



Welcome to the first LBAP Newsletter of 2005. A lot was achieved in 2004 for biodiversity conservation, and changes to the Scottish Biodiversity Forum structure and the formation of the Biodiversity Implementation Team will ensure words are put into action. The Biodiversity Action Reporting System is now online. Most LBAP areas were able to make full use of the recent training opportunities, and many are now inputting their own local habitat and species information. The review of the UKBAP process continues, further details later. If you would like to make any comments or suggestions for the newsletter, please e-mail [Jo Lenthall](mailto:Jo.Lenthall)

Scottish Biodiversity Forum - proposed future structure

The review of the structure of the Forum, its committees and working groups, to ensure the right model is in place going forward, is almost complete. The likely outcomes are:

The **Scottish Biodiversity Forum** will continue as the overarching framework through which biodiversity conservation policy and implementation is developed, and a route through which people can become involved in biodiversity. The SBF will continue to meet annually at 'The Forum'.

It is proposed that the **Scottish Biodiversity Committee** will replace the current Strategy Steering Group, focusing on implementation of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the Implementation Plans. The SBC will have a key role in providing strategic advice and guidance on biodiversity, including playing into UK/European and international processes. This group will continue to be chaired by Scottish Executive.

An **SBC Implementation Sub-Group** will be set up whose main task will be to steer the work of the Biodiversity Implementation Team, to make decisions and give advice on a day-to-day basis. This group will be answerable to SBC for its decisions and actions.

The new **SBF Biodiversity Implementation Team** will work on behalf of the SBF, and be responsible for overseeing, facilitating and reporting on implementation of the SBS, primarily through the Implementation Plans, using BARS. The team will be directly accountable for the steering and delivery of their work programme to the SBC through the Implementation Sub-Group, to reflect the partnership ownership of the implementation plans.

The **SBF Working Groups** (APSG, Marine, Rural, Urban, ICE, Local) will continue to provide a flexible (enhanced) resource to the SBC. SBC will be involved, with the Chairs, in setting the remits of the working groups to actively coordinate their work and ensure they deliver added value, and the working groups will report regularly to the SBC. The working groups will have close relations with the Biodiversity Implementation Team.

Cross-cutting issues, for example climate change, will be coordinated by the SBC itself. SBC may decide to create additional working groups to deal with particular cross-cutting challenges as these arise, but there is a presumption against a standing cross-cutting group, as these issues are of such importance that it is considered they should generally be addressed at the highest level.

Timing of changes: Finalisation of Implementation Plans, March 2005; SBC first meeting, March 2005; Biodiversity Implementation Team established, April 2005.

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

Biodiversity Action Reporting System

BARS is now online and available to everyone (although you will need to register with English Nature for a login and password). Although it is a well-designed intuitive system and is easy to understand, there were three very successful training workshops in January to help get LBAPOs around Scotland familiar with the website. Online support is also available. Four Biodiversity

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Officers have volunteered themselves as 'BARS Champions' being the first point of contact for any queries.

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

SBF Implementation Plans Database

The finalised Implementation Plan action tables were published and circulated in January 2005 to coincide with the beginning of the first implementation phase. They will be made available to users in a web-based searchable format via BARS. BARS will allow users to access the action tables in a variety of ways (eg by lead organisation, topic or strategy objective). Using BARS to manage the Implementation Plan actions in this way will simplify the process for organisations that are involved in UKBAP and LBAP activity in addition to SBF actions, and assist in the effective integration of Scottish and UK level activity. This part of BARS should be available by the end of March 2005. The full plans (both text and action tables) will be published as a hard copy, and will be available via the Scottish Biodiversity Website.

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

Scottish Biodiversity Forum website

Work is underway to review overall web presence, (both Scottish Biodiversity Forum, and Scottish Executive Biodiversity presence, including the guidance for public bodies) with the objective of creating a single point of information for biodiversity information in Scotland. The new SBF Biodiversity Implementation Team will be responsible for maintaining a new 'gateway' site bringing together information on Scotland's biodiversity, hosted at www.biodiversityscotland.org.uk. This address is currently being used for the biodiversity duty guidance and this will be incorporated into the new, overarching site.

