



Annual Review 2018

Buglife - The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
Saving the small things that run the planet





Matt Shardlow, CEO

Buglife consistently achieves far more than our size would predict. Invertebrates are at the very core of life on earth and are the engine of key ecological functions, hence why progress towards halting extinctions and restoring bioabundance is so vital.

As well as numerous awareness raising activities, campaigns and policy promotions we ran 43 projects in 2018, the biggest being our £1 million Biffa Award funded public engagement phenomenon - 'Urban Buzz'; the crucial 'Important Invertebrate Areas' project that's redefining the important UK places for bugs (funded by Esmée Fairbairn and People's Postcode Local); and our fabulous work restoring Scottish bogs (WREN, EU LIFE and Scottish Power). 'B-lines' is our flagship insect decline solution, it should restore a robust network of wildflower habitats across the countryside.

We mobilised support for a stronger EC Pollinator Initiative – proposed in 2015 - 77,000 people across the EU wrote to the EC and we co-ordinated responses from 42 European environmental NGOs. We welcome growing efforts to save species from extinction, significantly 200 species

covered by the HLF 'Back from the Brink' partnership, including the Ladybird spider, Narrow-headed ant and Shril carder bee, but big efforts have also been made to save the Blue ground beetle, Mud snail, Bordered brown lacewing and Wart-biter cricket and we organised an international conference on conserving mayflies, stoneflies and caddisflies.

In April, after nearly a decade of work to address the destruction of insect populations by neonicotinoid insecticides, EU Member States endorsed the Commission's proposed ban on outdoor agricultural use – this will release pollinating and aquatic insects from a massive toxic burden.

We raised funds totalling £1.15 million and used £0.08 million of reserves, spending a total of £1.26 million on bug conservation.

Buglife can only achieve what it does with the help of hundreds of partner organisations, everything we do is a joint enterprise, but sadly there is not space here to give them the credit they deserve, we do however thank them all for making progress on invertebrate conservation a reality.

B-Lines – a landscape-scale response to the pollinator crisis

Our pollinating insects are in trouble. In recent years it has become apparent that pollinator populations are fragile and if not cared for they can become damaged, depleted and cease to function.

The main cause for the decline in our pollinators is the large-scale loss, degradation, and fragmentation of habitat. For pollinating insects this means the loss of wildflower habitats like wildflower-rich grasslands, meadows and heathlands.

We are working with others to restore wildflower-rich areas of our countryside through our B-Lines projects. Over the past six years we have worked with partners across the UK to map opportunities for creating B-Lines at a county and country scale. In 2018 we completed our B-Lines maps for Wales and

Northern Ireland, and we continued mapping England and Scotland.

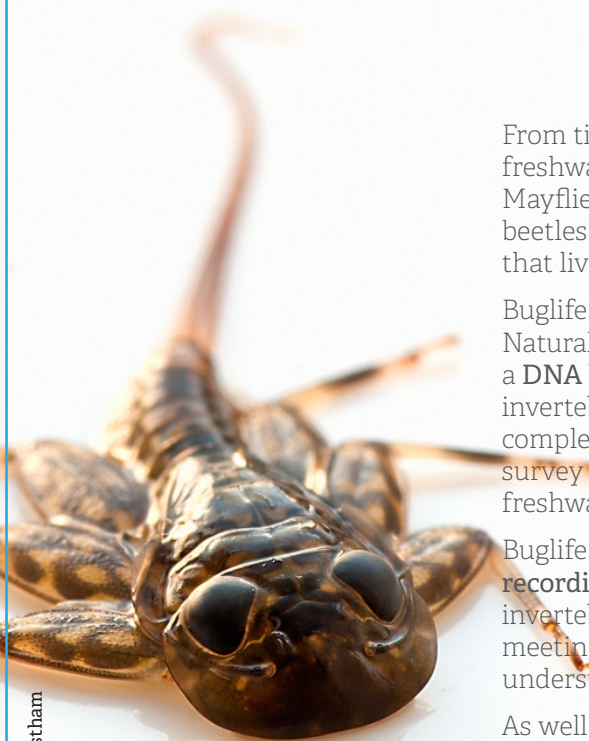
Through regional projects such as the West of England B-Lines project (in partnership with Avon Wildlife Trust), South Wales B-Lines, and John Muir Pollinator Way we have explored new creative ways of working with different partners to deliver the B-Lines habitat creation and restoration on the ground. Our partners are as diverse as water companies, schools, businesses, farmers, highways managers and local authorities.

To date, our regional B-Lines delivery projects have delivered over 250 hectares of wildflower-rich habitat for pollinating insects across England, Scotland and Wales, and an additional 200 hectares have been restored or created by our partners.



© S. Burgess

Freshwaters for the Future



From tiny springs to vast lakes, freshwater abounds with life. Mayflies, stoneflies, shrimps and beetles are just some of the diversity that lives underwater.

Buglife has been working with the Natural History Museum to develop a **DNA barcode library** for freshwater invertebrates found in the UK. Once completed, this library will allow new survey methods to be developed for freshwater habitats.

