



Ulster Wildlife Trust

Annual Report & Accounts 2019/20



**Ulster
Wildlife**



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A message from our Chairman:

2019/20 has been a very challenging year for us all and Ulster Wildlife has been no exception. The charity has made great progress in terms of work completed and ensuring financial stability but, of course, the Covid-19 pandemic had a major impact towards the end of the year.

Our project work continued to deliver very positive and tangible benefits and we had major successes in our sharks and rays, barn owl, red squirrel, peatlands and Environmental Farming Scheme projects.

Climate change is so important to all of us and Ulster Wildlife sees restoration of our Peatlands as a major influencer in Northern Ireland. We were therefore delighted during the year to be able to purchase Glenullin Bog near Garvagh. We will begin by recording baseline conservation information and will then move forward with its restoration over the coming years. We hope to work with DAERA and other partners on expanding peatland restoration work and with other climate change initiatives such as restoring blue carbon moving forward. With the global climate and ecological crises, it is important that Northern Ireland plays its part in achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 or before and reverses the loss of biodiversity.

At the very end of 2019/20, the pandemic had a minor impact on our nature reserves and project work. However, growth in membership significantly declined during the last month of 2019/20 (ie March 2020) with the lack of public events we depend on for recruiting new supporters. This will be a big challenge for next year and as we move to digital fundraising we would appreciate members' help in encouraging friends, family and colleagues to join the charity online at www.ulsterwildlife.org

Thank you for your continued support and together we can make a difference for wildlife in Northern Ireland.

Ken Brundle



A message from our Chief Executive:

As the Covid-19 lockdown took effect at the end of the 2019/20 year, the role of the natural environment in health and well-being became even more apparent.

During lockdown, we have seen that the ability for people to have their daily dose of nature has been a lifeline for many during the pandemic. Within our natural surroundings we create a sense of place, of belonging, of identity – in ways that staying inside with Zoom and digital streaming services can't ever replace.

It is against this background of a growing appreciation of nature that we are proud to report on the achievements of the charity during the 2019/20 year featured within this annual report. We work with local people to secure space for nature in our countryside, towns, coasts and seas and this year has been no exception. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been involved in this journey throughout the year. It is a great privilege to work with our staff team, trainees, board members, volunteers and funders in our quest to care for some of Northern Ireland's most special places delivering on our promise in the Strategic Plan of 'Wildlife in Trust'.

We are experiencing unprecedented climate and ecological emergencies and the need for action is more important than ever. Your support is very much appreciated and we would welcome new members and volunteers to enable us to maximise our contribution to local wildlife. We have been working to achieve a cultural shift and move the environment up the political agenda as the time for change is now.

We hold our natural environment in trust for the next generation. By implementing the measures in this ambitious plan, ours can become the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it and pass on to the next generation a natural environment protected and enhanced for the future.

Jennifer Fulton

Nature's Recovery

For over 40 years Ulster Wildlife has been driven and supported by people who believe that wildlife and wild places are important. Nature brings a host of benefits for society - it is fundamental to human well-being and underpins a sustainable economy. We are a local charity that champions native wildlife. We work with local people to secure space for nature in our countryside, towns, coastlines and seas.

Our long-term vision is for a Northern Ireland with:

'...a healthy, well cared for natural environment which contributes to enjoyment, quality of life, prosperity, health & well-being'.

Ulster Wildlife's charitable objectives as set out in our Articles of Association are -

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| <p>(1) The advancement of environmental protection and improvement, in particular the conservation of all aspects of Northern Ireland and its adjacent areas' wildlife, biodiversity, geodiversity and associated natural beauty for the benefit of present and future generations by:</p> <p>(a) safeguarding, maintaining and enhancing natural biodiversity and geodiversity through the management of nature reserves (however entitled or however established);</p> <p>(b) practising, advocating, encouraging, influencing, advising and campaigning for best conservation practice involving land, sea and freshwater management practice in ways that favour biodiversity, geodiversity, ecosystem health, sustainable use of natural resources and sustainable development;</p> <p>(c) undertaking action, independently or in partnership, to protect threatened habitats, sites of geodiversity or heritage significance, at local, national or international levels on or in water, land and adjacent seas;</p> | <p>(d) taking account of other aspects of the natural heritage on which wildlife is dependent or to which it contributes, including landforms and landscapes;</p> <p>(e) improving the quality of life of people through supporting a biodiversity, ecosystem, geodiversity and sustainability-led approach to the management and design of the natural and built environment.</p> <p>(2) The advancement of education by raising the public's awareness and knowledge of all aspects of the natural and built heritage, biodiversity and geodiversity of Northern Ireland and its adjacent areas by promoting, undertaking and co-operating in research and gathering and sharing information on these topics.</p> <p>(3) The advancement of citizenship through volunteering linked to natural heritage including the promotion of sustainable food production and sustainable lifestyles.</p> <p>(4) The advancement of the arts, culture, heritage and science linked to natural heritage through events and project-based action.</p> <p>(5) The advancement of health and well-being through activities linked to the natural environment.</p> |
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Our Charitable Objectives are delivered through the two Strategic Themes of Living Landscapes and Living Seas.

Our Living Landscapes work is about:

- Working with people and communities to restore damaged and fragmented habitats, reconnecting these and linking them to the green space in our cities, towns and villages.
- Securing a society where people are inspired by, and engaged in, protecting wildlife and where they recognise the economic and social value of nature, and the many ways in which it improves their quality of life.

Our Living Seas work is about:

- Helping wildlife and habitats to recover from past decline as our use of the seas' resources becomes environmentally sustainable.
- Inspiring people about marine wildlife and to value the sea for the many ways in which it supports our quality of life.
- Creating a network of marine protected areas as part of a long-term solution to the management of healthy seas.

Our work to achieve Living Landscapes and Seas is delivered annually focused around five strategic goals.

Our Priorities for 2019/20

This was the sixth year of delivery under our current Corporate Strategy 'Wildlife in Trust' which runs until the end of March 2020.

Our five strategic goals are to:

- 1. Inspire people** to champion wildlife and value nature.
- 2. Protect and restore habitats and ecosystems** through practical action and research.
- 3. Stand up for nature** by influencing government policy.
- 4. Promote health and well-being** through enjoyment of the natural environment.
- 5. Grow our success** and extend our reach.

Our Fundraising targets for 2019/20 were to:

- > Secure at least 14,050 members or regular supporters.
- > Secure £409,196 income from Membership including Gift-Aid contributions.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have taken into account the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning our future activities.

This Trustees' Report shows how we performed against these Strategic Goals and Targets in 2019/20.



Goldcrest in Balloo Woodland Nature Reserve © R Surgenor



Hedge Planting in Crumlin with Young Farmers



Volunteers from Danske Bank at Slievenacloy Nature Reserve

At a Glance...2019/20

14,208
members supporting
our work



Over
1,200
people attended our
wildlife events

98
sharks and rays
tagged

Over
15,250
volunteer hours
contributed

Over
6,500
engagements with young
people in nature education
sessions

Over
100 different
NI Priority Species
cared for on our nature
reserves

Over
100,000
visits to our nature
reserves

Over
600 landowners
benefiting from advice

Over
200 woodlands
surveyed for squirrels

682
hectares of nature
reserves managed

Over
850
people took part in
our nature-focused
training events

98 sites
surveyed for
barn owls

Inspire people to champion wildlife and value nature

We believe that in order to protect Northern Ireland's diverse landscapes and seas, and secure a future rich in wildlife, we must invest resources into re-engaging people with nature and educating our society to value the environment as a vital investment in our future health, well-being and economy.



Rockpool ramble - Glenarm July 2019

Education

Inspiring and enthusing the next generation of environmental leaders and encouraging them to take action for nature in their local communities is of vital importance - we want to make sure that every child has the opportunity to benefit from learning about wildlife and wild places.

We delivered hundreds of environmental education sessions with Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Special Schools and Young Farmers' Clubs across Northern Ireland with almost 7,000 interactions with young people during the year.

Our Grassroots Challenge Project worked directly with 165 pupils across ten post-primary Special Schools helping them to improve their understanding of wildlife and to take action in their school grounds. The pupils completed 45 separate activities to improve the wildlife habitat value of areas around their school including biodiversity surveys, wildflower planting, tree planting and making bird feeders. As part of this work, small grants were provided for ten schools to enable biodiversity improvement projects to take place on their grounds.

We brought the underwater world of our endangered local sharks and rays to life, working with 138 secondary school children in Coleraine, Carnlough, Carrowdore and Newry. We also delivered education sessions with 205 primary school children in Glenarm, Belfast, Ballymena and Carnlough to teach them all about our local seas and the amazing but threatened marine wildlife around our coasts.

The ParkLife project worked with 40 primary schools across Belfast. The schools took part in five different sessions; two based indoors and three based in their local park or school grounds. Six monthly Parklife Saturday Clubs were also organised for children across Belfast's Parks providing fun educational activities to help them reconnect with and learn about nature.

We also completed our 'Environmental Leadership Programme' with Secondary Schools in the Larne, Carrickfergus and Belfast areas, funded by our Corporate Partner AES UK & Ireland. This project engaged young people in environmental action in their local communities.

Ulster Wildlife continued to support two Wildlife Watch Groups in Lisburn and Belfast, run by dedicated volunteer leaders, where children meet monthly for fun and engaging nature-based activities.

Events

In 2019/20, Ulster Wildlife ran 78 different events for the public - offering a wide range of ways for people to get involved and learn more about local wildlife.

Events included talks, walks, rambles and clean-ups across the whole of Northern Ireland with over 1,200 people attending our events in 2019/20.

This included;

- talks on barn owls and red squirrels,
- a programme of summer events at Bog Meadows,
- five beach cleans and two 'extreme' beach cleans on remote areas of our coast,
- four snorkel safaris,
- five shark egg case hunts,
- five rockpool rambles and our first ever sea safari by night where people experienced the weird and wonderful world of our coastal marine life through UV light.



Trainee helping at Bog Meadows Nature Reserve

Training

Building knowledge, skills and competence is fundamental to a sustainable future for Northern Ireland's environment and an important aspect of the charity's work.

Our Grassroots Challenge Project worked with 1,312 young people through the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster network delivering engaging wildlife education and training events throughout the year. Our Lantra-approved 'Conservation on the Farm NI' course and other training opportunities were undertaken by 168 young people. Twenty-one Young Farmer's Clubs engaged in different levels of the Eco Club Award scheme.