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

Biodiversity Action Grants Scheme

The appearance of the new application form and guidance for the next round of BAGS applications is still eagerly awaited – it is hoped that something will appear in the next few days. The deadline for the round of applications is likely to be at the end of March.

Contact: Cathy Stobo cathy.stobo@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or Frank Lewis-Bowen frank.lewis-bowen@scotland.gsi.gov.uk for more information.

Scottish Biodiversity Week 2005 – 21-29 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 during the week please do pass me the details so I can get them advertised on the website. A number of events are already appearing on the UKBAP website (see under 'latest' or 'library/SBF'). International Biodiversity Day is 22 May.

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

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** - This 5 year pilot project is now at an end and was an unqualified success demonstrating the importance of upland unharvested crops for a wide range of bird species. A report will be produced in the summer of this year summarising the whole project. A sub-group is looking at future project development.
- **Non-Native Fish Project** - A full survey report and recommendations for action following a survey of lochs and fishing activity in the Spey and Dee Catchments is available in March for those interested. Further work on a code of practice for pike fishing, a leaflet on the dangers of non-native and a joint pike angling and salmon angling event will be undertaken this year.
- **Butterflies and Moths in the Cairngorms Mean Business** - This BCS project is underway providing 7 workshops for volunteer recorders and three workshops for tourist providers across the Cairngorms starting in April. For more details and a full programme of events go to: www.butterfly-conservation.org/lrs_cairngorms or contact Julie Stoneman jstoneman@butterfly-conservation.org. A leaflet on the "Butterflies of the Cairngorms" will be available shortly.
- **The Highland Aspen Group** - This group of aspen enthusiasts was recently established to promote research and management of aspen and raise the awareness of this species. Plans to establish a community tree nursery, initially to provide local provenance aspen seedling and supported by the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), are nearing completion.
- Several biodiversity projects are being supported by the CNPA including a **Freshwater Pearl Mussel Re-introduction** project, the provision of a black grouse hide for use on the Glenlivet Estate and equipment to assist Aberdeenshire Rangers in providing training to volunteers on moth and bat recording. The CNPA is also working on a householder guidance note on biodiversity and planning.

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

Clackmannanshire

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

Comhairle non Eilean Siar

- **Biodiversity Posters** – A series of three, A1 size, and colour biodiversity posters has been produced with funding from the Biodiversity Action Grants Scheme. The posters are based on the first phase of Western Isles habitat and species action plans - Native Woodland, Saline Lagoons and the Great yellow bumblebee *Bombus distinguendus*. They provide information about the species or habitat, the issues affecting the species or habitat and what can be done to help. The posters are bilingual (English and Gaelic), and copies are available from Anne MacLellan.
- **Public Consultation** – The next phase of five draft action plans are to go out to public consultation during March 2005. These include species action plans for Dunlin, Corncrake, Corn

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bunting and Irish lady's tresses and a habitat action plan for Cereal Field Margins. The consultation exercise will be carried out by independent consultants and aims to involve and engage the local community, including young people and schools, through a series of community workshops.

- The **Future Learning and Teaching (FLaT) Project: Designs for Learning, 21st Century Schools**, funded by the Scottish Executive and managed by the Lighthouse, aims to produce exemplars of processes and designs that will make schools fit for future learning and teaching. Sir E Scott School in Tarbert, Harris is currently involved in this project, which focuses on designing for outdoor learning, and is working towards Eco-School status. The school is in the process of being redeveloped and the pupils are working with one of Scotland's leading landscape architects, Lisa Mackenzie to design areas for learning in the school grounds. In January 2005, the pupils participated in a week of workshops focussing on the local landscape and environment, aimed at developing ideas for the design of the outdoor areas. The first day was spent considering biodiversity and its importance to Harris. The pupils mapped their journeys to school and identified the wildlife and habitats encountered on their journey – a useful exercise for raising awareness of biodiversity. The outcome of this week was the formulation of a brief by the pupils for the landscape architect. A number of different designs will now be developed, based on the pupil's brief, with the pupils then selecting their favoured option(s) for their school grounds. For further information contact: Anne Cunningham, Education Projects Officer, The Lighthouse, Scotland's Centre for Architecture, Design and the City, Glasgow (0141 221 0674 anne@thelighthouse.co.uk)

