

The Irish Hare

WELCOME GARDEN WILDLIFE ALL YEAR

Simple things you can do every
month to 'let nature in'

PECULIAR PEATLAND PLANTS

From bug-munchers to bone
breakers

The decade we bring back nature

Our strategy to 2030 to help
nature recover



**Ulster
Wildlife**

Welcome



With the evenings brightening and weather improving now is the perfect time to start planning how to 'Let Nature In' to your garden— see our helpful annual planner (pp. 6&7) for some inspiration. If you haven't already, then please consider signing up for our campaign at ulsterwildlife.org/let-nature-in, to receive even more inspiration and tips throughout the year.

I'm very pleased to be able to introduce our new strategy to 2030 to members in this issue (pp. 8&9). Focused around key outcomes for nature, people and climate, this updated strategy provides a high-level framework on which we will plan and carry out our work for nature's recovery up to 2030.

To achieve nature's recovery, it is no longer enough to think about slowing the loss of the natural world and protecting what remains of our wildlife. Nature reserves are invaluable, but to keep these protected areas from becoming wild oases in an otherwise impoverished landscape, we need to use every single space to help wildlife. Our gardens, road verges, parks, and even houses and offices can become part of a wild network, creating vital green corridors and stepping stones that connect to larger wilder spaces such as farmland.

We need to do things differently: business as usual won't be good enough and the next ten years will be critical. The status quo and delays or inaction are not an option. We can turn things around before it's too late - nature is capable of extraordinary recovery, but only if we act now. We need transformative change right across society, so we can pass on a better environment to the next generation.

Over the past four decades, Ulster Wildlife has worked hard to protect our remaining wildlife and wild places and we have been planning how we can make the greatest impact in addressing the challenge facing us over the next ten years, to build on our successes to ensure nature's recovery across Northern Ireland and, more widely, across the UK and island of Ireland.

We look forward to working with you to make nature's recovery a reality. Together we can and will make a difference.

Jennifer Yulston

Chief Executive of Ulster Wildlife

Ulster Wildlife *Get in touch*

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Together we're stronger

Here are some of the ways you've been helping to protect your local wildlife

4

barn owl chicks ringed this autumn with one new nest site discovered at Finnebrogue Estate – great news given the difficult breeding year.



You helped us stand up for nature

Over the last year, we submitted 12 consultation responses and met with decision makers to help influence government policy for nature and climate.



Over £2,000

raised for nature's recovery in NI from the sale of our 2022 'Let Nature' In calendar. Thanks to everyone who bought a copy!

17

hectares of eroded blanket bog restored on Cuilcagh Mountain which will improve the habitat for wildlife, reduce flood risk, and lock away carbon.



FUNDRAISING FOR WILDLIFE

Want to get involved? Contact Vickie on 028 9693 5291



© PETER CAIRNS / 2020 DIVISION

We contacted you in December last year about our 'Moving On Up' appeal, aiming to raise much needed funds for our native species work. Your generosity and passion for local nature conservation has raised more than £7,000 in donations and 150 of you have increased your monthly or annual membership subscription.

On behalf of Katy Bell, our Senior Conservation Officer, we would like to thank you – this support will help the conservation team undertake monitoring, surveys, habitat management and policy work to benefit our native red squirrel, hedgehog, and barn owl populations.

Power NI Partnership

In 2021, Power NI pledged its support for peatlands through a two-year partnership with Ulster Wildlife. As well as a regular donation towards peatland restoration work, Northern Ireland's leading energy supplier has been supporting local nature conservation in other ways too!

Several of the Power NI team volunteered on our Bog Meadows Nature Reserve in December, helping with conservation tasks.

Through a series of informative posts and videos on social media, Power NI have been helping raise awareness about the importance of peatlands.

In an ongoing effort to reduce paper billing, Power NI has encouraged



customers to switch to managing their bills online. For every customer that made the switch (in a time period), Power NI donated £1 to Ulster Wildlife! This raised more than £3,000 which will go directly to our local nature conservation efforts. Thank you to everyone who switched.

