

The Irish Hare



OYSTER WILDLIFE

Meet the incredible marine life thriving at our oyster nurseries

ATLANTIC RAINFOREST REVIVAL

Hear about our plans to restore Lenamore Wood

Puffins return to Muck

Seabird recovery project turns folklore to fact



**Ulster
Wildlife**

Welcome



Winter has rolled around again, offering a chance to pause and reflect on all that we have achieved together in bringing nature back, thanks to your continued support. From restoring habitats and helping species recover, to empowering people and confronting the climate crisis head-on, we have accomplished much throughout the year. You can find a summary of our annual report on page 10.

One stand-out moment was undoubtedly the return of the iconic puffin to our Isle of Muck Nature Reserve, for the first time in our 25 years of managing this magnificent seabird sanctuary (p.8). This remarkable comeback is a result of 8 years of commitment to reducing the threat from invasive brown rats and offers a beacon of hope for seabird recovery.

Our efforts to restore the native oyster to Belfast Lough have also taken significant strides, with four nurseries now established to boost the fragile wild population. But it's not just the oysters that are benefiting. These nurseries are teeming with life, with almost 200 different marine species seeking refuge, from endangered eels to colourful sea slugs (p.4).

We are also delighted to have progressed our existing partnership with Aviva and The Wildlife Trusts to bring back the lost Atlantic rainforests to Northern Ireland. Our ambitious journey will focus on Lenamore Woods, in Gortin, restoring and reconnecting this remaining fragment of oak and birch woodland to help bring nature back, tackle the climate crisis, and engage local communities. This precious site is a wonderful addition to our suite of nature reserves (pp.6&7).

I hope during the coming months you will have time to visit some of our beautiful woodland nature reserves to admire the changing seasons, and perhaps even spot a red squirrel (p.5). And, if you have a garden, why not take this opportunity to explore the many simple and cost-effective ways to let nature in and help your garden wildlife thrive (p.9).

Dawn Miskelly

Chief Executive of Ulster Wildlife

Ulster Wildlife *Get in touch*

Irish Hare is the membership magazine for **Ulster Wildlife**

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Cover Puffin © Joshua Copping

You are receiving this magazine as part of your Ulster Wildlife membership. To stop this mailing, please contact us and let us know if you'd prefer an email version.



4 ways to get involved

Other ways you can get involved with Ulster Wildlife

Give the gift of wildlife

Give your loved ones a wildlife calendar this Christmas, adopt an animal in their name or give them the gift of membership ulsterwildlife.org/shop

Explore a nature reserve

You can visit 11 accessible nature reserves as part of your membership. Try somewhere new: ulsterwildlife.org/nature-reserves

Donate to our annual appeal

Help raise £10,000 to help safeguard homes across Northern Ireland for our precious pollinators. Keep an eye-out for your invitation to get involved.

Sign up for email updates

Keep up to date with events, news, activities and more by signing up for our monthly members' news and updates ulsterwildlife.org/keep-in-touch

FUNDRAISING FOR WILDLIFE

Want to get involved? Contact Vickie on 07485 329 722 or email vickie.chambers@ulsterwildlife.org

FieldDay Helps Let Nature In Bloom

We are delighted to welcome FieldDay Ireland as a corporate partner in our *Let Nature In* wildlife gardening campaign for 2025/26. Known for their fragrant candles and deep love of Irish landscapes, FieldDay brings a unique blend of creativity and conservation to this initiative.

Our *Let Nature In* campaign inspires households to take simple but powerful steps to support wildlife, starting in their own gardens. From planting native flowers for pollinators to leaving water and natural food for hedgehogs, these small changes can make a big difference for biodiversity.

With FieldDay's support, we're aiming to reach our ambitious goal of getting 5,000 households involved – sowing the seeds of change, one garden, one candle, one wildflower at a time.