Buglife continues to support **recording schemes** for freshwater invertebrates. This year we held a meeting for recording schemes to understand what support they need.

As well as supporting recording in the UK, we have recently established an **IUCN Specialist Group** for mayflies, stoneflies and caddisflies.

This group will undertake global red list assessments and plan conservation work for the most threatened species.

Buglife collaborated with Nottingham Trent University, the Environment Agency, and others on a project looking at the natural capital of **temporary rivers**.

This challenging habitat is home to a unique assemblage of species, however they are at risk from climate change, land use practices and water abstraction.

Our public survey for the **Northern February red stonefly** turned up new records of this endemic species in several rivers. We've also been working on finding out more about its habitat requirements.

Saving species!

Buglife is a partner on the ambitious **Back from the Brink** project. Working with our ReThink Nature partners (Amphibian and Reptile conservation Trust, Bat Conservation Trust, Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Plantlife, and RSPB) and joining forces with Natural England, we are part of a collective effort to **save 20 species from extinction, and benefit over 200 more.**

As well as saving our most threatened plants, animals and fungi, Back from the Brink is providing thousands of opportunities for people to get involved – to do their bit to help these special species.

Buglife is leading Back From the Brink partnership projects to

conserve the Ladybird spider, Narrow-headed and species associated with ancient trees. We are also working with Bumblebee Conservation Trust to help the Shrill carder bee, and contributing to two more projects.

In South Wales we have launched a new project working with local communities to learn more about the elusive **Blue ground beetle** (*Carabus intricatus*). This project will protect this rare and globally threatened beetle, and its ancient woodland habitat.

In Scotland we have been working in 2018 to help the Bordered brown lacewing, Pond mud snail and two species of pot beetles.





© Craig Macadam

Speaking up for bugs

Bugs can't speak for themselves so they need a champion to speak for them.

During 2018, Buglife assisted Ben Bradley MP to table the Protection of Pollinators Bill as a Private Member's Bill in the UK Parliament. The Bill helped gain some major concessions from government, in particular, the creation of a £60,000 fund to complete the mapping of pollinator habitat across England.

Our Putting Bugs on the Map project is identifying the most important areas for invertebrates across the UK. **95 Important Invertebrate Areas** have been identified and we are now producing detailed maps and profiles.

Buglife continues to keep an eye on development that might harm important invertebrate populations. We objected to plans for a golf

course at **Coul Links** in the north of Scotland. This site is home to a nationally important invertebrate assemblage including **Fonseca's seed fly** (*Botanophila fonseca*), a species found nowhere else in the world. We also objected to plans for a port development at **Tilbury** in the Thames gateway. This area of brownfield is one of the best in the country and is home to 31 threatened species.

It's not just Buglife that stands up for bugs – politicians in the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and House of Commons have also vowed to help species by becoming **Species Champions**. Covering species as diverse as the Bog sun-jumper spider to the Freshwater pearl mussel, these Species Champions ask questions, table motions and keep an eye on parliamentary business that might affect their species.

Reconnecting with nature

Our **Urban Buzz project** is all about creating wildflower-filled Buzzing Hotspots in urban areas for pollinators and people. The project is working with local communities in England and Wales to transform unused urban green spaces into wildlife haven to help bees and other pollinating insects.

In 2018, with the help of **2,995 volunteers** we created and restored **98 hectares of wildflower habitats** across **197 Buzzing Hotspot** sites in Cornwall, Bristol, Leeds, Leicester and Ipswich.

Our **Scottish mud snails** is working with nine schools to breed Pond mud snails (*Omphiscola glabra*) in their classrooms as part of our

conservation efforts for this species. Each school received visits from our team and had the opportunity to learn more about Pond mud snails, and other pond wildlife. **350 school pupils have got involved in this project in 2019.**

Laura Garrido-Eslava, teacher at James Gillespie's Primary School said: "Thank you so much to Buglife for adapting their project to our school... We really appreciate it. The children and the parents loved the sessions. Buglife did a great job!"

The snails will be released into ponds at 4 new sites in North Lanarkshire, East Dunbartonshire, West Lothian and Edinburgh.





buglife.org.uk



EXPENDITURE £1,300,577

Fundraising	3%
Policy & Campaigning	12%
Research, Survey & Advice	18%
Education & Advocacy	22%
Practical Conservation	44%



INCOME £1,127,247

Bank Interest	0.1%
Donations & Legacies	15%
Contracts & Contributions	24%
Restricted Grants	61%

List of Funders for 2018 contribution over £5,000. We'd like to thank everyone that has provided funding to Buglife this year. Without you, we wouldn't be able to do so much to help bugs. Artemis Charitable Trust, Bannister Trust, Beryl Thomas Charitable Trust, BIFFA Award, Bunzl, Central Scotland Green Network, DAERA Northern Ireland, Enovert, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Heritage Lottery Fund, Inner Forth Landscape Initiative, Langdale Trust, LIFE+ financial instrument of the European Community, Natural England, Postcode Lottery Local Trust, Northumbrian Water, Sackler Foundation,