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Peatland Programme

Summer Edition

July 2019 Newsletter

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Blanket peat restoration has great potential to provide natural flood management benefits and reduce flood risk downstream

The [Upland Environments Research Unit at the University of Manchester](#) has been working closely with [Moors for the Future Partnership](#) over the last decade to produce an empirically grounded evidence base to demonstrate the multiple benefits of blanket peat restoration. The primary aims of peatland restoration works are often to stabilise the landscape, raise water tables and increase biodiversity, but the restoration of natural processes may also have a positive impact on flood risk. Their recent work has focussed on assessing the degree to which natural flood management (NFM) may be one of the many benefits that peatland restoration can provide [Read full article...](#)



Sphagnum is a key ingredient of natural flood management

spawned a new body of research which has shown how revegetation of peat, particularly if we can get a dense Sphagnum cover, can slow the flow of water during storm events to reduce the flood peak downstream. The research indicates priority areas in the landscape for dense surface revegetation that will generally maximise flood benefits. Given that we have also recently shown sediment release from bare peat strongly influences peatland stream ecosystems this gives added impetus to revegetating peatlands and enhancing Sphagnum cover to achieve maximum downstream benefits for river habitats and flood risk. [Read full article...](#)

Dr Richard Payne

The IUCN UK Peatlands Programme team were all saddened to hear the shocking news about the death of Dr Richard Payne and our thoughts are with his family. He was killed while climbing in the remote Nanda Devi region of the Himalayas. Richard was a Senior Lecturer in Environmental Geography at the University of York and was well known to many in the peatland community for his enthusiastic approach and leading edge work. We were fortunate to have Richard's involvement in our Commission of Inquiry on peatlands and hope this will stand as one of the many lasting legacies from Richard's passionate contribution to peatland science.

We invited Dr Roxane Andersen to give a personal tribute available to read [here](#).

Our news

Above: [Europa Hotel, Belfast](#) (left) Belfast skyline (right) © [Visit Belfast](#)

IUCN UK Peatland Programme Conference 2019 - [TICKET SALES NOW OPEN](#)

[Peatlands: Investing in the Future, 1st - 3rd October 2019, Belfast](#)

This, the 9th in our conference series, celebrates the 10th year of the IUCN UK Peatland Programme partnership.

[The conference](#) presents an opportunity for policy makers, scientists, land managers, practitioners, businesses and communicators to connect and share their knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm for peatlands.

Across the 3 days knowledge exchange & networking opportunities include:

- A programme of professional presentations from across the peatland community;
- Formal Networking evening, Stormont Parliament buildings, *Tuesday 1st October, 2019*;
- Evening Reception & Poster Exhibition, Europa Hotel, Belfast, *Wednesday 2nd October, 2019*;
- Delegate designed workshops and project-led sessions to discuss key issues;
- Fantastic field trips

[More information about the conference.](#)

[Book Tickets](#)

Bog Day reminder

Bog Day falls on 28th July this year; let us know if

the Future and Yorkshire Peat Partnership.

Please email details to info@iucn.org.uk



Website refresh

We've had a spring clean, scrubbed down [our website](#) and given it a fresh coat of (digital) paint. We think it's brighter, fresher and easier to use and we'd love to know what you think. Why not take a look and let us know?

And it's goodbye from Lyndon

Our Communications Officer, Lyndon Marquis, is bidding us farewell. Don't worry, he's not going far - he currently splits his time between us and [Yorkshire Peat Partnership](#) (YPP) - from July he'll be full time with YPP. Lyndon said "It's been tremendous working with such a dedicated and knowledgeable bunch, and it's given me a real insight into peat restoration policy. I'm really happy to be staying in peat and look forward to continuing working with the programme from the 'other' side."

