

Conserving the small things that run the world



ANNUAL REVIEW 2006



“If we and the rest of the back-boned animals were to disappear overnight, the rest of the world would get on pretty well. But if the invertebrates were to disappear, the world’s ecosystems would collapse”

Sir David Attenborough

A word from our Chair

It gives me great pleasure to report that 2006 has been our most successful year to date. Staff numbers rose from five to eight, whilst other highlights included the excellent media coverage we have gained with a full front page feature in *The Independent* newspaper and large funding awards for our brownfield, freshwater, Scottish and public involvement projects.

The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation has continued its generous core support for a further three years. They have also for the past three years supported our soft rock cliffs project, and in 2007 will be supporting our project which is carrying out research into the ecology of ditch systems.

The 'All of a Buzz in the Thames Gateway' project has received substantial funding from The City Bridge Trust and Countdown 2010 Biodiversity Action Fund. The Heritage Lottery Fund has enabled us to promote conservation management and community involvement at Canvey Wick SSSI, Essex, whilst a grant from Cory Environmental Trust in Great Britain supports a major bumblebee survey in Essex. SITA Trust has provided us with funding to build a demonstration green roof for invertebrates.

On the policy front we have also achieved major success in ensuring that the importance of invertebrate conservation is recognised in parliament and Whitehall. Thanks largely to Buglife, the sale of a highly toxic sheep-dip is currently banned in the UK.

We could not have achieved as much as we have without the continued support of all our donors, friends, members and other supporters. Likewise this could not have been achieved without our very enthusiastic and effective staff, and the contribution of a dedicated board of trustees.

A. E. Stubbs

Alan Stubbs
Chairman

Invertebrates are vitally important to a healthy planet – humans and other life forms couldn't survive without them. The food we eat, the fish we catch, the birds we see, the flowers we smell and the hum of life we hear...all this would be lost without invertebrates.

INVERTEBRATES ARE FACING AN EXTINCTION CRISIS

Thousands of invertebrates are declining and many are heading towards extinction. Worldwide 150,000 species could be gone by 2050 if we do nothing. In the UK alone we have lost:

Bumblebees: 3 species are extinct, 15 others have gone from many parts of the country.

Butterflies: Over 70% of species are declining significantly.

Riverflies: Have declined by 66% in recent years.

Buglife is the only organisation in Europe committed to the conservation of all invertebrates. The funding we raise enables us to:

- Protect invertebrates and their habitats
- Campaign for invertebrates and the environment
- Involve people in conservation action



Blue-tailed damselfly
(*Ischnura elegans*)
© Jaybee
www.phocus-on.co.uk



West Thurrock Marshes
© Greg Hitchcock



Cliff tiger beetle (*Cicindela germanica*) © Roger Key



Large dark olive (*Baetis rhodani*) © Stuart Crofts



River Arun © Alan Stubbs

CANVEY WICK

Canvey Wick is one of the most diverse and species-rich examples of Thames Gateway brownfields, with nationally important assemblages of invertebrates. It also has the most important remaining population of the BAP Priority Shrill carder bee (*Bombus sylvarum*) in the Thames region and perhaps the UK.

In total 30 Red Data Book (RDB) species and 3 species previously thought to be extinct in Britain have so far been found on the site.

Buglife has been given a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to raise awareness of threatened brownfield habitats, both as a resource for people and for nature. From autumn 2006 to spring 2008, we will work to encourage the local community to become involved with this amazing site and its wildlife. Planned activities include bug walks, school visits, an 'invertebrate roadshow' and practical conservation work.



Milford On Sea - Chewton Bunny © Andrew Whitehouse

SOFT ROCK CLIFFS

This is an extremely important habitat for invertebrates in the UK, supporting 29 soft cliff specialists which include 23 Red Data Book species. Species groups of note include rare tiger beetles, ground beetles, weevils, crane flies and solitary bees and wasps.

This project will be reporting on the three year findings in 2007. To date the project has surveyed 20 soft rock cliff sites.

BUGLIFE – MAKING A DIFFERENCE – OUR CONSERVATION WORK

FROM BROWNFIELD SITES TO SOFT ROCK CLIFFS TO FRESHWATER HABITATS

This year Buglife has been out and about surveying habitats, providing habitat management advice and promoting the importance of these habitats for invertebrate conservation to a wide audience.

BROWNFIELD SITES

Buglife is surveying the extent and quality of invertebrate populations occurring on brownfield sites in the Thames Gateway to ensure they are taken into account in the future development of the region. The Thames Gateway is noted for its assemblages of rare and threatened invertebrates. As at December 2006 we have mapped 1,007 sites, assessed 362 sites and recorded over 1,000 species including UK-BAP, Red Data Book, Nationally Scarce and many local species, as well as a new British species.