IN BRIEF

Creating a wilder future

Ulster Wildlife received a kind and very generous legacy donation from the estate of Robert Simon Harper, Principal of Portadown College, who sadly passed away suddenly in 2019.

Simon's partner, Catherine Beattie, said, "Simon always enjoyed the outdoors and nature from a young age and had always been an advocate for protecting and conserving wildlife and the environment."

We are incredibly heartened to know that Simon wanted to protect local wildlife and wild places, even after his passing.

Gifts in Wills are secured in our 'Fund for the Future' – a designated fund which helps to manage and purchase new nature reserves; protect under-threat native species; build awareness of the importance of nature in future generations and invest in our conservation teams. Find out more at ulsterwildlife.org/leave-gift-your-will



Share your Hare!

Once you have read your magazine, please give it someone that you think would like to support local nature conservation work. This simple act could help encourage your friends and family to become members of Ulster Wildlife.





SMELL THIS

One of the most evocative plants of spring, the golden yellow flowers of gorse give off the most amazing coconut scent. Get your nose in and be transported to the tropics.

HEAR THIS

Listen out for the sound of the chiffchaff, spring's delightful harbinger. Its unmistakable 'chiff chaff chiff chaff' song is easily identifiable and can be heard in woodlands, parks and gardens.

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

PEATLAND PLANTS

BY SIMON GRAY

Peatlands host some of our strangest, rarest, and most striking plants. Harsh and low nutrient conditions mean that only those specially adapted can survive.

Bug-munching bog plants

Peat soils are very low in nutrients and some plants have actually evolved to find the nutrients they need elsewhere. Sundews use their sticky projections to capture and consume unsuspecting flies! Butterworts aim for the same prey but instead roll the poor flies up in their sticky leaves. Bladderwort preys upon those underwater invertebrates that thought they were safe, grabbing them at the speed of sound and engulfing them in a corrosive capsule!

Bone breakers and bog tonic

Many bog plants hold cultural connections here. Bog asphodel brings a burst of yellow to the bog in summer but this flower was always known to farmers for making sheep's bones brittle. However, it's more likely that this hardy plant was just a good sign of calcium-poor pastures. Bog bean is a common sight in our wettest areas and a sure sign of soggy ground. Historically, this plant was gathered to make bog bean tonic which was taken in rural areas in an effort to clean the blood – I have been widely assured that it tasted absolutely foul!

Bog rarities

Some of our specialist peatland plants are hanging on in only a few remaining places. Bog rosemary is more widely found in the Irish midlands but is much scarcer in Northern Ireland. However, it clings on in a few locations including our Ballynahone Bog Nature Reserve. Marsh clubmoss is an extremely rare and ancient plant that has a strange preference for




Bog Asphodel

© PHILIP PRECEY

bare and regularly flooded peat; it can be found only in Northern Ireland at Peatlands Park. Yellow marsh saxifrage is a beautiful summer flower that ekes out a living in mountain flushes and is now found in only one place on Co. Antrim's Garron Plateau.

BEST PLACES TO SEE THEM

- **Peatlands Park:** One of the best areas of active raised bog in Northern Ireland with a huge network of walking trails. The only known location here of the rare marsh clubmoss.
- **Cuilcagh Mountain:** With numerous walking trails, Cuilcagh is a great place to spot sundews, sphagnum, bog cotton, and bog asphodel.
- **Ballynahone Bog:** Although not accessible to the public, Ballynahone is a great spot for liverworts, sundews, cranberry, and sphagnum mosses. Its colony of bog rosemary is one of only six in Northern Ireland.

 Find out more about peatland wildlife and our work to protect these precious habitats at ulsterwildlife.org/saving-our-peatlands

Top tips 3 SPECIES TO SPOT

Bog cotton

The fluffy white flowers are a common sight in spring when they can create seas of white across the bogs and pools.



© MARK HAMLIN 2020 VISION

Bog cranberry

This tiny creeping plant produces pale pink flowers in late spring and summer, which are then followed by the bright red berries later on.