Everyone who signs up will receive a free digital pack and seasonal advice to help bring more nature into gardens, terraces, and balconies. Sign up now and make your garden a haven for nature: ulsterwildlife.org/let-nature-in



IN BRIEF

Share your love of nature - join our team

Do you know someone who's passionate about wildlife and enjoys meeting people? We're looking for friendly, enthusiastic individuals to join our team of Membership Fundraisers. By chatting to the public at events and venues across Northern Ireland, our fundraisers play a vital role in inspiring new members to support Ulster Wildlife. It's a rewarding role with flexible hours, great training, and the chance to make a real difference for nature on your doorstep. If you or someone you know might be interested, we'd love to hear from you – email recruit@ulsterwildlife.org



Thank you!

A big thank you to the more than 300 members who completed the 2025 Member Survey. Your feedback helps shape the future of your membership and our conservation work. Congratulations also to Rosemary Smyth, winner of our prize draw: an overnight stay in a luxury shepherd's hut, kindly donated by Peatlands Causeway Coast.

When asked about the Irish Hare magazine, most members supported a change to two longer editions per year instead of three shorter ones, with nearly half in favour and only 8% preferring the current format.

You also backed reducing printed materials to cut our environmental footprint – from fewer leaflets and letters



to more durable membership cards, with almost half open to a fully digital option.

We'll use these insights to guide improvements in how we share stories, updates and inspiration with you going forward, while keeping sustainability at the heart of everything we do.

Share your Hare!

Once you have read your magazine, please give it to someone you think would like to support local nature conservation work. This simple act could help encourage your friends and family to become members of Ulster Wildlife.





HEAR THIS

Listen out for the roar of stags and clash of antlers when male deer compete for mates as deer rutting season reaches a crescendo in November.

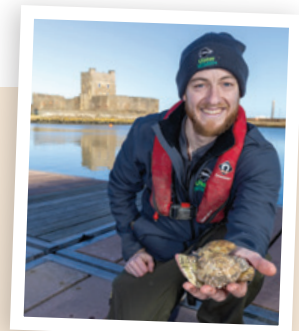
DO THIS

Collect colourful autumn leaves, make rubbings, or press them into a scrapbook alongside wildlife notes.

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Life Among the Oysters

We're restoring the native oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) to boost biodiversity, improve water quality, and protect our coasts. In Belfast Lough, four nurseries beneath marina pontoons provide mini-reef habitats where oysters thrive. Over 180 species have been recorded in these vibrant ecosystems, thanks to the dedication of our incredible volunteers.



Dr Nick Baker Horne
Marine Conservation
Manager



Bristly (hairy) crab
(*Pilumnus hirtellus*)

These small crabs are scavengers, wandering around oyster cages for scraps. Their hairs trap sediment, helping them blend in. Oysters also settle sediment (boosting water quality), making cages ideal crab habitat. Here, they go about their business without fear of being munched.



Corkwing wrasse
(*Symphodus melops*)

This striking fish is common on rocky shores. Like birds, the males are more brightly coloured. They build nests in rocky crevices using their mouths to collect seaweed. By restoring oyster reefs, we are creating more suitable habitat where they can build their cosy homes.



Star ascidian sea squirt
(*Botryllus schlosseri*)

This fascinating creature, resembling the night sky, is not just one animal but a colony of many individual sea squirts. Sea squirts, like oysters, are filter feeders. They are many different types, but this is one of our favourites thanks to its dazzling star-like formations.



Rare worm
(*Leodice harassi*)

Little is known about this elusive native species, as there have only been 15 records in Northern Ireland and 120 verified reports around the UK. This new and rare find highlights the important role native oysters play in enhancing biodiversity and the wider impact of our conservation efforts.



Snake pipefish
(*Entelurus aequoreus*)

Pipefish are close relatives of the seahorse and similarly have a prehensile tail, adapted for grasping. The males also carry the eggs. This small fish needs places to hide, and the spaces between oysters provide the perfect spot.



Nudibranch
(*Facelina bostoniensis*)

Nudibranch (a group of sea slugs) are a favourite find at our oyster nurseries owing to their variety of beautiful colours. This species is found all around the UK and across the Atlantic, which is reflected in the "Boston" part of the Latin name.