Partner highlights



Biggest ever year for Moors for the Future Partnership

From September 2018 to March 2019 the Partnership's teams worked tirelessly in all weathers to conduct their vital work restoring the peatlands of the Peak District National Park and South Pennines and conclude their biggest work season to date. In the 2018–19 season, [Moors for the Future Partnership](#):

- spread a total of 17,728 bags of heather brash
- re-vegetated 86.9 hectares

- installed 113 grips or gully blocks
- cut 96.6 hectares of dominant vegetation
- planted 837.2 hectares of sphagnum moss
- conducted 1092.5 hectares of invasive species control

[Read on...](#)



Additional £11 Million for peatland restoration

'In light of the global **climate emergency**, an extra £11 million has been allocated to fund projects to restore degraded peatland in Scotland'...' providing an important habitat for plants and wildlife, improving water quality, and mitigating flood risk."

[More](#)

YPP turns 10

[Yorkshire Peat Partnership](#) turns 10 in July. Over the last decade, we have:

- surveyed 40,281ha of the estimated 70,000ha of peatland in North Yorkshire
- completed restoration works on 27,223ha of blanket bog
- blocked 1844km of eroding grips
- re-profiled and re-vegetated 1682km of grips and 1497km of gully edges and hags.
- re-vegetated 108ha of bare peat & micro-erosion.
- restored 58ha of dendritic gullying

We will be celebrating, along with the National Trust and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, by planting sphagnum on the summit of Buckden Pike.



Record year for peat restoration in the North Pennines

This has been the busiest year for the [North Pennines AONB Partnership](#) since their restoration projects began in 2006. The Partnership is currently leading an £8 million project with [Yorkshire Wildlife Trust](#) and [Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership](#), [Pennine PeatLIFE](#). The restoration of 2,250 hectares of North Pennines blanket bog has included:

- 8,000 bags of brash cut, airlifted and spread over the land by hand;
- 1,800 tonnes of stone have been used to construct leaky dams;
- 3,400 sediment traps have been built using 2,000 coir rolls;
- 21km of eroding hags or gullies have been re-profiled;
- 100km of grips or moorland drains blocked to restore the hydrology of the blanket bog; and
- 120,000 plug plants of sphagnum and cotton grass have been planted.

[More](#)

Vacancies - research opportunities and jobs

National Trust - Abergwesyn – Area Ranger Vacancy (part-time, permanent role)

The Area Ranger - Abergwesyn will be tasked to lead on peatland restoration work and local community engagement on the Abergwesyn Group of Commons, specifically the implementation of Peatland Restoration Project work on Abergwesyn Hill Common and engagement, support and working alongside the Abergwesyn Group of Commons Graziers. Peatland Restoration is being guided by the Wales Peatland SMS Project

[Details](#)

3 PhD student opportunities with University College Dublin

University College Dublin are looking for 3 highly motivated PhD students to work on an interdisciplinary four-year project funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (Ireland) investigating Strategies to improve Water quality from Managed Peatlands (SWAMP project). Starting date: 01/9/2019.

PhD 1: Experimental studies evaluating water pollution mitigation measures at drained and extracted

on the physico-chemical composition and biodiversity of associated aquatic habitats

PhD 3: Modelling of the effects of drainage and water treatment on the hydrology, hydro-morphology and hydrochemistry of industrial cutaway bogs

[Details](#)

Peatland Restoration Officer - Maternity Cover

Cumbria Wildlife Trust have a vacancy for a dynamic officer to use their expertise to help others deliver conservation projects to restore upland wetlands across Cumbria, mostly within the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks. Kendal, Cumbria. Part-time 21 hours per week, closing date 9.00am on Tuesday 16 July 2019. [Details](#)

Events



Bog Day - Buglife

The Red Moss of Balerno is a Scottish Wildlife Trust Reserve, and the only lowland raised bog in Edinburgh. Join [Butterfly Conservation](#) at this special event to celebrate International Bog Day!

[More](#)

Bog Day - Moors for the Future Partnership

[Moors for the Future Partnership](#) will be taking the Bogtastic Van to the RSPB reserve Dove Stone, from 11:00 until 15:00.

