

The B-Lines Initiative

December 2011 (Update no. 2)

Welcome to the second of a series of updates on the B-Lines initiative.

We are now six months into the B-Lines Initiative and our pilot Bee-Roads project in Yorkshire is progressing well. We are continuing to receive help and support from a range of key organisations both within Yorkshire, and further afield, and are now closer to defining how the B-Lines could look and how they could be implemented. Work is also happening on the ground; we are busily trying to identify potential habitat restoration/creation sites and to develop management plans/agreements with interested landowners and farmers. Nationally we are consulting with a range of partner organisations with an aim of producing a scoping report in March 2012. The B-Lines message is also travelling around the country and we have been actively discussing the Initiative with people in other counties, including within several of the candidate Nature Improvement Areas.



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Developing the B-Lines concept

In late October B-Lines hosted a national workshop entitled “*Making Landscapes work for pollinators – now and into the future: the role of B-Lines*”. We were delighted to be able to welcome over thirty delegates from across the country for a day of lively discussion and debate.

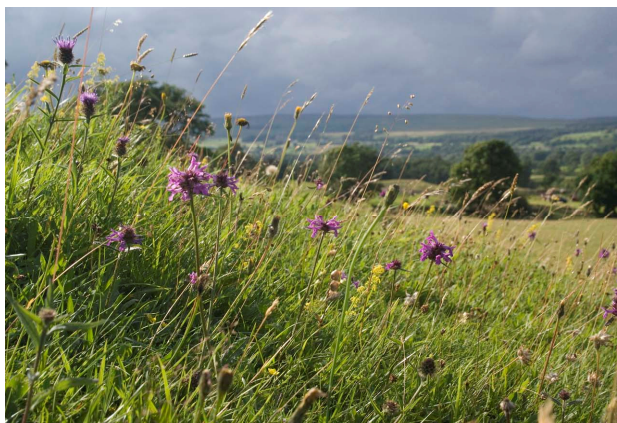
The workshop attracted researchers from several Universities involved in the Insect Pollinators Initiative, as well as the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Scottish Agricultural College and the Food & Environment Research Agency; bringing with them knowledge of the latest scientific work. We were also joined by representatives from a number of wildlife and land management organisations including the National Farmers Union, Country and Business Landowners Association and Conservation Grade.

The workshop was a great success and gave us the opportunity to tap into a wide range of expertise and current thinking. The morning session of the workshop chaired by Prof Dave Raffaelli (Director of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service Sustainability Research Programme) discussed current evidence on pollinator habitat requirements and reviewed how effective farming and conservation programmes were being at protecting pollinators. The delegates then went on to debate how things could be done better and the role of the B-Lines Initiative. Finally we discussed a range of questions concerning how B-Lines could be implemented.

A summary report of the workshop is available alongside some of the key presentations on the Buglife website at [Workshop](#). The outputs of the workshop will influence the future development of the B-Lines concept and we will continue to work with all of the workshop delegates.

Identifying the B-Lines

Through the Yorkshire Bee-Roads project, we are continuing to refine the provisional Yorkshire B-Lines mapping, working with a number of partners to review local datasets. This phase of the work involves reviewing individual stretches of the proposed B-Lines network, utilising local knowledge of sites, current wildlife priorities and target areas, and more detailed local data to ensure that the overall B-Lines network will have the capacity to deliver both its core vision and as well as wider wildlife objectives. We have also recently joined up with a programme of 'Integrated Habitat Network Mapping' being undertaken by Forest Research which we hope to use to support and further refine our own mapping work.



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Making B-Lines

Having seeded the first 8 hectares of land in the Yorkshire Wolds with wildflower seed in early September, we will now wait to see what will happen on this site over the coming years. In the meantime we are continuing to promote the B-Lines Initiative to the farming and landowning communities on the proposed B-Lines and are starting to discuss new works with interested parties. Several conservation partners are actively assisting by 'advertising' the B-Lines and this is helping us to gradually build up interest for wildflower-rich grassland restoration/creation which, subject to funding, we hope to progress in the coming year.

Can you help?

We are very keen to build up a portfolio of interested landowners and farmers who may have ideas for restoring/creating wildflower-rich habitat in the provisional B-Lines identified through our pilot Bee-Roads Project. If you have any contacts who might be interested, please spread the word about B-Lines and ask them to get in touch with us. Thank you.

We will continue to place information on the Buglife website on a regular basis – [Buglife | Habitats Action | B-Lines](#)

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Supported by the Co-operative's Plan
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