Nudibranch
(*Ancula gibbosa*)

Another glorious nudibranch that we find at our nurseries, which feeds on colonial filter feeders – such as sea squirts. This is great for the oysters as it reduces competition for food – so not only do they look good, but they are also a welcome bonus!



European eel
(*Anguilla anguilla*)

This critically endangered species is a surprising visitor to our nurseries. Eels are often found hiding amongst the oysters, probably using them as a refuge during their journeys to and from the sea. By restoring native oyster reefs in Belfast Lough, we can help support this species along its migration.

DIG THIS

Keep your bird bath or part of your pond ice-free to help our feathered friends. Fresh water is just as vital as food for birds during the winter.

SEE THIS

Brent geese arrive in their thousands every autumn at Strangford Lough from Arctic Canada. At high tide, they often gather in large flocks on fields or shorelines – a brilliant winter wildlife spectacle.



© DEREK MOORE

A LITTLE BIT WILD

Five ways to enjoy nature this winter

Feed your love of nature with these really wild things to do

1 GET INVOLVED IN SHORE NI

Love exploring the shore? Fancy turning your snaps into science? Get involved in Shore NI – our fun, free citizen science project to record marine life and protect our precious coastal habitats. Whether you're a rockpool pro or a curious beginner, Shore NI is for you – no experience needed! Your sightings will help us track climate impacts, monitor invasive species, and protect marine life! Sign up now at ulsterwildlife.org/shore-ni and get all the information you need to get started.



2 SPOT NUTS AND BERRIES

Even in the coldest months, hedgerows, woodlands, and gardens are alive with colour and food for wildlife. Next time you're out on a walk, take our ID chart and see how many nuts and berries you can spot. Look for feeding signs too – split hazelnut shells or acorn caps are clues that wildlife such as squirrels, jay, or mice have been feasting before you arrived.

3 JOIN US FOR AN ONLINE TALK

Discover more about local wildlife and how your support is making a difference to nature, by signing up for one of our online winter talks. Visit ulsterwildlife.org/events from December onwards to see our full programme, including talks by a range of guest speakers.



4 GO ON A RED SQUIRREL SAFARI

Winter is one of the best times to spot red squirrels as their fiery fur stands out beautifully against bare branches. Head out early in the morning or mid-afternoon (after their nap) for the best chance of catching them leaping through the treetops or foraging for nuts, pinecones, and acorns. Our nature reserves at Glenarm and Straidkilly in Co. Antrim are among the top spots to see red squirrels, with regular sightings. Check out our guide to more red squirrel hotspots across Northern Ireland: ulsterwildlife.org/where-see-red-squirrels



5 CREATE A HEDGEHOG HIGHWAY

Hedgehogs need to be able to roam far and wide in search of food, mates, and nesting sites – the average hedgehog roams 2 km a night! Get together with your neighbours to make a hole in your fence or dig a channel beneath garden boundaries to connect your gardens. If you're lucky enough to have a prickly garden visitor, please record your sightings – ulsterwildlife.org/report-sightings

© ADAM GERRARD

© TERRY WHITTAKER - 2020VISION

Lenamore leads the return of Northern Ireland's rainforest

Map showing remaining locations of temperate rainforests across the UK, which are predominantly in the wetter uplands of NI.

Imagine a rainforest: lush green, damp mossy trunks jewelled with raindrops, and canopies alive with ferns and insects. This is not the Amazon, but right here in the temperate Atlantic rainforest zones of the UK and Ireland. Sadly, this precious habitat has mainly disappeared with less than 1% now remaining.

In the foothills of the Sperrin Mountains, just a mile and a half from the village of Gortin, lies Lenamore Wood, an ancient woodland home to a tiny fragment of this once extensive forest. The surrounding land will soon become the focus of plans to bring Atlantic rainforest back locally, thanks to a long-term partnership between Aviva and The Wildlife Trusts.

