “Best Value” seminar in Dundee (7 Oct), a “Living Roofs” seminar in Perth (11 Oct, nearly 30 attended), and a “Greening the Golf Course” lunchtime seminar in Dundee on 20 Oct. Two full-day workshops are planned for greenkeepers and golf club committees at Carnoustie (25 Nov) and Blairgowrie (9 Dec). Anyone else interested in joining the training day is welcome. Butterfly Conservation Scotland will be holding a lunchtime seminar in Perth in the New Year on “Managing Brownfield Sites for Biodiversity”. Four events have already been planned for “Tayside’s Having a Field Day” in 2005. Tying in with the UK Lowland Grassland HAP Steering Group, the events will be varied and will include wildflower meadow management. A public day will include bumblebee and butterfly ID, there will be a tour of species-rich grassland management, etc.
- Last, but not least, the **Sand Martin Wall at Broughty Ferry dunes** has been outstandingly successful in its first year, with over 100 pairs nesting and 3 broods reared! The wildflower meadow in the front of the wall was popular. Hopefully further funds next year will extend the wall and improve the interpretation.

Contact: Catherine Lloyd, Biodiversity Officer, 01738 476481 tayside.biodiversity@ukf.net

West Dunbartonshire

Contact: Rod McCreath (temporary contact) rod.mccreath@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

West Lothian

Contact: John Sheldon, Co-ordinating Officer, 01506 775278 John.Sheldon@westlothian.gov.uk

Events

SNH's Sharing Good Practice programme - Greener Golf Courses

2 February 2005, Gleneagles

A practical workshop delivering environmental best practice through the development and management processes on golf courses, during "on-site" visits at Gleneagles golf course and with help from experienced practitioners. Particular emphasis will be placed on the planning process, consultation, and 'Best Value' management of golf courses. Detailed guidance on landscape and nature conservation for new development will be provided, along with guidance on environmental best practice during construction and management planning.

To book a place, please contact Karen Smith, Scottish Natural Heritage, Battleby, Redgorton, Perth, PH1 3EW Tel: 01738 458555 Fax: 01738 458612 e-mail: karen.smith@snh.gov.uk

Dumfries and Galloway Wildlife Festival - 2-17 April 2005

The Dumfries and Galloway biodiversity partnership is to use money from the Biodiversity Action Grant Scheme to organise next year's Wildlife Festival. The festival is aimed to raise public awareness of the array of wildlife in the area, and to increase the need for conservation. Full details of the festival will be released on the Dumfries and Galloway website <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk>

Butterfly Conservation 5th International Symposium - 8-10 April

This symposium at Southampton University will discuss the role of Lepidoptera as indicators of Biodiversity Conservation. For full details of the symposium and how to book, visit:

<http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/ne/news/symposium/index.html>

Native flora for the future - 12 and 13 April 2005, Reading

Flora locale, the national charity promoting wise use of native flora, is hosting a conference concentrating on sourcing of planting stock for habitat restoration and creation projects. In Reading town hall experts from Scotland, Wales and England will debate how native flora can be wisely used and the policies and practice for wildlife, people and places. The event focuses on 'New Wildwoods' and 'Landscapes for native flora'. Speakers include George Peterken, Scott McG Wilson, Joanna Francis, Colin Ferris, Richard Smithers, Jon Marshall, Barbara Smith, Andrew Jones and Grahame Dixie. They are covering a huge diversity of subjects from 'Native trees for new climates', 'Establishing woodlands by direct seeding' to 'Genetic conservation issues', 'Quarry restoration' and 'Grassland restoration'. At £65 per day this conference is a bargain not to be missed! Book now on www.floralocale.org or call 01488 680 458 for a booking form.

SEPA's Habitat Enhancement Award Ceremony, 25 May 2005

SEPA's HE has two schemes promoting habitat enhancement and encourage practical environmental improvements. The Demonstration Sites scheme provides support to new projects, while the Award Scheme rewards the achievements of existing habitat enhancement projects. For more information, please see http://www.sepa.org.uk/guidance/hei/demo_award.htm. Although the closing date for entries has now passed, the date of the Awards ceremony will be 25 May 2005 (during Scottish Biodiversity Week).

