

# Monmouthshire Meadows

Issue 32

Registered Charity No. 1111345

Spring 2020

Our aims are to conserve and enhance the landscape by enabling members to maintain, manage and restore their semi-natural grasslands and associated features

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## Contact Us

For information about the group or to join MMG contact our membership secretary Marilyn Dunkelmann [marilyn@monmouthshiremeadows.org.uk](mailto:marilyn@monmouthshiremeadows.org.uk) tel. **01600 860031**, or use our [online membership form](#)

Contributions to the newsletter or items for the web site can be sent to Marilyn

Contact details for the rest of our Committee, as well as news and events, and information about our meadow reserves at Kingcoed, Maryland and Trellech, are on our web site [www.monmouthshiremeadows.org.uk](http://www.monmouthshiremeadows.org.uk)

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## From the Chair

Rachel Morgan

Our meadows are starting to emerge from the mud and wet of these last few months, how wonderful it is to see the wild daffodils blooming once again signalling spring. We send our best wishes to everyone affected by the flooding across the county, and sincerely hope everything will soon return to normal.

Winter is a relatively quiet time for the Meadows Group. At Wet Meadow in Trellech, Dick Coates continues to look after the fields, with Isca's help of course. This year Texel sheep grazed the grass, together with some Jacobs. As Texels have much tighter wool and are about twice the size of the Mountain sheep we had last year, Dick did not have the same problems extracting the animals from briers.

We have been waiting on a couple of grant applications to start some work on Wet Meadow and I am happy to report that we were successful on both counts, with £597 from the Welsh Church Fund and £1,300 from Trellech United Community Council, and we are very grateful to both organisations. With this grant money and the work already done by Gwent Wildlife Trust we are now able to replace the wicket gate into the forest land in the north west of the site, put up some board walk bridges over ditches, and to install an interpretation panel at the entrance by Roman Way.

**STOP PRESS:** As readers will know, most of the events mentioned in this newsletter have been cancelled. We are putting out the newsletter as it stands as it is ready for publication, but without the Diary Dates section



Texels and Jacobs on Trellech Wet Meadow (Dick Coates)

Wet Meadow had a good show of colourful fungi in the autumn, including some beautiful Waxcaps.

At Ida's Meadow near The Narth we removed the bales that were of no commercial value, and arranged a small work party to clear encroaching bracken.

Eifion Davies from Ystradfellte once again put on his Welsh Mountain sheep to graze Kingcoed Meadows. Owain Rees replaced a stretch of fencing and a gate post, and the hedges were cut.

All our fields, including the rented Wet Meadow, are now eligible for money from Rural Payments Wales and this is a welcome addition to defray our costs. As members will know, making a living out of land managed in the way we like is not really an option!

Very many thanks to Steph and Alan Poulter for looking after our two Exmoor Ponies Jacinth and Jemima. This winter they have been at Llangwm near Usk, where fortunately there has been plenty of grazing, as it has been too wet to move them.

At our packed Autumn social we enjoyed a fascinating presentation from our Secretary, Carol Cook who also runs Wye Valley Hedgehog Rescue, and once again Judith Carruthers co-ordinated a magnificent buffet.

There are natural synergies between such organisations as the Hedgehog Rescue and Bee-friendly Monmouthshire. What is good for bees and hedgehogs is good for meadows and vice versa. It was interesting to see that at our stands at the shows, when we had hedgehog material it often disappeared more quickly than our meadows leaflets!

MMG has also been supporting the Nature Isn't Neat project in Monmouth. Through the winter they have held a series of monthly talks and events, with speakers including wildlife gardening expert Cheryl

Cummings, and Brigit Strawbridge, author of Dancing with Bees.

Another project of interest is Embrace Nature Caerwent, led by ex-serviceman Stephen Smith which is restoring an area of scrubland, combining conservation with encouraging mental-health awareness and well-being (more later in this newsletter).

The process of converting to Charitable Incorporated Organisation has been a bit slower than we had originally said. We are only now ready with a draft new constitution. It will be distributed to members shortly and a vote should be taken at the AGM.