Temperate rainforests grow in areas that have high rainfall and humidity, and a low annual variation in temperature, which is why they thrive in the wetter uplands of Northern Ireland. Also known as Celtic rainforest or Atlantic oakwoods, they are dominated by tree species such as sessile oak, birch, rowan, holly, alder, willow, and hazel.

These majestic and globally rare habitats are home to red squirrels, pine martens, Irish stoats, and threatened birds such as wood warblers and spotted flycatchers. The damp conditions support



Hard fern - an indicator of ancient woodland

© BEN PORTER

an astonishing diversity of mosses, liverworts, lichens, and ferns. Even globally rare fungi, like the oak polypore, can be found here. In turn, these plants, lichens, and fungi support a vast array of invertebrates, many of which are just holding on in small pockets of surviving ancient woodland. Among them are saproxylic species, such as false darkling beetles and beefsteak fungus which are dependent on dead or dying wood and are some of our most threatened species.

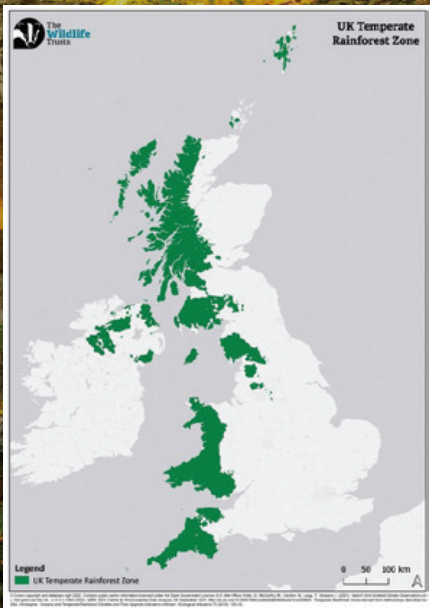
© BEN PORTER

Did you know!

Temperate rainforests are actually rarer than their tropical cousins! This incredible habitat has been reduced to less than 1% of the land area.



Oak polypore - a globally rare fungi



and educational opportunities.

Restoring this habitat will help fight climate change as rainforests have huge potential for storing carbon and help to achieve our net-zero ambition. It will also reduce threats from extreme heat, flood, and drought, and enable local people to reap the benefits.

Although it will take decades before Lenamore Wood becomes a fully functioning rainforest, the journey begins now. By protecting and restoring this remarkable habitat, as Ulster Wildlife's newest nature reserve, we will also be contributing to the target of protecting 30% of land and sea by 2030.

In due course, Lenamore Wood Nature Reserve will be accessible to all and will be a place to walk among young oaks, watch the forest grow, and be part of something that future generations of people and wildlife can cherish.



Sessile oak at Lenamore



Rosemary Mullholland
Head of Nature Recovery

Yet, in many broadleaved woodlands, the dead wood is removed for firewood or for aesthetic reasons, but it serves a vital function for nature to thrive.

Work will shortly begin to restore some of this precious lost habitat at Lenamore Wood as part of a wider programme of nature-based projects to remove carbon from the atmosphere, help nature recover in a time of crisis, and benefit local communities for generations to come.

This project will see the current area of oak and birch woodland extended by 16.6 hectares. Locally sourced acorns will be gathered and grown on for transplanting in a year or two, to boost what is already there. Lenamore Wood will provide a place where people can come and find out more about Atlantic rainforest and watch its development over the years. Local communities in the Gortin area will be closely involved in the rainforest recovery project and will benefit from increased access to nature, volunteering,

Wildlife set to benefit

RED SQUIRREL

There is a good population of red squirrels in nearby Gortin Glen. The woodland at Lenamore will become part of a nature recovery network and act as a stepping stone to allow reds to colonise new areas and move safely across the landscape.



© MBERTIE GREGORY - 2020/VISION

CUCKOO

Cuckoos are summer visitors to the Sperrins. They love eating insects, especially hairy caterpillars! The young woodland at Lenamore will provide lots of food for them and we look forward to hearing them calling from the treetops.



