



Conserving Wildlife and Habitats

In the first three years of our highly successful Biodiversity Challenge Fund, we have awarded 20 major grants totalling some £8 million. These have targeted projects across England and Wales delivering significant gains for UK biodiversity, both in terms of priority habitats and species.

MENTER MÔN – ANGLESEY RED SQUIRREL PROJECT

Anglesey is one of only three sites in Wales to have red squirrel populations. With this much-loved creature now facing the possibility of extinction, creating an island haven for them represents a very special opportunity.

Supported by our grant of £444,000, Menter Môn's project is now conserving Anglesey's existing red squirrels and introducing new populations. Woodland corridors are also being planted to connect all forest areas on the Isle for the squirrels to use.

BRITISH WATERWAYS – CANAL CORRIDOR CHALLENGE

Along 39km of the popular Wolverhampton and Staffordshire Canal, which links Staffordshire and the West Midlands conurbation, British Waterways is working to create a continuous corridor for wildlife movement.

Our grant of £652,000 is being used to fund the planting of over 5,000 trees, hedge laying, the creation of new reed-beds and canal-side habitat, and the construction of otter holts and hibernation chambers for bats.

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION – PREES HEATH COMMON

Thanks in no small part to our grant of £571,000, Butterfly Conservation now owns a new 60 hectare reserve in north Shropshire. The site's importance stems from the fact that it is the last refuge in the Midlands for the rare silver-studded blue butterfly.

Our funding is also being used to help re-create what was once a beautiful heathland common. This will benefit not just the silver-studded blue, but also the unique heathland wildlife community as a whole.

RSPB - BROADWATER WARREN NATURE RESERVE

In late 2006, the RSPB acquired a new 180 hectare nature reserve in Kent. Broadwater Warren was chosen as it represents the largest and best potential heathland restoration site in the High Weald.

Assisted by our grant of £487,000, the RSPB is now restoring the site to its former glory. This will result in a mosaic of open heathlands, mature woodland and a special area of valley mire, benefiting rare wildlife species.



1 © M.Richards (rspb-images.com)



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3 (courtesy of Menter Môn)



4 (courtesy of Butterfly Conservation)

