

# Beds BioNews



**BedsLife**  
Bedfordshire & Luton Biodiversity Partnership

## Introducing GrazeBeds

GrazeBeds is a grazing scheme set up in Bedfordshire with the purpose of matching landowners or managers of land in need of grazing with potential graziers in the local area. GrazeBeds forms part of the Grazing Animals Project (GAP) which was set up in 1997 to aid the development of conservation grazing in the United Kingdom. Laura Downton who works for the Bedfordshire Wildlife Trust is responsible for the scheme.

Land-owners/land-managers and graziers can register their land or livestock on the website for free. This information is put into a grazing exchange directory. This directory can be viewed on the GrazeBeds website along with contact details. The website works like a 'match making' service. The website also provides information on local advice sources and support sources (e.g. vets and other relevant issues).

To view the website visit [www.grazebeds.org.uk](http://www.grazebeds.org.uk)

*(This project is supported under the England Rural Development Programme by the Department for environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund).*

## WildPhotos 2007: Exploring the Power of Nature Photography

The power, potential and pitfalls of nature photography will be explored and explained by some of the artform's best-respected international exponents when **WildPhotos 2007** takes place in **London** on **26 and 27 October** this year.

**Frans Lanting** leads the line-up for the new event, to be held at the **Royal Geographical Society**, Kensington, London, in partnership with **Shell Wildlife Photographer of the Year**.

Other confirmed speakers include **Doug Allan**, a specialist in Arctic/Antarctic photography; **Gary Braasch**, internationally known through his photo-documenting of the effects of global warming; **Robert Glenn Ketchum**, the acclaimed and highly influential landscape photographer; and Norway's **Pål Hermansen**, who combines nature, landscape and photography to create fine art.

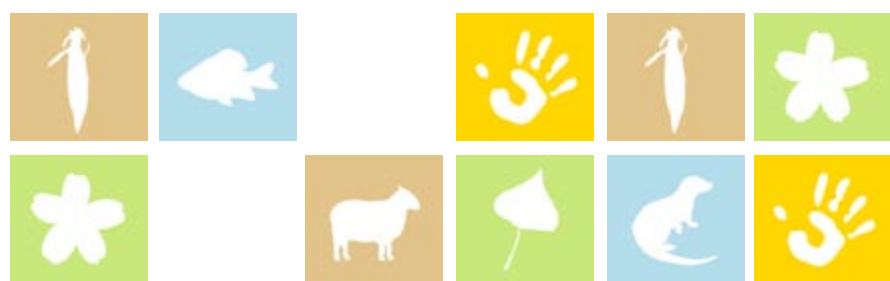
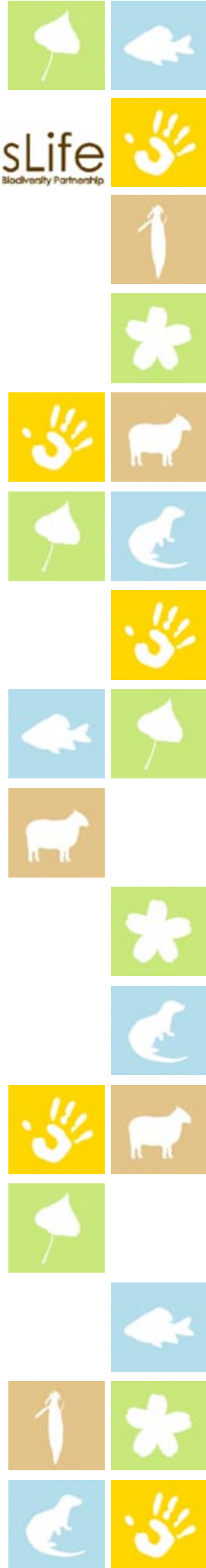
They will be joined by leading photographic agents and publishers, to offer a programme that takes in **technical** and **digital advice**, **commercial opportunities**, **fieldcraft**, **artistry** and the role of nature photography in **conservation** and environmental **campaigning**.

