

# Alderney Wildlife

## **WILDFLOWER WONDERS**

Alderney is abundant with colourful flora - including Wild Thyme and Autumn Squill!

## **EXPLORING EELGRASS WITH BEEP**

The Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project is a collaborative effort to record eelgrass through citizen science! Find out more inside!



**Summer 2023 | Nature's Classroom**  
Protecting Alderney's wildlife for  
the future.

# Welcome

## Embracing nature in all its forms!



We're already over halfway through the year, and with the topsy-turvy weather we've been experiencing on Alderney, it has flown by! We have still been fortunate to have those lovely summer days shine through though and, in those moments, I have taken the opportunity to be outside as much as possible, as I'm sure the rest of the island's community have as well. From watching the picturesque sunset at Fort Albert to enjoying my book on Longis Bay, summer on Alderney is always special!

However, I have also found pleasure in embracing nature even on those less-than-perfect days. Namely, I've run into the sea while its drizzling and gardened knowing that the looming rain will help the seeds that I'm planting flourish. Highlighting how our relationship with nature is what we make of it and not just waiting for a sunnier day.

Over the past few months, I have been working on Nature's Classroom, a campaign close to my heart, which encompasses all that the Trust accomplishes with community engagement and education. From running nature-based activities with the Aspire Youth Group to holding our weekly Moth Morning Mayhem for people of all ages and interests to join in with, the Trust has always strived to work closely with Alderney's community and inspire a connection with the island's incredible natural world. On July 20th of this year, the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts released a report stating that nature-based projects open to the public, can help improve physical



and mental health! This includes tackling social isolation and loneliness, anxiety and physical inactivity which is linked to musculoskeletal problems.

With this recent development, it seemed fitting to bring Nature's Classroom to the forefront of this edition of Alderney Wildlife. Within this topic, we'll cover how you can get involved with the Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project (BEEP) and help pollinators in your garden by making a butterfly puddling station, and as always, talk about all things wildlife!

Rowie Burcham  
Outreach Officer



## Contents

**4** Manager's Report

**6** Wild News

**8** Top Sightings

**10** Introducing: Nature's Classroom

Since it's beginning, the Trust has aspired to bring the island's natural world closer to the community. This objective is what we call Nature's Classroom.

**12** Wildflower Wonders

Alderney is a wildflower island! Learn about three (of many!) species to keep an eye out for when you're out and about.

**14** Masters of the Sea

We were recently visited by University of Exeter students Poppy Tully and Mike Clarke. Read all about their research on Grey Seals and invasive species here.

**16** Team Wilder

Our Team Wilder Community Support Officer, Abbie, discusses the new strategy from the central Wildlife Trusts team and how it is being brought to Alderney.

**18** Grass-Fed Guardians

Other than looking cute, what benefits do our Conservation Grazing Herd have to Alderney's landscape?

**20** Exploring Eelgrass with BEEP

The Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project is a collaborative project co-founded by the Trust. Discover how you can get involved here!

**22** WATCH

Help take care of your local pollinator community by creating a Puddling Station for the dryer months!

**24** Visit a UK Reserve

"Peregrines, kestrels, buzzards and red kites are ever-present!" Discover where Ramsar Officer, Alex, is talking about.



# Manager's Report

*“This leaves the Trust in a position where it will have to continue to carry out all this work for the government using only its charitable funds.”*

**Y**our Trust has changed over the last few years, morphing from having a single paid employee for most of its history, to having four full-time and one part-time paid members of staff by September this year. Alongside them work four or five interns, and many resident volunteers (nearly sixty at last count). The funding for this change has come almost entirely from generous off-island sources, brought to Alderney through the team's hard work.