© TAB TANNERY

Bog bean

This beautiful white flower erupts from bog pools, but take our advice and don't try the tonic!



© AMY LEWIS

FORAGE FOR THIS

Whilst nettles aren't everyone's cup of tea, the new growth of spring is packed with vitamins and can be used in numerous recipes.

SEE THIS

On sunny spring days look out for the dazzling holly blue butterfly fluttering through your garden, high around trees and bushes – it's the first of the blue butterflies to emerge.



NOT JUST FOR KIDS

Five ways to enjoy nature

Why should kids have all the fun? Feed your love of nature with these really wild things to do



1 TAKE PART IN THE IRISH HEDGEHOG SURVEY

The Irish Hedgehog Survey is back this May and we need your help to find out how our prickly friends are faring in NI and across Ireland. You can take part by either surveying hedgehogs in your garden or submitting your sightings. No special skills or knowledge are required. Hedgehogs are classed as 'Least concern' in Ireland as there is insufficient data, so the information you provide will help shed light on our hedgehog population. Register your interest ulsterwildlife.org/hedgehogs



2 GET READY TO JOIN US FOR 30 DAYS WILD

Can you do something wild every day in June? Go on a bug hunt, do a mini-litter pick, plant some wildflowers, you name it! Register your interest now and you'll get a free pack full of ideas and inspiration to help you go wild. Do it for your health, wellbeing, wildlife, and the planet! Register your interest now wildlifetrusts.org/30dayswild



3 SIGN UP FOR THE BIG ROCKPOOL RAMBLE

Our Big Rockpool Ramble is back for National Marine Week (July 24 – Aug 8) and we want you to get outside, explore your rocky shore, and send us pictures of what you find, to help us monitor changes in our local shores. Sign up from June at ulsterwildlife.org/bigrockpoolramble

4 SAY NO TO THE MOW

Let some areas of long grass grow for insects or at the very least set your mower on a higher setting and let any daisies or dandelions flower – a vital early food source for emerging pollinators such as queen bumblebees. For wildlife gardening guides and info visit ulsterwildlife.org/let-nature-in



5 GO WILD AT AN EVENT

We've got lots of great in-person events lined up this spring and summer to help get you outdoors and closer to nature, from shark egg case hunts to woodland wanders – find out more at ulsterwildlife.org/events. If you missed our online winter talks series, why not grab a cuppa and listen to everything from pine martens to peatland restoration on our YouTube playlist bit.ly/3IUbcbn



Let Nature into your Garden All Year

January



2020 Vision © Ross Hoddinott

1. Prep for the Birds

With the bird-nesting season fast approaching, now is the perfect time to put up a bird box, but please be sure to put it somewhere safe from cats and predators.

2. Get Bird Watching

January marks the start of the Big Garden Birdwatch, so grab yourself a cup of tea, settle into a nice spot in your garden and get counting.

3. Get Trimming

Cut back straggly hedges a little to encourage new growth. This will help to thicken up the hedge and provide better habitat for birds come the breeding season.

February



2020 Vision © Mark Hamblin

1. Create a Frog Log

Choose an area close to a pond or water source and dig a small sloping chamber into the soil before stacking some logs over the top in a frog friendly shape.

2. Build a Bee Box

With the bees beginning to emerge in March try putting up some bee boxes in a nice sunny area of your garden, out of the wind and rain.

3. Peat-free February

Make an effort this year to go peat free with your compost to help save our peatlands, as they are such an important habitat.

March



© Suzanna Bird

1. Bee a Little Untidy

Leave some messy materials like twigs, bricks and wood somewhere sunny and sheltered for queen bumblebees to begin building their nests.

2. Create a Butterfly Bed

Plant up a border with flowers high in nectar, for pollinating insects like butterflies, bees and beetles.

3. Create a Rainwater Collector

You can use something simple like a large drum attached to your drainpipes to collect excess rainwater or even use a series of containers dotted around your garden.

July



© Chris Speller

1. Bird Baths

Now is a great time to place a bird bath in your garden. Be sure to keep it topped up throughout the summer.