Botanical Society of Scotland - Atlantic Oakwoods Symposium

14 -16 September 2005 Corran Halls, Oban

This meeting aims to provide a forum presenting current knowledge on the ecological diversity and past management of woods and to identify needs for conservation and further research. The proceedings of the symposium will be published in a Symposium Special Issue of the Botanical Journal of Scotland. Booking forms and further information will be available from 28 February 2005 from Shiela Wilson, Institute of Geography, University of Edinburgh, Drummond Street, Edinburgh EH8 9XP, shiela.wilson@ed.ac.uk or from www.geos.ed.ac.uk/abs/bss/

Lead Partner Articles, Policies and Strategies

Butterfly and Moth Species Leaflets

Butterfly Conservation Scotland have colour leaflets on four UKBAP Priority Species; marsh fritillary, argent and sable, netted mountain moth, and narrow-bordered bee hawk-moth. These "Learn About" leaflets provide information on identification, lifecycle, foodplants, habitat and suitable land management. They are designed to raise the profile of these threatened and often neglected species to a wide audience including fieldworkers, landowners, conservationists and countryside advisors. To obtain copies of these leaflets please contact Tom Prescott (0870 7706160 or tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org) Each leaflet is available in pdf format, and were produced with financial support from SNH.

Plantlife Juniper Survey

On 1 September 2004, Plantlife launched a new survey to find out more about juniper and where it grows. Juniper, although fairly common, is in steady decline. Many juniper bushes are old, more than 100 years, and are producing fewer viable seeds. In some places, grazing pressures are high and if any seedlings are set they are eaten by voles, rabbits, sheep or deer. In upland parts of the UK, the information we have on juniper and its health is limited. We are therefore looking for people to help with the survey particularly in Highland and north west Scotland, north Wales, Cumbria and Northumberland, but also throughout the UK. This is a simple survey, which requires no botanical expertise and has been designed with printed forms to send back to Plantlife, and online forms on the Plantlife website. Juniper at this time of year is fairly easy to identify and we are asking participants to record the number of plants plus look at whether it has any berries, whether there are any signs it's been eaten, or if the needles are going brown. This should give us an idea of the health of the bush itself plus an indication of whether the population at that location is healthy. It will save us time and resources if you could fill in the website form but if not, please do send us a completed paper form through the post! The address is on the form.

There are two forms. A slightly longer form, which takes about 10 minutes to fill in, provides us with more detailed information. However, we have also designed a shorter form, specifically for climbers and mountaineers, who may spot the odd prostrate juniper and who may not have 10 minutes per bush to hang about in! This is the mountain juniper form and can also be downloaded from our website or requested through the survey hotline (number below).

This survey should help us identify areas where conservation work is urgently required to safeguard juniper. It will also increase people's awareness of juniper and encourage them to get up close and appreciate it in the field as well as in the pub! If you would like to take part either download a survey form from our website at www.plantlife.org.uk or ring the survey hotline on 01722 342755, stating juniper survey, or mountain juniper for the quicker form. If you have any queries, email juniper@plantlife.org.uk

Take a look at the NEW business and biodiversity web site!

The web site has been re-designed to provide easier access to more information about biodiversity issues important to businesses. www.businessandbiodiversity.org

Cambridgeshire BAP's Farmer Pack Location

<http://www.camcnty.gov.uk/sub/cntryside/biodiv/farmerspack/index.htm>

UK News - Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group 2005 Reporting

Main milestones

1. Agree scope and aims of 2005 reporting
2. Refine, update and amend 2002 questions
3. Develop additional questions and sources of information
4. Questions in near final form to BRIG
5. Questions and covering paper to UK Partnership Steering Group
6. Carry out user survey to decide report format
7. Produce guidance to Lead Partners/LBAPs etc.
8. Develop web-based reporting system
9. Agree analyses and plan sufficient time for work to be completed

Current position and current risks

The scope and aims for 2005 have been agreed (1). The sub-group has made good progress in developing the 2002 questions (2), in developing the fields and validation of questions and ensuring that the development of BARS reflects the reporting requirements (8) and the proposed questions for Lead Partners and LBAPS have been approved by BRIG (4). We took the opportunity of a workshop at the UK Partnership meeting to gain views from a variety of stakeholders on questions (2, 3) and format (6). Guidance will be produced (7) and analysis will be planned (9) once the Lead Partner/LBAP questions have been agreed (see 4 below).