**Since its founding the Trust has provided services to the States of Alderney** for which it has received a set income (in 2002 this was £15,000). Last year the Trust team provided more than 1,800 hours of services to the States for just £16,000, including managing 28 km of the island's footpaths, as well as supporting the States response to avian flu, invasive plants, and Asian Hornets. Depressingly, we often hear the phrase 'the Wildlife Trust takes too much money from the States'. The irony here is that the States helped to establish the Trust to reduce its own overheads and meet new commitments to the environment, and this has been formalized as a service level agreement in recent years. The States' own estimates show that for it to carry out the same amount of work as is provided by the Trust under its service level agreement it would cost the island at least £45,000. *(nb. the Trust publishes its signed accounts online).*

**In 2022, at a public meeting,** a States General Services Committee (GSC) Member challenged the amount of funding the Trust took in 'grants'. I would like to clarify that in 2022 the Trust received a total of £4,845 in Grants. £1,345 of this was for the Queen's Jubilee Tree Planting, undertaken at the request of the States, £1,000 for tree planting and woodland maintenance work and £2,500 funding for running the Inter-Island Environment Meeting (IIEM), an event jointly hosted by the States. For the IIEM, the Trust contributed a further £5,000 (including secured sponsorship) and around 500 staff hours, therefore making

its contribution many times more than that provided by the States. In regard to Alderney's 'Ramsar Site', the United Nations recognised Internationally Important Wetland designated by the States in 2005, the States' provides a budget to anyone working on the site to help repay costs; this excludes staff time. If one factors in staff hours, the Trust contributes an additional £30,000+ towards the site (based on States calculations), nearly twice as much support as is provided by the States. This it does because of the global ecological significance of the site, and so that Alderney can hold its head high as the 'Wildlife' Channel Island, a massive part of its tourism appeal.

**Contrary to the claims of the Trust 'costing too much'** and thanks to the hard work of all of the team and the generosity of our members and donors, we have been able to secure significant amounts of funding from both the UK and Guernsey. **This brings new income and jobs to Alderney: only 5% of the Trust's funding in 2022 came from the States' service contract.**

**I feel it is important for our members to know** that, as of the 4th of August, well over 800 hours of service provision has already been delivered by the Trust to the States. However, as yet the States GSC has not agreed to provide any funds. This leaves the Trust in a position where it will have to continue to carry out all this work for the government using only its charitable funds. This includes keeping States paths open during the peak of the tourism season and supporting Public Works on issues such as environmental impacts and Asian Hornets. We have always had a strong and positive relationship with our government and continue to try and improve communications with States members. However, I believe that you, the Trust's members, have the right to know what we do for our island's government.

Thank you for all your support!

By Roland Gauvain, CEO

# WILD NEWS

All the latest news from Alderney Wildlife Trust



SOME OF THE AWT TEAM!

## We won the Conservation Awards!

This was for the **Schools & Youth Groups Green Award** in the Insurance Corporation (Channel Islands) Conservation Awards and we'd like to say thank you to everyone who voted for our Nature's Classroom campaign! We were the only Alderney organisation that were finalists in the awards and were definitely up against some tough competition. With this, we won £500 which will go towards Nature's Classroom (read more about this on page 10).

## We Held an Ocean Gala

At the end of July, we held an Ocean Gala at the Georgian House! With pieces of artwork by artists across the Channel Islands, we held an auction and raised over £3,000 which will go towards the FishIntel project. FishIntel tracks fish (and dolphin) movement through the English Channel to help understand their migration patterns. With the money raised, the project can now extend a year within Alderney's waters and the long term future of the project is more secure! Thank you to the artists and creators who donated their beautiful artwork and to the attendees who bid and pledged throughout the night!



## Welcome Poppy!

At the beginning of July, we said hello to Poppy Emmens, our new Reserves Officer! Poppy is originally from Southampton and has just completed an Advanced Technical Diploma in Land & Wildlife Management at Sparsholt College. Her favourite parts of the course were studying (and putting into practice) estate work, habitat management and ecology, all of which she is hoping to incorporate into the new role.

As Reserves Officer, Poppy will be taking care of our Conservation Grazing Herd, managing the reserves across the island and helping lead the Wildlife Volunteers.

## Avian Influenza Update

Last summer, birds across the UK and Channel Islands were hit with Avian Influenza (AI). The Northern Gannet population suffered in particular and the colonies on Alderney were no exception to this.

This year, **there have been no confirmed cases of AI on Alderney** and the Gannet colonies are having a good breeding season so far. However, AI has been reported in the UK, but seems to be affecting different species compared to last year. This includes Guillemots, Kittiwakes and Terns. Alderney's breeding Common Terns have not returned this year and while AI may have a part to play, they also faced high rat predation in 2022. It should also be noted that our Guillemots have now all fledged.

There has been an isolated case of AI in a domestic bird on Jersey and we are continuing to carefully monitor Alderney's seabird populations.