FRESHWATER

As part of our overall freshwater strategy Buglife will be recruiting a Freshwater Policy Officer in 2007 and we will be carrying out a three year national research project into the ecology of ditch systems. Surveys will include both the invertebrate fauna and flora for this habitat.

This year Buglife carried out further river surveys. Sandy banks, shoals and bars in rivers are home to a very specialised fauna that can be threatened by changes in hydrology and canalisation of rivers. Buglife is working to understand the ecology of flies living in this habitat with a particular focus on three species of fly that the UK Government has identified as high priority for conservation action. To date Buglife has surveyed 18 rivers and has compiled habitat management advice.



Scarlet malachite beetle
(*Malachius aeneus*)
© Richard Loader



Curious burying beetle
(*Microphorus investigator*)
© Roger Labbett



Sussex diving beetle
(*Laccophilus poechnus*)
© Roger Key



Red-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*)
© James Lindsey

THE BIG BUMBLEBEE HUNT

In 2006 we secured funding to run a bumblebee survey in Essex, Kent and London. The survey will take place in 2007 and will encourage large numbers of people to look for and count bumblebees in their local open spaces.

We will also be running a number of guided walks, talks and basic identification workshops across this region to coincide with this survey.

There are approximately 250 species of bumblebees worldwide, 25 of which are native to Britain. Of these, three have become extinct and only six species of bumblebees are still common and widespread throughout the country.

BUGLIFE OUT AND ABOUT

We have attended a wide range of events this year and have hosted a number of bug walks for our members and others. During 2006 our minibeast roadshow visited six schools in the Peterborough area.

BUGLIFE – BUILDING SUPPORT FOR INVERTEBRATES

Media coverage is central to raising awareness of the threats facing invertebrate biodiversity. As a result of our Scarlet malachite beetle survey *The Independent* featured a large photo of the beetle on 24th June, and the front inside page to invertebrate declines. During the past year we have had:

- 47 Radio interviews
- 69 Articles in magazines and local newspapers
- 24 Articles in national newspapers
- 6 National TV interviews
- 7 Regional TV interviews

THE INDEPENDENT SUPPORTS BUGLIFE

Our press release highlighting the dramatic decline of British beetles, which focused particularly on the plight of the Scarlet malachite beetle (*Malachius aeneus*), prompted *The Independent* newspaper to devote its entire front cover to the beetle, and to donate 20p from each newspaper sold on 24th June. This resulted in a donation of £19,500 to Buglife.

SCARLET MALACHITE BEETLE SURVEY

The Scarlet malachite beetle is currently known from only eight small sites in the UK. This extraordinarily beautiful beetle appears for only three weeks during May and June.

The challenge for Buglife was how to conserve a beetle so rare that nobody looks out for it. So in 2005 Buglife organised the first ever public survey for the beetle. The result was incredible, with hundreds of people on the lookout for the beetle. We were able to identify four new sites, helping to ensure its long term survival.

In 2006 we decided to expand the survey into those areas where the beetle has been lost, including Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, Surrey, Dorset and Somerset. The survey again proved incredibly popular and we found one new site for the beetle. In 2007 we will be focusing our efforts on the ecology and conservation of the beetle.

NATIONAL INSECT WEEK

This year Buglife took a leading role in the organisation of National Insect Week. We used the week to report our concerns over the alarming decline rate of British beetles. The press release was extremely well reported and raised the profile of invertebrate conservation.





Brown-banded carder bee
(*Bombus humilis*)
© Sam Ashfield

Large-striped plant-bug
(*Miris striatus*) © Dragisa Savic

Distinguished jumping spider
(*Sitticus distinguendus*)
© PRHarvey

West Thurrock
© Greg Hitchcock

“Over 1,200 species of bug, bird, reptile, including 36 Red Data Book (RDB) invertebrate species have been found on this site”



West Thurrock
© Greg Hitchcock



Photo. credit at base of page



Brown-lipped snail
(*Cepaea nemoralis*)
© Rosemary Hill

WEST THURROCK MARSHES CAMPAIGN

Buglife has met with Prime Minister Tony Blair in an attempt to halt the development of a nationally important wildlife site by Royal Mail, and to press for better protection for invertebrates and other threatened wildlife.

We were invited to the Prime Minister's office to discuss the environmental threat posed by construction on West Thurrock Marshes in the Thames estuary.

The site in South Essex is one of the richest and most important wildlife sites in the country, with over 1,200 species of bug, bird and reptile, many of them extremely rare. In summer it is a riot of colour. But as it is considered a brownfield site it has little protection from development.

