

Welcome to your New Partnership

The Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership was launched at an event on 9th May attended by a wide range of stakeholders. The new Partnership takes on the role and assets of the Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership and will continue to use existing networks, whilst also forging new relationships to ensure the best outcomes for nature.

The Partnership exists to promote collaboration and share best practice across the conservation sector and to foster greater understanding in the public arena of conservation issues and the value of nature in our society.

Recent policy and guidance relating to the sustainable management of natural resources represent a shift away from specific Biodiversity Action Plans and towards a more holistic, multi partner approach to 'nature recovery'. This refresh and re-brand of the Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership (PBP) as Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership (PNP) is part of this wider process and positions the Partnership within the new framework without losing the networks and close working relationships that PBP has built up over the last 18 years. This is an opportunity to review the membership of the local nature conservation delivery partnership to ensure participation from as broad a stakeholder base as possible.



Cllr Huw George, Biodiversity Champion for Pembrokeshire County Council, opening the inaugural meeting of the Partnership.

PEMBROKESHIRE NATURE PARTNERSHIP



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Pembrokeshire County Council and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority have played a key role in supporting the local Partnership since its inception – part funding the core running costs and providing expertise to steer the work of the Partnership and deliver specific tasks. Together, the Partners have produced plans to guide conservation effort to where it is most needed and worked directly on the ground together to secure improvements for species as diverse as the rare southern damselfly, dormouse and waxcap fungi.

At the time of writing, the list of Partners includes:

- Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust
- Buglife
- Darwin Centre
- Farmers Union of Wales
- Natural Resources Wales
- Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority
- Pembrokeshire County Council
- PLANED
- West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre
- Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales

It is also supported by Welsh Government and has a network of some 200 individuals with relevant skills and experience who contribute time and expertise to the furthering of conservation aims in Pembrokeshire. More Partners are expected to sign up in the coming weeks.

If you received regular communications from the Biodiversity Partnership, these will continue under the Nature Partnership (unless you tell us otherwise). If you don't already receive regular updates and would like to, please get in touch.

I look forward to continuing to work together for nature in Pembrokeshire!

Ant Rogers
Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership

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Bee Friendly in Pembrokeshire

The Bee Friendly Scheme is a relatively new initiative supported by the Welsh Government as part of its Action Plan for Pollinators. The scheme is open to any group, organisation, business or community and encourages a long term commitment to supporting our pollinating insects. It is all about people taking action to help all pollinators, not just bees.

Pollinators are essential to the environment and to us. The economic value of bees as pollinators of commercially grown insect-pollinated crops in the UK has been estimated at over £200 million per year (British Bee Keepers Association), but bees are declining nationwide and need all the help they can get.



Bumblebee on knapweed
Photo: Trevor Theobald

Newport Town Council has recently become the first Town Council in Wales to be awarded 'Bee Friendly' status in recognition of its commitment to helping to halt the national decline in pollinator populations.

The Town Council will be managing an area of land above Brynhyfryd Cemetery as a wild flower meadow to provide food for pollinators and will install 'bug hotels' made by pupils at Ysgol Bro Ingli to provide places for pollinators to live.



The Town Council will seek to expand the scheme in future years and would love to hear from anyone with ideas to build on their success and help to keep Newport buzzing!

Coastlands C.P. School has recently become the first school in Pembrokeshire to achieve Bee Friendly status.

The School has pledged to provide pollinator-friendly flowers throughout the year, to provide places for insect pollinators to live, to avoid harmful chemicals and to involve the community in raising awareness of the importance of pollinators.

The Eco Warriors at Coastlands School are proud to be amongst those leading the way to make Wales the first Pollinator-Friendly nation in the world! Head Teacher, Mr Evans said "The pupils are working hard to not only improve our school grounds for bees, but also to raise wider awareness of their importance; it is more than an environmental issue, it helps them to understand global responsibility. Bees are vital to our food chain. One third of the food we eat would not be available but for bees."



The Eco-Warriors at Coastlands School with their Bee Friendly Certificate

For more information, see: <http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Wales-Action-Plan-for-Pollinators> or contact the Bee Friendly Champion for Pembrokeshire.

Ant Rogers
Bee Friendly Champion
for Pembrokeshire



Pembrokeshire Fungus Recording Network - The Blackening Waxcap Project

Articles in previous PBP newsletters documented the background to, and progress with, our project in which we set out to equip ourselves with the materials and expertise to extract DNA and isolate and amplify barcode portions of DNA from fungus samples.