Our Sea Deep Project delivered nine shark tagging training courses for sea anglers and eight egg case survey training courses for volunteers to help gather important data on sharks, skates and rays in Northern Ireland waters.

In March 2019, we welcomed seven new trainees onto our 'Nature Skills NI' Lottery Funded project. Building on the success from the previous year, the project continued to target trainees from underrepresented groups in the heritage sector including people from ethnic minority backgrounds, those with a disability and non-graduates under the age of 24.

Throughout their year, trainees benefited from training in a range of courses such as Brushcutters and Strimmers, Fencing, Snorkel Instructor, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Trailer Licence. Practical courses build the skills portfolio to help the trainees gain employment in the conservation sector upon completion of the traineeship. Their action-packed year included hands-on experience working within the Nature Reserves and Living Seas teams, working on maintaining nature reserves, delivering public engagement and education events and assisting other teams with projects such as Peatlands Restoration and Red Squirrel conservation. Trainees also had the opportunity to undertake placements with other organisations in the sector, partnering up with Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful and National Trust.

All trainees worked towards achieving a Lanta Award by completing a number of in-house training sessions and building a skills portfolio during the 12 months. Each received a certificate and skills card presented at the end of year celebration event.

We were delighted that most of our 2018 trainees successfully progressed on to employment within the natural heritage sector after their participation in the Nature Skills Programme. Trainees moved into employment with the National Trust, RSPB and Lough Neagh Discovery Centre.

Volunteering

Volunteers remain central to our success helping to maximise the charity's impact during the year.

Each volunteer makes a unique and valued contribution helping the charity to make a difference for Northern Ireland's environment. Volunteers help on our nature reserves, support our events, and provide much-needed support to fundraising efforts. They are also increasingly involved in 'citizen science' through our wildlife surveys which provides a valuable evidence base which informs conservation management practices.

It is a privilege to work alongside such a dedicated and passionate group of people. Over 15,000 volunteer hours were given to the charity in 2019/20 to support our conservation efforts. In order to improve our processes and ensure we provide a positive and welcoming volunteering experience, we successfully achieved the 'Investors in Volunteers' charter mark in November 2019. With this Charter Mark in place, we intend to continue to build on this foundation, further developing the range and quality of volunteer opportunities.

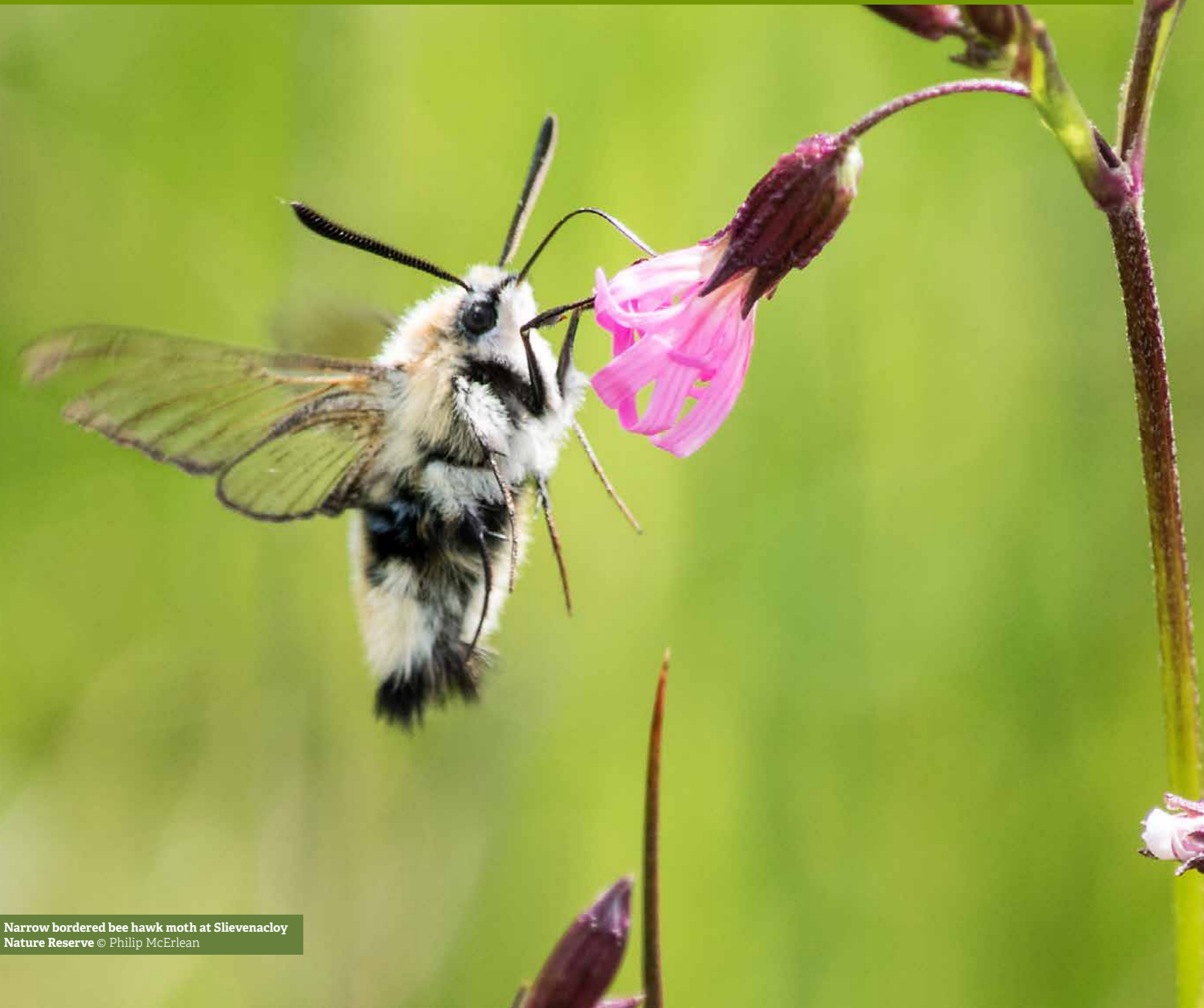
The Grassroots Challenge Project supported the Duke of Edinburgh's Award leaders and young people to engage in 64 local volunteering projects benefiting wildlife and the environment. Further volunteering took place during a Gold Award Residential which ran for a third year at Belfast Activity Centre's Ardaluin House near Newcastle. Our Wildlife Expedition Packs were used by 61 Duke of Edinburgh groups enabling 384 young people to have wildlife observation and recording as the focus of their Bronze, Silver or Gold Award expedition.

The volunteer Grassroots Challenge Youth Forum went from strength to strength during the year meeting regularly and helping to plan and deliver the project's annual celebration event. Two members also represented the project on the UK-wide 'Our Bright Future' Youth Forum.

Young people from the Grassroots Challenge programme contributed to the DAERA consultation on an Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland. New working relationships are now in place with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum and the Education Authority Youth Service.

Protect and restore habitats and ecosystems through practical action and research

We continue to promote the restoration of natural systems to provide maximum benefit for native species, habitats and people. This work centres around the protection and good management of core, high-nature-value sites, and seeks to promote habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors to form the basis of ecological networks within our landscapes and seas. We use our local presence and knowledge to carry out practical habitat management work, and assist others in doing so.



Narrow bordered bee hawk moth at Slievenacloy Nature Reserve © Philip McErlean

Nature Reserves

During 2019/20 the Ulster Wildlife Nature Reserves Team managed and protected 18 sites across Northern Ireland. We now manage 682 hectares of land, providing protection and care to over 100 Northern Ireland Priority Species and 19 Priority Habitats.

The highlight of the year was the addition of Glenullin Bog, near Garvagh. We were able to purchase this peatland site thanks to funding received from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) in addition to income we received from gifts in wills. We look forward to restoring this damaged peatland to increase its potential for nature and for locking away and storing carbon.

The wide range of work taking place on our nature reserves continued including conservation grazing, scrub management, invasive species control, habitat and species research monitoring, public access and health & safety maintenance. The support network provided by our dedicated volunteers and Ulster Wildlife members is invaluable and very much appreciated.

Agri-environment schemes are an important mechanism supporting conservation actions on our farmland sites and we entered the Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS) during the year. Benefitting from the scheme are sites like Slievenacloy in the Belfast Hills - one of the best species-rich grassland sites in Northern Ireland. Conservation work at this site protects nine species of orchid, common lizards and rare moths like red carpet and marsh pug.

Non-native species are one of the greatest threats to the wildlife on our nature reserves. A comprehensive survey was carried across several of our Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) nature reserves - non-native species were recorded, mapped and work has already begun to eliminate them. At Umbra nature reserve, this essential work was supported by funding from the Landfill Communities Fund and the burden of non-native species found on this site has been significantly reduced. Umbra is part of one of the most important sand dune systems in the UK and Ireland and is home to some of our rarest insects and plants.

Several of our nature reserves benefited from in-year funding from NIEA in 2019/20 - this allowed the completion of several important projects. At Ballynahone Bog, 1.5 hectares of non-native rhododendron was removed - these works complement our previous bog restoration projects at the site and will directly benefit iconic species such as skylark and large heath butterfly. It will also help preserve the integrity of the bog, helping to combat climate change through carbon storage and sequestration. NIEA also provided fencing for the largest grassland glade at Straidkilly nature reserve - the purpose is to reinstate traditional grazing at this small species-rich grassland area to support key species such as silver-washed fritillary butterfly. Additionally, this same funding provided a new storage shed for nature reserve materials at Slievenacloy as well as machinery to help deliver conservation works across our sites more effectively.

Sheep grazing recommenced on the Isle of Muck - this time with increased numbers and we are pleased that it is starting to have a noticeable and positive effect on the vegetation. The hope is that over time, combined with scrub, bracken and rat control, this will create more available habitat and improve the fortunes for ground-nesting seabirds.



Flooded dune slacks at Magilligan

Protected Sites

During 2019/20, we continued our work in partnership with the Ministry of Defence to provide management of the Ballykinler and Magilligan Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

Twelve hectares of gorse and blackthorn cut in the previous three years were treated to prevent scrub regrowth, and approximately another 5 hectares of gorse and blackthorn were cut. Surveys for a number of species were completed including rabbits, petalwort, marsh fritillary, scarce crimson and gold and small eggar moths. We recorded the highest ever number of marsh fritillary webs at Ballykinler and petalwort was seen for the first time in three years. Fencing, gates and drinkers have been installed at both sites to enclose approximately another 20 hectares that can be grazed for the first time benefitting the ecology of the dune grassland and significantly reducing fire risk. We also assisted with finding a grazier for Magilligan, supervised contractors undertaking a range of work on site and drafted the Natural Environment component of the MOD's 5-year Management Plan.