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

Dumfries & Galloway

- Much of the last few months has been taken up co-ordinating and promoting the **Dumfries and Galloway Wildlife Festival 2005** (2-17 April) and includes more than 40 events, organised by biodiversity partners across the region. Unlike similar fairs and festivals that are dominated by trade stands, the Dumfries and Galloway Festival is mainly about getting out into the countryside, in the company of expert guides, and watching wildlife. The timing of the festival is deliberately designed to give a boost the local tourist trade outside the main summer season. Red kites, peregrines, red squirrels, badgers, and barnacle geese are virtually guaranteed, with a good chance of also seeing kingfishers, black grouse, ospreys, deer and many other species. There is also a range of children's activities and art & photographic exhibitions. Thanks to Dumfries and Galloway Council, SNH and the Scottish Executive's Biodiversity Action Grant Scheme for funding the festival.
- The LBAP working groups have been **taking stock of progress** made since the launch in 1999 (progress report due to be published later in the spring), and formulating plans to address areas where progress against the actions has been poor. We now have 'mini-strategies' designed to clear the blockages that are preventing the successful implementation of four local HAPs and one group of local SAPs. All we need to do now is persuade somebody to fund their implementation!
- The local HAP that finished bottom of the league in terms of progress over the last 5 years is already catching up quickly. **Wood and Scrub Pasture** is a locally important and surprisingly extensive habitat, which includes the UK Priority Habitat of Lowland Wood Pasture and Parkland. SNH have agreed to complete the national Inventory of Ancient Wood Pasture by surveying Dumfries and Galloway this year; we missed out in 2001 due to foot and mouth disease. Furthermore, we are currently testing out a methodology in the Fleet Valley National Scenic Area in anticipation of a wider project that will enable us to begin management on all the best sites for both ancient and non-ancient wood pastures. An application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable us to carry out this work, and much more besides, is at an advanced stage.

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East Dunbartonshire

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East Lothian

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

Edinburgh

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

Falkirk

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)

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Highland

- **Seven Highland LBAPs** have been produced for Caithness, Sutherland, Wester Ross, Ross & Cromarty (East), Skye & Lochalsh, Lochaber and Inverness & Nairn.
- The Local Biodiversity Groups for each area are in the process of considering and planning biodiversity projects to put forward for funding secured by the **Highland Biodiversity Project**. A small number of projects will be taken forward in each area through this programme to contribute to the delivery of the LBAPs.
- The Highland Biodiversity Project Steering Group is holding a **Highland Biodiversity Seminar** on Saturday 12 March 2005 at The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, starting at 10am. The purpose of this event will be to:
 - Celebrate achievements to date of the Highland Biodiversity Project;
 - Provide a strategic overview;
 - Look at priorities for the future;
 - Work towards building a broader Highland Biodiversity Partnership.

The day will encompass a series of presentations, discussions and workshops. You can book on-line at <http://www.solas-biz.co.uk/>

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

Midlothian

Contact: Helen Dunlop, Biodiversity Officer, Midlothian Council, 0131 271 3462
helen.dunlop@midlothian.gov.uk www.midlothian.gov.uk

North East Scotland

Contact: Justin Prigmore, LBAP Officer, justin.prigmore@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk

North Lanarkshire

- **Wild Bird Cover** locations totalling 7.5ha have been identified, they will be sown in the spring.
- **18 barn owl boxes** have been put up. Three further locations have been identified and will have boxes by the end of February. Hopefully some will be used in this breeding season.
- **NLBAP review** ongoing, consultation drafts to be ready by the end of February. Plans to be completed by the end of April. Three new plans written, Canals, Urban and Brownfield and the Mud Snail.
- **Greener Gold Courses** training day run for local Golf Clubs in conjunction with the Scottish Golf and Environment Group. Four clubs attended with 2 further clubs unable to attend but interested in taking forward improvements on their courses. The event was held at Lochview Golf Course in Coatbridge. Over the last 6 years, this course created large areas of new rough, wildflower meadows both planted and naturally appearing, a large new pond and significant tree planting throughout the course.
- Working with the **Grounds Maintenance department** on 12 trial grasscutting sites. Colleagues and I will be monitoring these sites for changes to their biodiversity over the growing season. These sites will have one cut late in the year with the clippings removed. The outcome of this trial will help to determine future greenspace management.

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



Orkney

- **Orkney Community Environment Awareness Network (OCEAN)** has produced the Directory of Environmental Education Providers 2004. It is being distributed in paper and CD format to all schools, youth clubs, libraries and other potential users.
- In 2004 OCEAN produced a highly received April – September **calendar of environmental events** (8000 copies distributed) and an October – March calendar (2000 copies distributed). We are currently producing the next April – September calendar.
- OCEAN has been given 2 areas of display boards in the Tourist Information Centres in Kirkwall and Stromness to '**biodiversify**'. We have created a monthly calendar of what flora and fauna to see in Orkney, by selecting an LBAP habitat and relevant species for each month, linked it to a new series of access paths and leaflets which are all displayed on the boards through images. It is designed and maintained by the Tourist Information Centres.
- The Orkney LBAP partnership has decided to use **BARS** as the standard reporting format.
- As part of the new **3 year business plan** the Orkney LBAP steering committee will meet twice a year with interim reports between the meetings.
- The focus of 2005 will be **monitoring of the Orkney LBAP** at the half way point, producing a summary document of the Orkney LBAP, launching the document with a celebration of the successes to date.
- The Orkney LBAP and the Orkney Biodiversity Record Centre are producing a series of **Species ID Guides** specific to Orkney. They will be in a similar style to the Field Studies Centres guides being laminated and concertina. The first two to be produced will be the Dragonflies and Damselflies of Orkney and the Butterflies of Orkney. We are aiming to have them finished by the end of spring. 2000 copies will be produced and distributed freely to schools and the public.

Contact: Nadine Russell, Orkney Biodiversity Officer, 01856 888760

nadine.russell@orkney.gov.uk www.orkneybiodiversity.co.uk

Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde

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

- Progressing with the Marine BAP, all going well, several meetings have been held, and partners appear to be willing to be part of the process. One of the objectives within the Marine BAP is to raise general awareness of the marine environment, and this started by Dr Jonathan Wills of SeabirdsandSeals.com who gave a talk at the North Atlantic Fisheries College entitled - "Shetland Sealife - Threats and potential solutions". Feedback was very positive from the public and more people attended than anticipated, so overall, a good start to the implementation of the marine BAP framework. Hopefully this will kick-start a series of lectures, by the industry, fisheries policy makers, conservation organisations, etc. Advertising, venue, and other costs were all provided by members of the Marine BAP Working group.
- Nicky will be leaving the Living Shetland Post in mid-March as her contract comes to an end, as does funding for the post. Members of the Steering group and FWAG Scotland are working together to produce a funding package to create a new post. At the time of this going out, nothing has been confirmed.
- Nicky has been working with the LA Access Officer and Shetland Ranger Service on the production of a Biodiversity Trails leaflet, to be ready for the spring/summer season starting end of March, 2005.

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- Work is being done on the publication of the Living Shetland LBAP. It is hoped that this will be ready by the time Nicky leaves. The first tranche of plans to be included in this document are already being implemented and receiving positive feedback.
- Nicky is working alongside Shetland Biological Records Centre (SBRC) to produce a series of notes on areas considered by local communities to be of high biodiversity value. These documents will be used by SBRC, SEERAD and SIC as a source of information to be referred to during planning processes, or change of land use applications. This covers areas outside of SSSI designations.
- Woodlands. Bressay Community Council has offered to pay for the creation of a community woodland near to a housing estate and the local school. Volunteers have offered their assistance in the form of voluntary work, and use of their machinery. Work is expected to commence at the end of February, 2005.