## This Coming Season

I look forward to seeing you at our AGM and social evening on Tuesday 21st April at Usk, with our main speaker Caroline Hanks of Herefordshire Meadows (details later in this newsletter). This kicks off a what we hope will be busy summer with the Bee Festival in Monmouth the first weekend in May, our own member open meadow days in late June, then Chepstow and Usk Shows in August and September. The Autumn meet will be at Drybridge House in mid-October. Full details for all events are at the end of the newsletter and on our website.

For our Open Meadows, the plan is to open three meadows in the Trellech/Llanishen area on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June, between 11am and 4pm, and have a further open afternoon near Usk on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June. Full details will be posted on the web site when they have been finalised.

Let's hope for dry July and August so we can all get our hay cut easily.

*Rachel Morgan*



Wet Meadow fungi (Dick Coates)



## MMG AGM and Spring Social

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April, Centenary Hall, Usk, 7pm

Join us for our Spring Social and Annual General Meeting, this year in The Centenary Hall in Usk.

Our guest speaker is Caroline Hanks. Caroline has been co-ordinator for Herefordshire Meadows from its beginnings in 2015 as an informal group of meadow enthusiasts, playing a key part in its recent successes. The founding and core discussion group members now number 60 and there are more than 400 other meadow managers who are part of a wider network. Herefordshire Meadows members work together to conserve and restore native grasslands and to provide other habitats for pollinators and wildlife on their farms. Topics coming up the agenda, as part of the solution to climate change, include soil health, grazing strategies and diverse swards of all kinds.

Her talk is entitled *Herefordshire Meadows; flower rich swards for every farm and smallholding*. It will be fascinating to compare and contrast their group's approach and activities with our own.

We shall hold a short AGM meeting before the speaker, with an update on our activities, and have our usual buffet supper after the talk, with plenty of time to socialise with fellow meadow enthusiasts.

Please book in advance to allow us to plan the catering. You can do this on our web site where there is a booking form, or contact Marilyn [marilyn@monmouthshiremeadows.org.uk](mailto:marilyn@monmouthshiremeadows.org.uk), 01600 860031.

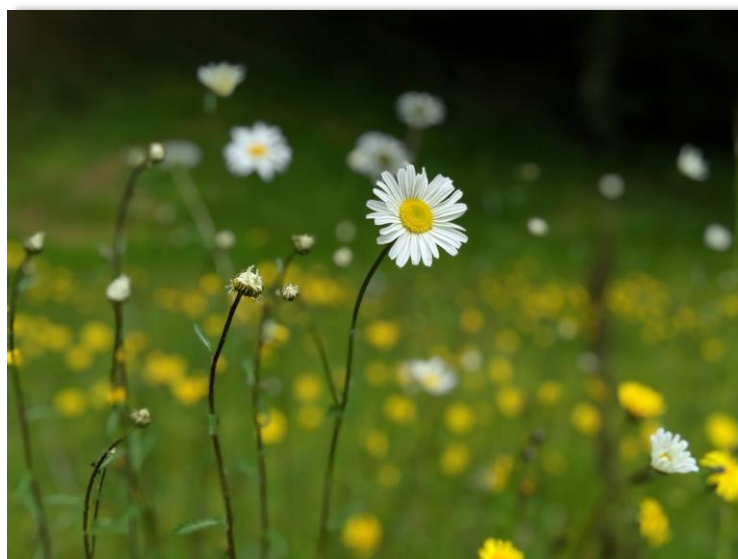
Don't forget to tell us if you have any special or dietary requirements when you book (we always have a good selection of vegetarian options on the menu).

We shall send details for online payment, or you can send a cheque, made payable to Monmouthshire Meadows Group, to The Beeches, The Narth, Monmouth NP25 4QL.

### Getting There

The Centenary Hall (also known as the Scout Hut) is in the far corner of the Maryport Street South Car Park, Maryport Street, Usk NP15 1AD (opposite the prison) where there is ample free parking. There is a link to a location map on the MMG web site.

Please contact one of the committee members if you would like to arrange a lift.