[More](#)



Bog Day - Yorkshire Peat Partnership

[Yorkshire Peat Partnership](#) will be celebrating its 10th birthday, with the help of the National Trust and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, in Buckden, North Yorkshire.

[More](#)



Full Flow - 5th, 6th & 7th July

A trio of events highlight the bid for The Flow Country to become a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Organised by a consortium of leading conservation bodies, including members of The Peatlands Partnership and event sponsor Wildland Limited, the events aim to answer the question Why make The Flow Country a World Heritage Site? Three eminent speakers will discuss the importance of preserving the landscape and wildlife, including Neil Oliver and Professor Iain Stewart.

Friday 5th July – Lairg Community Centre: <http://bit.ly/full-flow-lairg> - Free ticketed

Saturday 6th July – Thurso High School: <http://bit.ly/full-flow-wick> - Free, ticketed

Sunday 7th July – Eden Court, Inverness: <http://bit.ly/full-flow-inverness> - Ticketed

12th September 2019

The Peatlands Partnership has just announced that it will be holding a major conference on The Flow Country of Caithness and Sutherland on Thursday 12th September 2019. The conference will mark the end of the major National Lottery Heritage Fund supported “Flows to the Future” Project and both take stock of its achievements to date and look forward to future peatland developments, including the possible inscription of The Flow Country as a World Heritage Site. With speakers including Professor Des Thompson (Principal Adviser on Biodiversity at SNH and Dr Roxane Andersen, the conference will be held in Inverness at Eden Court. Speakers will cover topics such as the economic impact of recent restoration and people engagement work, and the benefits of using art as a means of engaging people with the Flow Country. There will also be field trips on the Wednesday. More details about the programme will be available soon on the Flow Country website. If you would like to stay updated with conference information please contact [Sydney Henderson](#)

New resources

Kinder Scout Sphagnum Trials Summary published online

Tia Crouch, Senior Research and Monitoring Officer at Moors for the Future Partnership, has published a summary report of the ‘Kinder Scout Sphagnum Trials’ online, available on the Partnership’s website. A number of conclusions can be drawn from the trials, the summary report highlights that when both Sphagnum coverage and cost is considered, the most successful propagule type is clumps, followed by gel, plugs and then beads. Both the full report, and summary are available on the Moors for the Future Partnership website.

[Summary](#), [Full report](#)

A synthesis of evidence for the effects of interventions to conserve peatland vegetation: overview and critical discussion

Peatlands are valuable but threatened ecosystems. Intervention to tackle direct threats is often necessary, but should be informed by scientific evidence to ensure it is effective and efficient. Here we discuss a recent synthesis of evidence for the effects of interventions to conserve peatland vegetation - a fundamental component of healthy, functioning peatland ecosystems.

[More](#)

Associations between gamebird releases and generalist predators

New research from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), just published in *Journal of Applied Ecology*, has revealed that the release of pheasants and red-legged partridges for commercial shoots may be boosting numbers of the avian predators and scavengers that feed upon them. This has implications for other species that might also fall prey to these predators. ([Report](#) - available free for a limited time)

Peatland carbon stocks and burn history: Blanket bog peat core evidence highlights charcoal impacts on peat physical properties and long-term carbon storage

The [recent paper](#) by Heinemeyer et al., [comment](#) by Evans et al., and the authors' [response](#).

In other news...

