



The B-Lines Update

Issue 9

June 2016

Welcome to our latest update

B-Lines continues to make big strides across the country and as you will see in this issue is now making a splash in the East of England. With support from Anglian Water we have been able to spread the B-Lines message across several new counties and hope this will encourage others to get involved. B-Lines continues to look for opportunities to deliver more pollinator-friendly habitats and we are always on the look out for others to contribute in 'their' part of the network. If you have any queries about getting involved or staying up to date with our work contact: Info@buglife.org.uk



Hoverfly©Steven Falk

Working with farmers in Kent and Sussex

Buglife has teamed up with Natural England, Farmcare Ltd and Ecotricity on its Landscapes for Wild Pollinators and Farm Wildlife Project. A key part of this project is providing support for landowners across Kent and Sussex on habitat management, restoration and creation for wild pollinators.

The B-Lines provide an important backbone to the project, as they incorporate some of the best of Sussex and Kent's natural habitats, including species-rich chalk grassland, vibrant meadows and traditional fruit orchards. Over the past few months we have started to work with landowners to safeguard these existing habitats and will continue to work to see how we can join them up through the B-Lines network.

Our Farm Advisor is on hand with advice on how best to provide and manage beneficial features, and help with accessing funding support. This includes working with the Countryside Stewardship Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife Package, and we are advising landowners on both Higher Tier and Mid Tier applications that will increase the quantity and quality of habitat for wild pollinators.

Interested in finding out more? contact Laurie Jackson laurie.jackson@buglife.org.uk or 07880 316036

Ministry of Justice making a B-Line to support our pollinators

Buglife and the Ministry of Justice have joined forces to help conserve the UK's wild insect pollinators. As part of its Year of Pollinators 2016 the Ministry is aiming to make its estate more pollinator friendly by creating new areas of wildflower-rich grasslands and other habitats. This work will also help deliver key actions outlined in the National Pollinator Strategy for England.

By working together Buglife and the Ministry of Justice will provide new food and nesting resources across the country. Much of this work will be targeted within the B-Lines network - a network of flower-rich pathways crisscrossing our countryside, towns and cities. By making areas of land or buildings within the B-Lines more pollinator friendly, pollinators will be able to move more easily around the countryside as they look for food, or as they need to move as the climate changes.

With help from guidance produced by Buglife, every part of the Ministry's Estate is being encouraged to do something for pollinators, whether this be simply erecting a bee hotel, planting up a wild herb bed or cutting grass less and allowing buttercups and dandelions to flower. Parts of the estate which have more land are being encouraged to look for opportunities to create new wildflower meadows or create nesting areas for bees.

The aim is to provide lots of small areas of pollinator habitat which when added together and developed along the B-Lines will make a real difference. We hope this challenge taken up by the Ministry will also be taken up by other government departments, local authorities, businesses, farmers and the general public.

For more information contact paul.evans@buglife.org.uk

Making A B-Line for the North East

The project is now coming to an end but has been very successful. We have carried out habitat restoration on 12 Local Wildlife Sites and two SSSI, and restored/created wildflower-rich grassland on a further 8 sites. In partnership with Durham Wildlife Trust over 14 schools across Sunderland and South Tyneside, have had the chance to get involved in B-Lines and seven of these have actually created some wildflower habitat on their school grounds. That's enough words so a few photos of our grassland restoration work!



Subject to funding we are hoping to initiate a similar project in Newcastle upon Tyne and North Tyneside.

Wildflower Superhighways in the Yorkshire Dales



The Meadow Links project aims to create wildflower superhighways and wildlife hubs across the Yorkshire Dales, to provide connected pathways, shelter and food for our wildlife.

The project is being co-ordinated by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (YDMT), and is driven by communities who want to conserve their local wildlife and build important 'stepping stones' between fragmented wildlife habitats. By creating new wildflower-rich habitats in strategically important locations across the Yorkshire Dales, Meadow Links will help to extend and improve the national B-Lines network so that pollinators and other wildlife can move across the landscape more easily.

Working alongside Buglife, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) and Natural England Meadow Links conservation work will help create a more cohesive and resilient network for wildlife and identify areas where more action is needed.



Swaledale Meadow © Tanya St.Pierre



Buff-tailed bumblebee

YDMT's Tanya St. Pierre is keen to get people involved "We have some fantastic opportunities for people in the Yorkshire Dales area to get involved in the Meadow Links project and support their local wildlife. We're looking for groups who would like to create a wildlife meadow in their own

community space, as well as homeowners and landowners who would like to create wildlife patches that will act as stepping stones to extend the wildflower highways. These patches can be any shape or size, from hedgerows and verges to small back gardens."

If you or your community group would like to create a community meadow or wildlife patch, please contact Tanya St. Pierre at YDMT on 015242 51002 or email tanya.stpierre@ydmtd.org

To find out more about Meadow Links visit www.ydmtd.org/meadow-links

Piecing together the habitats along the John Muir Pollinator Way

Scotland's first B-Lines project has been identifying opportunities for creating, enhancing and managing important grassland habitat for insect pollinators and other wildlife along a 6km wide corridor of the entire 134 mile route of the John Muir Way.