## Our Eelgrass Maps are on the Apps!

In Spring, the Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project (BEEP), which the AWT co-founded, helped form the first map of Eelgrass beds across the Channel Islands. This was through collaborating with the marine boating app, 'savvy navy', the Ocean Conservation Trust, Clean Sailors and the Government of Jersey. The map is now visible on the 'savvy navy' app!

This digital map will allow the public the chance to view the Eelgrass beds and to make an informed decision not to anchor within them, which can physically damage this vulnerable habitat. For more information on BEEP, head to page 20.



# Top Sightings

**Two Dragon Arums**, also known as the Dragon Lily, was seen near Crabby Bay back in June. **This spectacular plant only appears occasionally on Alderney** and is known for the unpleasant smell it produces to attract flies which pollinate the plant.



DRAGON ARUM | LINDSAY PYNE



GREY HERON | ALEX PURDIE



BOTTLENOSE DOLPHINS | ALEX PURDIE

On a recent trip around Burhou, a **pod of Bottlenose Dolphins** were seen bow-riding. Remember: if you see a dolphin while out on the water, to **slow down and keep a distance of 100m**. If the individuals approach you, maintain your intended journey and **avoid unpredictable movements**.



RAISED WILDFLOWER BED AT ALDERNEY ROOTS | ROWIE BURCHAM

Back in spring, our Wildlife Volunteers built and sowed **two raised wildflower beds at Alderney Roots** as part of our **Pollinator Project**. In July, the beautiful wildflowers flourished and their bright colours and sweet scent have attracted a number of bumblebees to the pretty patch!

In July, not one, but **eight Grey Herons** were spotted flying over the north-west coast. These easily recognisable birds, fly with their long legs stretched out and necks pulled in.

## NEW SPECIES RECORD!

Incredibly, a **Dark Crimson Underwing** was found in our team's moth trap at Essex Farm in mid-July. This is the **first record of the species for Alderney** and it is also a priority species in the UK!



DARK CRIMSON UNDERWING | MATT LEWIS

At the beginning of July, delightfully an **Elephant Hawk-moth** was recorded in our team's moth trap. While we often see their relative the Small Elephant Hawk-moth, this is **first record in ten years** of the larger Elephant for the AWT.



ELEPHANT HAWK-MOTH | ROWIE BURCHAM

BACKGROUND: ABIGAIL DE CASTELLA

# Introducing: Nature's Classroom



From its foundation, the Alderney Wildlife Trust (AWT) has striven to engage the island's residents and visitors with the natural world, through running nature-based learning and organising activities and events.

Over the years, the younger generation in particular has had the opportunity of participating in many events organised by the AWT. At one of the local playgroups, toddlers are always a keen audience at each wildlife session; from making seed bombs to creating pinecone bird feeders or making butterfly ponds, they never hesitate to get messy to help our island's fauna. In recent weeks, these enthusiastic young people have enjoyed observing and carefully handling moths of all kinds, and looking for green things around the allotment.

Recently, the AWT has also attended several sessions with the Aspire Youth Group (part of the Youth Commission for Guernsey & Alderney) with children aged 8-13. We carried out activities such as creating bee hotels, writing environmental pledges on a giant poster (that some of you may have seen in the AWT shop), learning more about foraging and tasting seaweeds, or doing a beach clean at Braye. Following these activities, children have found that "it has changed the way [they] see people littering and doing bad things for the environment", that "[they] have a better understanding of [nature]", that nature is "interesting" and that "we should respect it". From this,



MAKING A WORMERY WITH PLAYGROUP | ROWIE BURCHAM

all the children expressed a desire to take part in future activities organised by the AWT, and they have already been throwing around ideas for future sessions!

The AWT also hosts activities open to the wider public, including the popular, weekly moth-trapping sessions, in which visitors of all ages are welcomed at Essex Farm to observe release of the moths captured the previous night. The island is home to a varied population of moths, from the delicate-looking White Ermine to the giant Hawk-moths, and the funky-looking pink-and-yellow Small Elephant Hawk-moth, which make for very interesting observation sessions. In the Summer, the Marine Tank sessions take place at the Moorings, offering the public the opportunity to discover marine creatures they might never have seen before – an activity that is sure to attract much attention!