Picture: Matt Dexter

## Welcome to our New Members

We are delighted to welcome these new members to the group:

Annie Blandford, Monmouth  
Robert and Caroline Boyle, Llanrothal  
Sue Bullock, Llanover  
Clare Catto, Mitchel Troy Common  
Anne Davies, Cwmyoy  
Charlotte Downs, Crickhowell  
Ian Mabberley, Fforest Coal Pit

Harry Nicolle, Monmouth  
Stephen Smith, Caerwent  
Alan Stealey, Caerwent  
Anna Terry, Llangwm,  
Mr R and Mrs H Ward, Raglan  
David Wilkins, Monmouth

### Wildflower meadow at Monmouth Comprehensive School

It is hoped to develop a wildflower meadow and soft fruit area on a small parcel of land at the Comprehensive School in Monmouth. Vivien Mitchell who lives adjacent to the site is leading the project on behalf of Transition Monmouth, together with Monmouthshire Meadows Group, MCS, 21st Century Schools and MCC Landscape Team.

Unfortunately, as we write the developers are still not off the site which means the wider project for the whole site is on hold.

Transition Monmouth and MMG have started work on the ½ acre open access area, where they spread seed last year and planted some grassland wildflowers and woodland plants. Ground preparation for an Incredible Edible soft fruit and herb garden is well underway, and, continuing the food theme, hazel and elder will be planted shortly.

### Bee Town Events: Monmouth Open Gardens and Monmouth Bee Festival

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, Monmouth residents will be opening their bee-friendly gardens to the public, organised by Bees for Development who, together with Bee Friendly Monmouthshire, are also running their Pollinator Friendly Gardens Award again this year.

If people who live in Monmouth would like to open their garden for the day while raising money for charity, please could they let contact Cyrene Powell of Bees for Development:

[cyrenepowell@beesfordevelopment.org](mailto:cyrenepowell@beesfordevelopment.org)



There are no 'official' criteria, you just need to be passionate about gardening for wildlife.

**Monmouth Bee Festival** is the next day, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, in Nelson Garden between 10am and 4pm. This event is growing from year to year, with more stalls, activities and information, from honey tasting, bee identification, plant sales and bee keeping equipment, as well as stalls from other local conservation

organisations, including MMG, and of course refreshments. This year there will be a new speakers' area where there will be different talks scheduled throughout the day.

Entry is free, and the proceeds help raise funds for local work protecting bees.

For information about any of these events visit [beefestival.org.uk](http://beefestival.org.uk)

### Parish Grasslands Climate Change Initiative

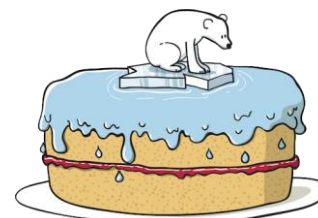
Our colleagues across the border, the Parish Grasslands Project, have started an initiative to actively address the climate emergency. PGP were formed nearly 20 years ago as a wildflower meadow conservation group for people in the parishes of St Briavels, Hewelsfield and Brockweir. (MMG followed their model when we started up in 2003.) Grasslands are still their principal concern, but over time they have widened their scope to include other aspects of their local environment. Now they are engaging with the most fundamental environmental problem of the age.

The goal is to find ways in which their local communities can work together to reduce their combined carbon footprint. The scheme was launched at a meeting in the Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir in February.

They have various events planned including talks on different aspects of global warming and climate change by three knowledgeable local speakers, Gemma Bode, Matt Dunwell and David Rees, at their AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> March (Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir, 7.30pm). Non-members are welcome and there is no charge for entry.

This will be followed by a Brockweir wildlife walk on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April from 2pm - 4pm, Electric bike and car demonstrations on Saturday 25 April, 11am till 1.00pm, at Mackenzie Hall; renewable energy open house weekends on April 25 - 26 and May 16 - 17 with various demonstrations of renewable energy technology, and a Midsummer Festival on Saturday June 20.

Details of all can be found on PGP's web site [www.parishgrasslandsproject.org.uk](http://www.parishgrasslandsproject.org.uk)





## PONT Award

The Welsh Conservation Grazing organisation PONT (Pori Natur a Threftadaeth) has won a Special Commendation in the Collaborative Working section of the national awards from the Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE). The awards were made to celebrate ALGE's 25-year anniversary, and to recognise contributions to nature conservation made by partnership organisations working with local government. The awards were presented at the 2019 ALGE Conference in December.