The trial excavation in the humid dune slacks that was created the previous year with the aim of creating embryonic slack habitat was monitored. Encouragingly the excavation flooded as intended this winter, and is being colonised by jointed rush which is a slack community indicator plant. Things appear to be developing in the right direction but further monitoring will be required in future years to judge the success of this initiative.

We partnered with a local charity, True Harvest Seeds to collect seed under licence from the extremely rare plant smooth cat's-ear. The training centre at Magilligan is the last known location for this plant in Ireland and seed will be bulked-up by growing on plants in controlled conditions to be held in safe long-term specialised storage facilities. Plans are under development to provide new suitable habitat for this species at Magilligan Training Centre.

The Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS) Project continued to go from strength to strength during 2019/20, with the addition of a second full-time facilitator based in the Fermanagh office plus the launch of a further satellite group, centred on the Carn-Glenshane SAC in County Derry/Londonderry.

The Higher Level Environmental Farming Scheme focuses on designated sites and priority habitats such as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Areas of Special Scientific Interest. It helps support farmers and land managers on protected sites carry out environmentally beneficial land care practices to move sites towards favourable condition. Ulster Wildlife completed site specific remedial management plans for 24 farm businesses during the summer of 2019, bringing the total number of plans completed by Ulster Wildlife over the first three years of the project to 66 with 4,775 ha of protected land now under EFS Higher management prescriptions.

The past year also saw the re-branding of the Fermanagh EFS Group to simply the 'Ulster Wildlife EFS Group' which is an indication of our expansion outside the county of Fermanagh into Tyrone and further across the rest of Northern Ireland. The Group facilitation project, co-funded by DAERA and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) through the Rural Development Programme, now has a membership base of 237 individuals representing 159 farm businesses. High quality, professional support and guidance is provided to all members via a range of different platforms.



Installing ammonia monitoring stations throughout the Cuilcagh Mountain and Cuilcagh-Anierin Uplands SAC

Protected Sites

Ulster Wildlife is one of the main delivery partners of the Collaborative Action for the Natura Network (CANN), a cross-border environmental partnership led by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

The project is funded by the EU's INTERREG VA Programme, co-funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, (DAERA) and managed by the Special EU Programmes Body. The environmental delivery strand aims to protect peatlands and wetlands in Northern Ireland, Ireland and Scotland.

Ulster Wildlife completed a full year's monitoring of the water table across the 13 raised bogs within eight SACs across Northern Ireland. As we expected, this monitoring showed that water levels were low during summer across all sites and these bogs are slowly drying and not laying down peat.

Our work aims to raise water levels with widespread drain blocking using thousands of dams: this work was completed at Tully Bog and the three bogs within the Cranny Bogs SAC. This is the most important part of restoration since bogs must be kept wet to allow peat to form. We thank the many farmers who worked in partnership with Ulster Wildlife to enable this important work to take place. Monitoring of the water tables will continue after drain blocking.

Peat depths were also measured at each site – the deepest was over 10m! Bogs are excellent carbon sinks so the more we can do to keep them wet, the more carbon they will lock up.

Invasive species, such as conifers and rhododendron, are a major threat to raised bogs. Conifer removal was completed at Moneygal and Garry Bog SACs and rhododendron control began at Tully Bog, the Fairy Water Bogs, Ballynahone Bog and Peatlands Park. On the Fairy Water Bogs one farmer was trained in the use of herbicides and chainsaws so that he could tackle the rhododendron on his own land.

Bird surveys across all of the lowland raised bogs have shown a notable absence of breeding waders such as snipe, lapwing and curlew; another sign of the bogs' deteriorating condition.

Field work has however highlighted that the large heath butterfly is much more prevalent than first thought on these sites with numerous new records of the species at the Fairy Water Bogs, Curran and Ballynahone. The micro moth *Helcystogramma rufescens* was recorded at Moneygal Bog, the first record for Co Tyrone.

On the fens in Co. Down, further surveys for the Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*), one of the rarest snails in Europe, discovered for the first time in NI in 2019, showed that the population is substantial with many more found than were expected. There are two 'hotspots' for the snail and this knowledge will guide management of the site.

On the cross-border site of Cuilcagh Mountain SAC (NI) and Cuilcagh and Anierin Uplands SAC (ROI), the year was spent preparing for restoration works across the site. Drones collected topographical and hydrological information in the NI SAC and this information was then analysed to create a restoration plan for the blocking of 4.65km of drains and restoration of 16.7ha of eroding peat. We have been busy monitoring the water table levels across these areas to benchmark success following restoration. A restoration plan was also developed for the rare montane heath habitat on the summit of Cuilcagh that has been significantly impacted by high visitor numbers. We have been working with landowners and stakeholders on both sides of the border to action this restoration plan.

Bird surveys were carried out across the site, which illustrated the importance of Cuilcagh and Anierin uplands as a nesting and foraging habitat for priority species such as golden plover, hen harrier and red grouse.

Wildfire is a significant pressure across both SACs. In October, Ulster Wildlife facilitated NI Fire & Rescue Service in delivering a wildfire response training day at Cuilcagh. Wildfire experts from Catalonia, Pau Costa, were appointed to develop a wildfire management plan covering the 125km² site. They met with the cross-border steering group in January to present their findings to date.

The robocut, a remote control flail machine, has been trialled as an alternative to burning heather strips in the South Leitrim Regional Game Council's Red Grouse Conservation Project. The machine has also been a great focus for landowner engagement events, which we held in Glangevlin and Ballinagleragh. These events helped kick start the commonage management and upland score card study that will be running through 2020/21. These events, alongside the successful bog day celebration on Cuilcagh, have helped highlight the importance of these habitats and collect insights for the future conservation management of these SACs.



Red squirrel © R Surgenor

Species Action

The Red Squirrels United (RSU) project came to an end in October 2019. This 3-year project was funded by EU Life14 and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. It was led by The Wildlife Trusts in collaboration with eight partners including community organisations, Newcastle University and Forest Research.

In Northern Ireland, Ulster Wildlife worked with landowners, local communities and local red squirrel groups in four main red squirrel strongholds; the Mournes, Glens of Antrim, Fermanagh and the North West, to help prevent further spread of grey squirrels and secure the future of red squirrels in these areas.

The Mournes was selected as the grey squirrel eradication zone. The effort was largely successful achieving the eradication and grey squirrels are now scarce in the zone. Ulster Wildlife worked with 94 local landowners, securing access for monitoring and grey squirrel control and developing an early warning network to pick up any incoming greys. Ulster Wildlife also developed a surveillance network in Fermanagh, which holds the largest population of red squirrels in Northern Ireland. Grey squirrel numbers are currently very low in Fermanagh but the area is vulnerable to incursion.

Through Red Squirrels United, we supported the existing network of Red Squirrel groups and facilitated the establishment of six groups (exceeding the target of three) including the first red squirrel group in the ROI – the Donegal Red Squirrel Group.

In 2019, the Northern Ireland-wide survey of red and grey squirrels, and pine martens was carried out for the third year. This gave us three years of data across the country to enable us to highlight areas for future conservation work. During the three years of RSU, Ulster Wildlife's volunteers surveyed more than 200 woodlands for the presence of squirrel species and pine marten across NI. This surveying effort has been vital to allow us to build up our knowledge of the distribution of the three species across the three years.

The data clearly illustrates that red squirrels are now distributed across the six counties, with Fermanagh and West Tyrone having the most widespread populations of red squirrels and very limited numbers of greys. Red squirrels are widespread across much of south/mid Co. Down area as well as north/mid Antrim. In the northwest, red squirrels appear to be restricted to pockets in the Eglinton and Derry/L'Derry areas and largely absent from the rest of the county. It also seems that the Lough Neagh basin remains a zone without significant (or potentially any) red squirrel populations.

Grey squirrels have been recorded across five counties during surveying with no greys being recorded in Fermanagh during any of the 2017-19 surveys. Areas with greys recorded in all years include squares in south Down, north Armagh, Omagh, Belfast, Derry, north Down and mid Ulster.

The map showing pine marten sightings indicates that pine marten are widespread throughout Northern Ireland. The areas where they have been found in multiple year surveys include south and mid Down, Fermanagh, east Antrim and in Tyrone, with RSU surveying recording sightings in all six counties.

Ulster Wildlife also worked with the National University of Ireland Galway and Vincent Wildlife Trust Ireland, to deliver the 2019 All-Ireland squirrel and pine marten survey, which built on earlier island-wide surveys.

The survey revealed continuing range expansion and recovery by red squirrels, which are now found in every county in Ireland. It seems highly likely that pine marten recovery is driving red squirrel recovery (pine martens are also now found in every county). Grey squirrel populations are collapsing across Ireland as pine marten recolonise, with red squirrel reappearing in woodlands soon after the disappearance of greys.



Barn owl, south Down © R Surgenor

Species Action

For more than 10 years, Ulster Wildlife has undertaken work across Northern Ireland focusing on the conservation of the barn owl. We estimate there are less than 30 pairs and our work aims to increase numbers, protect existing pairs, and increase our understanding of these birds in Northern Ireland.

Throughout 2019, a total of 33 barn owl boxes were distributed and erected. A number of these have been at existing nest sites to increase the network of boxes in the area and to offer more roosting or nesting opportunities for fledglings. Boxes were also erected at other potential sites with suitable habitat and where sightings have occurred in the area. This work is only possible with the help of volunteers who make these barn owl nesting boxes; our thanks to all the groups, young people and volunteers that helped make this happen and a special mention to Comber Rotary Club. Our annual barn owl survey was carried out in 2019 with the help of 33 volunteers. A total of 98 sites were surveyed across the country. This included potential sites, nest boxes, and also long-eared owl sites.

2019 brought positive news as the number of known active nest sites increased from two to three after a pair settled in a nesting box erected by Ulster Wildlife five years previously in Co. Down. This was a result of the excellent work undertaken by the farmer in making his land barn owl friendly. This shows that land management is vital in supporting our barn owl populations and that nest boxes should be erected where there is suitable habitat. In total, from the three nests there were 10 chicks raised; with one pair in Co. Antrim having a second brood. The chicks were ringed at all three sites. With the help of our nest-minders and volunteers we hope that these nests will continue to thrive and new nests will be established in 2020 and beyond.

