



JNCC Bulletin July 2022

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Working in partnership for terrestrial monitoring

Through collaboration, innovation and evaluation, we provide robust evidence and advice to help policy makers turn science into action. When JNCC was formed in 1991, our terrestrial monitoring involved working with partners to harness the activities of volunteer recorders to provide a national picture of changes in the status of birds, mammals and other species. Today, volunteer-based species recording schemes remain at the heart of what we do but are now complemented by the use of satellite technology which has revolutionised environmental monitoring.

This past year, we've worked with our terrestrial surveillance schemes and partners to develop strategic priorities and define direction of work for the next five years. All in all, we have renewed or are renewing 12 biodiversity monitoring schemes: six key bird schemes, as well as the monitoring programmes for bats, butterflies, pollinators, plants, and other mixed taxa and habitat reporting. This year we have even added to the suite of surveys and been able to extend the lifecycle of certain partnerships, allowing a more strategic approach and certainty for planning. The schemes contribute to long-term surveillance and monitoring used to generate annual statistics, [UK Biodiversity Indicators](#) and international reporting, multinational agreements as well as regional management plans. Thanks to our amazing partners, we look forward to five more years of strong collaboration.

Extinction exhibition

For over 30 years our trusted expertise, dedication and skills have strengthened nature conservation. As part of our work we contribute to the development of Government policy on endangered species of wild fauna and flora by providing sound scientific advice, as well as advising Government on licence applications for CITES-listed species. The [CITES](#) team come across a wide variety of seized and confiscated items, which we use to supplement training that we provide to wildlife crime officers around the UK. One of these items was a pair of seized African Elephant, *Loxodonta africana*, tusks which were gifted to us by Warwickshire Police.

We approached Peterborough Museum to enquire about donating the tusks which are now a key component of a new free exhibition – 'Extinction'. The exhibition highlights the work of conservation in preserving wildlife, and alongside the tusks, we have loaned the museum a variety of specimens to show the wide range of species found in wildlife trade. Our CEO, Dr Gemma Harper, Director of Ecosystem Evidence and Advice, Steve Wilkson and CITES Licensing Assistant, Elinor Grant, attended the opening of the exhibition, and we encourage you to pay a visit and see it for yourselves! The [Extinction exhibition](#) runs from July-November 2022.

Help make data more meaningful

You can help make data more meaningful by spending 10 minutes watching flowers and insects in good weather! Flower Insect Timed (FIT) counts collects data on the total number of insects that visit a particular flower, ideally chosen from a list of 14 target flowers. FIT Counts can be done anywhere, including gardens and parks, in warm, dry weather any time from April to September. Insects are identified to broad groups, including bumblebees, honeybees and hoverflies, and [a guide](#) is provided to help with this. Part of the motivation for FIT counts is to encourage wider

involvement in recording wildlife and the methods are designed to be a good introduction for this.

FIT counts are relatively new, formally beginning in 2018 and running annually since then – increasing from 585 up to 1,940 in 2020. By collecting data on flower visitation, FIT counts help understand the interactions between plants and pollinators. One important question to explore is how and why these interactions change over time and what that might mean for pollination. FIT Counts are a part of the [UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme](#). JNCC is a joint funder of the scheme which is carried out through a partnership involving a range of organisations.

Supporting nations of the Eastern Pacific Marine Corridor

JNCC, in collaboration with the Marine Management Organisation and Cefas, is leading on scoping ways to offer support to the nations of the [Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor](#) (CMAR), which is set to become the largest trans-national MPA network of its kind in the world. Protected under the actions of the CMAR initiative, this Corridor extends through waters of Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and Ecuador, and covers one of the world's most important migratory routes for sea turtles, whales, sharks and rays.

The team has recently concluded the last of their in-country visits, where JNCC facilitated two-day workshops and meetings with representatives from a wide range of stakeholders from the four nations including environmental non-governmental organisations, government and the fisheries and defence sectors.

The four CMAR nations announced at COP26 in Glasgow their plans to join forces to increase the size of their protected waters to cover a fishing-free zone of more than 500,000 km². Following this, the Rt Hon Lord Goldsmith announced during his visit to Ecuador and Costa Rica in January that the UK will work together with the four countries to protect the marine environments of the region.

Seas the day: Back to West Shetland Shelf

The JNCC survey team and our Marine Scotland Science colleagues headed back to the West Shetland Shelf Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (MPA) to collect evidence which is vital to understand the condition of the MPA's seabed. On previous visits to the site, situated in Scottish offshore waters, the team discovered a [new species of worm](#) and with guidance from Historic Environment Scotland the location of a [shipwreck from 1940](#). Find out what the team discovered, from yellow hedgehog sponges, brittle stars and ocean quahog to being treated to spectacular sunrises and sunsets [on our blog](#).