The full list shows a pleasing number of Welsh projects and groups, as well as Moor Meadows group (a special commendation in the Unsung Local Heroes category). Our local Nature Isn't Neat project was nominated in the Local Government Biodiversity Project category, but lost out to Tayside who submitted their project to save the habitat of the Small Blue Butterfly.

Congratulations to PONT – there's more about them on [www.pontcymru.org](http://www.pontcymru.org) and the full list of winners is available on [www.alge.org.uk/alge-silver-anniversary-awards-2019](http://www.alge.org.uk/alge-silver-anniversary-awards-2019)

## American Skunk-cabbage

American Skunk-cabbage, *Lysichiton americanus*, is a problematic invasive non-native species, originally introduced to the UK in the 1901 from Western North America as an ornamental garden plant. It gets its name from its pungent smell. Since the 1940s it has been spreading in the wild as a garden escape. It is a plant that likes damp habitats, such as woodlands and wetlands, and is fast growing so can spread very quickly once established. It has very large leaves that can be up to 1.5m tall, and big yellow flowers. Infestations clog up areas leaving no room for native plants to grow. It was banned from sale in the UK in 2016.

It is one of the species targeted by the Lower Wye Catchments Project and their team has been busy in the Whitebrook valley clearing areas around the stream. Their Project Officer, Chris Radford, sent us these photographs of the plants before and after treatment.

*The Lower Wye Catchments Project is a partnership led by the AONB and Monmouthshire County Council, involving NFU Wales, Gwent Wildlife Trust, Natural Resources Wales, Woodland Trust and Monmouthshire Meadows. The project takes a catchment approach to natural flood management, covering tributaries of the Wye between Penallt and*

*St Arvans. This means working with natural processes to help slow down the flow of water, while improving habitat and water quality through improved soil infiltration. The invasive weeds primarily targeted through this project are Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. (See our Spring 2019 newsletter for a detailed article on the project.)*





## An Alfred Russel Wallace Companion

### David Collard

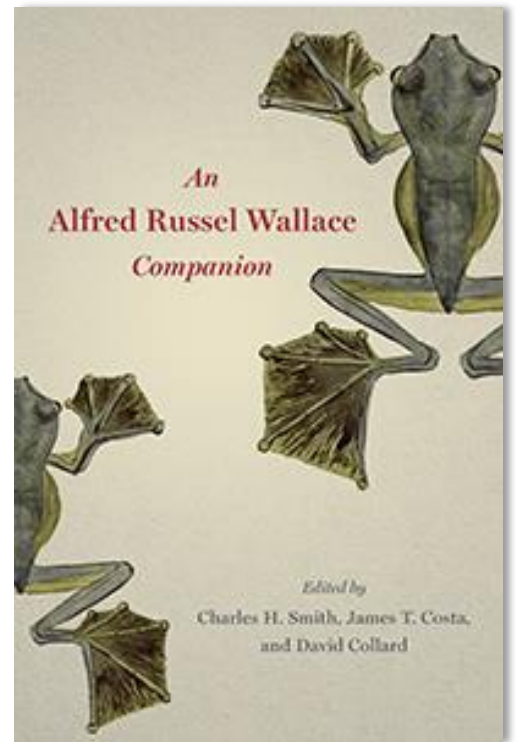
Members of Monmouthshire Meadows may be interested to know that I and my fellow editors recently produced a book on Alfred Russel Wallace the great evolutionary biologist, born in Llanbadoc, Usk.

It is generally recognised that Wallace discovered the principle of natural selection independently of Darwin while collecting specimens in the Malay Archipelago. Wallace's 1858 letter to Darwin sent the great man into something of a panic, stimulating him to produce *The Origin of Species* in the following year.