Using data provided by conservation partners and local authorities the project identified over 300 sites designated for their wildlife interests. In addition we identified a significant number of sites where there may be potential to create habitat of benefit to pollinators and other wildlife, including over 50 golf courses, almost 300 public parks and play spaces, 5 country parks, and over 800 schools and nurseries, hospitals and places of worship and cemeteries. If a significant number of these sites were able to restore or create valuable wildflower-rich habitats, this would produce a more joined up pollinator pathway along the corridor of the John Muir Way. Reports on the work have been made available to each of the local authorities involved and can be downloaded on the Buglife website.

We will be working with and encouraging landowners and managers to do something good for pollinators on the sites identified. To raise awareness the project has been running events promoting the importance of wildflower-rich grassland for pollinators and how to create and manage these habitats. Over John Muir's birthday week from 16th-24th April 2016, a total of 20 events were held for 280 people.



This project has been funded by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Central Scotland Green Network ideas fund.

Please contact Suzanne Burgess, 01786 447 504 or at suzanne.burgess@buglife.org.uk

Others working to deliver B-Lines

Working with FWAG: B-Lines leaflets have been produced with both Norfolk and Suffolk Farming & Wildlife Advisory Groups, to help them engage farmers in developing Norfolk and Suffolk B-Lines. The leaflets highlight the valuable contribution that farmers can make to helping our pollinators, including key options in the Countryside Stewardship's Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife Package.

Facilitation Funds: Buglife is looking to engage with dozens of land managers across Norfolk, Suffolk and Devon through the innovative Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Funds. These farmer led groups offer the opportunity for land managers to work together to deliver co-ordinated delivery for wildlife across their local area. Buglife is offering pollinator advice and helping to promote the delivery of wildflower-rich habitats within B-Lines to three of the Facilitation Funded groups that were awarded funding in 2015.

Anglian Water: After kindly supporting the East of England B-Lines mapping Anglian Water are now looking to use the B-Lines network to target their own work for pollinators.

South Wales B-Lines

Thanks to funding from the Welsh Government and the JP Getty (Jnr) Charitable Trust Buglife has started to map B-Lines in South and West Wales. The project area extends from Pembrokeshire to Monmouthshire, taking in the amazing coastline and South Wales Valleys. Initial partnership workshops were held back in March to share information and discuss opportunities for delivering B-Lines in South Wales. The West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre is now busy mapping potential B-Lines routes based on habitat data collated from partners and we will be discussing and finalising the South Wales B-Lines routes at the end of this month. Going forward we will be sourcing funding to deliver B-Lines, and encourage our partners to consider these routes within their conservation delivery mechanisms.

West of England B-Lines

Since the project started in April 2014 the West of England B-Lines project has continued to gain momentum and support from partners, local communities and funders which translates to significant habitat benefits for the regions wild pollinators and other wildlife.

Buglife and partners Avon Wildlife Trust (AWT) have now carried out over 120 ha of grassland restoration, much of it carried out by AWTs Grassland Restoration Team: volunteers who do an amazing job year round to enhance sites for our bees, hoverflies and butterflies. This huge effort equates to 144 practical conservation task days and 743 days of volunteer time!



Work party © Clare Dinham

We have also worked closely with our local authority partners, Natural England, land owners and local groups to make a real difference to the West of England B-Lines network, and secure its sustainability for future years.

April of this year saw the start of an additional years funding from Cory Environmental Trust in Britain, who along with Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust have played a key role in supporting the B-Lines project in Avon. Our partners Avon Wildlife Trust are also securing funding to take B-Lines delivery forward for future years, including a project which will restore species rich habitats between a number of their nature reserves creating a truly joined up landscape for wildlife.



cory environmental trust
in britain

A B-Line for the East of England

B-Lines are making a huge splash in the East of England thanks to the generous support of Anglian Water. Buglife and partners have mapped B-Lines for a large part of the East of England and beyond in 2016, including Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex. This means that Buglife is now working to create networks of wildflower-rich habitats from the Humber down to the Thames Estuary and from the Norfolk Broads across to the edge of the Cotswolds.

Working in partnership with the Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre, Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre and Herts Environmental Records Centre, and with help from other data centres, local Wildlife Trusts

and local authorities, Buglife held workshops in 2016 to engage stakeholders in mapping B-Lines across the East of England. Buglife is now looking to work with partners and landowners across the region to deliver wildflower-rich habitats to help make the region more pollinator-friendly. This work has added significantly to the national B-Lines network and Buglife now needs help from as many people as possible to help deliver for pollinators. If you or your organisation is interested in helping us to develop B-Lines in any of these new areas, please contact Paul Evans on paul.evans@buglife.org.uk.



Can you help?

We are 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 forward them this B-Lines Update. Thank you.

To stay up to date with progress keep visiting the Buglife website www.buglife.org.uk.

Some of our key partners we would like to thank:

