

GLORIOUS *Cotswold* GRASSLANDS

Newsletter no. 1 | November 2019

Welcome to our first Glorious Cotswold Grasslands newsletter!



Seed harvesting at Hyde Mill Coronation Meadow near Stow-on-the-Wold (Deb Roberts)

A busy summer

The sun has well and truly shone on our first harvesting season and, with the help of our fantastic volunteers, we have collected over 1300kg of mixed wildflower seed from 18 different donor sites across the Cotswolds. The majority of this has now been spread (largely by hand!) on a wide range of recipient sites from village verges and school playing fields to large agricultural fields. We have more than doubled our 2019 target of 25 hectares restored, and can't wait to start seeing the results next spring.

We are now looking for new donor or recipient sites, small or large, so if you know of anywhere which may be suitable, please do get in touch.

Reaping the rewards

Wildflower grassland is important in so many ways. This summer, we discovered the botanical diversity at some of these grassland sites was incredible (we recorded a total of 218 species of flowering plants in our botanical surveys this year, with one of our donor sites alone having 95 species). For me though, it was the insect abundance that was been the real eye-opener. Our donor sites were all, without exception, teeming with invertebrates; from micro moths to giant crickets – in stark contrast to the mown lawns and 'improved' agricultural grasslands which are so often the norm. Our hope is that by restoring these wildflower grasslands we are not just helping conserve the wildflowers, but also all the animals that depend on them – our insect pollinators, mammals such as voles and bats, and birds such as skylark, kestrel and barn owl.



Clockwise from top left: Yellow Wagtail (Richard Tyler), Marbled White on Common Knapweed (Ian Boyd), Barn Owl (Richard Tyler), Common Carder Bee on Horseshoe Vetch (Ian Boyd), Brown Hare (Richard Tyler), Skylark (Ian Boyd)



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Work continues – join us!

Our autumn habitat management programme is now well underway and our trusty group of volunteers has been out clearing scrub and rank grasses from some beautiful Cotswold grasslands which are difficult to manage with grazing or machinery.

We meet every other Wednesday from about 10am – 3pm at sites all over the Cotswolds so if you fancy some gentle exercise, whilst helping conserve this amazing habitat (along with the customary tea and cake), then please do get in touch.



Scrub clearance and grass cutting with volunteers on the National Trust's Sherborne Park Estate as part of our habitat management programme (Anna Field)

What's next?

We are now organising events for 2020 including guided walks, landowner and equine workshops, and a huge celebration on National Meadows Day. We'll be adding details to our website as soon as they are ready. We will also email out details of events, so if you would like to be added to our email distribution list, please do let us know.

Anna Field (Assistant Project Officer)

If you would like to get in contact with a member of the project team, please email [Anna Field](#) or [Harvey Sherwood](#).



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