Early in 2006 a planning application was submitted to develop the site. Buglife - in partnership with the local Council and Essex Wildlife Trust pushed hard for a less damaging scheme to be developed, but in November 2006 the unelected Thurrock Development Corporation approved the plans.

Buglife responded by launching an online petition which attracted over 2,500 signatures, and we tabled a motion in the House of Commons, which has received cross-party support from 60 MPs.

The meeting with Tony Blair will be followed by a meeting with the Biodiversity Minister, Barry Gardiner early in 2007.

BAN ON SYNTHETIC PYRETHROID SHEEP DIP

Following the Buglife campaign to ban sheep dipping with Synthetic Pyrethroids, on 22nd February 2006 the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) suspended the license to sell the Synthetic Pyrethroid (Cypermethrin) for sheep dipping on environmental grounds with immediate effect.

The VMD is currently being lobbied by the farming industry to reverse the ban. Buglife will continue to fight this threat to our precious rivers and their wildlife.

DESMOULIN'S WHORL SNAIL - BITING THE DUST?

Buglife discovered that the Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*) population moved to make way for the Newbury bypass had gone extinct on the translocation site on Bagnor Island and is in trouble elsewhere.

There are currently no plans to continue, let alone improve, the monitoring of populations of Desmoulin's whorl snail in the UK. Buglife will continue to lobby Government to ensure that its own monitoring protocol is implemented. Only annual monitoring of the snails across several sites will fully resolve the grave questions about status and ecology raised by the apparent decline of the species on the Kennet and Lambourn SAC.

BUGLIFE TAKING ACTION - SAVING IMPORTANT INVERTEBRATE HABITATS

In the past year we have worked to protect habitats that are home to endangered invertebrates and have contributed to the conservation of:

- 4 sites
- 48 populations of Priority Species listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan
- 153 populations of Red Data Book species
- 371 populations of Nationally Scarce species.

We have surveyed over 1172 sites and have found 9 new species.

“We are in the midst of a biodiversity crisis, the loss of the Desmoulin's whorl snail on its translocation site is a timely reminder of the fragility of the wildlife around us. Quick fixes rarely work - we need our leaders to take a brave choice that will protect natural resources for our descendants.” *Matt Shardlow - Buglife Director.*



Bog bush cricket
(*Metrioptera brachyptera*)
© Roger Key



Large Heath (*Coenonympha tullia*)
© Roger Key



A sawfly (*Tenthredo celtica*)
© Nigel Jones

BUGLIFE IN SCOTLAND

In 2006 Buglife secured funding to recruit a part-time officer for Scotland (post to be taken up in 2007). Buglife joins Butterfly Conservation and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust in Stirling, right in the heart of Scotland. No other city in the world hosts offices of more than one invertebrate conservation charity!

The Buglife post has been established in partnership with the Initiative for Scottish Invertebrates, and is funded by Scottish Natural Heritage. The project will produce an invertebrate conservation strategy for Scotland as well as promoting action to conserve Scotland's invertebrates.

The project will benefit common invertebrate species as well as rarer species such as the Great yellow bumblebee (*Bombus distinguendus*) and the Northern damselfly (*Coenagrion hastulatum*).

Buglife has been active in Scotland ever since we started and the recruitment of this post will greatly strengthen our existing work:

- We led the campaign to save the peat bog at Aucheninnes Moss, after planning permission was granted for the site to be turned into a 21 metre-high rubbish dump.
- After Buglife's action planning permission was rejected for a housing development on amenity woodland at the village of Carrbridge within the Cairngorms National Park.
- During 2006 we surveyed two rivers in Scotland which resulted in us finding a Biodiversity Action Plan species new to Scotland, the Southern silver stiletto fly (*Chlorisma rustica*).



© Paul Raeburn

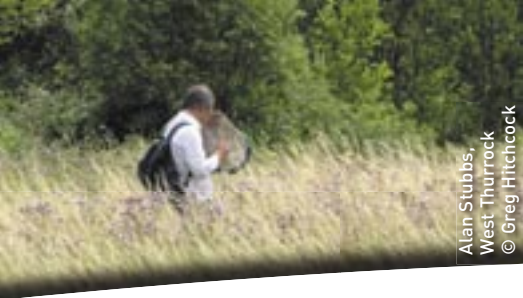
ADVICE FOR FARMERS



Jimmy Doherty © John Feltwell

In 2006 we produced a set of four farming leaflets covering Grasslands, Hedgerows, Ponds and Woodlands. The leaflets have proved very popular amongst farmers and others involved in habitat management.