2. Drought Tolerant Treats

Plant some drought tolerant cottage plants, such as lavender, to save on water and help pollinators and invertebrates.

3. Sit Back and Enjoy

Sit back and enjoy the sounds and colours of wildlife in your wildlife friendly garden - you deserve it!

August



1. Mini Meadow Management

Choose a patch of grass in a sunny area and strip away the topsoil. Gently rake the ground and sow a native wildflower mix before lightly compacting the soil and giving it a good soaking.

2. Create a Mini Drystone Wall

Choose a sunny border area in your garden and begin stacking stones and rocks to create a mini drystone wall - this will provide amazing shelter for wildlife.

3. Create a Compost Heap

Find yourself a sunny spot in the garden and a suitable sized container that has some holes for wildlife to get in and out. Add green cuttings from your garden and scraps from your kitchen.

September



© Chris Lawrence

1. Leaf the Ivy Alone

Leaving ivy uncut in the later stages of the year is a great way to provide a late source of nectar and berries for pollinators and birds, as well as shelter for wildlife.

2. Mini Meadow Management

If you have an established wildflower lawn, cut the sward to a height of around 5-10cm and remove the cuttings so they don't add too much nutrients back into the soil.

3. Tidy up the Pond

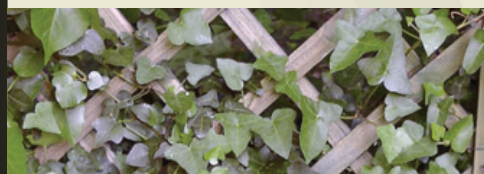
Remove any extra or dead vegetation and leave it next to the pond for a couple of days, to allow any wildlife in the vegetation to find its way back into the water.

Garden ar Round

Sign up now to 'Let Nature
In' and get lots more wildlife
gardening tips and advice
[ulsterwildlife.org/
let-nature-in](http://ulsterwildlife.org/let-nature-in)



April



1. A-maze-ing Garden

Instead of mowing the entire lawn cut a fun shape into it, allowing some areas to grow longer and produce some wildflowers for pollinators.

2. Look Skywards

Make the most of your garden and look at planting species that will maximise your garden space by growing climbers, such as honeysuckle and ivy.

3. Create a Creature Feature

Recycle some old pieces of timber lying around your garden to build a deadwood dwelling for invertebrates and small mammals.



May



© Jon Hawkins

1. Encourage some Mini Gardeners

Ladybirds are a great help in the garden to deal with 'pests' eating your plants. Encourage by planting some nectar-rich plants and herbs such as chives and fennel.

2. Make a Mini Pond

Find yourself a suitable container (a Belfast sink is perfect), fill it up with rainwater and place it in a bright area of your garden. Plant it up with some aquatic species and be sure to provide a way in and out for wildlife.

3. Hands Off that Hedge!

During the nesting season garden hedges are extremely important for breeding birds, so let them to grow a little wild and enjoy the sounds of chirping chicks and singing adults.

June



© Penny Frith

1. Go 30 Days Wild

June marks the 30 Days Wild challenge with Ulster Wildlife. Commit to doing one wild thing a day for your health, wellbeing and for the planet.

2. Pollinator Planters

Plant an array of nectar-filled plants in some plant pots or a window box. You could try swapping out cultivated species for more pollinator friendly ones.

3. Go Chemical Free

Spraying to control 'weeds' in your garden can cause serious harm to wildlife, water bodies and even your family. This month, try some alternative, natural methods instead.

October



© Gillian Day

1. Make a Better Hedgehog Shelter

Build a nice ventilated waterproof shelter for hedgehogs to use for hibernation. An old wooden box or some stacked logs work great as long as they are somewhere quiet and sheltered.

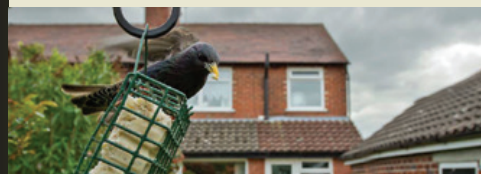
2. Hedgehog Highway

Create a highway/corridor for hedgehogs to move between gardens by cutting a 15x15cm shape at the base of your fence. It will allow them to move freely between gardens when they wake up from hibernation.