© JON HAWKINS

BLUEBELLS

The existing woodland at Lenamore has bluebells and these will soon spread and colonise the newly planted areas, forming a carpet of blue and providing a source of nectar for pollinating insects.



© VAUGHN MATTHEWS

MERVEILLE DU JOUR

This striking moth, whose name means 'Marvel of the Day', feeds on oak and rests by day in bark crevices, its colours blending perfectly for camouflage. In time, we hope these little marvels will return to Lenamore.



© VAUGHN MATTHEWS

Puffins return to Isle of Muck – a conservation milestone

With their colourful beaks and charismatic charm, puffins are one of the world's most iconic seabirds. For decades, there had been whispers that puffins once bred on our Isle of Muck Nature Reserve, off Islandmagee – a story that was more fairytale than fact. However, in 2017, we embarked on an ambitious conservation project that finally turned myth into reality: puffins are now nesting on the island.

Isle of Muck isn't a big place (about seven football pitches), but it packs in a lot of seabirds. The cliffs and stacks host nesting guillemots, black guillemots, razorbills, shags, fulmars and kittiwakes, while grassy areas are home to eider ducks and gulls. But there were a couple of special seabird species that had potential to join the gang, and puffins were at the top of the list.

However, Muck's seabirds were in trouble from a non-native furry fiend – the brown rat. Food in the form of eggs, chicks, and sometimes adult birds, and shelter in thick thatchy grass made for rat heaven. It's also only a short distance offshore and connected to the mainland by a shingle ridge (known as a tombolo) at low tide, so very accessible for determined and hungry rats.

Although the Isle of Muck seabird colony may be small, it's part of a much larger story of seabird conservation. Seabirds around the UK and Ireland are already under serious threat from climate change, shifting food supplies, over-fishing and pollution – with 24 of the 25 breeding seabird species at risk of local or global extinction. To ensure the future of Muck's seabird colony, the Isle of Muck Seabird Recovery Project was launched to remove the brown rats – not an easy decision but vital to keep the seabirds safe.

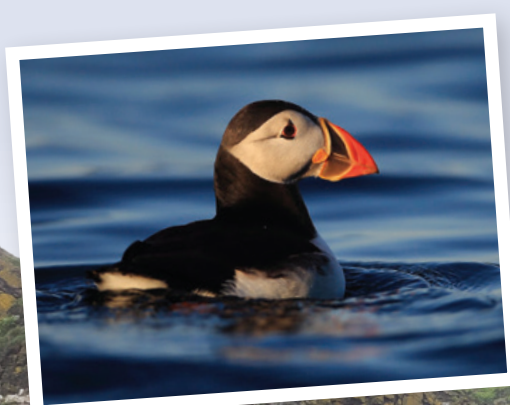
Benefits were visible fairly early on. Common eider chicks were spotted nearby by birdwatchers and, each year, black guillemot numbers have been increasing on and around the island. A couple of years ago, the numbers of nesting gulls took off, mostly herring gulls and lesser black-backed gulls.



© RONALD SURGENOR

The rats can come back in small numbers, but that's something we accept, and we swiftly remove any stragglers. Each year we continue to see even higher numbers of seabirds. This year, nine pairs of great black-backed gull nested, the highest total since the start of annual monitoring 25 years ago. During winter, the island is now grazed by sheep which has reduced the cover for rats and led to a complete change in the island's flora: what was thick grass is now covered in hogweeds and oraches and full of insect life.

With over 580,000 puffin pairs across the UK and Ireland, a handful on the Isle of Muck might seem small – but it's a huge step forward. This little colony proves that seabird restoration works. Our vision is that this tiny island will grow into a stronghold for puffins and, in time, tempt other long-lost species such as the Manx shearwater. It shows what's possible when nature is given a chance.



© RONALD SURGENOR



Andy Crory
Nature Reserves
Manager

The sea cliffs at Isle of Muck, home to thousands of breeding seabirds.