Exchange, 1st May

- [High Court dismisses climate case against third runway at Heathrow Airport](#) - Environmental Data

Interactive Exchange, 1st May

- [Reward farmers for tackling climate change, says report](#) – Farmers Weekly, 2nd May
- [Industry reacts to CCC net zero report](#) – Utility Week, 2nd May
- [Livestock Farming has Key Role in Tackling Climate Change](#) – The Cattle Site, 3rd May
- [How restoration project in remotest parts of Lancashire will help reduce county's flood risk](#) –

Garstang Courier, 4th May

- [Action needed to stop biodiversity collapse](#) – The Ecologist, 7th May
- [Sheep Farming Wrongly Blamed for Climate Change](#) – Stackyard, 7th May
- [80% of Yorkshire's peatlands are damaged to the point of disaster](#) – Yorkshire Life, 9th May
- [Peatlands and climate change](#) – The Ecologist, 9th May
- [Cumbria can "set the standard" in achieving nation's Net Zero ambition](#) – In Cumbria, 9th May
- ['Net zero ambitions a death sentence on livestock industry'](#) – Press and Journal, 11th May
- [New project will reduce risk of flash flooding in Largs](#) – Largs and Millport Weekly News, 11th May
- [Farming Minister: Grazing cattle on uplands is part of solution to climate change](#) – Farmers

Guardian, 13th May

- [How the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust are protecting our peat moors for future generations](#) – Yorkshire Post, 15th May
- [Group welcomes restoration of bog](#) – Scotsman, 15th May
- [Crews' fifth full day fighting wildfire in Sutherland](#) – BBC Scotland, 15th May
- [Rain helps bring Highland wild fires under control](#) – BBC Scotland, 18th May
- [Over 125,000 people are calling for Yorkshire Water to ban grouse shooting - here's what the company thinks](#) – Huddersfield Examiner, 18th May
- [Pay farmers to let Britain go wild again to save us from climate change, say campaigners](#) – iNews, 21st May

- [The bogs are alive: how art is healing Scottish peatlands](#) – Guardian, 22nd May
- [Aerial image shows scale of days-long wildfire in Sutherland](#) – BBC Scotland, 22nd May
- [How Scots can help nature hold back global warming](#) – Scotsman, 27th May
- [Carbon farming: how agriculture can both feed people and fight climate change](#) – Food & Farming Futures, 29th May

- [One-fifth of all Scots farmland 'should be returned to wilderness'](#) – Peebleshire News, 30th May

- [The bog swarming with scientists and artists](#) – BBC Scotland, 1st June

- [Scotch on the rocks: distilleries fear climate crisis will endanger whisky production](#) – Guardian, 2nd June

- [MPs to debate returning huge swathes of Britain to natural habitat in 'rewilding' scheme](#) – Independent, 3rd June

- [RSPB: Bradford moors are huge carbon store](#) – Telegraph & Argus, 6th June

- [Government plan sets UK on track to cut emissions to zero by 2050](#) - City A.M., 11th June

- [Record Year for North Pennines Peatland Conservation](#) - Stackyard, 12th June

- [What are Britain's Uplands for? East Cairngorms](#) - Food and Farming Futures, 12th June

- [Could leaving parts of East Anglia to grow wild help us tackle climate change?](#) - Great Yarmouth

Mercury, 15th June

- [The truth about Scotland's 2045 climate change target – Dr Richard Dixon](#) - Scotsman, 18th June
- [Project to restore peatland in Scotland gets underway](#) - Waste and Water Treatment, 19th June
- [Indonesia to restore 200,000 hectares of peatland this year](#) - Reuters, 19th June
- [First Minister Launches 'Big Climate Conversation'](#) - Build Scotland, 20th June
- [Street Spirit Let Down But Jigsaw Falling Into Place](#) - This Week in Facilities Management, 20th June
- [Scarred but signs of life: Greater Manchester moors a year on from last summer's disastrous fires](#) - Manchester Evening News, 23rd June
- [Funding pledge to protect Scotland's peatland](#) - BBC Scotland, 25th June
- [The Time is Now](#) - The Lady, 25th June
- [Spending on nature would be the investment of a lifetime](#) - Public Finance International, 26th June
- [Interview: Air Miles with Gareth Redmond-King](#) - Business Traveller, 28th June

*This list is by no means comprehensive, nor are these stories endorsements from the Programme, but for your information only.

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