



Peatland Programme



As spring edges into summer peatlands and the mosaic of habitats that surround them are alive with fresh growth and activity.

Specialised plants found on healthy functioning peatlands support a suite of nationally and internationally important bird life, mammal populations and invertebrates. There are a number of butterflies and moths that have caterpillar foodplants which only grow on bogs; the caterpillars of the Large Heath butterfly *Coenonympha tullia*, for example, feed almost exclusively on Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*). This butterfly is now only found in the north and west of the UK and Ireland, with our data showing a 58% contraction in range since the mid-1970s.

Peatlands are also home to hundreds of species of moth. Some are easily recognised like the spectacular Emperor Moth *Saturnia pavonia*, the caterpillars of which feed on heathers and the species is still quite widespread. Yet populations of others are threatened in some areas, including species like the Manchester Treble-Bar, Wood Tiger and Beautiful Yellow Underwing. In some parts of Scotland these species are vulnerable, and rely almost entirely upon lowland raised bogs.

[Continue reading...](#)



Inclusion of peatlands in the UK's GHG emissions inventory published

The long-awaited report on [inclusion of peatlands in the UK's greenhouse gas \(GHG\) emissions inventory](#) has now been published by the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The report suggests that total Greenhouse Gas emissions from UK peatlands could exceed the equivalent of 20 Megatonnes of CO₂ per year. These emissions occur across both the uplands and the lowlands. The emissions estimates produced for this report are expected to form part of the UK's official emissions inventory in future, and have already featured in the recent ['Net Zero' The UK's contribution to stopping global warming report](#) by the Committee on Climate Change. [Read full article...](#)



Record breaking Spring temperatures exacerbate wildfire outbreaks across the UK.

The summer heatwave of 2018 was accompanied by wildfires across the UK with a major incident declared at Saddleworth Moor in the Peak District where homes in nearby villages had to be evacuated. The wildfire problem has hit the headlines again with record breaking Spring temperatures accompanied by several serious outbreaks including peatland at the National Trust's Marsden Moor. The threat to human lives, disruption to travel as well as the huge financial costs in tackling the fires and dealing with the damaging consequences deserves urgent national attention. [Read on...](#)

Our news

International Bog Day - 28th July 2019



This years' Bog Day falls on Sunday 28th July and will see events across the country helping others to understand the importance of these fantastic places and working together to make sure they are saved for future generations.

Bog Day celebrates bogs, fens and mires and all the great things they do for us: helping to fight climate change by storing carbon; providing us with clean drinking

water; helping prevent flooding; providing great homes for our rare and endangered wildlife... the list goes on.

For more information or to download copies of activities or Bog Day branding please visit: www.bogday.uk. To list your resources or event please contact info@iucn.org.uk.

SAVE THE DATE

IUCN UK Peatland Programme Conference 2019 will take place in Belfast on Tuesday 1st - Thursday 3rd October.

Our conference series provides an important convening function - bringing together people from across sectors and disciplines in one place to make connections old and new and to share knowledge and experience. Details of this years' conference will be announced soon and ticket sales made available.



Image: Ballynahone Bog at dawn © Ben Hall

Survey for peatland community: extent of UK peatland under restoration management

We are conducting a survey to help us track the progress of peatland restoration in the UK.

The [UK Peatland Strategy](#) set a target of two million hectares of peatland in good condition,


under restoration or being sustainably managed by 2040.

To track progress against this target we need to update existing estimates. We are asking the peatland community across the UK to help us do this.

Please complete our short survey & share the link. <https://goo.gl/forms/1uWytxD63nc7uEBT2...>

Please contact info@iucn.org.uk with any queries.

Extent of UK Peatland under restoration management.



Have you delivered peatland restoration in the UK between 2014 - 2019? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Promoting peat in parliament

Representatives from across the UK peatland community celebrated the importance of upland catchments at a Parliamentary reception at Westminster on April 30th.

The reception, hosted by Julian Sturdy MP and supported by Rishi Sunak MP on behalf of the partners in the Pennine PeatLife project and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) UK Peatland Programme, provided an opportunity to highlight the intrinsic value of peatlands and the public benefits they provide and urged Members of Parliament and Peers to visit their local peatlands during the summer recess.