Contact: Nicky Davies, Biodiversity Officer, 01595 690832, livingshetland@fwag.org.uk

South Lanarkshire

- Bogs, Bings & Beasties Exhibition - Kittochside Museum of Scottish Country Life, East Kilbride is hosting the Bogs, Bings & Beasties Exhibition from December 4th until 29th May 2005. As happened at Hamilton Low Parks Museum last year, the exhibit will be supported through a series of events culminating during Biodiversity Week in May.
- Aspen Species Action Plan (24 February 2005) - In conjunction with the Bogs, Bings & Beasties Exhibition, South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership hosted a workshop focussing upon our Aspen and Juniper Species Action Plans. History, status and distribution were discussed followed by a workshop on the propagation of these species, including a practical component.

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Stirling

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

Tayside

- The **Angus Community Planning Review's** main feature this year will be on local biodiversity. It will also publicly celebrate the Angus County Flower, Alpine Catchfly.
- **Two hospitals – Crieff and Blairgowrie** – are undertaking biodiversity enhancement projects in their grounds. These will be the first two of several pilot projects set up with NHS Tayside to link with the LBAP's "Hospitals, Sheltered Housing and Nursing Homes" HAP.
- **Perth Lade** – once a haven for water vole, bats and kingfishers various sections of this historical waterway have been canalised, over-cleaned or left to accumulate rubbish. A chance discovery of a report of a survey carried out over a decade ago has led to Perth & Kinross Council agreeing to re-survey the lade with a view to undertaking a few enhancement projects along its course. There is a great opportunity to involve local schools and businesses – and the incentive to get water voles back into the centre of the city!
- By its close in December, the "**Wild and Wonderful**" biodiversity exhibition at Perth Museum had attracted 22,0000 visitors in total.
- A **Green Graveyard** leaflet is being planned which will publicise the project and encourage more people to take part in enhancing their local graveyard. Training courses will be linked to the project, including a lichens ID course.
- Funding for a **Red Squirrel Newsletter** will enable the different Squirrel Groups in Tayside to join forces to contribute news in a Tayside-wide medium.
- The **Tayside Barn Owl Survey** is proving there are a lot more barn owls in Angus than first envisaged.
- Various **Swift projects** are underway, including the Dundee Tenement Project which is encouraging both surveys and incorporation of simple nestboxes on the buildings. A major

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development in Perth will have swift nestboxes included at the building stage.

- **Wildflower Banks** – it looks hopeful that Perth & Kinross Council will be managing up to 20 of its steepest grass banks for biodiversity in the coming year. There may be opportunities to involve local communities.
- A **Playpark in Arbroath** is being designed with both biodiversity and sustainability in mind. As part of a major housing regeneration scheme areas within the playpark will be made for a sensory garden with seating and a wildflower maze wending its way through a new community orchard. There are also possible links with the enhancement of the local Academy's school grounds.
- The **Tayside biodiversity website** is now due to be launched early in March – www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk
- The second issue of the Partnership's "**Funding Newsletter**" has now been circulated. It will be available via the website in future.
- The **Planning Manual** has created a lot of interest although it is still at a draft stage. Two leaflets are being published ahead of the actual Manual to raise awareness of biodiversity issues to householders and developers.
- The "**Building Better Biodiversity**" series of seminars continues – the first of the year will be a lunch time seminar in Perth on 17 March on "Managing Brownfield Sites for Biodiversity". A programme of events for 2005 will be published in due course. Plans are afoot for a large-scale seminar at Birnam on the subject of Riparian Management; this will probably take place this autumn.
- "**Tayside's Having a Field Day**" – plans are in hand for a half day demonstration workshop on wildflower meadow creation in Angus, followed by a full day's event – a public "Field Day"; these are expected to take place at the end of May – everyone welcome!
- **Juniper Woodland Visit** – the Partnership's Woodland sub-group are planning a site visit to explore the different types of juniper woodlands in Highland Perthshire. This will probably take place in July; date and venue yet to be decided.
- The **Broughty Ferry Environment Project** has been granted BAGS funding for its Hourglass Project to enhance the sand dunes east of Dundee and to extend the already-successful Sand Martin Wall. Funds have been secured to enhance the wildflower meadow at the front of the wall and to improve its interpretation to the local community.
- **RHET Angus Countryside Initiative** has welcomed some 1,500 schoolchildren onto local farms in the past 4 years. Many of these visits form part of "food and farming" study projects, but once onto the farms pupils also learn about biodiversity, weather and soils. ACI's latest idea is the "Potatoes in a Barrel" project - local farmers deliver the barrels, soil and potatoes for the children to grow and study their own crop.