3. Leave the Leaves

Leaves on the ground provide shelter and warmth for small invertebrates to forage during the colder months and birds will feed on the insects. If you have to rake them up, consider leaving them in a pile somewhere for wildlife.

November



2020 Vision © Ben Hall

1. Get Feeding

Help out birds during the colder months by providing a rich source of fat and protein in the form of a hanging suet block (never hang it with plastic).

2. Put up a Bat Box

Place a bat box in a nice cool sheltered place in your garden preferably in an area away from artificial light and close to some large trees or a hedgerow.

3. Natural Native Boundary

Garden fences are a real barrier for wildlife, so try planting a natural native hedge instead. This will help wildlife to move between gardens and provide shelter.

December



2020 Vision © Peter Cairns

1. Get Planting

Plant a mini woodland area with species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, holly and, if you have the space, some rowan. They are great for wildlife and look amazing in bloom.

2. Stop the Freeze

Place a warm pan on top of any ice on your pond and allow it to melt the ice. Avoid cracking it as this causes noise disturbance to aquatic life.

3. The Wild December Way

Leave some truly wild areas in your garden in order to provide some essential shelter and late food sources for wildlife over the colder months.

Our New Strategy to 2030



© JON HAWKINS

We are facing 'a climate and ecological emergency' – we cannot solve one crisis without tackling the other: nature's recovery is vital for tackling climate change. It is also essential in building a green recovery to the Covid-19 pandemic, providing a platform for the Northern Ireland economy as it seeks a sustainable and ethical 'net zero' future.

Sadly, we are living in one of the most nature-depleted regions in the world. Business as usual is no longer good enough. We need to stop and reverse the declines on land and at sea, and put nature into recovery, at scale and at pace, using every single space to help wildlife, not just wild oases. And we need to start now.

A healthy, wildlife-rich, natural world is not only vital for its own sake but it's essential for our own well-being and survival. By creating more space for nature, we are creating a better world for everyone.

We understand that the recovery of nature must not be something that is done to people; it must be done by people

– inclusive, welcoming, diverse growing communities of people. We are firmly rooted in our local communities, supported by and accountable to our members, and we will continue to work with landowners, farmers, fishermen, businesses, schools, local authorities, and other stakeholders to ensure at least 30% of land and at least 30% of sea is protected, connected, and well managed for nature by 2030.

Our challenge over the next ten years is significant. Our Strategy to 2030 provides the framework of how we intend to make our contribution as a local environmental charity: delivering local action and building a collective impact that contributes to a global solution.

Over the last 40 years, Ulster Wildlife has worked tirelessly to deliver impactful change for nature protecting and enhancing habitats and species on land and sea. With our new strategy, we plan to accelerate progress and build on this foundation to ensure nature's recovery. We want to make an even greater difference and recognise that this needs to happen quickly, but only if we act now.

OUR VISION

A wilder future where people and nature are thriving together.

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to protect and restore nature on land and at sea. We will play our part in ending the climate and ecological emergencies, creating a society where nature is valued and is part of our daily lives.



The full strategy is available from April at ulsterwildlife.org/publications

Our Strategic Outcomes for 2030

Nature

Outcome 1: Nature is in recovery and wildlife is thriving across Northern Ireland.



In the midst of a global biodiversity crisis, with increasingly isolated and fragmented remnants of wild habitat across Northern Ireland's land and seas, it is not enough to simply protect and conserve the wildlife that remains. We need to make spaces for nature that are bigger, better, and more joined up and bring wildlife back.

Fundamental to achieving this will be the development and establishment of a national 'Nature Recovery Network' for Northern Ireland providing opportunity maps for positive management and targeted restoration, both on land and at sea. The adoption of a 'biodiversity net gain' principle in local planning decisions will also play a key role.

Where possible we will restore, expand, and connect our nature reserves which are small and isolated, so that they become platforms for nature's recovery.