[Read more...](#)



Partner highlights

New initiative to combine data across studies

Researchers, practitioners and policy-makers from across Europe took part in a workshop in Newcastle in March. Their aim was to begin the process of finding a way to standardise the collection of environmental data so it can be combined from multiple studies and sites to better inform policy and practice. [More](#)



Ugie Peatland Partnership welcomes restoration of local bog

Members of the [Ugie Peatland Partnership](#) (UPP), who aim to restore 1,500 hectares of peatland within the River Ugie catchment, were delighted to see the recent completion of peat bog restoration works on Moss of Kinmundy. The restoration work, funded by [Scottish Natural Heritage's Peatland ACTION](#) fund, should provide multiple benefits, including: increased carbon storage; improved water quality; and better wetland habitats for wildlife. RSPB have overseen the project management, on behalf of the landowner, from an initial feasibility study through to completion of the project.



Mike Taylor, who owns Moss of Kinmundy said: "It feels good to be able to help the environment here, both in terms of creating habitat for wildlife and improving some of vital natural resources such as water quality. The project has also enabled me to make a contribution to tackling climate change. Peat bogs were once considered wasteland and dumping grounds, but we are now increasingly realising their importance for a wide range of environmental resources."

[Read full article...](#)

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust have launched a new campaign helping to diversify income for the Yorkshire Peat Partnership



All we are saying is give peat a chance...

[Yorkshire Wildlife Trust](#) has launched an appeal to raise funds for [Yorkshire Peat Partnership](#). Entitled "Give Peat A Chance", the appeal is aimed at Yorkshire Wildlife Trust members and the wider public. Find out more about the campaign [here](#).

Wetland futures in contested environments

WETFUTURES is a 3-year, international project funded through the Joint Programming Initiative Cultural Heritage (Heritage in Changing Environments Call, via the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme) that will focus on wetland environments in Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The project lead is Dr Roy van Beek (Wageningen University, Netherlands) whilst Dr Ben Gearey (University College Cork, Ireland) and Dr Ben Jennings (University of Bradford, UK) will lead the Irish and British components respectively. [More](#)



Demonstrating UAV use: Pennine PeatLIFE - a progress report

Following the very popular first webinar on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, Chris Osbourne – GIS & Remote Sensing Officer for the [Pennine PeatLIFE](#) project – will provide an update on the project's use of UAVs. Topics covered will include including lessons learned, types of data/images collected have so far, and what's planned next. The webinar will take place on Monday 13th May 2019 at 12 noon, and you can register [here](#).



Vacancies - research opportunities and jobs

If you would like us to highlight a vacancy in our newsletter please email info@iucn.org.uk

Yorkshire Peat Partnership voluntary trainee

Closing date: May 13th

Location: North Yorkshire

Details: In this role you will be working alongside the YPP Research Officer to feed into the three-year research project investigating the ecosystem service impacts of peatland restoration. If you like the idea of being out in the field collecting data (vegetation, hydrological and greenhouse gas flux surveying) in some of Yorkshires most beautiful landscape, combined with analysis of the data when you're back in the office; this could be just the role for you. [details](#)

New resources

Digibog_hydro - a decision making tool for restoration planning

Alongside the [User](#) Guide on methods to value the benefits of Peatland Restoration produced by [iCASP](#) partners as part of the [Optimal Peatland Restoration](#) project, a user-friendly model to help guide decision-making in planning restoration will be ready soon. Digibog_Hydro will help peatland practitioners better understand the effect of restoration measures on peatland hydrological dynamics, and therefore help inform the choice of peatland restoration activities, such as sphagnum planting (see Newsletter header image © Moors for the Future Partnership) in view of optimising ecosystem service delivery. [University of Leeds](#), [Yorkshire Peat Partnership](#), and [Moors for the Future Partnership](#) have worked together to develop this new modelling interface. Several workshops will be organised with partners this Spring to ensure the tool is embedded in their planning and delivery practices and help staff confidently use it.



'Nature's Dangerous Decline 'Unprecedented'; Species Extinction Rates 'Accelerating''

Nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history — and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world now likely, warns a landmark new report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services ([IPBES](#)), the summary of which was approved at the 7th session of the IPBES Plenary, meeting in Paris (29 April – 4 May). [Read report...](#)

Fire temperatures and *Sphagnum* damage during prescribed burning on peatlands

New research (Noble, A., Crowle, A. *et al*, 2019) quantifies the damage caused to *Sphagnum* species during rotational burning on peatlands. Key findings include: burning on peatlands has the potential to damage peat forming plant species; *Sphagnum* samples exposed to higher temperatures had a greater proportion of damaged cells; damage to these mosses may threaten the ecosystem services provided by peatlands. [More](#)



If you would like to submit content for future editions of this newsletter please email info@iucn.org.uk.