Alan Stubbs,
West Thurrock
© Greg Hitchcock



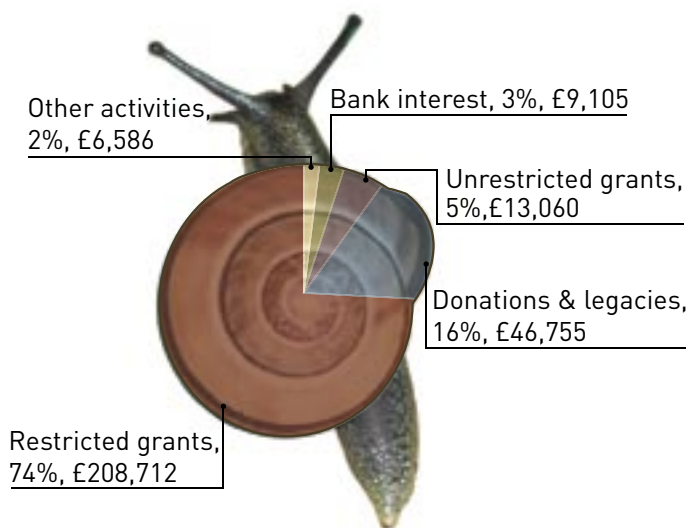
Sandy River Monnow Pandy
© Alan Stubbs



Anne Greenizan
© Richard Pottard

YOUR IMPACT ON OUR FINANCES

BREAKDOWN INCOME



BREAKDOWN EXPENDITURE



Brown hawker (*Aeshna grandis*)
© David Pryce

A BIG THANK YOU

For the terrific support we have received from so many quarters this year. We would like to thank all our volunteers including our trustees who have given up their time to help. Our friends whose donations have contributed enormously to our core work.

The following organisations who have given us grants: A S Butler Charitable Trust, The City Bridge Trust, Cecil Pilkington Charitable Trust, Cory Environmental Trust in Britain, Countdown 2010 Biodiversity Action Fund, Courtyard Trust Fund, Ernest Cook Trust, Environment Agency, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Essex Environment Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Heritage Lottery Fund, Idlewild Trust, The Jack Patston Charitable Trust, John Spedan Lewis Foundation, Manifold Trust, Natural England, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, SITA.

Our corporate sponsors: Anglian Water, Greenfield, Jadd Cards, Martin Rapley – The Bug Man, Notcutts Garden Centres and Wild Windmill. We would also like to thank all our dedicated staff who have worked tirelessly to promote invertebrate conservation.

Buglife is the only organisation in Europe devoted to the conservation of all invertebrates, and we are actively engaged in saving Britain's rarest little animals, everything from bees to beetles, and spiders to snails. There are more than 32,000 terrestrial and freshwater species in the UK, and many of these are under threat as never before.

Our aim is to halt the extinction of invertebrate species and to achieve sustainable populations of invertebrates. We are working hard to achieve this through:

- Undertaking practical conservation projects that will contribute to achieving our aim.
- Promoting the environmental importance of invertebrates and raising awareness about the challenges to their survival.
- Assisting in the development of legislation and policy that will ensure the conservation of invertebrates.
- Developing and disseminating knowledge about how to conserve invertebrates.
- Encouraging and supporting invertebrate conservation initiatives by other organisations in the UK, Europe and worldwide.



Director: Matt Shardlow



Chairman: Alan Stubbs

President: Germaine Greer



Five-banded weevil-wasp
(*Cerceris quinquefasciata*) © Mike Edwards



Shieldbug fly, (*Gymnosoma nitens*) © Peter Harvey



Red-headed cardinal beetle (*Pyrochroa serraticornis*)
© Roger Labbett

“we are actively engaged in saving Britain's rarest little animals, everything from bees to beetles, and spiders to snails.”



Cockchafer (*Melolontha melolontha*) © Roger Labbett



Bug walk © Greg Hitchcock

- **One in three mouthfuls** of our food depends upon insect pollination (strawberries, apples)
- **Honey, chocolate, coffee, silk** - just some of the luxuries that wouldn't exist without invertebrates
- **Ninety percent of wildflowers** could be threatened with extinction if there wasn't invertebrates to pollinate them
- **We eat 20 million tons of bugs every year** (such as lobsters and prawns)
- Bugs are **a vital food source for wild animals and birds** - our countryside would be an empty, silent place without them

So it's no exaggeration to say that they make the world go round. They do.

Back cover photography credits: 1. Garden bumblebee (*Bombus hortorum*) © James Lindsey, 2. Brown-lipped snail (*Cepaea nemoralis*) © Ron Boyce, 3. Chestnut click beetle (*Anostirus castaneus*) © Roger Key, 4. Common carder bumblebee (*Bombus pascuorum*) © Trevor Pendleton, 5. Common sand wasp (*Ammophila sabulosa*) © Roger Key.



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