Let Nature In

Six wildlife-friendly gardening tips for autumn/ winter



As the days shorten and temperatures drop, gardens can still be buzzing with life. Autumn and winter are the perfect seasons to give nature a helping hand, from planting early nectar sources to creating shelter for wildlife. Here are six simple ways to let nature in during the colder months.



Plant spring bulbs

It is never too early to get ready for spring! The best time to plant spring bulbs is in the autumn. You can plant crocuses and native daffodils from September, so they are established before the first winter frost, and tulips a little later in November. These flowers are great early sources of nectar for spring pollinators. Simply pick a border, flower bed, or pot and get started.

© ZSUZSANNA BIRD



Make a dead hedge

Dead hedges are also a great place for wildlife to shelter, feed, and nest. They are made by weaving and stacking dead branches and twigs – a great way to reuse garden cuttings while creating a wildlife habitat. Pick a spot, create a framework first, and then start filling it with branches, the larger ones at the base. You may even see new growth starting to appear!

© ROYAL FORT GARDENS, BRISTOL CC-BY-SA-4.0



Help hedgehogs

Resist tidying your garden in the autumn. Species like hedgehogs, frogs and newts rely on leaf piles and long grass to survive at this time of year. Remember, if it is mild, hedgehogs might even have a second litter of hoglets, so watch out for them when strimming or lighting bonfires. If you do see hedgehogs in your garden we'd love to know!

© JON HAWKINS - SURREY HILLS PHOTOGRAPHY



Collect seeds

If you have a wildflower patch, autumn is a great time to collect seeds for next spring. Pick a dry day and start collecting when the seed pods ripen – from flowers such as teasel, yellow-rattle, or knapweed. Make sure you leave some behind to self-seed or to feed the birds. Store the rest in paper bags in a cool dry place over the winter.

© JAMES ADLER



Plant a hedge

Autumn is a great time to plant a wildlife-friendly hedge. Choose native plants such as hawthorn, blackthorn, holly, bramble, and honeysuckle to create a beautiful hedge that is also great for garden wildlife. Try to keep the base of the hedge free from weeds until it is established and remember, don't cut your hedge between March and August when birds are nesting.

© ROSS HODDINOTT - 2020VISION



Protect your pond

If your pond sits under trees, cover it with a net in autumn to prevent it filling with leaves. This will allow wildlife such as frogs or newts to climb out safely. Check your net daily to ensure no wildlife becomes trapped. After autumn has passed, remove the net and move the leaves to your compost heap – this will help keep the pond healthy for all its residents.

© PENNY DIXIE

Get your free wildlife gardening starter pack - ulsterwildlife.org/let-nature-in



WILD NEWS

All the latest local news from Ulster Wildlife

Our year for nature, people and climate

Despite the profound loss of our CEO, Jennifer Fulton, last year, we continued to rise to the challenge of restoring nature, empowering people, and confronting the climate crisis head-on.

We are building a future where nature not only survives but thrives: pioneering peatland restoration at Garry Bog, expanding our network of native oyster nurseries and nature reserves, discovering new breeding sites for endangered species such as the marsh fritillary butterfly, while connecting more people than ever with nature through wellbeing initiatives and volunteering opportunities.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the dedication and support of our members, funders, donors, partners – thank you!

Read our full Annual Report for the year 2024/25 at ulsterwildlife.org/publications



Boost for Nature and Community Wellbeing



We're thrilled to announce major new funding that will help us grow our work over the next three years, bringing more people closer to nature and supporting healthier, stronger, communities.

Two exciting projects are now underway, giving young people and local communities the chance to experience the benefits of nature while taking positive action for the environment.

Naturally Connected Young People will offer teenagers across Belfast hands-on experiences in nature, helping them build resilience, improve wellbeing, and strengthen their long-term connection to the natural world – something that often declines in adolescence. Funded by the Prudence Trust, this project will also enable other Wildlife Trusts to develop similar initiatives with young people.

United for Nature will bring people from different backgrounds together to take action for wildlife and wild places across 10 locations in Mid Ulster. Funded by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body – SEUPB, via Mid Ulster District Council, this – initiative aims to create stronger bonds between communities while delivering real wins for nature.