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

- Scottish Executive has granted almost £54K (from the proceeds of the Aggregate Levy) to conduct the first detailed geological survey of a local area in Scotland. The British Geological Survey (BGS) will manage the two year project, mapping out the geology and identifying habitats important to individual plant and animal species. The £77,650 **West Lothian Geodiversity Framework pilot project** will bring together geology and geomorphology, soils and biodiversity for interpretation, education, conservation and planning purposes. It will address all aspects of geodiversity including its cultural and industrial influence on West Lothian and provide a new data base for planning and other uses. Announcing the funding Deputy Minister for the Environment, Lewis Macdonald, said: "The SE is committed to preserving our environmental heritage. The way the land was formed and developed can tell us a lot about our culture and history. This funding will allow the BGS to carry out the first work of its kind in Scotland so that we will be able to

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discover more about our rich heritage. Through mapping the area we will also be able to preserve this heritage for generations to come." West Lothian was selected because of the council's progress in its LBAP programmes, supported by the Soil Sustainability Report published last year, and the earth science educational and interpretation work that it has undertaken in association with the Lothian and Borders RIGS Group. Together these provide a unique base for the development of a geodiversity plan as a model for other councils to consider. West Lothian was selected to test the methodology and practical applications, including its influence on the planning process. The success of the bid was unexpected and while the target for such a plan is written into the new LBAP the progress towards it was not anticipated this quickly.

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

Events

SBF's Action Plan and Science Group seminar - 11 March

"Science for biodiversity". This is a one day meeting for those interested in the science underpinning the conservation of biodiversity, held at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. For more information, please contact Lesley Kirton 01224 498249 or l.kirton@macaulay.ac.uk

Dumfries and Galloway Wildlife Festival - 2-17 April

This includes more than 40 events, organised by biodiversity partners across the region. Unlike similar fairs and festivals that are dominated by trade stands, the Dumfries and Galloway Festival is mainly about getting out into the countryside, in the company of expert guides, and watching wildlife. The timing of the festival is deliberately designed to give a boost to the local tourist trade outside the main summer season. Red kites, peregrines, red squirrels, badgers, and barnacle geese are virtually guaranteed, with a good chance of also seeing kingfishers, black grouse, ospreys, deer and many other species. There is also a range of children's activities and art & photographic exhibitions. Thanks to Dumfries and Galloway Council, SNH and the Scottish Executive's Biodiversity Action Grant Scheme for funding the festival. 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.

Spring into Action Day - 14 May

A day of practical workshops for bat workers held at SNH Battleby (near Perth). The day will cost £20, please contact <mailto:ayoungman@bats.org.uk> for further details or watch the BCT website <http://www.bats.org.uk/>

Flora Locale Scottish workshops - May and September

Flora locale, the national charity promoting the wise use of native flora, have training events to provide practical advice for conservation projects while highlighting the need to use native origin seed and plants. Two Scottish workshops are ideal for wardens, rangers, community groups, advisors, landscapers and farmers, planning to plant anything in the countryside this year. In May, the event in Angus is entitled '**Supplying, specifying and using native flora for landscape projects**'. The workshop will provide an introduction into the use of Scottish native plants in habitat creation and restoration projects and will highlight how to overcome some of the common problems encountered by plant users. In September, a workshop in Perth relates more to trees and shrubs.

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Held in conjunction with The Tree Council, **'Collecting and propagating seed from native trees and shrubs'** will provide invaluable advice for anyone wishing to grow their own trees from seed. This hands-on day will concentrate on the methods to collect, stratify, sow and grow common species. For more details of these workshops, and others, get a copy of the programme from www.floralocale.org or call 01488 680 458.

Scottish Biodiversity Week 2005 - 21-29 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 during the week please do pass me the details so I can get them advertised on the website. A number of events are already appearing on the UKBAP website (see under 'latest' or 'library/SBF').