Tickets for the symposium are on sale now and cost £95 for one day (£75, students, State benefit claimants and over-60s) or £165 (£125 concession) for both days. Bookings can be made online at <http://www.wildphotos.org.uk> or telephone the WildPhotos office: 0117 328 5950.

WildPhotos 2007 grew out of a single day's event run in Bristol last year by the conservation charity **Wildscreen**, and **ARKive** – Wildscreen's free-to-view digital library for film, photos and fact-files of endangered species.



Oystercatcher. Photo by Paal Hermansen





## “Breathing Places” Update

by Madeleine Forrester, Learning Project Manager, BBC Eastern Region

During this last year the Breathing Places strategy has been to pilot a “Year of Action in Breathing Places Cities” including running Springwatch festivals. Unusually we have two Breathing Places Cities in this region - Peterborough and Norwich - and so the focus of my work has been working with city councils and partners working within those cities.

However I wanted to give you advance notice of further Breathing Places funding from BIG, which will be announced on Autumnwatch mid November. I am currently working with BIG’s Regional Office to consider running a seminar/s to provide information and advice to interested parties and to those in a position to cascade this out to community groups. At the same time to provide further updates about the campaign, workstreams and plans for 2008.

Please do let your community groups know about this funding as they may welcome time to forward plans, consider local partnerships (e.g., with schools, libraries).

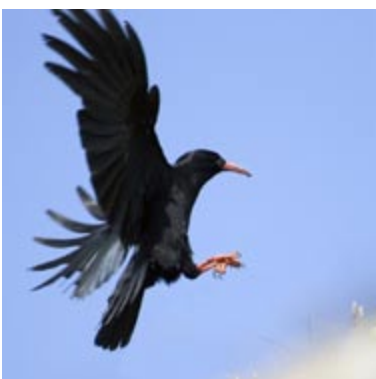
More detailed information will be made available after the announcement on TV. Thanks, and please do get back to me if you are interested in attending an event with BIG and BBC. I can be reached on 01223 589838 or [madeleine.forrester@bbc.co.uk](mailto:madeleine.forrester@bbc.co.uk).



Dunstable Downs, one of our local Breathing Places. Photo by Colin Eric

## Schmoozing with the Crowd in Exeter

The 2007 Local Biodiversity Action Plan conference was held Sept 18-20 in Exeter, and a successful conference it was! The jam-packed programme included workshops on habitat action planning and communicating biodiversity. Presentations covered a range of topics including the new Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, the updated national priority species list and Higher Level Stewardship spatial targeting. Our region was well represented, with four of our BAP Coordinators giving talks or workshops.



But it wasn’t all work and no play! Day two was concluded with a bus trip through the 1100 hectare East Devon Pebblebed Heath (and a glimpse of a couple of choughs!), followed by an excellent boat tour of the Exe Estuary. Warm cider and local food kept everyone comfortable on the chilly, windy ride.

We’re lobbying to have the next conference in Luton, so watch this space!

Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*. Two of these were spotted at the Pebblebed Heath! Photo by Keith Marshall





## Comings and Goings

It's been musical chairs at BedsLife in recent months, with some old friends departing and new ones arriving. Best of luck to Stella Baylis and Monica O'Donnell (Natural England), Emily Brennan (ZSL Whipsnade Zoo) and David Anderson (Bedfordshire Natural History Society); many thanks for all your help! And a warm welcome to Nick Lindsay (ZSL Whipsnade Zoo), Andy Lingard (Forest of Marston Vale), Martin Day (Bedfordshire Natural History Society), Laurie Jackson (Wildlife Trust) and Helen King (Cranfield University). We're looking forward to working with you all!



## Nature Nuggets

Three new county **habitat and species action plans** have just been released! Action plans for wet woodland, arable field margins and arable plants are all done - check them out at [www.bedslife.org.uk](http://www.bedslife.org.uk).