In other news...

- [Windfarm planning change leads to peat slide risk row](#) – Ground Engineering, 20th February
- [Askwith moor fire "out of control on Saturday" - Natural England urged to stop grouse moor burning for shooting](#) – Stray FM, 21st February
- [Eight things you can do to help alleviate the insect crisis](#) – Smallholder, 23rd February
- [Grouse estates investigated over heather burning](#) – Guardian, 24th February
- [New bids sought to restore Scottish peatland](#) – Scottish Field, 25th February
- [130,000 years of data show peatlands store carbon long-term](#) – Scienmag, 25th February
- [Carbon farming: how agriculture can both feed people and fight climate change](#) – The Conversation, 26th February
- [Why are there UK wildfires in February?](#) – 27th February
- [‘Rewetting work at Marsden has saved moors from more wild fires’](#) – Yorkshire Post, 28th February
- [Responsibly Produced Peat promise](#) – Flora Culture International, 28th February
- [Green Alliance & National Trust progress work on Natural Infrastructure Scheme model](#) – Water Briefing, 1st March

- [Put more carbon back in soils to meet Paris Climate Pledges, opinion piece from the 4 per 1000 initiative](#) – Food and Farming Futures, 1st March
- [New research from the Arctic: thawing permafrost peatlands may add to atmospheric CO2 burden](#) – AlphaGalileo, 1st March
- [Are winter wildfires actually due to climate change?](#) – The Conversation, 1st March
- [Applications open for funding to restore Scotland's peatlands](#) – Caithness Business Index, 4th March
- [How climate change could be causing winter wildfires](#) – Independent, 6th March
- [Wake up, Philip Hammond. The climate crisis needs action, not lip service](#) – Guardian, 14th March
- [Campaigners and landowners clash over burning of Scotland's grouse moors](#) – The Scotsman, 17th March
- [What is climate change and how does it affect the UK?](#) – Countryfile Magazine, 19th March
- [Disease threat to Scotland's ancient pine forests due to climate change, report warns](#) – The Scotsman, 20th March
- [Wildlife campaigners monitor controversial Pendle grouse shooting estate](#) – Burnley Express, 1st April
- ["Common voice" needed for hill farming's future](#) – The Courier, 2nd April
- [Event review: Climate change and agriculture](#) – SCI, 2nd April
- [World seems ambivalent about swift action on climate change](#) – IPCC chair – The Scotsman, 3rd April
- [Pilot project could help prevent flooding in Peter Tavy, Walkhampton and other villages](#) – Oakhampton Times, 4th April
- [Let nature heal climate and biodiversity crises, say campaigners](#) – Guardian, 3rd April
- [Indonesia should not quit climate pact over palm-oil spat](#) - UN official, 5th April
- [Rare species rely on rescue plan for precious peatlands](#) – The Scotsman, 6th April
- ['Flooding and climate change make fixing Yorkshire's broken peatlands vital', Yorkshire Wildlife Trust says as it launches major fundraising appeal](#) – Yorkshire Post, 8th April
- ['Give peat a chance' to help stop York from flooding](#) – York Press, 8th April
- [Climate change impacts peatland CO2 gas exchange primarily via moisture conditions](#) – AlphaGalileo, 8th April
- [The battle to save the Dales' peat bogs](#) – Telegraph and Argus, 11th April
- [New research reveals climate change secrets hidden in the Yukon permafrost](#) – Heritage Daily, 11th April
- [Finding out more about Crompton Moor](#) - Royton Correspondent, 15th April
- [Give Peat a Chance](#) - UK Hillwalking, 22nd April
- [Leading artists join fight against climate change](#) - Scottish Field, 22nd April
- [Fine Gael rejects criticism of all-party climate action plan](#) - Irish News, 23rd April

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

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Further information:

Header image: Begonias growing in Sylvamix® peat-free professional growing medium for a local authority bedding scheme © Melcourt Industries Ltd.

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