**"We want to encourage the use of outdoor spaces for educational puposes and aim to offer the public the opportunity to learn more about our island's pollinators"**



THE LETTER TO TOMMORROW  
CREATED BY YOUTH GROUP  
| ROWIE BURCHAM

Moving forward, the AWT will continue to provide Alderney's youth with resources to generate a positive connection to nature. We want to encourage the use of outdoor spaces for educational purposes and aim to offer the public the opportunity to learn more about our island's pollinators and increase their identification skills. We also welcome any ideas and feedback from the public regarding activities they would be interested in doing with the AWT.

By *Camile Francois*, AWT Volunteer



PREPPING FOR OUR SEAWEED FORAGE SESSION WITH YOUTH GROUP | ROWIE BURCHAM



MORNING MOTH MAYHEM | ABIGAIL DE CASTELLA

# Wildflower Wonders

## Wild Thyme

**W**ild Thyme is a low-growing native wildflower, which forms dense mats abundant with clusters of beautiful purple-pink flowers. It can be found along chalk grasslands, meadows and rocky areas, such as cliffs, and creates a sensory delight with its strong aromatic smell. In folklore, Thyme is a favourite of faeries!

There are over three hundred species within the thyme family, with Wild Thyme being one of the more widespread and common amongst them.

On Alderney, the best place to spot Wild Thyme is Longis Common, where our Conservation Grazing Herd helps us manage the land and keep the reserve's landscape as healthy as possible. Wild Thyme is not only attractive to humans with its bright colour and lovely fragrance, but also to a variety of pollinators, keeping Longis Common thriving and buzzing!

WILD THYME | VAUGHN MATTHEWS

## Autumn Lady's-tresses

**A**lderney's smallest orchid, usually less than 15cm high, Autumn Lady's-tresses can usually be found in flower from mid-August to early September. It has creamy white flowers with a green spot deep inside which are arranged in spirals up the stem (its Latin name is *Spiranthes spiralis*) and grows in calcareous coastal grassland such as the east coast paths, Mannez Garenne and in gardens around the Picaterres, Platte Saline and Braye.

AUTUMN SQUILL  
(WHITE VARIATION) |  
LINDSAY PYNE



## Autumn Squill

**A**lthough this native plant bears the name Autumn, it actually flowers in mid-summer so if you wait until Autumn you will be too late!

The short dense upright spikes of blue-purple - occasionally white - flowers can be seen, primarily in short dry grassland, before the basal narrow leaves appear. Autumn Squill is nationally scarce, found in Devon, Cornwall and the Channel Islands and just a few other sites in England. Here it is locally common, or even abundant - look out for it around the lighthouse and the coastal paths

Autumn Squill was originally in the lily family but this has now been split into seven groups following research using DNA and the plant has been reclassified as being a member of the asparagus family along with plants such as Bluebell and Grape Hyacinth.

AUTUMN LADY'S-TRESSES |  
LINDSAY PYNE



Did you know:  
Autumn Lady's  
Tresses is named  
after the plants  
resemblance to a  
braid of hair!



By Lindsay Pyne, Administrator &  
Rowie Burcham, Outreach Officer

# Masters of the Sea

The Trust were recently joined by University of Exeter students Poppy Tully and Mike Clarke, who are undergoing their *Masters of Science in Marine Environmental Management*. While on Alderney, they spent their time investigating rockpools and carrying out ecological surveys to collect data for their research projects: Poppy's on Grey Seal populations and Mike's on invasive species!



Poppy



Mike

## Poppy's Pinnipeds Piece

**M**arine mammals play an important role in the marine environment and are distributed across the globe. One marine mammal that you can find on your doorstep here in Alderney is the grey seal, also known as *Halichoerus grypus* (which translates to hook-nosed sea pig!). This charismatic species is one of over thirty seal species and can be found across the North Atlantic. They are also one of the rarest seal species globally. Unfortunately, grey seals have had a tumultuous history, facing pollution, global warming, and human conflict. Sadly, these threats are still present today.



**Pollution is a well-known danger** to marine wildlife, especially to an animal notorious for its curiosity. Young seals have been seen playing with dangerous marine litter such as discarded fishing gear, which can become entangled around them, leading to potentially life-threatening injuries.