In money matters, the "**Access to Nature**" **grant scheme** will be launched by Natural England next spring. The scheme will be open for applications in the Spring of 2008 and will be fully promoted next year. Stay tuned to the Natural England website for more information: [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk).

Congratulations to the **Forest of Marston Vale** - the Forest Centre has received a prestigious Green Flag Award! It joins Bedford Park, Priory Country Park, Brantwood Park and Wardown Park as one of the best green spaces in the country!

Need some **advice and information for your rural business**? Diane Budd is our local Food, Agriculture and Land-based Business Advisor for Business Link. Give her a shout to talk about your business needs - free of charge! After over four years in the sector she's got a good network of useful contacts and knowledge that might be able to give you a helping hand. Diane can be reached on 07739 596411 or [diane.budd@bl4bl.co.uk](mailto:diane.budd@bl4bl.co.uk).

## New Publications

Defra has released two guidance documents on the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act. The Act imposes on all public bodies a duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity. These new guidance documents are written for local authorities and parish councils, respectively, and can be downloaded from [www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/biodiversity/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/biodiversity/index.htm).

Also available on the Defra site is *Conserving Biodiversity: A UK Approach*. This report calls for joined-up working across the public, voluntary and business sectors on a variety of agreed goals and priorities for the greater good of biodiversity.

*Park Life Report* is the first ever public satisfaction survey of Britain's parks and green spaces. In it, GreenSpace summarises the results of a national survey examining what people think of Britain's parks and green spaces and the role they play within the community. The survey is based on nearly 20,000 respondents and can be downloaded from the GreenSpace website: [www.green-space.org.uk](http://www.green-space.org.uk).





## Upcoming events

Oct 30: The RASE and ADER are pleased to invite you to their conference **Gateways to the Future: Ways Forward for Rural Business Support**, at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire. Full details about booking and overnight accommodation can be found on the ADER website at [www.ader.org.uk](http://www.ader.org.uk).

Nov 7: The River Restoration Centre is hosting a seminar from 4:00 - 5:00 pm at Cranfield University. Shannah Anderson of the University of California will be presenting **Lessons Learned from the Post-project Appraisals of California Urban Stream Projects**. Entry is free for all RRC members (includes all EA, SEPA, SNH and EN staff) but numbers are limited. To book your spot email [rrc@therrc.co.uk](mailto:rrc@therrc.co.uk) by the 2nd of November.

Nov 13-15: The theme of the **2007 IEEM Conference** is Making the Connections: a Role for Ecological Networks in Nature Conservation. The conference will take place at the Britannia Hotel, Nottingham. Single or two-day passes are available for a fee; for complete details visit the IEEM website at [www.ieem.net](http://www.ieem.net).

Nov 20: GreenSpace with support from Leeds City Council is hosting **Pushing Parks Forward**, a conference focusing on how to successfully market and raise awareness of parks and green spaces. The conference will take place at the Royal Armouries, Leeds. The programme, information and booking details can all be found at [www.green-space.org.uk/conference/](http://www.green-space.org.uk/conference/).

Nov 28: **Working With and Beyond NERC** is the theme of the 13th conference and annual general meeting of the Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE). The event will take place at Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London. The entry fee is £40 for ALGE members and £65 for non-members. The booking deadline is Nov 19. Contact ALGE for more information: [www.alge.org.uk](http://www.alge.org.uk).

Oct 5-14, 2008: **The IUCN World Conservation Congress** is the world's largest and most diverse environmental congress. Co-hosted by Spain and Catalonia, the next Congress will welcome more than 8000 people from around the globe. Please visit the website for more information: [www.iucn.org/congress](http://www.iucn.org/congress).



Paul Armstrong

Have you got an announcement or event to tell us about? Don't keep it to yourself; put it in the next issue of Beds BioNews! Just contact Heather Webb at [heather.webb@bedscc.gov.uk](mailto:heather.webb@bedscc.gov.uk).

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