



The B-Lines Update

Issue 6

November 2014

Welcome to our latest update

B-Lines is spreading....

Since our last update B-Lines has continued to spread across the country and we are now working from the South coast to the England-Scotland border. As well as extending the mapping of the B-Lines networks we are continuing to develop partnerships to deliver work on the ground. Despite some of the coldest, wettest, warmest and driest periods on record, our ongoing work to restore and create wildflower-rich grasslands within the B-Lines is starting to reap success, and we have had some 'buzzing' fields over the summer months.

This newsletter aims to give you a flavour of the current B-Lines work and hopefully encourage you to get involved in developing the B-Lines in your area.



Peacock butterfly © Leanna Dixon

Have a look and see how the B-Lines are growing

To help us keep track on how the B-Lines are developing, and to monitor activity across the network, we have recently added an [interactive map](#) to our B-Lines webpages. We will use the map to highlight areas where we are working on the B-Lines and provide people with a flavour of projects and activities. We are also encouraging other organisations and individuals to input information on their own work so that we can build up a better picture as to how the B-Lines are being 'filled out' with wildflower-rich habitats and other important habitat features.

It's very easy to input data so please have a go! The more people see on the map the more they may be encouraged to get involved! And where we find there are areas with no work underway we can use this information to target action.

With support from the Co-operative Group, B-Lines are now extending into Cumbria, Lancashire and Greater Manchester. The new 'Coast to Coast Bee Roads Project' is working with Local Nature Partnerships and Local Records Centres to identify B-Lines networks in the north west.



Meadow creation site © Paul Evans



A new urban partnership in London

We are really excited about the work of the 'Making a B-Line for London' project which is a partnership between Bee Collective, Buglife, Forestry Commission, Greater London Authority, Greenspace information for Greater London, London Wildlife Trust, Natural England, RSPB and University of Sussex.

The partnership aspires to increase the diversity and abundance of pollinating insects in London's green spaces and gardens. It also aims to raise awareness of the benefits of pollinators and encourage action to protect, conserve and celebrate pollinating insects.



The partnership has already mapped a key B-Line from Enfield to Croydon, which will be used to promote the overall vision and demonstrate the concept to others. This B-Line will be the focus of work with managers of parks, gardens, allotments and amenity green spaces to change the way land is designed and managed to improve or create flower-rich connections between areas of existing good quality pollinator habitat.

The partnership is developing an on-line toolkit to enable others to identify and create local B-Lines to encourage the development of an interconnected network of B-Lines across London.

Getting schools to discover and grow their B-Line

We have been working with schools located on the B-Lines to help improve their grounds for pollinators.

Schools have developed 'Pollinator Improvement Plans' which outline ideas on how to make their grounds better for pollinating insects. For a number of schools in Calderdale, Sheffield and Rochdale we helped to make their plans a reality.

Also helping to develop the B-Lines is Eureka! - The National Children's Museum. A new wildflower meadow and pollinator friendly shrubs here will both enrich the museum's grounds and provide inspiration to both adult and children visitors to create wildlife areas in their gardens at home and/or at school.

New primary schools resources, available to download, will help schools to develop their grounds for pollinators and to teach about pollination throughout the curriculum.



Scout Road School © Leanna Dixon

Nectarworks helps to create the B-Lines

Nectarworks was launched by the North Pennines AONB Partnership in May 2013 to enthuse, educate and enable communities to take action for bumblebees and other pollinators. It is contributing directly to the B-Lines network within the North Pennines by restoring and increasing flower-rich habitats across the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The North Pennines boasts some of the most beautiful flower-rich upland hay meadows in the UK, however many of the special plants have now retreated to field edges, steep banks and roadside verges. To help look after and enhance these valuable habitats Nectarworks is:

- Locating and surveying flower-rich banks
- Working with farmers to put in place appropriate management of these bee-friendly places
- Using specially-designed machinery to harvest seed in 'green hay' from suitable sites and spreading it on nearby meadows



To bumblebees and other nectar-feeders areas rich in wildflowers and school or community nectar gardens are the same – vital sources of pollen and nectar. We are therefore also working with local primary schools, establishing bumblebee-friendly nectar gardens in their grounds and designing and delivering associated educational activities linked to the National Curriculum. In addition we are working with care homes and their residents to establish nectar gardens in their grounds.