We continue to receive sightings through the Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (CEDaR) and iRecord of both barn owl and long-eared owl. This allows us to target our efforts and investigate areas with numerous sightings. We also hosted an MSc student from the Queen's University Belfast (QUB) who studied the small mammal species in the habitat surrounding one nest site to identify the impacts of habitat degradation on small mammal populations.

All of this information is presented in more detail in an Ulster Wildlife report for barn owl conservation which can be downloaded from our website. This feeds into the State of the UK Barn Owl report on breeding success and volunteering effort. We look forward to continuing this positive work in 2020.



Sea Angler tagging a Bullhuss

Species Action

Sharks, skates and rays are some of the most vulnerable animals in our seas. They are long-lived and slow to mature and reproduce making them particularly vulnerable to overfishing and other threats such as pollution, disturbance or habitat destruction.

These characteristics result in low population growth rates and mean that with the increasing use of our seas, the numbers of many of our sharks, skates and rays have plummeted.

With support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Sea Deep project focuses on the conservation of our endangered local sharks, skates and rays. From tagging sharks at sea to recording their egg cases on the shore, the project aims to improve our understanding of endangered species so we can target local conservation efforts.

Sea Deep provides free-of-charge shark tag-and-release training and equipment to volunteer sea anglers around the coast. This year we delivered nine shark tagging training courses. We received tag records on many of our most threatened species including porbeagle, spurdog, and tope, and we received our first recapture records on the 'common' skate. Recapture data provides us with an insight into the movement patterns of these animals, allowing for more effective management measures. In total, ninety-eight sharks, skates and rays were successfully tagged in year 2, with two 'common' skate recaptures.

Sea Deep is also encouraging all coast lovers to search for shark and skate egg cases along the shore. Better known as 'mermaids' purses', these cases can be identified to the exact species that laid them. This will provide important information on the different kinds of species in our seas and where their spawning and nursery grounds may be. We have received egg case records from 22 different locations around the coast of Northern Ireland and have found some quite rare egg cases like small-eyed ray and bull huss egg cases.

We are also working closely with Sea Search NI, a volunteer dive group. Sea Deep sponsored six survey dives around the coast of Northern Ireland in search for shark and egg case records. Sea Search NI were successful in finding small-spotted catsharks developing in egg cases amongst seagrass during two of their dives. Underwater records help us to pinpoint exactly where sharks and skates are laying their eggs, and we learn more about the depth and substrate they lay their egg cases on.

During the year, we engaged with over 2,675 people at talks, festivals, shark egg case hunts and training courses. We also delivered a year-long education programme to Key Stage 3 pupils at four coastal schools. This programme dives into the world of shark biology, ecology and conservation over three classroom sessions, and finishes with a trip to the pupils' local shore, where they search for and record egg cases, taking direct action for shark conservation in their local area. Another highlight of our year was being featured on BBC Home Ground where we shared the importance of our NI-wide shark, skate and ray tagging programme.

Stand up for nature by influencing government policy

We believe that there is great urgency in achieving sustainability in how we use natural resources and in safeguarding biodiversity. Our work with politicians and decision makers seeks to get a better deal for nature. We will contribute to emerging government policy, raising awareness of biodiversity, ecosystem services and natural capital.



Environment Strategy Consultation
Event at Stormont - February 2020

Policy

During 2019/20, Brexit was a key focus of policy work and Ulster Wildlife is a representative on DAERA's Environmental Stakeholder Group inputting into discussions on what the post-Brexit future should look like.

The environmental issues arising from Brexit are complex and DAERA has been progressing arrangements throughout the year including the introduction of statutory instruments to prepare for this transition. The Northern Ireland protocol brings legislative obligations for the region, separate to the rest of the UK and this will set the framework for protection of our environment with the underpinning concept being no regression as an unintended consequence of leaving the EU. This is the first step in a longer term strategic process where the regions of the UK can go beyond EU legislative requirements providing bespoke solutions to regional issues.

We were encouraged to see the Environment Strategy pre-consultation during the year and we continue to seek parity with England with a 25-Year Environment Strategy. This is important given current environmental challenges. We would like to thank our members and the wider public for the interest shown in this consultation and the many responses submitted. This is an important development for Northern Ireland that should feed into Programme for Government priorities for the future.

As part of the post-Brexit preparations, the process of developing new agri-environment schemes has commenced and we are inputting into this development process. The management of uplands, species-rich grasslands and coastal habitats are particular priorities for the charity and we hope to see the integration of nature recovery networks into these proposals moving forward.

The issue of badgers and bovine TB remains unresolved although the incidence of bTB in cattle has reduced during the year following the introduction of new testing regimes by DAERA. Feedback from the public to the charity has made it clear that any form of widespread cull is unacceptable for a local native species and this informed our policy stance accepting the concept of Test Vaccinate Remove but opposing any form of generic cull which involves killing healthy (rather than infected) badgers. This was communicated to DAERA and other key stakeholders.

Momentum on action for climate change continues to build following the release of a wide-ranging UN climate report during the year. This shows that climate change is having a major effect on all aspects of the environment, as well as on the health and wellbeing of the global population. Consolidated by the findings of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change, this is becoming an increasingly important aspect of our work and has been a key driver for the peatlands restoration work. Plans are underway to ensure the charity can play its part in effecting change through natural solutions to climate change. During the year we also supported the Youth Climate Strikes in Belfast.



Horse Mussel Clump in Strangford Lough © B Picton

Policy

Over the past three years, Ulster Wildlife has been continuing to act as one of the lead organisations on the Northern Ireland Environment Link Brexit Coalition to ensure the best future for our environment once we leave the EU. Through the 'Nature Matters NI' campaign, the coalition has been working to influence and inform policymakers, political representatives and the public.

Ulster Wildlife chairs the Marine & Fisheries Group within the Nature Matters NI campaign. Through this campaign, we are calling for a nature-friendly UK Fisheries Bill that enshrines sustainability in law. This year we have joined government, industry and NGO stakeholders from across the UK to discuss how a common approach to fisheries management can be secured across all administrations. We have developed a detailed position statement on sustainable fisheries management that will support industry and a thriving marine environment and we presented this evidence to the Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs Committee at Stormont in March 2020. We continue to engage with DAERA and the local industry through our position on the Inshore Fisheries Partnership Group.

Ulster Wildlife is one of the lead partners in the Northern Ireland Marine Task Force (NIMTF), a coalition of 10 NGOs working for better marine protection in our local seas. Sadly, last year the UK's seas were found to be failing 11 out of 15 indicators for healthy seas. We have responded by beginning the development of an ambitious new Ocean Recovery agenda for Northern Ireland, working with NGOs across the UK to achieve a complementary approach to restoring the health of our seas. A key aspect of ocean recovery will be ensuring that parts of our seas become effective sanctuaries for marine wildlife, where they are protected from damaging activities. Only 4.48% of Northern Ireland's marine protected areas have effective management. In February 2020, we held a workshop with invited speakers from WWF and the Marine Conservation Society to discuss the practical and legal aspects of securing strong protection for marine wildlife. We look forward to discussing how the lessons from this workshop can be implemented in Northern Ireland with DAERA this year.

For over 20 years, we have been working to protect and restore the damaged rare horse mussel (*Modiolus modiolus*) reefs in Strangford Lough. As a member of the Modiolus Restoration Plan Working Group (MRPWG), we were encouraged to hear DAERA's report of the initial signs of horse mussel recovery. Yet, as horse mussels can live for up to 50 years and are vulnerable to damaging activities, we recognise that there is a long journey ahead before these reefs are fully restored to health. We will continue to work through the MRPWG to ensure that the fishing exclusion zone in Strangford Lough is maintained to secure this goal.

Promote health and well-being through enjoyment of the natural environment

Access to, and enjoyment of, wild places and wildlife has been shown to have a positive impact on our physical and emotional well-being and is important for people of all ages both in terms of preventing illness and managing health conditions. Ulster Wildlife continues to provide opportunities to engage with nature and believes it is an important factor in achieving a healthy society.

Promoting Nature as a Tool to Improve Health

We continued to promote and improve our Nature Reserves as places to enjoy the well-being benefits of getting out into nature. There were over 100,000 visits to our nature reserves during 2019/20, with the nature reserves team, supported by local volunteers maintaining several kilometres of access routes every year.

Practical volunteer days provide a chance for people to learn more about nature, learn new skills and take part in physical activity – all great ways to improve their health and well-being.

Bog Meadows is a true urban nature reserve – important not only for wildlife but also as a natural environment for the people of Belfast to enjoy. The classroom building hosted a variety of well-received events and training workshops and we continued to work with local communities to make the nature reserve better for visitors and wildlife.

Balloo Nature Reserve is another excellent urban opportunity to experience flora and fauna but unfortunately this site was closed for most of 2019/20 due to the need to redevelop access following removal of the damaged boardwalk last summer. Thankfully, funding was secured from the NIEA Capital Challenge Fund to create a new public access path and bridge, as well as a range of habitat improvement works – we are looking forward to re-opening of the site later in 2020.

The path network at Slievenacloy Nature Reserve was repaired also thanks to funding from NIEA - a total of 1.1km of paths were resurfaced, with added drainage to prevent erosion, alongside the refurbishment of several kissing gates and stiles. Additionally, signage and interpretation panels are to be refreshed across the site - a welcome upgrade for this important grassland site in the Belfast Hills.

Unfortunately, one in five young people in Northern Ireland will experience a significant mental health issue by the time they reach 18 years old. Utilising the natural environment to promote the wellbeing of young people was the focus of new work developed by Ulster Wildlife in partnership with the Education Authority's (EA) Youth Service during 2019/20. Staff from the EA's specialist youth mental health team, the Flare Project, got to experience a 'wild wellness' day at Bog Meadows Nature Reserve. Young people from the Flare Project Ambassadors group also visited Bog Meadows for a twilight wildlife session. Ulster Wildlife also provided members of an EA young men's group in Crumlin with a woodwork training session so that they could build good quality habitat boxes whilst also fulfilling the skills section requirements of their Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Ulster Wildlife looks forward to working with the EA to develop this important work further in the year ahead.

"Take 5 Tuesdays" Well-being walk at Bog Meadows Nature Reserve

Grow our success and extend our reach

As a locally governed charity, we will develop our committed, skilled and knowledgeable staff and volunteer base. We will continue to extend our reach in terms of fundraising to deliver impacts for nature and ensure we make the most efficient and effective use of our resources.