**Global warming is causing increases** in both sea temperature and acidity, which are having negative impacts on grey seals. Rising temperatures are shortening the pupping season and pushing it earlier in the year. Increases in acidity can lead to toxic algal blooms which affect the nervous system of grey seals, often leading to fatalities.

**Throughout their history**, grey seals have faced conflict with human activities such as boating and fishing. Previously,

this has resulted in culling programmes which have had detrimental effects on the grey seal populations. Sadly, they have been villainised, as their effects on the ecosystem are misunderstood. While it is a common belief that seals are harmful to fisheries, according to seal experts in the UK, the presence of grey seals is actually an indicator of healthy fish stocks. Seals require fish to survive, so if there were no fish, they would simply move away. Lots of seals, means lots of fish! This shows that grey seals are a valuable part of the marine ecosystem, and we must conserve this incredible species.

## Mike's Meddlesome Marine Invasives

**U**nlike terrestrial species, marine organisms are able to move freely around the global oceans. This unique trait not only makes the oceans a diverse environment but allows for the chance for species to arrive in new locations. Unfortunately, most of these new arrivals are not successful as the organism is outcompeted or cannot find enough suitable resources for them to survive. However, invasive non-native species (also known as INNS) can survive. Invasive species are organisms which have been intentionally or accidentally introduced into an environment outside their native range. INNS cause particular problems as they are known to displace native plants and animals by aggressively competing for space, light and food, even beginning to eat the local wildlife.

**Invasive marine species can be transported in several ways**, but the most significant method is through shipping, by attaching themselves to hulls of ships or surviving in ballast water tanks. The relatively recent development in the trade and tourism industries has allowed species to travel vast distances to new habitats. The results can be significant, not only in



terms of ecological impact but also economically, as aquaculture and fisheries can be affected. The arrival of these INNS to any coastline is now inevitable, but it can be very expensive to control and eradicate INNS once they become established, so efforts are concentrated on prevention. Continuous monitoring, risk assessments, equipment and vessel cleaning, as well as awareness and education are essential for the successful control of INNS, at a global and national level.

**Alderney in particular has seen an increase** of INNS over the last 5 years. Several species of invasive seaweeds have begun to outcompete the local resident seaweeds. Currently, surveys are being put in place to monitor these invasions and begin to control the species affecting our coastlines.



# Team Wilder

POLLINATOR PATCH AT ALDERNEY ROOTS | ABIGAIL DE CASTELLA



*Abbie de Castella*

Alderney holds a diverse and extensive variety of wildlife within and around its unique landscape, from land to sea and air. The ecology of this little place is fascinating to explore and, as the new *Team Wilder Community Support Officer*, I'm thoroughly enjoying getting to know what lives above, below and around this beautiful Island.

*Did you know?*  
Research completed by the University of Derby, highlights a link between nature connection and conservation. The more connected we feel to our natural environment, the more likely we are to take care of it!

**The central Wildlife Trust has developed a strategy** to 'Bring Back Nature by 2030' because it is evident that climate change is contributing towards ecological losses. The focus of this strategy is to achieve nature recovery, meaningful action and nature-based solutions by empowering people of all ages, identities, cultures, backgrounds and abilities.

**The AWT believe in this collaborative approach** of inspiring people to get involved and support this recovery, enabling us to help our natural world thrive again. It's important to acknowledge that efforts by the Bailiwick are not comparable with larger industrial or polluted countries. However, it's imperative that we focus on how Alderney's environment is responding to climate change so that we can respond accordingly.

**Collectively, our incredible community already volunteers** over 1,000 hours every year to protect, enrich and take care of this natural environment, enabling us to not only maintain but also improve our island's ecology whilst enabling people to access it and enjoy it.

**In 2023 and beyond**, we want to create more engagement across the island that benefits the wildlife of Alderney, in the hope that if we take notice together, we'll be better equipped to respond



CELEBRATING WILDLIFE WEEK | ROWIE BURCHAM

to what might be changing in Alderney. Community is pivotal for new projects, much needed causes and flourishing organisations that contribute socially & environmentally, empowering people to make a difference. We will be running a series of surveys to enable you to Have Your Say and in person events where you can help us develop a list of priorities, ideas or concerns you'd like to explore, together.

**If you are a resident or tourist, part of the local youth group**, a business owner or part of an under-represented community, we want to hear your views. This is an opportunity for you to develop new projects that can make a difference. Would you like to see more growing for our pollinators? More recycling? Less plastic? Would you like more opportunity to learn about how you can help the natural world?