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

SEPA's Habitat Enhancement Award Ceremony, 25 May 2005

SEPA is holding its Habitat Enhancement Awards event on Wednesday 25 May to tie in with Scottish Biodiversity Week. This morning event is being held at the Stirling Management Centre. If anyone would like more details, or if you who would like to attend, please get in touch with Joanne Lambert (joanne.lambert@sepa.org.uk).

Argent & Sable Survey weekend - 25 and 26 June

The Cree Valley Community Woodlands Trust (CVCWT) has a vision of establishing a Forest Habitat Network from "source to sea" which incorporates a mosaic of native broadleaf woodland and other habitats. Do come along and join us with an Argent & Sable (a rare moth) survey, starting at 10am on both days. Meet at the Forestry Commission Scotland picnic site at High Camer NX366732 (north of the RSPB Scotland car park). Bring packed lunch, drinks and butterfly net. See www.cvcwt.org.uk for further details.

BATS and The Millennium Link - Courses 2005

1. Insects and their Bat Predators (14th July)

2. Field Surveying and Habitat Assessment For Bats (1st - 3rd August)

Bookings are now being taken for the above events, which offer excellent value for money. For more information about BaTML please visit our website: www.batml.org.uk. If you or someone within your organisation would like to attend please URGENTLY let us know as the courses quickly get fully booked. Neil Middleton, Project Co-ordinator, 01324 710007

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 Sheila 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/

Articles

Make the Adder Count - A Springtime Adder Survey for 2005

Can you help monitor adders? - This spring The Herpetological Conservation Trust is co-ordinating an adder census. The adder is a reptile of particular conservation concern, and although widespread in Britain, there is evidence of a long-term national decline. This project will test the feasibility of an annual monitoring scheme that will:

- More accurately quantify the extent of decline
- Strengthen the case for, and guide, proactive conservation
- Provide a yardstick against which to measure the effectiveness of any future conservation effort.

How you can help - We want to gain a measure of national population status by counting adders after their springtime emergence from winter hibernacula. During February to May (depending on weather and geographical location) adders can be readily visible, lying out, often in aggregations. If you or your colleagues regularly visit an adder hibernation/aggregation site, or know of a site where you could arrange visits, then a simple count of snakes could help us to help the adder. If you already have data on the numbers of adders you have seen at a particular site (or sites) over past years, we would also be interested to hear from you.

What sort of experience you need - Gathering data for this project will require a good working knowledge of at least one local adder population, familiarity with adder activity patterns and experience of observing these snakes. If you do not have the necessary experience, but want to get involved, then we recommend that you contact your nearest amphibian and reptile group. These groups may be able to provide the necessary training or organise local counts. Contact information is available from Froglife (01733 558844, www.froglife.org/HGBI/HGBI.htm).

How to take part - To take part in the project, or to obtain further information, please contact John Baker: Phone 01986 872016 Mobile 07884 441521 jbherpconsult@yahoo.co.uk

Scotland needs more batty people!

Would you like to try something just a bit different, be at the forefront of scientific discovery and have fun at the same time? If so, you should sign up as a volunteer on the National Bat Monitoring Programme. The Bat Conservation Trust run a series of bat surveys throughout the year and are particularly keen to get more surveyors from Scotland. The surveys start very easy with no need for specialist knowledge or equipment and gradually get more complex (and sometimes more adventurous). There is something to suit everyone, no matter where their level of fitness or bat knowledge lies. Surveys start in June and most are carried out throughout June, July and August. The simpler surveys involve watching for bats at sunrise and counting bats at sunset. More complex surveys involve the use of bat detectors to identify different species and to gauge bat activity in different habitats. For those with experience and a suitable licence hibernation surveys can be carried out over the winter months. Householders with pipistrelle bats can help improve knowledge and there is the Sunrise Survey and the Waterway Survey.

If you would like to find out more about the National Bat Monitoring Programme please look at the Bat Conservation Trust website www.bats.org.uk or contact Philip Briggs 0207 501 3622.



