

Eycott Hill Nature Reserve

Newsletter

ISSUE
#2



2016 was another brilliant year at Eycott Hill Nature Reserve. Almost 5,000 people paid us a visit, joined an event, or helped at a conservation work party.

Thank you for your support and we hope to see you during 2017!



LOTTERY FUNDED



Wildlife recording

We worked with Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre during summer 2016 to encourage people to record the fantastic wildlife they saw. In July we held a two day Bioblitz attended by almost 100 people who learned about moths, mammals, dragonflies, geology, and meadow flora. A total of 275 records were collected, for 125 different species, and 27 of them had never been recorded before.

The total species list now stands at 760!



Coronation Meadows

We enjoyed a busy and productive summer working on the Coronation Meadow. Another three hectares of flower-rich meadow was created in 2016 through harrowing, spreading green hay, and planting plug plants, taking the total area to six hectares. We enjoyed lots of sunny days with volunteers who helped us plant an amazing 2,550 wildflower plugs, and took part in training to help us survey the meadows on an annual basis.

This year's survey showed that the area restored in 2014 is doing really well and looks spectacular with a good range of grass and flower species including rough hawkbit, red clover, yellow-rattle, and eyebright.

The area restored in 2015 is also doing nicely and the meadows should keep getting better with careful management.



CORONATION
MEADOWS



Building communities. Transforming lives.

The Bioblitz was followed up with two recording training days in September 2016 where we learnt how to use the brilliant iRecord app and website and how mobile technology like smartphones can aid recording. We'll be running more of these in 2017 and would encourage all ages to come along and have a go; you don't need to be an expert!



Chrysops sepulchralis, a rare dark deerfly usually found in the south west of England was snapped on a smartphone during a sedge course in July 2016. This image allowed experts from across the country to verify it, confirming it as the second recorded sighting in Cumbria. The first record also came from Eycott Hill Nature Reserve, recorded by David Clarke in June 2013.

New publications - Look out for a geology leaflet and poetry anthology inspired by Eycott Hill Nature Reserve

New Species Records July 2016

1. Straw grass-veneer moth (Agriphila straminella)
2. White tailed bumblebee (Bombus lucorum)
3. Rough stalked feather-moss (Brachythecium rutabulum)

4. Snail (Candidula intersepta)
5. Violet ground beetle (Carabus violaceus)
6. Common spotted orchid (Dactylorhiza fuchsii)
7. Square stalked willowherb (Epilobium tetragonum)
8. Ash (Faxinus excelsior)

9. Common earwig (Forficula auricularia)
10. Barred straw moth (Gandaritis pyraliata)
11. Ox eye daisy (Leucanthemum vulgare)
12. Fox moth (Macrothylacia rubi)
13. Black medick (Medicago lupulina)

14. Fly (Mesembrina meridian)
15. Hoverfly (Myathropa florea)
16. Pale forget-me-not (Myosotis stonlonifera)
17. Middle barred minor moth (Oligia fasciuncula)
18. Green grasshopper (Omocestus viridulus)

19. White-tipped bristle moss (Orthotrichum diaphanum)
20. Common froghopper (Philaenus spumarius)
21. Soldier beetle (Rhagonycha fulva)
22. Yellow-rattle (Rhinanthus minor)
23. Hoverfly (Rhingia campestris)

24. Hoverfly (Sericomymia silentis)
25. Crane fly (Tipula maxima)
26. Hoverfly (Bumblebee mimic) (Volucella bombylans)
27. Dotted clay moth (Xestia baja)

Prism Arts

Eyes on Eycott Hill is a brilliant animated film produced by learning disabled adults from the Edington Centre in Penrith. It combines folklore, stories written by local children, and the geology and wildlife of Eycott Hill into a fabulous tale of adventure. We had lots of fun making it and you can view the film, and see how it was made, by visiting our website below.

The Edington Centre, along with Eden Mencap, and older people from Amy's Care in Carlisle visited Eycott Hill Nature Reserve again in summer 2016 to work on a textiles project inspired by the flora and fauna in the Coronation Meadows. An exhibition of this work was held in Carlisle and Penrith libraries from November 2016 to January 2017.



..... www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/eycott-hill

Luing cattle

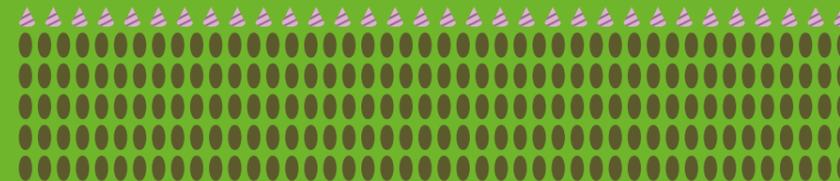
The herd are thriving on the nature reserve and numbers have increased to 27 cows which are a mix of suckler cows and heifers. The bull was running with them over the summer so we are expecting new calves from May 2017.