Most significant risks with 2005 reporting and plans to address these risks:

The workload on LPs (in particular) and LBAPOs could be considerable over the next 18 months. We are designing a reporting system that should be quick and easy to complete. We aim to collect only information that will be used and that will be useful to LPs and LBAPs and are carefully considering the timetable alongside the Species and Habitat, and Target Reviews. Insufficient time will be available for analysis. We will scope analysis requirements and seek agreement from BRIG and the Standing Committee on what outputs will be expected well in advance. BARS' role in reporting has not been fully 'road tested'. We have given priority to developing the questions and relevant fields so that they can be included in BARS development. BARS was released to a test group of users at the end of September.

Targets Review Group

Main milestones

- Feb 2004 Targets Review Group met for first time, further meetings in April and August.
- July 2004 Draft guidance note for the review was circulated to BRIG and key partners in July 2004. Comments from a wide range of organisations were received and have been incorporated into a final guidance note.
- Sept 2004 Guidance note issued to LPs
- March 2005 End-month deadline for LP/Agency submissions of text of revised targets, and proposed quantitative targets
- Apr/May 2005 Sub-group secretariat to compile and check submissions, and sort out initial issues with LPs
- May/Aug 2005 Country Group consultation on targets
- Sep/Oct 2005 Feedback to SAP/HAP Lead Partner / Agency
- Nov/Dec 2005 Final draft targets submitted to UK Standing Committee and Country Groups for adoption
- Jan/Mar 2006 Refinement of targets in light of 2005 reporting round, taking into account LBAP and regional targets to improve the accuracy of quantitative targets
- July 2006 New targets posted on UK BAP website and uploaded into BARS

Current position and current risks

Guidance note is at www.ukbap.org.uk/Library/BRIG/TRGGuidance/TargetsReviewLPGuidance.pdf
Thinking on "new target types", including targets to help address climate change issues and targets that act across plans still needs to be developed, working closely with LPs. Only risk at this stage is resistance from LPs to the SMART approach being advocated.

Priority Species and Habitats Review Group

Main milestones

- Sept 2004/05 Priority Species and Habitats Review Group has been in existence for a year and membership on the group has grown as interest in the subject area increases.
- Sept 2003 Initial discussions with marine staff to understand and dovetail work on marine priorities underway by JNCC
- June 2004 Workshop at UK Biodiversity Partnership Conference in Cardiff, over 60 delegates contributing ideas on alternative delivery mechanism to BAPs
- June 2004 Work began on international obligation criterion and testing on certain taxa
- June 2004 Initial list drawn up of secondary criteria (practical, social policy factors)
- Sept 2004 Initial questions drafted for habitats review (along lines of definitions and gaps in BAP series)
- 2005 To produce Stage 1 criteria for species and habitats review and guidance for use by expert species groups, habitat groups and LPs etc.
- 2005 To receive lists based on scientific criteria from groups and follow up any issues/problems raised in applying criteria
- 2005 To provide Country Groups with lists enabling them to undertake Stage 2 according to country priorities and county development of policy, practical, social criteria, and Stage 3 based in information gathered.

Current position and current risks

Groups are currently not at the same stages of readiness. Some taxa have undertaken early trials, others are starting to use (semi) developed criteria, whilst others have not yet got a representative to feed in to the process. Hence potential concerns over the degree to which the Review will be one coherent review. Still unresolved issues of who adjudicates on lists and use of criteria and where final authority for agreement over species lies. Related to this are the issues of Country plans and the tie in to this. In particular, the role and status of the lists (either after the application of Stage 1 or 2) needs clarity.

If you would like to contribute to this newsletter, please do get articles to [Jo Lenthall](#), Scotland LBAP Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum, by 21 February 2005.