Ulster Wildlife Staff and Volunteers - February 2020

Teamwork for Wildlife

Ulster Wildlife's success is dependent on our dedicated staff, trainees and volunteers. We were delighted to have achieved the 'Investing in Volunteers' charter mark in 2019/20 and look forward to involving more volunteers in our work over the coming months and years.

At the end of 2019/20 we had 39 employed staff and over 100 registered volunteers all working together to achieve our vision.

We continued with work in planning and developing our new five-ten year strategic plan in Ulster Wildlife, which will be launched in 2021.

Landfill Communities Fund

It has been another busy year for the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) with over £337,000 distributed in the twelve months to March 2020.

The LCF is a grant award scheme which allows landfill operators to contribute a portion of their landfill tax to a fund which is used for community and environmental projects in the vicinity of a landfill site. Ulster Wildlife is registered as an Environmental Body with ENTRUST, the Government appointed regulator of the scheme to distribute monies on behalf of Landfill Operators.

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council are our only two remaining contributors of funds as LCF activity continues to reduce as landfill tax achieves its objective of increased recycling and landfill sites close. The amount distributed to projects in 2019/20 was c£337,000. There were 12 active projects at the end of March 2020.

For the remaining lifespan of contributions from our landfill operators, Ulster Wildlife will continue to maximise the benefits of distributing funding to projects which are aligned with our own strategic goals of promoting health and wellbeing through enjoyment of the environment and rebuilding biodiversity and ecosystems.

Our Supporters

We would like to thank all our supporters. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported local nature conservation over the past year. Membership remains an integral part of raising unrestricted funds for nature conservation, but increasingly supporters' generosity is being demonstrated through one-off donations, leaving gifts in wills and corporate fundraising. Currently, the majority of our projects are funded through grants from statutory sources and Charitable Trusts matched with this unrestricted funding from members, individuals and businesses. Digital fundraising will take centre stage in the coming year, where we hope to engage with new audiences around the importance of our wildlife and wild places – and to demonstrate why financial support is so important.

Membership

During 2019/2020, we established an annual growth rate of 5.1% (new memberships), with a total of **14,208** members and **6,669** memberships at the end of March 2020. Income from membership, including gift aid, was **£398,642** and this income is vital as it is 'unrestricted' meaning it can be used for the most urgently identified conservation work. This was just short of our fundraising target for the year. Importantly, membership also provides strength and voices when lobbying government for better protection for wildlife and wild places.

Legacies and In-Memory Gifts

Gifts in Wills and In-Memory donations were slightly down on last year, but we were heartened by the increased number of people contacting us to pledge a gift in their will to wildlife conservation. During the year, we were incredibly moved to find that Margaret Davey remembered Ulster Wildlife in her will and that the families of Dr Pamela Forsyth, Prof. Howard Platt and Mr Douglas Anderson requested donations in-lieu of flowers donations – all to a total of £4,146. These donations will rest in our designated 'Fund for the Future' – to manage and purchase nature reserves, protect key species as well as educate and create future wildlife champions.

Other Fundraising Income

General donations totalled £20,981. This was through postal donations; online digital fundraising; bucket donations at venues, events and festivals; charging for events and education sessions; delivering courses and services to businesses; selling merchandise and our annual Wildlife Calendar. Our annual Barn Owl appeal raised £12,174 to help fund our conservation work for this under-threat species for the next three years.

Corporate Members

We are grateful to all the businesses that provide support for nature in Northern Ireland through our Corporate Membership Scheme.

Platinum	EP UK Investments (formerly AES UK & Ireland)
Gold	Bombardier, Translink
Silver	Allstate Northern Ireland Belfast International Airport CES Quarry Products Ltd Encirc Ltd NIE Network
Bronze	Alpha Housing Belfast Harbour Henry Brothers Ltd Lafarge Cement
Standard	Chaka Travel Danske Bank Finlay's Foods Henderson Group Ltd Peninsula Print & Design Ltd Pritchitts, A Lakeland Dairies Company

Thank you...

Below are some of the organisations whose vital contributions helped to make a difference in 2019/20:

AES UK and Ireland	EU LIFE 14
Ards and North Down Borough Council	Garfield Weston Foundation
Aughrim Landfill Communities Fund (Groundwork NI)	INTERREG VA
Belfast City Council	Landfill Communities Fund through Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
Biffa Award	Ministry of Defence
Bombardier Aerospace Foundation	National Lottery Community Fund
Comber Rotary	National Lottery Heritage Fund
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland Environment Agency)	Neighbourly
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	Rees Jeffreys Road Fund
	West Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership supported by Belfast City Council



Members' Day at Glenarm - September 2019

Financial Review at 31 March 2020

Ulster Wildlife's financial position remained stable during the year and a modest surplus on unrestricted activities was achieved.

Sources of Income

Unrestricted income is revenue generated by the charity for its general purposes. It can be used at the discretion of the charity on any of the charity's objects and is mostly made up of donations from our members and supporters.

Unrestricted income was slightly higher than in the previous year (+£59k).

Restricted income is income given to the charity for specific purposes. It may be a grant for a specific piece of conservation work or education activity or funds to be awarded as grants to third parties, in line with specific grant guidelines.

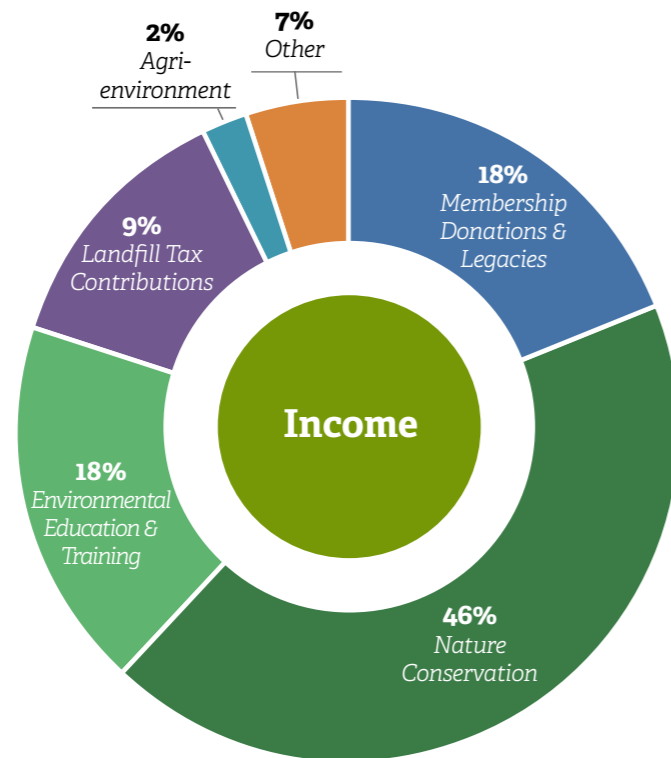
Ulster Wildlife's restricted income has two main components, grants for specific conservation and education activity which is delivered by

the charity; and Landfill Communities Funds where grants are awarded by the charity to third parties for purposes defined under the Landfill Communities Fund guidelines.

Restricted income in 2019/20 was c. £115k higher than 2018/19.

Grants from third parties awarded to Ulster Wildlife for the direct delivery of specific conservation outcomes increased by £145k in the year. This relates to the timing of project work and grant income claimed.

Contributions to the Landfill Communities Fund decreased by £55k. This is a reflection of the decrease in the level of waste being sent to landfill by the landfill operators we work with.



Sources of Income	Unrestricted Funds £,000	Restricted Funds £,000	Total Funds £,000	Ratio
Membership Donations & Legacies	421	12	433	18%
Nature Conservation	1	1,072	1,073	46%
Agri-environment payments	33	5	38	2%
Landfill Tax Contributions	-	226	226	9%
Environmental Education & Training	5	411	416	18%
Other Income	121	38	159	7%
Total Income	581	1,764	2,345	100%

How the Charity spent its resources

Overall expenditure was £93k lower in the year to 31 March 2020 than in the previous year.

In line with the income split, a large part of the expenditure is on conservation and education activity.

Restricted projects make a contribution to core overhead costs for time and expenses incurred in running the projects.

After taking this contribution into account an unrestricted surplus of £65k was generated.

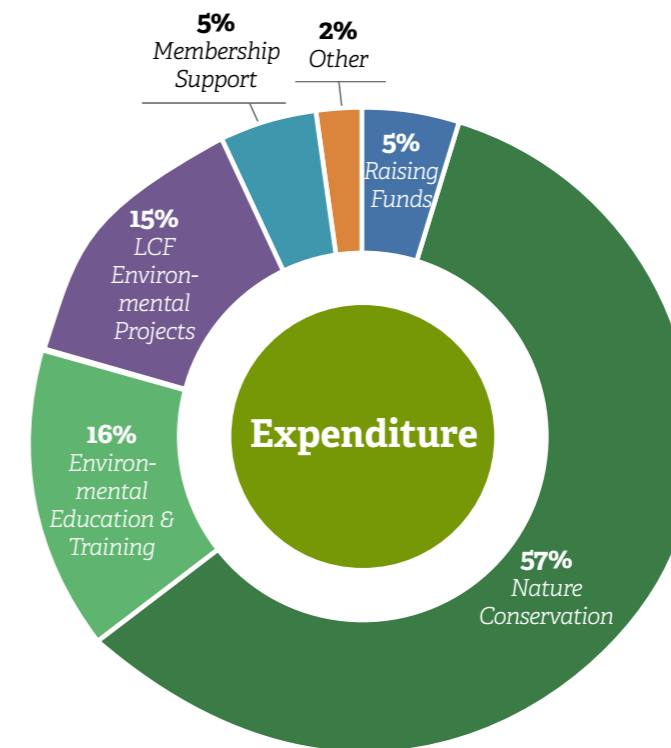
The small surplus is in keeping with the charity's objectives which are to deliver conservation outcomes rather than a surplus of income over expenditure. A modest surplus is, however, necessary in order to maintain financial stability and help to secure the long term viability of the charity.

After expenditure on restricted projects, the 'deficit' on restricted funds amounted to £193k.

This 'deficit' represents expenditure on projects in the year to 31 March 2020 where the funds were received in prior years and was in line with expectations.

The major part of this amount relates to Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) grants (£118k), this is outlined in Note 5, where we can see that for this twelve month period expenditure was higher than income due to timing.

Restricted financial reserves cannot be utilised by the charity, except for the very specific purposes set out by the funder. These reserves are therefore not available to fund either general working capital requirements or any unexpected events.



