

Growing Connections

The West Weald Landscape Project Newsletter

Editorial by Dan Hoare

Senior Regional Officer, Butterfly Conservation



The West Weald Landscape Project is a fantastic example of how organisations and individuals can work together in partnership to achieve more than we could alone. Butterfly Conservation is delighted to be part of the project, using butterflies and moths as indicators of the state of the environment and safeguarding the rich diversity of the area including many rare species.

This issue focuses on the work of the project and its partners to support land management for wildlife, illustrating the great progress being made in the West Weald to further practical conservation measures working with many different landowners. Our parish article is about Northchapel, in which we are reminded that what we value about the landscape today is a result of its past use. Lastly, with spring finally in full swing, we are appealing to local people to get involved in recording our wildlife - focussing on butterflies, nightingales and traditional orchards.

Supporting Nature-Friendly Land Management

Landowners and farmers in the West Weald Landscape Project (WWLP) area are benefitting from the increased support available to incorporate nature-friendly practices into their routine management of land. The project freely provides a wide range of services to any interested owner or tenant of land in our area, be they smallholders or large commercial farmers, as described in our new leaflet (see website).

The WWLP Manager, Rich Howorth, has been providing advice and funding guidance to land managers around the Ebernoe area for the past couple of years. The new WWLP Landowner Adviser, Petra Billings, is now extending our proactive focus to the area around The Mens woodland reserve and along the Upper Arun river. A successful workshop was recently held with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group on 27th March in Wisborough Green for twenty local landowners. The support available from the WWLP and its partners was presented and questions on management answered, followed by a farm walk to learn about a Higher Level Stewardship scheme involving grazing by traditional livestock breeds by The Mens.



This project is based at the Sussex Wildlife Trust and is supported by
The Tubney Charitable Trust,
as well as by the BBC Wildlife Fund and Chichester District Council.
A broad partnership of organisations helps to steer and deliver the project.

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Traditional Orchards survey – the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) is looking for **local volunteers** to record our remaining old orchards, a threatened habitat of great wildlife value. Please contact WWLP for details.

Funding for practical conservation works, especially targeted wetland creation, is available this summer from WWLP.

Events

STOP PRESS! Butterflies of the West Weald Landscape at **Lodsworth** village hall – Talk (10.15) and Walk (12.45) by Sussex Butterfly Conservation - **Saturday 24th April.**

Butterfly Atlas walk, Loxwood (meet at post office 10.30 am) – an easy 4 km stroll to find butterflies – **Monday 3rd May.**

News in Brief

Sussex Butterfly Atlas



Wood White (Martin Warren)

How many of the county's 45 butterfly species have you seen in your local area? Get involved in an exciting new recording project being run by Sussex Butterfly Conservation over the next five years, as part of a nationwide project to map the distribution of these attractive colourful insects and hence inform us of the condition of our countryside. Come along to one of our local events, or get more details from www.sussex-butterflies.org.uk

Our Project has been supported with funding from the BBC Wildlife Fund since 2008 to study and conserve the rare barbastelle and Bechstein's bats in the West Weald. Now you can get involved in the second BBC Wildlife Fund Appeal this summer, which is asking nature lovers around the country to "go wild for wildlife" by celebrating its extraordinary diversity and helping to raise vital funds for threatened wildlife and places. Tune in to watch the live *Wild Night In* appeal show on BBC Two on Sunday 20th June. You can also participate in community *Springwatch Wild Days Out*, such as on 6th June near Brighton - [click here](#). The BBC's *Wild!* pack, including lots of fundraising ideas and materials, is available from www.bbc.co.uk/bbcwildlifefund.

Great Gains for Farms and Wildlife

The West Weald can now count on a further four Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agri-environment funding schemes from Natural England, supporting sensitive management for special nature along the Upper Arun river and on farms near Ebernoe and Lurgashall. The Forestry Commission meanwhile are supporting woodland restoration works, such as coppicing, with enhanced Woodland Improvement Grants (which pay 80% of standard costs). For our part, the WWLP has worked on four farms this past winter, planting over a kilometre of new hedgerows as well as floodplain woodland blocks. Funding support for these works was secured from the BBC Wildlife Fund, *Real Hedge Fund* (through West Sussex County Council), and *MoreWoods* (from the Woodland Trust).



Nightingale (Roger Wilmshurst)

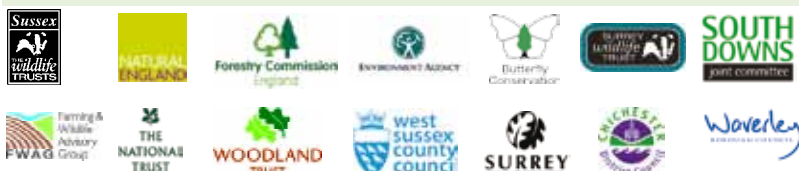
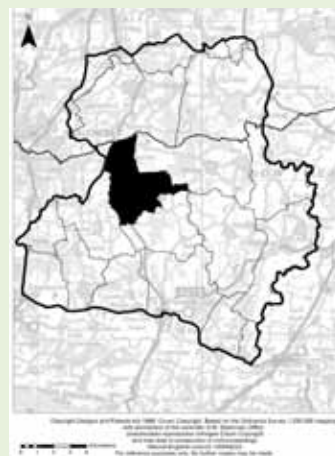
When did you last hear a Nightingale?

This iconic woodland bird's evocative song is again making a welcome return this spring to the West Weald, an area which is especially important for this species because of its abundance of small coppice woodlands and scrubby areas. In recent years, however, nightingales have been retreating eastwards and many locals talk of its decline in the West Weald. We are hence very keen to hear when and where you last heard a nightingale sing - [please email your records to WWLP](#), giving as exact details as possible of the location and date (month and year at least).

Go Wild for Wildlife with the BBC!

Parish focus – Northchapel "An Ancient Chapelry" by Pam Bruce

The parish of Northchapel is situated in the north-western corner of Sussex along the border with Surrey. As its name suggests, it was once a chapelry in the north of Petworth parish and did not become a parish in its own right until the end of the 17th century. The parish is a gently rolling landscape of rural farmland with abundant woodland and covers around 3,500 acres (1,400 hectares) in area. The parish landscape reflects its development over the centuries, whereby typical of parishes in the Weald early settlers created the pattern of small fields, copses and wooded 'shaws' still evident today. Read the rest of this article at www.westweald.org.uk/northchapel.htm



Supported by The Tubney Charitable Trust