Wallace not only established the principle of natural selection but made many other contributions across an astonishing range of subjects. The establishment of the so-called Wallace Line, running through the Malay Archipelago, is perhaps the most famous of these other contributions. The Line carefully delineated for the first time the evolutionary boundary between Australasian and Asian species. Indeed, Wallace attached at least as much importance to his work in biogeography as he did to natural selection. The limitations on the geographical movement of flora and fauna prompted his famous Sarawak Law that any new species must be co-incident in time and space with some previous species, a complete denial, of course, of creationism. Wallace became a great advocate of Darwinism, the title of his own big book on evolution. But they did differ on some key points including their explanations of camouflage and mimicry and, most importantly of all, natural selection in man.

Our book, edited by Charles Smith, creator of the invaluable website *The Alfred Russel Wallace Page*, James Costa, Professor of Biology at the University of Western California and myself, is an attempt to guide readers through the complexities of Wallace's life and work.

*An Alfred Russel Wallace Companion. Charles H Smith, James Costa and David A Collard, eds. University of Chicago Press, June 2019. 416 pages. ISBN 9780326622101. \$60.*



## Members' Meadows

Helen Bosanquet in Dingestow discovered this Splendid Waxcap (*Hygrocybe splendidissima*) in their Tumpy Field, one of their ancient pastures so named because of its ant hills (picture below left). This particular field has a rich variety of fungi species. Jon Dunkelman also had a new species of Waxcap, the Blushing Waxcap (*Hygrocybe ovina*) (below right).





## More Members' Meadows



Above: John Hinderer sent in a picture of a dormouse, captured at night by trail camera.



Left: Signs of Spring on Martin and Patricia Milling's land at Llanishen, with their beautiful display of Wild Daffodils

Below: Carol Cook sent in some pictures of seed heads of Teasel and Yarrow which look eerily beautiful.





## Embrace Nature Caerwent

Embrace Nature Caerwent is a group established by army veteran Stephen Smith to provide a project combining concern for mental health awareness and general wellbeing with creating a place for nature to thrive and which the community can enjoy. Working in partnership with CADW, who own the land, and with support from Caerwent Community Council, the group is preparing to transform an 11-acre area of former scrubland into a wildflower rich meadow. They have agreed a licence with CADW for using the land, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument site, and formally constituted the group which will enable them to apply for grant funding to help the project.

Stephen has knowledge of mental health issues and PTSD following his experiences with the armed forces, and now works for the emergency services. On the group's Facebook page he says "I understand how early intervention dealing with mental health is so important hence this project. Embrace Nature be aware of the world around you and reflect on the experience."

"Mental health awareness and general wellbeing are somewhat hot topics of late, & people living with problems such as stress, anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress are encouraged more to embrace nature as part of their own healing process. From my own, & many others experience with living with PTSD & other mental health problems, being out in nature and working in nature can bring people together, relieve stress, and enhance wellbeing. Studies have shown that reconnecting with nature can have a huge impact on mental health and that spending time in green spaces help people to destress and relax."

The site was surveyed by Steph Tyler in October, and as a first step has been topped and Yellow Rattle

seeds planted, provided by MMG. This February the group started work on clearing the nettles and briars. The group members know it is a long project, but they are determined to succeed. As Stephen says "It will take time to deal with the nettle and briar incursion, but with the tenacious work already shown by our members we are looking forward to the challenges ahead."

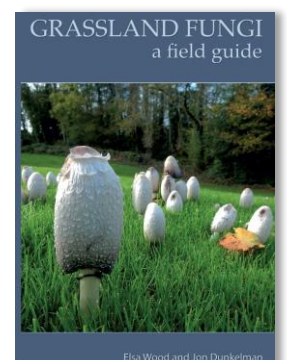


*Pictures: Volunteer Adam Phelps cutting the top field*

## New Edition of our Successful Fungi Guide Planned

Our identification guide ***Grassland Fungi: A Field Guide***, published in 2017, is almost sold out. Elsa and Jon have continued to survey grassland for the last two years and have accumulated a number of new species and additional photographs to enhance the identification options. Work has started on a new edition which we hope to have ready later this year.

The last few copies of the current edition are available from [www.nhbs.com](http://www.nhbs.com), and we shall be selling it to members at MMG events at £10 (the normal retail price is £20) so it will still be worth grabbing a copy of the 'classic' edition while stocks last.