Expenditure	Total Funds £,000	Ratio
Raising Funds	133	5%
Nature Conservation	1,423	57%
Environmental Education & Training	402	16%
LCF Environmental Projects	363	15%
Membership Support	121	5%
Other Expenditure	42	2%
Total Expenditure	2,484	100%

Note:

Organisational support costs of £260k (Notes 10 & 11) have been allocated across the activities above on a proportional basis representing the resources expended to run all aspects of the charity.

Plans for the Future

2020 will be the final year of our current seven-year Corporate Strategy - 'Wildlife in Trust'. Our aims for 2020 remain focused on our five strategic goals -

1. **To inspire people** to champion wildlife and value nature.
2. **To protect and restore habitats and ecosystems** through practical action and research.
3. **To stand up for nature** by influencing government policy.
4. **To promote health and well-being** through enjoyment of the natural environment.
5. **To grow our success** and extend our reach.

With the Coronavirus Pandemic severely impacting all charities and affecting our ability to secure new members through our normal methods we have had to shift our focus quickly to alternative sources of fund raising.

Our fundraising targets for 2020/21 are:

- > To maintain current levels of membership.
- > To secure £380,252 income from Membership including Gift-Aid contributions. 2019/20 will be the final year of our current Strategic Plan so significant time during the year will be spent on researching, consulting with stakeholders, members, staff and volunteers on the development of our new Strategic Plan for the next five years.

Cottongrass in Fermanagh

2019/20 will be the last year of our current Strategic Plan so significant time during the year will be spent on researching, consulting with stakeholders, members, staff and volunteers on the development of our new Strategic Plan for the next four years.

Although the Covid 19 pandemic presents challenges for Ulster Wildlife, we are planning ahead to maximise our contribution to nature and climate change with available resources and focusing on where we can have the greatest impact.

A new Strategic Plan will be developed during the autumn/winter of 2020/21. This will be a ten-year vision to the end of 2030. Consistent with the scientific recommendations in the IUCN and EU Biodiversity 2030 reports and associated recommendations, we will be seeking to maximise our contribution to securing at least 30% of the land and seas managed for nature, promoting and delivering nature-based solutions to climate change. We will also be focusing on engaging more people in nature through membership, volunteering, taking action or advocating for nature.

We will be seeking to extend our work on peatland conservation through funded project work, corporate sponsorship and nature reserves management. Our new nature reserve – Glenullin will be a focus for restoration with options and a management plan developed during the coming year. We will be looking to acquire more peatland sites for restoration in the future.

We will also be pursuing funding to scope out and deliver 'blue carbon' restoration projects around our coasts in future on habitats such as seagrass, kelp and shellfish beds. These habitats can store significant amounts of CO₂ and have reduced dramatically in size over the years. Our plan is to carry out a feasibility study to identify areas that could be restored in NI's coastal waters. We will also be launching a brand new intertidal monitoring citizen science programme to collect more data on the health of our local marine life.

Our species focused work will continue including barn owl, red squirrel and sharks. A review to identify further 'focal' species for the next ten years to take action for either on our own or in partnership with others will be completed and integrated with this strategy.

We also hope to expand our work on the Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS) Group programme working with farmers to help them manage some of the most important habitats in Northern Ireland. This has proved highly successful and very valuable providing support to

landowners and managers to help them meet the complex requirements of the EFS agreement.

A new area of work which we are excited to take forward this year is around the concept and approach of ecological network mapping or nature recovery networks. We have secured funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to work in partnership with RSPB, Woodland Trust and the National Trust to deliver a project to produce a set of ecological network maps for Northern Ireland and to advocate for how these could be used in practice to inform planning, local biodiversity action and future agri-environment schemes. We will be looking for funding to develop nature recovery networks at key locations throughout Northern Ireland.

A key element of all our work is in how to engage more local people to take action for nature. We will continue to focus on engaging young people with nature and will be working with a group of young advocates to lobby for more time spent learning in and about nature, more training opportunities to prepare them for green jobs and a greater youth voice in government decision making. We'll continue our youth action project, the Grassroots Challenge albeit having to carry out many activities online from the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

On the policy front, we'll be working alongside other partners in the sector to secure a green recovery from the pandemic including calling for a green growth fund, a climate change act and the implementation of an environment strategy for Northern Ireland.

As we develop our new vision, we'll also be developing a fundraising plan to allow us to deliver the required actions. Due to the pandemic our ability to carry out our normal membership recruitment activities has been severely reduced due to social distancing and the lack of events that we would normally attend. This has meant a renewed focus on online content and digital fundraising and we will be developing this further as the year progresses.

Structure, governance and management

Ulster Wildlife Trust, (operating as Ulster Wildlife) is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (NIC101848) and is a not-for-profit company incorporated in Northern Ireland, limited by guarantee (NI 12711). It is an independent body, locally governed, although affiliated to The Wildlife Trusts, a federated network of 46 charities across the UK.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees (Council) comprised of up to 16 members, nominated and elected from the membership of the organisation. Council members are elected at the AGM each year to serve up to an eight-year term.

At the AGM at least one quarter of the Council must retire, and unless they have served for eight consecutive years, are eligible for re-election.

The Ulster Wildlife Council is responsible for making strategic decisions in relation to policy and procedure within Ulster Wildlife, while day-to-day operational decisions and management

is delegated to the Chief Executive, who in turn oversees the staff team of Ulster Wildlife.

All Board Members receive induction training in relation to their role and are provided with a Governance Handbook when they are elected to the Board.

Ulster Wildlife has an Honorary President who does not have a voting or decision-making role on the Board but contributes to discussions and carries out representation engagements for the Charity.

Details of the serving Council Members in 2019/20 can be found below:

<p>CHAIRMAN</p>  <p>Ken Brundle (Appointed on 17 September 2013, appointed Chairman 22 November 2017) F & A</p>	<p>VICE-CHAIR</p>  <p>Stephen Aston (Appointed on 07 December 2017, appointed Vice Chairman on 27 September 2018) F & A</p>	<p>VICE CHAIR</p>  <p>Jim McAdam OBE (Appointed on 22 November 2017, appointed Vice Chairman on 05 December 2019) E</p>	<p>HONORARY TREASURER</p>  <p>David Hendron (Appointed on 25 July 2018) F & A</p>
<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Gillian Allen (Appointed on 19 November 2015) G</p>	<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Ian Garner (Appointed on 14 March 2019) E</p>	<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Stephen McGinn (Co-opted 05 December 2019) F</p>	<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Ben Matson (Appointed on 05 September 2012) G</p>
<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Lorraine McCourt (Appointed on 05 October 2016) F</p>	<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Craig McGuicken (Appointed on 07 October 2014) F & A</p>	<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Fiona McVicker (Appointed on 19 November 2015) G</p>	<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Doris Noe (Appointed on 05 September 2012) E</p>
<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Howard Platt (Appointed on 07 October 2014, passed away on 21 August 2019) E</p>	<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Kate Thompson (Appointed on 14 March 2019) F</p>	<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>John Wittchell (Appointed on 07 December 2017) E</p>	<p>COUNCIL MEMBER</p>  <p>Ed Wright (Appointed on 07 October 2015) F</p>
<p>HONORARY PRESIDENT</p>  <p>Joe Furphy OBE</p>			

Changes to the Ulster Wildlife Council during 2019/2020

Stephen Maginn was co-opted to Council on 05 December 2019.

Doris Noe stood down as Vice Chair and was replaced by Jim McAdam on 05 December 2019.

Howard Platt sadly passed away on 21 August and will be greatly missed for his dedicated and valuable contribution to the Board and the work of Ulster Wildlife.

The governance sub-structure is made up of four sub-committees - Governance, Finance & Audit, Environment and Fundraising. This governance framework is designed to ensure that we are an accountable, effective and efficient charity and to manage risk at a reasonable level.

- The Governance Committee (G)** ensures that the Ulster Wildlife Council fulfils its legal, ethical, and functional responsibilities through adequate governance policy development, skills audits, recruitment strategies for Council Members, training programmes, monitoring of Council activities and evaluation of Council's performance, human resources and health & safety management.
- The Finance & Audit Committee (F&A)** supports Council in ensuring that the effective governance of Ulster Wildlife is maintained in relation to financial and physical resources.
- The Environment Committee (E)** provides ongoing strategic input into the organisation's work linked to Living Landscapes and Living Seas. The remit of this Committee encompasses nature reserves, environmental projects linked to habitats and/or species and input into regional policy issues.
- The Fundraising Committee (F)** provides ongoing strategic input to the organisation's fundraising activities - with a focus on unrestricted fundraising.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Ulster Wildlife Trust) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company and charity law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure for that period. In preparing these financial statements the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently,
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP,
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements,
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

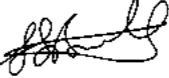
Provision of Information to Auditors


Each of the individuals who is a trustee at the date of approval of this reports confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditor

DNTCA Limited are deemed to be re-appointed under section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006. This report was approved by the Board on 20 October 2020 and signed on its behalf by


Ken Brundle
Chairman


David Hendron
Honorary Treasurer

Key Policies and processes

Managing Risk

Ulster Wildlife Trustees are responsible for identifying and managing the risks facing the charity. They are responsible for ensuring that Ulster Wildlife has a system of internal control, management and audit to take advantage of opportunities and manage risk effectively.

Risk management is well established and an integral part of the charity's work. We have an active risk management process in place to make sure that appropriate steps are taken to manage and mitigate risk across the organisation. The Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team are clear that risk should be very carefully assessed in relation to the health, welfare and security of staff, volunteers and the public and in managing the reputation of Ulster Wildlife. Risks are also reviewed in the broadest sense and anything that might alter or impact on the charity's ability to fulfil its charitable objectives is considered.

Processes include:

- > Risk assessments are completed by all staff to identify, evaluate and manage H&S risks.
- > Financial procedures are in place and guide the day to day operation of the charity. These are reviewed annually and monitored on an ongoing basis.
- > A comprehensive risk management review is carried out annually and reviewed quarterly by each Committee within their area of responsibility and a quarterly report given to Council.
- > Multi-year planning, with targets that are linked to delivery of Corporate Strategy.
- > Regular financial reporting and control which compares results with budget.
- > 'Value for Money' principles underpin the procurement of goods and services.
- > Annual external audit completed annually at the year end.

The most significant risks identified in 2019/20 included uncertainties arising from Brexit as leaving the EU may lead to a weakening

of environmental protection, impact on environmental standards and policies and will impact on the availability of EU funding.

A major new area of risk that occurred at the end of the year was the Covid 19 pandemic. This impacted on the ability of fundraisers to carry out face to face recruitment to maintain and grow the charity's membership base which provides monthly membership donations.