**The next step will be to bring people together** to enable new concepts, ideas and projects to develop.

**The AWT are committed to creating solutions** that support and empower you all to make big changes. As they say though: from little acorns, mighty oaks grow. No matter how small our actions are, collectively, we can make big waves (or mighty oaks) for the benefit of all.

**This is called Team Wilder.**



# Grass-Fed Guardians: Moo-ving Towards a Greener Future

Rowie Burcham, Outreach Officer

While enjoying the Longis Nature Reserve, you may have seen the six Guernsey/Angus cross steers borrowed from Kiln Farm Dairy which make up our current Conservation Grazing Herd. Our herd were first introduced in autumn 2003, as the very first of their kind in the Channel Islands and now help manage over 30 hectares of Alderney's countryside! But other than looking adorable...what benefits do they bring to the island's landscape?

THE GRAZING HERD | CAMILLE FRANCOIS

## A Diverse Landscape

Using livestock for land management is a traditional method which was widely used before the introduction of heavy machinery. Cows are non-selective feeders and have longer tongues compared to other grazing species which they use to wind around vegetation and pull. This leaves behind a variety of vegetation of differing heights, benefiting some birds nesting near the ground, by contrast, heavy machinery often leaves behind a monotonous landscape.

## Creating Microhabitats

Allowing a variety of vegetation and flora to grow also creates multiple microhabitats. These are exactly what they sound like: small areas of land which are different from those surrounding them. Numerous animal species benefit from these microhabitats, providing specific shelter, food and water sources, including specialist butterflies. By creating multiple microhabitats within the plot for their grazing, the cattle are allowing an abundance of wildlife to flourish in the Longis Nature Reserve.

## Source of Nutrients

An expected (and smelly) part of having a grazing herd of cattle is their dung, which is a rich source of nutrients and attracts various insects to the area. This in turn brings a variety of insectivorous species to the reserve as well, making the reserve (including Longis Bird Hide) the perfect place for birdwatching on the island.

## Opening Up Space

Prior to the cattle's introduction, bracken, bramble and scrub were slowly taking over the reserve. Our herd will happily graze on these plants, while being able to push through them and reach taller vegetation as well. By doing so, they are opening space for other plants and giving those less competitive species a chance to grow. Once again, this brings diversity of flora to the reserve and with it an abundance of wildlife. All as a result of our Conservation Grazing Herd!



THE GRAZING HERD | CAMILLE FRANCOIS



# Exploring Eelgrass with BEEP



The Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project (BEEP) is a collaboration between *the Trust, the Biodiversity Partnership (States of Guernsey), La Société Guernesiate, the Guernsey Biological Records Centre and Seasearch*. The project was setup in 2019 with the aim of recording the two species of Eelgrass found in the Bailiwick of Guernsey (Common Eelgrass and Dwarf Eelgrass), through citizen science.

One of the project's core objectives is to enhance public awareness of Eelgrass (also known as Seagrass) as an important habitat-forming species within the Bailiwick's rich and diverse marine landscape. Using a combination of outreach tools and awareness workstreams, the importance of this marine habitat is slowly becoming public knowledge across the Bailiwick of Guernsey.

EELGRASS SURVEY | BEEP PARTNERS



EELGRASS SURVEY | ALEX PURDIE



BEEP SNORKEL SESSION | BEEP PARTNERS

## Annual Public Workshops

These are held on Guernsey and Alderney during late spring to summer, and comprise a classroom session followed by a field-based activity. The classroom session includes a presentation on how to identify Eelgrass species, about the project and how to help survey it across the Bailiwick (e.g., voluntarily through beach walks, snorkels or scuba diving methods). Attendees are then invited to join a field-based activity, usually in the form of a beach walkover or snorkel session.

## Field-Based Explorations

The field-based explorations have been designed to help record Eelgrass across the Bailiwick's different marine environments throughout the year. From late autumn until early spring, BEEP provides intertidal beach walkover surveys for the public to help record Eelgrass beds during the low spring tides. Throughout the summer, BEEP partners and volunteers focus on getting out into the blue to record Eelgrass presence, location, extent and associated life (such as fish and invertebrates) either by sea-swimming, snorkelling or scuba diving, with records heading off to the island's records centres and Seasearch.