Volunteer livestock checkers are visiting on a regular basis after completing a Lantra accredited course. As well as carrying out welfare checks they also record how the cattle are using the nature reserve including location, behaviour, and what they are eating.

We also send grass samples to laboratories at Romenco and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) who analyse the nutritional value of different vegetation as part of a wider study into upland grazing by The Farmers Network.



32 Work Parties



210 Volunteer Days

229 points surveyed for vegetation across nature reserve

Did you know
1 Hectare is equal to 10,000 m²

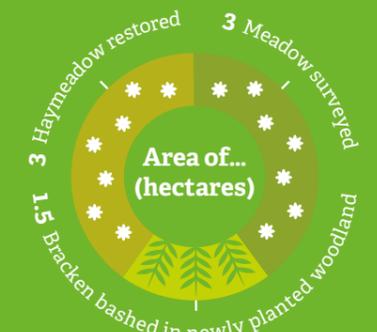
1500 Trees



2550 Wildflower Plugs

2016 Nature Reserve work in numbers

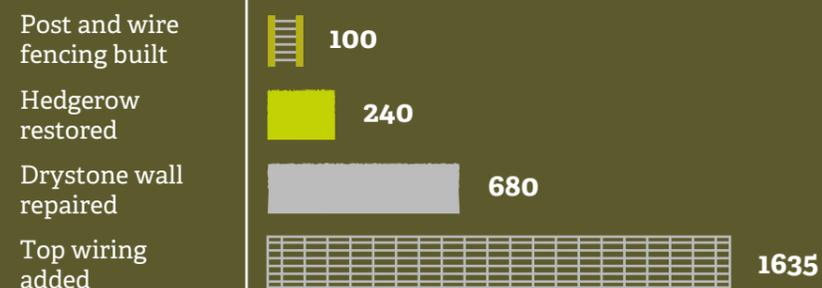
804 Event Attendees
4821 Visitors



6000 Young trees checked and weeded by volunteers

26 Bales of green hay spread

Length of...(m)



14 Training Courses



132 People learning new skills

Volunteers

We achieved an amazing amount in 2016 and it wouldn't have been possible without our brilliant team of volunteers. As well as creating new wildlife habitat by planting wildflower plug plants, hedgerows, and shrub heath, they've helped to carry out vegetation and ditch surveys, repaired dry stone walls, put up

fences and top wiring, checked on the cattle, and helped to make visitors welcome at events. We'll also have some newly trained volunteer guided walk leaders to show visitors around the nature reserve from spring 2017.

New volunteers welcome, no previous experience necessary, visit www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/whats-on for dates.

Voluntary placements and student projects

Rowena Hargill completed her voluntary placement in April 2016 and returned to the University of Cumbria to complete the final year of her BSc in Animal Conservation Science. She stayed in touch and helped out at events over the summer.

Louise Richards joined us in July 2016 for a nine month placement after finishing an MMBiol degree in Marine Biology from Bangor University in North Wales. She was interested in wetlands after doing a lot of work on coastal wetlands during her studies and wanted to gain experience in practical conservation. She's been helping out at work parties and events, even leading a hedge planting work party.

Louise has also done ID training courses on meadow plants, fungi, and moths, and practical training courses in dry stone walling and fencing. She's now training to be a guided walk leader. You can read more about Louise's placement on the Eycott Hill blog at: www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/blog.

We'll also be working with two BA (Hons) Wildlife Media students from the University of Cumbria on short term volunteer projects early in 2017. Ben will be helping to promote volunteering through photography and online blogs posts and Jess will be completing a geology photography project.



Vegetation Monitoring

During summer 2016 we surveyed more than 200 points across the nature reserve. It's really important to monitor how the vegetation is changing as a result of our conservation management work so we can ensure we're getting the best results for nature. We carried out surveys across the fell, in the Coronation Meadows, and in newly planted woodland to look at which species are growing where and the structure of the vegetation.

On the fell it's very varied from dense patches of rush, to shorter grass cropped by the cattle, and patches of heather that are starting to grow again. This means lots of different habitats for wildlife including small mammals, invertebrates, and ground nesting birds. There'll be lots of opportunities to help with this throughout 2017 and you don't need to be an expert botanist to take part.



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UP**

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