Further details and contact info can be found on our website www.northpennines.org.uk/Pages/Nectarworks.aspx

Rebecca Barrett, North Pennines AONB Partnership

Get Calderdale Buzzing

Get Calderdale Buzzing! - the new bee and pollinator partnership for the district - was launched in National Insect Week at the end of June. It brings together the Council, Buglife, Friends of the Earth, Bumblebee Conservation Trust and many other enthusiastic local organisations and individuals. A central part of its strategy is to support the B-line - Calderdale is well-placed in the centre of the Pennines to provide a link between East and West - and in return Buglife has been able to help a local school, Scout Road Academy (attended as it happens by Britain's youngest qualified beekeeper, J D Anderson-Martin!) improve its play area with bee-friendly plantings. Plans are now being developed for Get Calderdale Buzzing's next phase in 2015 which will focus on the public estate (before moving onto private landowners after that); read all about it at www.greencalderdale.org.uk/bees.

Filling the B-Lines

As part of our 'Restoring Ryedale's Lowland Meadows Project' and our 'Richmond's Lost Meadows Project' we have been working on several meadow creation and restoration sites. After intensive first year management, sites seeded in autumn 2012 and spring 2013 are now starting to develop into wildflower-rich grassland swards. As with all habitat work time will tell how successful we have been, but initial results are promising. Over the summer we have had c. 15 ha of grasslands flowering profusely and attracting good numbers of insects. Butterfly transects and bee walks have been put in place to monitor pollinators into the future. Baseline invertebrate surveys carried out by local naturalists will provide additional data to help assess the impacts.



But of course Buglife is still only a small wildlife charity and we need everyone to play their part in delivering B-Lines.

Mapping B-Lines across the West of England



The West of England B-Lines project is now in full swing. Over the past six months Buglife and Avon Wildlife Trust have been working closely with partners to obtain information and data to allow us to map the B-Lines routes.

A mapping workshop attended by partners including local authorities, Natural England, the National Trust and the Mendips and Cotswolds AONBs provided an opportunity for attendees to share their local knowledge, and advise on the location of key sites and other

relevant initiatives. The West of England B-Lines map is now being finalised and will be available to view on the Buglife website soon.

We are now looking forward to putting the map to good use and engaging with local landowners and communities to restore and create wildflower-rich habitats for pollinating insects and other wildlife across the West of England.

For further information please contact Clare.Dinham@buglife.org.uk

Making a B-Line for the North East

With support from the JP Getty (Jnr) Trust, Biffa Award and Northumbrian Water we are now actively taking forward and promoting B-Lines in the north of England. In partnership with Sunderland City Council, South Tyneside Council and Durham Wildlife Trust we are carrying out our habitat works to restore wildflower-rich grasslands on fifteen Local Wildlife Sites. Alongside this work we will be aiming to expand the grassland areas on some of these sites and create new wildflower-rich meadow on areas of urban greenspace.

Over the coming months Durham Wildlife Trust will be visiting a number of schools across the North East B-Lines and we hope this will result in new pollinator friendly works being carried out on schools grounds.



South Devon joins the B-Lines

Workshops have been held in South Devon to map B-Lines across the area. South Devon is the only place in the UK where the rare Six-banded nomad bee (*Nomada sexfasciata*) can be found, it is also a national hotspot for oil beetles including the Mediterranean oil beetle (*Meloe mediterraneus*) and the Short-necked oil beetle (*Meloe brevicollis*) —these species survive in a narrow band of wildflower-rich grassland along the coastal edge. Restoration of wildflower rich grasslands along the B-Lines network will aim to help to extend the range of such species inland.

For further information please get in touch - Rupert.Goddard@buglife.org.uk


Once again Buglife would like to take this opportunity to thank all our funders for their support and to all our partners who are showing so much enthusiasm in getting involved and helping us closer to making B-Lines a reality. Our funders include The Co-operative Group, Natural England, South Devon AONB, Naturesave Trust, SITA Trust, Biffa, Northumbrian Water, JP Getty Trust, Waterloo Foundation, Cory Environmental Trust in Britain, Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust, South Gloucestershire Council, Bristol City Council, Wessex Water and the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust.

We keen to work with, and develop new partnerships to deliver stretches of the B-Lines network, both in our countryside and urban environments. If you have any contacts who might be interested, please spread the word about B-Lines and ask them to get in touch with paul.evans@buglife.org.uk.

Thank you.

We will continue to place information on the Buglife website on a regular basis.



www.buglife.org.uk Tel: 01733 201 210  @buzz_dont_tweet

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