Alongside this ecological network approach for habitats, we will deliver specific conservation actions for a range of key species over the next ten years.

We will continue to develop our relationships with the farming and fishing industry, as only with their support can the natural environment be sustainably managed for both biodiversity and climate action.

Headline Indicator of Success:

At least 30% of land and 30% of sea in Northern Ireland is protected, connected and managed for nature by 2030.

People

Outcome 2: More people are taking positive action for nature and climate and are benefitting from time spent in nature.



As a society, we have unknowingly accepted a creeping decline of our natural world and wildlife. We have also seen our modern lives shift dramatically indoors, particularly children and young people. Research shows that those who have the least access to nature also have the worst levels of physical health and mental wellbeing. We want to see a Northern Ireland where nature and people are thriving together.

We will engage, empower and amplify the voice of people across Northern Ireland to speak up for and take action for nature. Maintaining and strengthening our membership and volunteer network will be key to delivering this outcome.

It is also vital that we engage younger generations in issues that will impact their future and equip them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to combat the climate and nature crises and help them reconnect with nature for their health and wellbeing.



We will also work to ensure that nature and wildlife forms a key component of the formal and informal education systems, from primary to higher education.

We will play our part in enabling local people to value and enjoy wildlife as part of daily life, by exercising, playing, socialising, volunteering, and simply being in wild places close to where they live.

Headline Indicator of Success:

1 in 4 people in Northern Ireland are taking positive action for nature

Climate

Outcome 3: Nature-based solutions are playing a central role in addressing climate change.



Biodiversity loss and climate change are inextricably linked and we cannot resolve one without the other. We will promote the value of nature-based solutions and work to influence government and public policy to ensure their adoption as key tools in both mitigating the effects of, and helping with adaptation to climate change.

We will restore habitats that can provide long-term carbon sequestration and storage while also promoting diverse and resilient wildlife. This will include a focus on protecting and restoring peatlands and coastal blue carbon habitats, such as kelp, saltmarsh, seagrass and shellfish, and by adopting a Nature Recovery Network (NRN) approach. A sound evidence base will identify areas on which to focus efforts and partnership and collaboration will be crucial.



© BERNARD PICTON

We will continue to support the development of delivery plans for peatland restoration and ensure our work returns peatlands to favourable condition, so they can provide a range of beneficial services from flood control and biodiversity to carbon storage.

We will also advocate for a Climate Change Act for Northern Ireland with ambitious targets and inclusion of nature-

Headline Indicators of Success:

We are actively engaged in three blue carbon habitat restoration projects across Northern Ireland.

We are actively contributing to the annual restoration of approx. 5,000 hectares of peatland for conservation and climate resilience

WILD NEWS

All the latest local news from Ulster Wildlife

Ambitious Environment Strategy needed for NI



We are facing a nature and public health crisis. The Environment Strategy provides a welcome opportunity to create a new normal: a climate-safe, nature-rich, healthy world for all. It will also form our first Environmental Improvement Plan, under the Environment Act (2021), that should 'significantly improve the natural environment'. It will coordinate decision-making, policy setting and funding across the Executive and government departments to improve the natural environment and subsequently create socio-economic benefits. However, the draft Strategy, which was out for consultation in January, was sadly unambitious and lacking specificity and as such we do not believe it will adequately address the nature and climate emergency.

Ulster Wildlife responded to the draft Strategy, and also joined forces with RSPB NI and over 30 other organisations, businesses, academics, and youth campaigners to send an open letter to the First Minister and deputy First Minister highlighting our concerns.

Specifically, we called for:

Implementation of the UK

Environment Act 2021: the Environment Act creates an important framework for environmental governance in Northern Ireland including the Office for Environmental Protection.

Legislation for nature's restoration:

non-statutory targets have so far failed to protect and restore nature. To reverse nature's decline the Executive must bring forward legally-binding interim and long-term targets for nature's restoration. The Executive must also rapidly scale up the implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of environmental protections by delivering on the commitment to establish an independent Environmental Protection Agency.