Education, health services and the economy remain the spending priorities within the Northern Ireland budget and in recent years spending cuts and lack of new investment in the environment has limited progress and many of the environmental indicators remain in decline. However, the environment has moved up the public agenda in recent years and climate change is increasingly recognised as a key societal issues which may assist in achieving positive movement for natural solutions to sequestering carbon and halting the loss of biodiversity.

Foreign exchange rate exposure and cash flow risks associated with the delivery of EU programmes remain a risk with Brexit uncertainties. This has been monitored and proactively managed during the year and no significant concerns have arisen.

Staff turnover due to funding uncertainties remains a challenge. A fundraising strategy has been developed to increase the long-term sustainability of the charity however this will be reviewed in light of the Covid 19 pandemic and the need to move to digital fundraising.

The most significant risks identified in 2020/21 are:

- > Fundraising of unrestricted income with the new Covid 19 operating environment.
- > Cash flow and foreign exchange rate implications of EU funded projects.
- > Continuing uncertainty around Government funding.
- > Retention of skilled and experienced staff during this period of uncertainty.

Our Promise to Our Supporters

Delivering our vision is only possible because of the generosity and enthusiasm of our supporters and therefore we hold our supporters and members in the highest possible regard.

We work hard to ensure that everyone who supports us has a positive experience in their involvement with Ulster Wildlife.

Our Fundraising Approach

We not only adhere to all legal requirements; we also strive to achieve the highest standards in our fundraising by following best practice guidance for the charity sector. Ulster Wildlife is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and follows best practice in fundraising, as laid out in the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice.

How we fundraise

Ulster Wildlife fundraises primarily through offering membership of our charity to the general public and businesses. Membership promotion takes place at venues and events across Northern Ireland. Membership staff are branded and wear photographic ID at all times. In addition, we contact our existing members on an annual basis to give them the option of increasing their financial contribution to our conservation work or giving a one-off donation for a particular appeal.

Any external agencies who conduct this work on our behalf are required to do so in a respectful manner and in accordance with fundraising standards and regulations.

How we use and protect data

Ulster Wildlife understands that our supporters have trusted us with their personal information and we will never sell our supporters' information to another organisation or individual. Our supporters have the opportunity to opt out of any existing communications by any method at any time. Opting out does not affect all membership mailings, some of which are a legal requirement (e.g. Direct Debit advance notice letters).

Our Privacy Notice for Members and Supporters is available on our website at www.ulsterwildlife.org/privacynotice

Our complaints policy

Any concerns about Ulster Wildlife's fundraising practices can be raised through our complaints procedure. Our complaints procedure is available on our website at www.ulsterwildlife.org/Complaints.



Equal Opportunities and Diversity

Ulster Wildlife aims to be an employer of choice, for people from different backgrounds and through our Equality in the Workplace policy, we promote respect for the individual and equality of opportunity.

Our aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of the wider community and for each employee to feel respected and able to give of their best. Within Ulster Wildlife there is respect for promotion and protection of each individual's human rights.

Ulster Wildlife promotes being at ease with all aspects of diversity, built on fairness and respect for all. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit are made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

Ulster Wildlife recognises that such a policy is not only good management practice, but that it also makes good sense. Our Equality in the Workplace policy helps all those who work for us to develop their full potential and ensure that the talents and resources of the workforce are utilised to fully maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Sustainability

Our main achievement was meeting our zero waste pledge by a switching to a new refuse collector. In-house, we calculated our carbon emissions so that we can plan reductions. We have also identified ways of making McClelland House more nature friendly, eg through installing living green walls. We achieved Silver Level Award in the NI Environmental Benchmarking Survey.

Wider network

Ulster Wildlife is part of a collective of 46 Wildlife Trusts, represented nationally by The Royal Society for Wildlife Trusts (RSWT). The Wildlife Trusts collectively, act together where appropriate, in key policy areas and campaigns.

Financial Management

Financial Reserves Policy

Ulster Wildlife, in common with most charities, has an objective to set aside sufficient financial reserves to fund working capital and meet unexpected events, mainly in relation to the funding of our conservation activities. This is especially important as we increase the number and complexity of projects, including those where the grant funding is denominated in foreign currency.

To achieve this objective, the trustees seek to set aside financial reserves amounting to six months unrestricted payroll and support costs, which currently amounts to £369k.

The balance on restricted reserves at 31 March 2020 is £835k. After deduction of unrestricted fixed assets, unrestricted financial reserves amount to £442k which meets that objective.

Investment Policy

Ulster Wildlife does not have investments apart from cash balances held on short term deposit. The policy is to safeguard cash in a manner which minimises risk but seeks to achieve a satisfactory level of return.

In line with this aim, cash balances will be placed in short term cash deposits in UK based banks with a credit rating of P1/P2 (Moody's) or equivalent.

Ulster Wildlife will seek to spread deposits over a number of institutions.

Remuneration Policy

Pay for all staff is determined by a job evaluation system which places the role on one of eight pay scales. Inflation awards, which are currently capped at 2%, reflecting the current economic climate, are dependent on affordability within the unrestricted operational budget.

Benchmarking of payscales is undertaken periodically.

Advisors, Senior Personnel and Administrative Details

Auditors DNT Chartered Accountants
Ormeau House
91-97 Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 1SH

Bankers Danske Bank
Belfast Finance Centre
PO Box 183
Donegall Square West
Belfast
BT1 6JS

Solicitors Edwards & Co.
28 Hill Street
Belfast
BT1 2LA

Company Secretary Jennifer Fulton

Senior Management Team Jennifer Fulton
Chief Executive

Dawn Miskelly
Operations Director

Niamh Hart
Finance Manager

Charity Registration Number NIC 101848

Company Registration Number NI12711

Registered Office and Operational Address McClelland House
10 Heron Road
Belfast
BT3 9LE

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Ulster Wildlife Trust

We have audited the financial statements of Ulster Wildlife Trust for the year ended 31 March 2020 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, statement of cash flows and the related notes including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the charity's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2020 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing(UK) (ISAs(UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a misstatement of this other information, we are required to report this fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006.

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

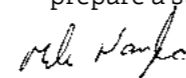
- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.



Mr M Nangle (Senior Statutory Auditor) For and on behalf of **DNTCA Limited Ormeau House 91-97 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 1SH**

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2020

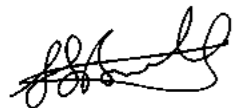
		2020	2019		
	Notes	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
INCOME FROM:					
Donations & Legacies	3	420,835	12,652	433,487	414,540
Conservation grants	4	1,006	1,071,527	1,072,533	927,615
Agri-environment payments		33,307	5,240	38,547	45,699
Charitable activities- landfill contributions	5	-	226,145	226,145	281,505
Education & training activities	6	4,631	411,125	415,756	387,369
Interest received	7	6,841	4,705	11,546	9,258
Other Income	8	114,034	33,232	147,266	104,604
TOTAL INCOME		580,654	1,764,626	2,345,280	2,170,590
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising Funds	9	114,176	2,900	117,076	107,283
Charitable Activities	10	555,110	1,811,616	2,366,726	2,469,962
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		669,286	1,814,516	2,483,802	2,577,245
NET INCOME BEFORE TRANSFERS AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE		(88,632)	(49,890)	(138,522)	(406,655)
Gains/(losses) from foreign exchange		9,914	-	9,914	(11,187)
Transfers between funds	14	143,461	(143,461)	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		64,743	(193,351)	(128,608)	(417,842)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
Total funds at 1 April 2019		769,881	1,435,412	2,205,293	2,623,135
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2020		834,624	1,242,061	2,076,685	2,205,293

The notes on pages 51 to 57 form part of these financial statements. The Statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

Statement of Financial Position at 31 March 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	2020 Total Funds £	2019 Total Funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	16	392,986	530,730	923,716	905,560
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	17	60,022	298,681	358,703	165,871
Cash at bank and in hand		492,320	871,598	1,363,918	1,676,716
		552,342	1,170,279	1,722,621	1,842,587
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Creditors	18	100,585	116,132	216,717	219,195
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		451,757	1,054,147	1,505,904	1,623,392
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		844,743	1,584,877	2,429,620	2,528,952
CREDITORS due in more than 1 year					
Capital Grants	19	10,119	342,816	352,935	323,659
		834,624	1,242,061	2,076,685	2,205,293
RESERVES					
General Fund	20	834,624	-	834,624	769,881
Designated Funds - Funds for the Future	21	-	99,992	99,992	112,096
Restricted Funds	21	-	1,142,069	1,142,069	1,323,316
		834,624	1,242,061	2,076,685	2,205,293

These financial statements were approved and signed by the members of the Board and authorised for issue on 20 October 2020.



Ken Brundle, Chairman



David Hendron, Honorary Treasurer

The notes on pages 50 to 57 form part of these financial statements. Company Registration Number: NI 12711

Statement of Cash Flows for year ending 31 March 2020

	2020 £	2019 £
Cash Flows from operating activities		
Net income/(expenditure)	(138,522)	(406,655)
<i>Adjustments for</i>		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	29,078	28,116
Increase/(Decrease) in Capital Grants	29,277	(6,212)
(Increase)/Decrease in Trade and other Debtors	(192,832)	(19,844)
Increase/(Decrease) in Trade and other Creditors	(2,478)	5,213
Net cash (used in)/from operating activities	(275,477)	(399,382)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible assets	(50,000)	(26,286)
Disposal of tangible asset	2,765	-
Net cash used in investing activities	(47,235)	(26,286)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(322,712)	(425,668)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year	1,676,716	2,113,571
Net increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents due to exchange rate movements	9,914	(11,187)
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year	1,363,918	1,676,716

Notes to the Accounts

1 Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP (FRS102)) and the Charities Act 2008.

2 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use, at the discretion of the trustees, to further any of the charity's purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service.

These are classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it is regarded as restricted.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure is classified under

headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by the charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Depreciation

Purchased assets, which individually exceed £1000 at cost are included in the balance sheet at historic cost less depreciation and any impairment in accordance with FRS 102.

Fixed Assets are depreciated over the period of their useful lives as follows:

Land	not depreciated
Buildings	2.5% straight line
Equipment	10% straight line
Computers	25% straight line
Vehicles - cars and vans	15% straight line

Depreciation for specialist conservation equipment with limited resale value would normally be depreciated over the lifetime of the project in which they are used.

Grants

Government and other grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable. Grants are not recognised until there is reasonable assurance that the charity will comply with the conditions attaching to them and the grants will be received.