The project was made possible with funding from the Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership and technical support from Dr. Gareth Griffith at Aberystwyth University. This note summarises the outcome: a more detailed report will appear in the July issue of the PFRN newsletter which will be available on the website www.pembfungi.org.uk

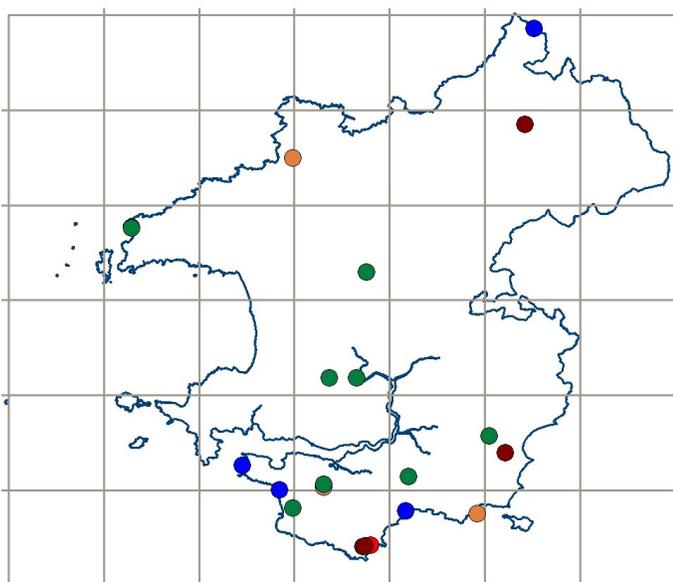


Collections of blackening waxcap were obtained from locations across the County in 2015 and 2016. A DNA barcode sample was extracted and amplified for each collection. Analysis of these barcodes showed that the collections fell into 4 distinct groups - one of which corresponded with the sand dune species *Hygrocybe conicoides* (*H. conica* var. *conicoides*). The other clusters remain unnamed until taxonomists delve further into the *H. conica* complex. When this happens we will be able to revisit the DNA sequences and



voucher material and retrospectively assign names to each collection. The map shows the distribution of sequenced collections which have been assigned a colour code based on the group in which they clustered.

The substantive outcome of the project is that we have established and tested our facilities and procedures for extracting DNA and generating fungal barcode material for sequencing. This allows us to develop new projects to enhance our knowledge of fungal species in the County and further afield, particularly in cases where molecular studies have significantly changed our understanding of a species complex.



H. conica collections - Coloured dots represent different clusters based on DNA sequences. The blue dots correspond with the dune waxcap - *Hygrocybe conicoides*.

David Harries
Pembrokeshire Fungus
Recording Network



Seen any Adders in Pembrokeshire this Spring?

An important project aimed at finding and studying Adder hibernation sites has been underway this Spring across Pembrokeshire, and thanks to earlier appeals for sightings as well as local record centre data, Sam Langdon (a local ecologist) and Mark Barber (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust) have managed to locate a number of new sites.

Adders can be a common sight in some areas of the County, but very little is currently known about the places in which they choose to hibernate. Adders tend to hibernate communally and populations can be small, so if these features are inadvertently destroyed during winter habitat management works or left exposed due to vegetation clearance, it could have a very large local impact on what is thought to be a nationally declining species.

The aim of this project is to find as many of these hibernation features as possible from records and site visits, study hibernacula features and then work with land managers to secure their future, as well as training conservation volunteers and land managers in identification of such features on their sites.

However, despite some really good new hibernacula finds, it is surprisingly difficult to locate them and initially relies entirely on spotting adders as they emerge from them to bask during early Spring (between February- mid April).



Baby Adder at Castlemartin
Photo: Sam Langdon



If you have seen any adders over the last few months and can remember the location (even roughly), please do get in touch with Sam and Mark as any information could help locate further important sites or add to locations at known adder hotspots. All information will be fed into ARC's Wales Online Amphibian Atlas (<http://arc.cofnod.org.uk/>) and used directly to help with adder conservation in West Wales. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

Please send details of any sightings (date, location, any details of the animal/s such as possible sex or age and any photographs) to: Dr Sam Langdon – dr.s.langdon@gmail.com

Mark Barber - Mark.Barber@arc-trust.org

Sam Langdon
Ecologist



Biodiversity
Solutions

Reserve's Aquatic Flora and Fauna Benefit from Funding

Dowrog Common, Llangloffan Fen and Pembroke Upper Mill Pond nature reserves have been fortunate enough to receive just over £6000 of funding to enhance open water habitats. These monies have come from the Freshwater Habitats Trust, Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership and Natural Resources Wales.

The works took place in February and involved the use of contractor machinery to de-silt areas of open water, clear channels and create new scrapes. Part of the work on Dowrog Common involved clearing a section of a historic leat of silt and vegetation to promote better flows of water through the site whilst enhancing habitats for freshwater invertebrate and amphibian species. In future years, additional sections will be cleared with the aim to completely reopen the waterway.

De-silting the Leat at Dowrog Common
Photo: Nathan Walton



At Llangloffan Fen two new scrapes were created to promote the establishment of rare aquatic plant species such as pillwort and three lobed water crowfoot. The main pond with the bird hide was also extended, pushing back encroaching vegetation and promoting open areas of water for waders and other bird life. Work at Pembroke Upper Mill Pond



Extending the Main Pond at Llangloffan Fen

Photo: Nathan Walton



involved digging out vegetation and silted banks from impinging on the main pond whilst also preventing the spread of invasive species such as Himalayan balsam.