## Social Media

BEEP partners regularly publish a range of informative pieces on the ecological properties and conservation importance of Eelgrass and BEEP. These outreach platforms also

allow BEEP to request sightings of Eelgrass from the public. In 2022, one social media request of 'have you seen Eelgrass growing?' gave over twenty different locations of Eelgrass across the Bailiwick. These public sightings are incredibly important and enable new sites to be considered as well as verify previously recorded sites of Eelgrass.

## Digital Mapping Applications

Recent applications of digitising marine maps and making them publicly available has changed the way we record, use and share marine ecological information. Earlier this year, BEEP linked with several environmental organisations and the marine boating app, 'savvy navy', to create the first Channel Islands map of Eelgrass beds. This collaboration will allow marine users, the opportunity to see the location of the Eelgrass beds and choose not to anchor within them, which can physically damage the vulnerable habitat, sometimes leading to complete loss. The use of this digital mapping application also allows BEEP to positively engage with new marine users on the importance of Eelgrass and how to reduce their potential impact upon it.

If you would like further information on the Bailiwick's Eelgrass or would like to join BEEP partners and volunteers, please contact Dr Mel Broadhurst-Allen via [marine@alderneywildlife.org](mailto:marine@alderneywildlife.org).

By Dr. Mel Broadhurst-Allen, Living Seas Co-ordinator

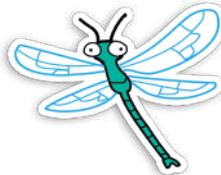


## WATCH Make a Butterfly Puddling Station

While butterflies mostly feed on nectar, like all living creatures they also require water to remain healthy and flying high! In the heat, it can become difficult for them to find water sources which are steady and that they can rest near while hydrating. A butterfly puddling station gives the butterfly community near you everything they need to keep pollinating!

### What you need:

- A shallow dish
- Some soil and sand mixture
- Flat stones and pebbles of various sizes
- Water!



### Instructions

- 1) Add the soil and sand mixture to the station
- 2) Put in the stones and pebbles, leaving some areas of the dish exposed
- 3) Fill the station with water, but ensure you leave the tops of the stones and pebbles uncovered as butterflies cannot land on open-water
- 4) Place the dish or tray flat near some pollinator-friendly plants
- 5) Optional: Add some nectar-rich sources to help attract butterflies to the station
- 6) Watch all the butterflies enjoy their new drinking pool!



MAKING A PUDDLING STATION WITH PLAYGROUP | ROWIE BURCHAM



## Visit a UK Reserve

*“Peregrines, kestrels, buzzards and red kites are ever-present!”*

Mount Caburn is a standalone hill in the South Downs. At 146 metres it may not be an official mountain, but it stands prominently above a floodplain cut by the Glynde Reach. The remains of an Iron Age hill fort are visible at its peak.

Once heavily forested, clearance around 4,000 years ago and grazing have created a rare chalk downland. Caburn's slopes support numerous wildflowers, but are famous for their orchids such as Burnt-Tip, Pyramidal, and Common Spotted. Some of these are familiar to us on Alderney, where the alkaline soil enables similar meadows to flourish, but there are differences; lizards and snakes are abundant, and the rare Adonis Blue butterfly has a stronghold in Caburn's chalk slopes.

The best way to see Mount Caburn (and the South Downs in general) is undoubtedly from above! The gentle slopes create the perfect conditions for paragliding and hang gliding.

From the air, the abundance of bird life is apparent: peregrines, kestrels, buzzards and red kites are ever-present. The rich grassland provides a plentiful supply of grasshoppers, mice, and small birds – not to mention the odd rabbit – for these hunters!

To visit Mount Caburn, you can walk up the footpaths or check out the *Southern Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club* for information on flying schools and tandem flights.

By Alex Purdie, Ramsar Officer

# Thank you

Your support is vital for protecting Alderney's wildlife!  
[alderneywildlife.org/support-us/donate](http://alderneywildlife.org/support-us/donate)



FRONT COVER: FORESTER MOTH | ROWIE BURCHAM  
BACK COVER: WREN | DR. TARA COX

## *Champion, Study, Protect*

An Alderney Charity (Guernsey Charities Register No. CH261)

Tel: 01481 822 935