Foreign currency

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated at rates prevailing at the date of the transaction.

Pensions

Ulster Wildlife operates a defined contribution pension scheme and contributes to the scheme at a maximum rate of 7% of salary.

Taxation

The organisation is a registered charity with HMRC and is therefore not liable for taxation to the extent that any surplus or gains arising are wholly applied to its charitable objects. The company is registered for VAT. Much of the income is either exempt or outside the scope of VAT. Consequently, it is not possible to recover most of the VAT incurred on expenditure. Income and expenditure are shown exclusive of recoverable VAT.

Notes to the Accounts

3 Donations & legacies

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £
Legacy & in memory giving	-	4,146	5,684	-
Membership contributions inc. gift aid	399,272	-	385,714	-
Corporate support	14,953	-	14,383	-
Other gifts & donations	6,610	8,506	5,091	3,668
	420,835	12,652	410,872	3,668

4 Conservation Grants

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £
AES UK & Ireland	-	-	-	16,727
Ards and North Down Borough Council	-	5,000	-	-
Biffa Award	-	-	-	26,370
Capital grant credit	1,006	3,471	1,006	5,206
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	-	7,119	-	-
Environmental Farming Scheme	-	100,344	-	59,687
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	-	-	74,654
EU- Interreg VA	-	423,340	-	277,167
EU - LIFE14	-	-	-	136,023
European Solidarity Corps	-	45,069	-	-
Garfield Weston	-	30,000	-	-
Government grants	-	250,631	-	174,756
Alpha Programme - Groundwork	-	5,705	-	18,917
Heritage Lottery Fund	-	161,764	-	122,953
Landfill Communities Fund	-	9,212	-	3,240
Ministry of Defence	-	16,245	-	8,123
Other	-	3,660	-	2,786
Reese Jeffreys	-	9,967	-	-
	1,006	1,071,527	1,006	926,609

Notes to the Accounts

5 Landfill environmental projects

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £
Landfill contributions received	-	226,145	-	281,505
	-	226,145	-	281,505
Expenditure				
Entrust administration fee	-	6,023	-	7,724
Direct project expenditure	-	337,707	-	720,838
Direct Costs	19,002	-	20,854	-
	19,002	343,730	20,854	728,562

6 Education & Training Grants and Income

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £
Big Lottery Fund (Our Environment Our Future)	-	208,803	-	200,882
Heritage Lottery Fund	-	118,335	-	92,092
Belfast City Council	-	83,614	-	79,805
Other	4,631	373	13,173	1,417
	4,631	411,125	13,173	374,196

7 Interest received

Interest received in Restricted Funds is the interest earned on landfill tax receipts held prior to disbursement and interest received which is used to fund expenditure on nature reserves. Interest received in unrestricted funds is bank interest earned on other cash balances.

Notes to the Accounts

8 Other Income

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation core funding	75,000	-	-	-
Consultancy	17,250	23,542	23,531	32,000
Sundry income	21,784	9,690	28,640	20,433
	114,034	33,232	52,171	52,433

9 Expenditure on raising donations & legacies

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £
Travel	8,458	-	9,429	-
Venue Costs	4,370	-	4,462	-
Professional fees	1,268	2,900	1,629	6,140
Printed materials, misc	1,953	-	2,291	-
Wages & salary costs	98,127	-	83,332	-
	114,176	2,900	101,143	6,140

10 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2019 £
Landfill environmental projects	19,002	343,730	362,732	749,416
Nature Conservation	140,322	1,107,198	1,247,520	1,012,022
Environmental Education & Training	-	353,274	353,274	336,586
Membership Support Costs	106,273	-	106,273	116,035
Organisation Support Costs	259,753	-	259,753	220,407
Depreciation	12 21,664	7,414	29,078	28,116
Bank Interest & Charges	4,316	-	4,316	4,052
Auditors remuneration	3,780	-	3,780	3,328
	555,110	1,811,616	2,366,726	2,469,962

Notes to the Accounts

11 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Staff Costs	Other direct costs	2020	2019
	£	£	£	£
Landfill environmental projects	17,406	345,326	362,732	749,416
Nature Conservation	578,906	668,614	1,247,520	1,012,022
Environmental Education	199,630	153,644	353,274	336,586
Membership Support Costs	48,895	57,378	106,273	116,035
Organisation Support Costs	142,859	116,894	259,753	220,407
Other - depreciation, bank charges, audit.	-	37,174	37,174	35,496
	<u>987,696</u>	<u>1,379,030</u>	<u>2,366,726</u>	<u>2,469,962</u>

Other Direct Costs

	Landfill Envir. Projects	Nature Conservation	Environmental Education	Membership & Organisation Support Costs	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Direct project costs	338,894	189,268	125,188	27,730	681,080
Premises costs	5,847	15,804	1,499	45,413	68,563
Postage, printing & stationery	-	3,270	508	39,115	42,893
Staff travel and vehicle costs	585	57,299	11,429	3,132	72,445
Contracted services	-	387,817	10,517	27,730	426,064
Staff training	-	10,973	3,594	3,083	17,650
Council Costs	-	-	-	7,335	7,335
Information Technology	-	4,183	909	20,734	25,826
	<u>345,326</u>	<u>668,614</u>	<u>153,644</u>	<u>174,272</u>	<u>1,341,856</u>

12 Depreciation

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds
	2020	2020	2019	2019
	£	£	£	£
Motor vehicles	7,061	6,226	7,061	4,410
Equipment	6,548	1,188	6,548	1,782
Buildings	8,055	-	8,315	-
	<u>21,664</u>	<u>7,414</u>	<u>21,924</u>	<u>6,192</u>

Notes to the Accounts

13 Staff Costs

	2020	2019
	£	£
Salaries and wages	941,109	931,314
Social Security Costs	79,369	77,562
Pension Contributions	65,345	59,608
	<u>1,085,823</u>	<u>1,068,484</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000. The average number of employees during the year, calculated on the basis of full time equivalents, was 34. (2019- 35). The key management personnel comprise the trustees and the members of the senior management team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel was £157,488. (2019: £157,268).

14 Transfer between Funds

	2020	2019
	£	£
Landfill contribution to organisation support costs	18,134	28,545
Project contribution to organisation support costs	123,269	122,933
Conservation work at Glendun	2,058	-
	<u>143,461</u>	<u>151,478</u>

15 Board remuneration and related party transactions

No members of the Board received any remuneration during the year in their capacity as Trustees. Travel and subsistence costs amounting to £1,762 (2019-£842) were paid on behalf of 4 Trustees during the year. Travel and subsistence costs of £80 were reimbursed to 3 Trustees (2019-£0). One Trustee received payment of £5,292 for professional services supplied to the charity (2019-£0).

16 Fixed Assets

	Nature Reserves	Land & Buildings	Motor Vehicles	Equipment & Computers	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£
COST OR VALUATION					
At 1 April 2019	349,372	599,287	110,993	90,468	1,150,120
Additions	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Disposals	-	(2,765)	-	-	(2,765)
At 31 March 2020	<u>399,372</u>	<u>596,522</u>	<u>110,993</u>	<u>90,468</u>	<u>1,197,355</u>
DEPRECIATION					
At 1 April 2019	-	147,888	48,319	48,354	244,561
Charge for year	-	8,315	13,287	7,736	29,338
Disposals	-	(260)	-	-	(260)
At 31 March 2020	<u>-</u>	<u>155,943</u>	<u>61,606</u>	<u>56,090</u>	<u>273,639</u>
NBV at 31 March 2020	399,372	440,579	49,387	34,378	923,716
including restricted assets of	359,372	150,000	21,358	-	530,730

Glendun farm has been included at probate value of £150,000. Addition in the year relates to the purchase of Glenuillin Bog.

Notes to the Accounts

17 Debtors

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £
Debtors and prepayments	35,108	43,959	40,876	15,882
Grants	7,038	254,723	9,000	82,686
Tax refunds due	17,876	-	17,427	-
	<u>60,022</u>	<u>298,681</u>	<u>67,303</u>	<u>98,568</u>

18 Creditors falling due within one year

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £
Sundry creditors and accrued expenditure	100,585	116,132	132,462	86,733

19 Creditors falling due after more than 1 year

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £
Capital grants	10,119	342,816	11,126	312,533

20 Movement on unrestricted funds

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £
Balance at 1 April 2019	769,881	738,460
Surplus for the year	64,743	31,421
Balance at 31 March 2020	<u>834,624</u>	<u>769,881</u>

Notes to the Accounts

21 Movement on restricted funds

	Restricted Project Funds 2020 £	Restricted Project Funds 2019 £
Opening balance	1,323,316	1,884,675
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	(197,497)	(449,263)
Fund for the Future transfer	16,250	(112,096)
Closing balance	<u>1,142,069</u>	<u>1,323,316</u>

	Restricted Fund for the Future 2020 £	Restricted Fund for the Future 2019 £
Opening balance	112,096	-
Designation of restricted funds	-	112,096
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	4,146	-
UW contribution to purchase of Glenuillin	(16,250)	-
Closing balance	<u>99,992</u>	<u>112,096</u>

Some funders pay in advance and other funders issue payment only after the expenditure has been incurred. The movement on restricted funds in any year is a result of timing differences between receipts of grants for restricted projects and the related expenditure.

In the year Ulster Wildlife Council decided to designate funds received from gifts in wills and legacy donations to a ringfenced 'Fund for the Future'. This will be used to manage and purchase nature reserves, protect key species as well as educate and support future wildlife champions.

22 Contingent Liability

A portion of grants received may become repayable if the charity fails to comply with the terms of the relevant letters of offer.

23 Taxation

As a charity, Ulster Wildlife Trust is exempt from tax on income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. In the period Ulster Wildlife registered for VAT as it reached the relevant threshold in relation to some specific taxable supplies. The charge in the period was £11k for VAT undercharged for services in the assessment period.

24 Company Status



Ulster Wildlife Trust Limited is a private company limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the members is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation.



**Ulster
Wildlife**

part of
The Wildlife Trusts 

**For further information,
visit www.ulsterwildlife.org
or Email: info@ulsterwildlife.org**

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Cover Image - **Two Spot Ladybird at Bog Meadows
Nature Reserve** © Ronald Surgenor
Back Cover - **Common Dolphin** © Ronald Surgenor

Ulster Wildlife Trust, (operating as Ulster Wildlife) is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC101848 and is a not-for-profit company incorporated in Northern Ireland, limited by guarantee NI 12711.