Nathan Walton, Wildlife Trust Officer for Pembrokeshire stated, "I am very grateful for the support of monies from the Freshwater Habitats Trust, Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership and Natural Resources Wales which enabled key habitat work to take place on my reserves this Winter. Although larger sources of funding are increasingly harder to obtain, smaller pots of money, when matched with other funds, still enable us to deliver real solid projects with positive outcomes for wildlife."

Nathan Walton
Wildlife Trust of South
and West Wales



Biodiversity Events June—August



Date	Title	Information	Contact
1 st June	Minibeast Safari, Cilgerran	Come on a fascinating walk around our reserve and discover a world of mysterious bugs and insects on our Minibeast Safari. Walks start at 11am and 2pm and the cost is only £3 per child. Suitable for ages 4+. Please dress appropriately for the weather and wear sturdy footwear. Bug viewers will be provided.	01239 621600
4 th June	St David's: A Ranger's View of the National Park	Our ranger invites you to explore 'his patch'. What makes the smallest city so special to him; why is it unusual to have a city in a National Park? Find out on this leisurely 1 mile stroll around the UK's smallest city. Sturdy shoes and suitable clothing advised.	01437 720392
6 th June	Wild Flower Walk, Broad Haven South	Explore the flora of Pembrokeshire in Spring and early Summer. Join our National Park leader, Vicky, who will identify species, and share stories on their history and varied uses; medical, culinary and household. Suitable for all members of the family. Some uneven ground, so sturdy shoes recommended.	01437 720392
17 th & 18 th June	Cetacean Survey Training Course	Learn about whale and dolphin species ID, classification, survey methods and conservation on this two-day course in Ceredigion including land and boat-based surveys. The weekend provides an unparalleled opportunity to see marine mammals in the wild and to contribute to cetacean conservation in Britain. http://www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk/cetacean-survey-training-courses/	katrin.lohregel@seawatchfoundation.org.uk

Biodiversity Events

June—August



Date	Title	Information	Contact
18 th June, 17 th , 21 st & 28 th July	Go Wild in the Woods. Castell Henllys	Join us with our nature engagement workshops, working with our surroundings and experiencing the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park in a completely different way. Ring for details on the week of the event, to find out what's in store, or check our Facebook page. £3.00 plus Admission.	01239 891319
1 st July	Crab Catching at Porthclais	Come and meet these crusty crustaceans in this fun filled family activity. Bait your line and send it down into the water, then wait for the crab to take the bait. Learn all about these fascinating creatures and how they are adapted for life at sea. All kit provided. Children must be accompanied. BOOKING ESSENTIAL	01437 720392
4 th July	Wild Flower Walk, Carew	Explore the flora of Pembrokeshire in Spring and early Summer. Join our National Park leader, Vicky, who will identify species, and share stories on their history and varied uses; medical, culinary and household. Suitable for all members of the family. Some uneven ground, so sturdy shoes recommended.	01437 720392
16 th July	Castlemartin Minibus Trip	Join South Pembrokeshire Local Group on a Castlemartin minibus trip – enjoy this area usually off limits to the general public, without too much walking. We will see interesting habitats and wildlife. Meet at Pembroke Commons car park at 9:30am. Spaces are limited so please book. Bring a packed lunch.	Christine Jones 01646 673912
3 rd August	Pond Safari, Colby Gardens	Get up close and personal and discover the fascinating wildlife in Colby's streams and ponds. Hands-on activities and family fun all day. Normal National Trust admission applies, plus charge for the activity	
3 rd August	Brilliant Bats at the Bishop's Palace	This ever popular event invites you to take a twilight stroll around the Bishop's Palace, St. Davids. Amanda, the site Custodian, will take you on a journey through time as she brings to life the building and the people who lived there in this very special guided tour. This is a fun activity for all members of the family. Bat detectors provided.	01437 720392
7 th August	Preseli Hill Walk	This is an opportunity to walk the length of the Preseli Hills visiting all the historic sites scattered along the ridge. Suitable clothing and sturdy footwear advised. Please note that the walks are dependent on good weather with clear visibility.	01437 720392

PNP Contact Details

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Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership website:

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk (search - biodiversity)

Wales Biodiversity website:

www.biodiversitywales.org.uk

Nature Newsletters

Mae'r cylch-lythyr hwn ar gael yng Nghymraeg, cysylltwch â Ant am gopi cymraeg.

PNP would like to thank all those who contributed to this newsletter. If you would like to write an article for the next newsletter please contact Ant.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author of the article and may not represent the position of the wider Partnership or it's constituent members.

PNP Members

amphibian and reptile
conservation



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[Parc Cenedlaethol Arfordir Penfro](#)
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park



WEST WALES
BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION CENTRE
CANOLFAN WYBODAETH BIOAMRYWIAETH
GORLLEWIN CYMRU