Plantlife Cymru has received funding from the Welsh Government to run a new project aiming to conserve and extend species-rich grassland across Wales. The Magnificent Meadows Cymru project is intended to promote awareness of meadows, increase knowledge and skills in their management, and to pilot a programme of well-being activities in community meadows.

Wales contains around 40% of all meadows and grassland in the UK. But despite this it has received, historically, proportionately much less funding to conserve it. A new Plantlife Cymru team has been recruited, hoping to readdress the balance, giving Welsh meadows the same level of awareness-raising and restoration activity as English and Scottish meadows received from the recent Magnificent Meadows project.

The team is working with the National Trust, the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare and other partners with the aim of creating and restoring a network of species-rich meadows across Wales. They will also be working with local landowners, schools and community groups, providing opportunities for people to connect to,

care about, and benefit from



meadows, through a range of activities. The project started in autumn 2019 with a series of waxcap fungi training courses in Gwynedd, Pembrokeshire and Radnorshire (in which MMG's Grassland Fungi book was used).

More recently the team has been developing Education packs and Training sessions that actively involve children in the creation and management of their own meadows on school grounds. This links to the wider aim of encouraging children to feel more connected to their natural environment. This is currently being trialled at a primary school in North Wales, which it is hoped will become a hub to provide an example and a location for training sessions for other schools in the area.

Another of the project objectives is to establish further Meadows Groups in Wales, and their Outreach Officer for South Wales, Clare Flynn, has spoken to MMG, and other existing groups, to research the best ways to do this. Clare says "We are really looking forward to working throughout Wales to help build resilience for this vitally important habitat, both in the wider countryside and within the heart of our local communities." It's an ambitious project, and we wish them every success.

[www.plantlife.org.uk/wales/our-work/projects-wales-cymru/magnificent-meadows-cymru-wales](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/wales/our-work/projects-wales-cymru/magnificent-meadows-cymru-wales)



*Pictures from  
Magnificent Meadows  
training days*

*Far left, Ray Woods  
using MMG's  
Grassland Fungi guide  
at Gilfach*

*Left: using BMS keys in  
Pembrokeshire*

## Hedgehog Update

### Carol Cook, Wye Valley Hedgehog Rescue

*'As a key indicator of a healthy and sustainable countryside, the absence of hedgehogs is a serious concern for agriculture. Farmers and landowners can help ....'* British Hedgehog Preservation Society and Peoples Trust for Endangered Species.

Following the enthusiastic response to our hedgehog talk at the Monmouthshire Meadows Autumn Meet, we have been asked for more specific guidance on managing meadows for hedgehogs. The following advice is available in more detail from

[www.hedgehogstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Farmers-leaflet.pdf](http://www.hedgehogstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Farmers-leaflet.pdf) but here are some key points.

Hedgehogs are struggling in rural areas. Reasons include habitat destruction through change of land use; fewer field boundaries reducing opportunities for sufficient sheltered, undisturbed areas for hibernation and breeding; a high use of pesticides destroying invertebrates on which hedgehogs feed; and increased road density.

**For hedgehogs to thrive land management must include:**

- Sites for shelter and breeding
- Abundant food sources

These can be achieved by:

#### 1. Management to increase the density of hedgerows

Hedgerows, especially native hedging, provide rich food sources and shelter. Maintain a bramble understorey for summer foraging and winter hibernation. A good hedgerow network provides protection and links to other habitats enabling more opportunities for breeding to stabilise the population. Hedgerows should be 3-metres plus in height and flayed on a 3-year rotation. Hedge-cutting should take place in January, hedge bases should be 2-metres wide with dense vegetation and no gaps.

#### 2. Field margin availability and management

Hedgehogs forage in field margins. Maintain a 2-metre grass margin from base of hedgerows to the meadow. Leave sections of tussocky grass to encourage spiders and beetles, primary food sources for hedgehogs. These areas also provide valuable daytime nesting sites so try to avoid driving or walking on grassy margins. Leave areas of scrub or decaying vegetation over winter to provide food and hibernation sites.