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

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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

Scottish Allotment Gardens Society biodiversity booklet

Allotments are part of our natural heritage, they benefit society in many ways, but we have been losing them at an alarming rate since WW2. From a wartime peak of 70,000 allotments, in Scotland, we estimate that less than 10,000 remain. The Allotments and Biodiversity booklet is a joint project between SAGS, GAF (Glasgow Allotment Forum) and the Glasgow LBAP. It should be ready to go out to all Glasgow plot-holders in March together with three postcards with details of a ladybird, peacock butterfly and hedgehog to encourage awareness and recording. The content is generic, apart from a page listing all the allotment sites in Glasgow and could be easily adapted for other local authority areas, and the Glasgow group is happy for it to be used throughout Scotland. If you are interested in the booklet, please contact either Carol MacLean (Glasgow LBAPO, Carol.MacLean@land.glasgow.gov.uk) or Judy Wilkinson (secretary@sags.org.uk).

Scottish Wildlife Trust's practical conservation work contracts

Since 1987 SWT have been operating a successful training programme benefiting hundreds of conservation trainees and have built up sound knowledge in planning and undertaking conservation projects. SWT is now looking to offer this expertise for all types of conservation projects at attractive rates. Please see the attached "Contract Jobs.pdf" for further information.

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

1, 2 and 4 have been completed. The questions for Lead Partners and LBAPs have been agreed and are being used to help develop the 2005 reporting elements of BARS (8). BARS has been launched and is now being used and populated. The specific 2005 reporting component of BARS should be ready for trial in late March/early April 2005. The sub-group will then trial the reporting system with a selection of Lead Partners and LBAPs to ensure that we can resolve any teething problems before we go live later in the year. The Guidance Note (7) discussed at the last BRIG meeting has been finalised and was sent out in January 2005. The sub group has made progress in considering broader questions (3) and a paper on this should be tabled at the next BRIG meeting (May 2005).

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

Since the Lead Partner Guidance note was issued in September 2004 there have been a steady flow of queries to the Targets sub-group secretariat, demonstrating that a substantial amount of work is underway across the BAP community, and a number of early draft proposals have been received. Members of the Targets sub-group have also attended several BAP group meetings to clarify the purpose and process of the review. Generally, the aims of the review are supported, though there are a number of concerns about how SMART targets can be set where data are poor. There is widespread interest in cross-plan targets/targets for resilience, though no specific recommendations have yet been received. Working with the Climate Change sub-group, the Targets sub-group will consider how these targets can best be built into the process. It is hoped that LBAP data available in BARS will be useful to Lead Partners when they set new targets.

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Although most LBAP Officers have received training on BARS, some have expressed doubts that their data will be available in time for the first draft HAP/SAP target deadline (end of March 2005). We will consider how these data are best utilised in the subsequent Country Group consultations.

Priority Species and Habitats Review Group

Main milestones

The Group considers that a three-stage approach to the Review should be undertaken (although the exact stages vary between species and habitats). Broadly the intention is that Stage 1 would involve the scientific assessment of conservation status. This stage would be based on gathering as much quantitative data to assess against scientific criteria as possible and would result in the identification of species and habitats most in need to conservation. In stage 2 the intention is to consider practical considerations such as what information we have available to us in terms of the feasibility of undertaking action (for example do we know enough about the species ecology and causes of decline). In Stage 3 the intention is to consider the most appropriate mechanism for conservation of the priority species and habitats (such as integration with sectoral programmes or strategies, or local/national action plans etc). Thus the development of the initial lists is decoupled from the development of traditional Action Plans.

Current position and current risks

The Group has produced a guidance document and data proforma for species and habitat specialists to complete, which will broadly deal with Stage 1, ie the production of a list of species and habitats. Once this is issued (anticipated in March 2005) the group, together with other experts will be involved in dealing with queries and resolving any difficult issues, these may include the availability of biological data. There is also a need to ensure (possibly at Stage 3 when considering delivery mechanisms) that there is linkage to Country lists being prepared.

If you would like to contribute to this newsletter, please do get articles to [Jo Lenthall](#), Scotland LBAP Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum, by 25 April 2005.