Discover more at ulsterwildlife.org/bring-people-closer-nature

10,000 people learned about nature at our events

550 farmers and landowners advised through our Environmental Farming Scheme Group programme

180 species identified on and surrounding the native oyster nurseries

8,635 volunteer hours given to nature

130 hectares of peatland restored

879 hectares of land managed for wildlife (equivalent to 1231 football pitches)

Co. Down farm nurtures rare barn owls

Barn owls, one of Northern Ireland's rarest birds, have bred successfully for the third year in a row at the Kelly family farm in Ballyhornan, County Down, offering hope for this iconic species.

Once common across farmland, barn owls have declined sharply owing to loss of rough grassland, hedgerows, and old trees, with fewer than 30 breeding pairs remaining here.

The Kellys have worked for many years with Ulster Wildlife and RSPB NI to manage their farm with nature in mind. Measures include planting winter bird cover, maintaining hedgerows, creating pollinator margins, and establishing species-rich meadows. Ten barn-owl nest boxes have been erected to provide safe nesting sites, and the farm's cereal crops supply plentiful prey for owls and other birds of prey.

After years of watching barn owls hunt across their farm, the Kellys welcomed their first breeding pair in 2023. The owls have returned each year since, raising chicks in the nest boxes. Adam Kelly said, "Seeing barn owls breed here for three years running is the ultimate reward for farming with nature. It shows that what we're doing on the farm is working."



Adam and Jack Kelly with Katy Bell from Ulster Wildlife

As part of the Environmental Farming Scheme Group programme, the Kelly farm shows the power of agri-environment schemes in supporting wildlife. Continued investment and the development of a new Farming with Nature scheme are essential to ensure stories like this can be repeated, helping barn owls and other farmland species to flourish.

If you have land suitable for barn owls and would like advice on how to create wildlife-friendly habitats, visit ulsterwildlife.org/barn-owls to download the 'Land Management Guidance for Barn Owls' leaflet.

If you have seen a barn owl, please record your sighting at ulsterwildlife.org/barn-owls

Peatland Strategy welcomed

We were pleased to welcome the long-overdue publication of the Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy to 2040, but its true success will hinge on the detail of the forthcoming Delivery Plan.

First tabled four years ago, the strategy acknowledges the huge benefits of healthy peatlands, from storing carbon and filtering water to supporting threatened species like curlew and marsh fritillary butterflies. It also recognises that restoring peatlands offers ten times better value for money in cutting greenhouse gases than many other measures.

However, we are concerned that commitments on peat extraction and stronger protections for peatlands have been watered down since earlier drafts. With only 10% of our peatlands currently protected, urgent action is needed.

We are calling on government to work with stakeholders to develop a Delivery Plan that sets ambitious, practical targets, backed by long-term funding and robust monitoring. If done right, it could transform peatland restoration into a cornerstone of tackling the climate and nature crises.

IN BRIEF

Rare dragonfly discovered at Bog Meadows

Volunteers at our Bog Meadows Nature Reserve, in west Belfast, were thrilled to spot a black-tailed skimmer dragonfly – a first for Belfast and only the second ever record for Co. Antrim! David & Ellen, who were taking a break from litter picking, noticed the striking dragonfly and captured this exciting moment on camera. This rare sighting highlights how important places like Bog Meadows are for wildlife – thanks to habitat improvements this urban oasis is buzzing with biodiversity.



© DAVID LITTLEJOHN

Fedrian moth first for NI

Well done to Ryan Mitchell who discovered a new species of moth for Northern Ireland on a recent visit to Fedrian, our newest nature reserve in Fermanagh. *Cochylis flaviciliana*, the gold-fringed conch, has caterpillars that feed on devil's-bit scabious so is a good indicator of high-quality grassland. Despite being mostly pink, this species is probably overlooked and waiting to be found at other species-rich sites in the area.



© RYAN MITCHELL

Wildlife Calendar 2026

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now!

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👉 www.ulsterwildlife.org/shop



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