## Badgers and hedgehogs

The badger is much maligned as a primary cause of hedgehog decline. There is no evidence for this. The main problem is lack of food sources, caused by pesticide use and habitat destruction. Badgers compete with hedgehogs for the same food and the two species have co-existed for thousands of years. Even areas with low badger numbers are reporting declines in hedgehog populations.

*'Badgers may attack and kill hedgehogs, but that doesn't mean they are solely to blame for the latter's decline.'* Dr Carly Pettett Wildlife Conservation Research Unit University of Oxford:

[www.discoverwildlife.com/animal-facts/mammals/separating-fact-from-fiction-badgers-and-hedgehog-decline](http://www.discoverwildlife.com/animal-facts/mammals/separating-fact-from-fiction-badgers-and-hedgehog-decline)

## Finally

Spring is here and hedgehogs will start to emerge from hibernation. Emerging hedgehogs are often dehydrated and wobble, so please provide fresh water. Please check for hedgehogs before using garden machinery, including hand-held forks when turning compost heaps, these are a beloved ready-made home for hedgehogs.

Please do not use slug pellets in your garden. Slugs form part of the hedgehogs' diet, so not only do pellets harm hedgehogs, they also damage their food chain. A recent ban on metaldehyde slug pellets has been overturned, so we must continue to raise awareness on this issue.

Keep all netting a foot above the ground so the hedgehog can travel underneath.

If you find a hedgehog out in the day, or injured, please ring Wye Valley Hedgehog Rescue on **01600 860375** or **07922 176767**. We are entirely volunteer run so may not answer straight away but we will return your call. In an emergency contact your local vet or Vale Wildlife Hospital on 01386 882288.





# Hay Days: Management of Floodplain Meadows for Sustainable Productivity

A request for help with a survey from Vicky Bowskill

The role of hay as an agricultural product, and the way that it is made, is changing. Are you a livestock farmer, grazier, haymaker or conservation land manager? Do you make hay on species-rich meadows, or buy in species-rich hay for livestock use? We'd like to hear your views on all things hay. Read on to find out more, or jump straight to the survey <https://openuniversity.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/hay-days>

Floodplain meadows are an ancient and species-rich feature of the farmed landscape that have evolved their unique botanical diversity in response to traditional haymaking practices. In turn, this botanical diversity, which can be as much as 40 species per square metre, supports a wealth of fungi, invertebrate, bird and mammal life. These meadows also provide wider benefits through improved flood alleviation, water and air quality, carbon storage, and cultural and heritage value. However, some 97% of our wildflower meadows have been lost since the Second World War to agricultural intensification, land use change and development.

Floodplain meadows are naturally fertile as a result of phosphorus-rich sediments deposited by flood events and were very highly valued prior to mechanisation and the introduction of artificial fertilisers. Today they represent a sustainable low-input system, producing a nutritious species-rich livestock fodder that leads to meat and dairy products with a healthier balance of nutrients and fats. The presence of medicinal phytochemicals produced by many meadow species can also reduce the need for chemical antibiotics and anthelmintics.

Agricultural management can have a big impact on meadow biodiversity, which depends on haymaking

and aftermath grazing to balance soil nutrients and maintain species-richness in the



sward. The timing of hay cutting is critical and has often been constrained by the requirements of agri-environment schemes. With the changing policy landscape post-Brexit, it is important to better understand how agricultural production and nature conservation can be harmonised as part of a sustainable agricultural future.

This PhD study with the [Open University](#) will be examining how factors influencing the quality and yield of hay respond to cutting date. It will also look at the acceptability of different approaches to haymaking to various stakeholders. The aim is to collect data to identify synergies between sustainable agricultural production and biodiversity to inform policy and practice.

The project is supported by the [Floodplain Meadows Partnership](#) and will run until 2023. This pilot questionnaire seeks to find out which factors relating to the production and use of hay are most important to you. For your chance to be a part of this research, please complete the following survey and let us know your thoughts.

*Author: Vicky Bowskill (PhD student), School of Environment, Earth and Ecosystem Sciences, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, [victoria.bowskill@open.ac.uk](mailto:victoria.bowskill@open.ac.uk)*

*The survey will remain open this year.*

The final section of this newsletter has been removed as it related to events which have all now been cancelled.