Increased ambition and specificity of the Environment Strategy:

of the 225 actions and targets within the strategy, 76% (172) have no timeframe, and 78% (177) are either partly or completely unmeasurable. To be effective the Strategy must have clear long-term vision, specific actions to deliver this vision, credible and measurable milestones and robust governance to oversee implementation.

Adequately resourced ongoing implementation and monitoring of the Strategy:

to be effective the Environment Strategy must have dedicated and long-term resourcing. An expert team should be established within DAERA to drive ambition and action across the Executive, and develop and carry out robust and transparent monitoring, review, and any necessary revisions.

Incentivise nature's restoration:

The Strategy must be supported by adequate investment. The Executive should recognise the positive socio-economic and public health potential of nature's recovery including the restoration of habitats, creation of jobs, quality of outdoor space, and mitigation and adaptation to climate change. The Strategy must be associated with incentives to support sustainable approaches to planning, energy, transport, farming, and commercial fishing.



You can read our full consultation response at ulsterwildlife.org/what-we-do/consultation-responses

New strategy to save our reds

We've been working with partners across the UK and Ireland to develop a strategy for red squirrel conservation in Northern Ireland, thanks to funding from the DAERA Environmental Challenge Fund.

Conservation efforts have played an important role in helping red squirrels to recover slowly in Northern Ireland after years of decline, and a coordinated and collaborative approach is now essential to secure their future.

The strategy provides evidence-based long-term conservation aims and actions needed to conserve this beloved mammal including maintaining red squirrels across their current range, supporting red squirrel recovery, removing grey squirrels through pine marten recovery and grey squirrel management, and supporting appropriate woodland management and creation.

To achieve this, surveys and monitoring, research, public support,



© ADAM GERRARD

awareness raising, disease control, and habitat restoration through Nature Recovery Networks are recommended.

Partnership within NI, as well as across the UK and on an All-Ireland basis, is the key to securing a positive future for our red squirrels, together with funding to ensure that red squirrel conservation is a continued priority.

More at ulsterwildlife.org/red-squirrels

Bringing back native oysters

We've embarked on an exciting new project to help bring back native oysters to Belfast Lough by deploying 24 nurseries in Bangor Marina. Native oysters are thought to have been extinct in Belfast Lough for the last century, but the summer of 2020 saw a small number of oysters return.

The oyster nursery, funded by the DAERA Environmental Challenge Fund, will help support their recovery by reproducing and releasing the next generation of oyster larvae. Native oysters are a priority species for conservation in Northern Ireland, and when they are restored they can improve water quality, enhance biodiversity, and lock away carbon. Find out more in the next issue.



© J HATCHER

IN BRIEF

Wild Youth

We've launched a new youth-led project with Belfast Hills Partnership called 'Wild Youth', thanks to the National Lottery Community Fund. The project will help 5,000 young people connect with local green spaces, through wildlife and conservation activities, whilst improving their mental health, wellbeing and employability.

ulsterwildlife.org/youth-in-nature



Glenullin Bog Restoration

We've been restoring our newest nature reserve, Glenullin Bog, near Garvagh, which was heavily impacted by draining and burning in the past. Five and a half miles of peat bunds and 475 dams were installed to help raise the water table and re-wet the bog, with funding from DAERA Environmental Challenge Fund. This will provide better habitat for wildlife, reduce local flood risk, and help store carbon combatting the climate crisis. ulsterwildlife.org/blogs



CBE for member

Congratulations to Ulster Wildlife member Anne Elizabeth Magurran who was recently awarded a CBE. Anne is a world-renowned published scientist who has received many awards. She is Professor of Ecology and Evolution at the University of St Andrews and has contributed to such bodies as the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.



© ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY

Can you do something



#30DaysWild

1-30 June



wild

every day for

30 days?

#30DaysWild is the UK's month-long challenge from The Wildlife Trusts



Last year, over 750,000 people went **WILD** in June. Join them by making time for nature every day for 30 days.



Sign up to receive your **free pack** to help you go **WILD**



Scan with your phone camera to sign up →



wildlifetrusts.org/30dayswild