

Natural History Society of Northumbria Annual Review 2022/23



**Thanks to your membership, volunteering,
and donations, we are connecting more people
than ever before with North East nature.**

Your support has made a world of difference for people and nature this year.

Thanks to you, regional citizen science projects continued to reveal fascinating information about local wildlife. Gosforth Nature Reserve flourished with the opening of an accessible boardwalk, new seating, and improved habitats for wildlife.

This year you've made possible our largest schools programme to date, reached new community groups, provided exciting courses and events and inspired wonder in young people through NHSN's Young Naturalist's Fund.

Members, like you, are the beating heart of NHSN and none of this would be possible without your support. Thank you so much.

**Inspiring wonder in the natural world,
from the Tees to the Tweed, since 1829**



Making Your Sightings Count

From the tranquil Northumberland coast to the windswept hills of County Durham, you've been noticing wildlife large and small.

Noticing wildlife is an important part of conservation. This year, over 180 people joined regional citizen science projects, recording bees, ladybirds and orchids, sharing 5,421 sightings, making exciting discoveries to improve collective knowledge of North East nature.

At Gosforth Nature Reserve, you shared hundreds of sightings of an amazing 140 species from Barn Owls to beautiful orchids and tiny bugs. In doing so, helping us protect this precious place in the future.

Together, your membership also enabled NHSN to support three conservation and research projects through our Dickinson Memorial Fund, including the Bedlington and District Red Squirrel Group.



“NHSN's citizen science projects have inspired me to record sightings of some of the smaller wildlife species that are all around us. Having records verified by them increases my confidence in making future identifications and the feedback I sometimes get when records are not accepted can also be very helpful. I'm learning all the time, and I don't have to travel far to make new discoveries.

David Jarema, NHSN Member



A Place for People and Nature

With your support, Gosforth Nature Reserve has continued to thrive this year.

It has been another exciting year at Gosforth Nature Reserve. Volunteer Rangers have been busy welcoming visitors, more school and community groups have visited, and Conservation Volunteers have carried out amazing work improving habitats and facilities including a new accessible boardwalk, improved footpaths, and new seating.

With your support, passionate volunteers have been able to inspire more people about the reserve than ever before. This year Education Rangers welcomed 878 school children, new community groups and partner organisations and 110 local people to our annual open day.

It has been a fantastic year for wildlife too. Rare visitors, including a Purple Heron and Golden Oriole, caused much excitement. Wildlife monitoring continued to increase our knowledge of the site. This included eDNA sampling in partnership with the Natural History Museum: London, aquatic invertebrate surveys, Water Vole surveys and several student projects.



Purple Heron
© Barry Hunter

“We have had a brilliant day. Children have said they don't want to go home, asked can we come back again and said it was their best trip ever.

Ms Morgan, teacher



Staff from the Environment Agency celebrating their team away day at Gosforth Nature Reserve

People Power

Volunteers are the heart of what we do. Without your help, NHSN wouldn't be what it is today.

NHSN volunteers have made an incredible difference across the region this year. Each with their own unique skills, experience, and knowledge, they contribute to all NHSN activities, by protecting nature, inspiring people, nurturing young naturalists and so much more. This year, over 200 dedicated volunteers contributed to NHSN's work as:

- Volunteer Rangers
- Conservation Volunteers
- Education Rangers
- Member mailshot deliverers
- Student Naturalists
- Trustees
- Library and Archive Volunteers
- Citizen Scientists and Event Leads

Our heartfelt thanks go to every person who gave their time this year.

We couldn't do what we do without you.

“ *I enjoy the excitement and wonder of the children, exploring, noticing, and listening to nature on the reserve. Especially for those children for whom this might be the first time they have been in such a 'wild place'.*

There are always wonderful moments of joy and connection.

Helen Raffle, Education Ranger ”

Nurturing Young Naturalists

Thanks to you, NHSN has supported more young naturalists than ever before.

NHSN members are passionate about nurturing young naturalists. Thanks to you, this year we helped 1,500 children connect with nature through our 'Your Plan A for North East Nature' project, welcomed 878 school children to Gosforth Nature Reserve and supported Children North East to run field trips through our Young North East Naturalist's Fund.

“ *Oliver has really enjoyed this project and has been very enthusiastic at home to tell us what he has been learning.*

He has enjoyed taking his learning further at weekends, telling his family interesting facts when we have been out and about.

M. Thomas, parent ”



Your support also enabled us to support our first ever Student Naturalist work placements, promote 20 early-career naturalists through our 1829 Talks, support four research placements, and run special trips for students working with Newcastle University Student Union.



NHSN Conservation Volunteers and Members celebrating the opening of a new, accessible boardwalk at Gosforth Nature Reserve



“ *I am so incredibly thankful to have been given the opportunity to work with NHSN as a Student Naturalist. It has benefitted me in so many ways, allowing me to develop valuable skills that I can apply to my future career and providing me with some unforgettable experiences.*

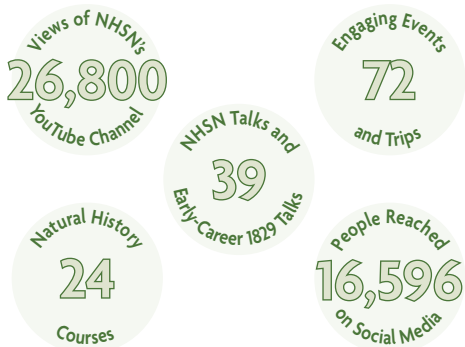
I thoroughly enjoyed contributing to what is a fantastic community of volunteers, where everyone is doing their part for North East nature.

Alex Moore, Student Naturalist ”

Connecting People and Nature

Your membership is helping us share the wonder of North East nature

Thanks to you, this year NHSN saw one of its most diverse programmes to date, connecting more people across the North East with wildlife and wild places. Opportunities this year included many walks, talks, trips, courses, videos, and informative blogs. Highlights include:



"I really loved the botany course - it was great to spend time outdoors with other people who liked looking at wildflowers, and to learn to identify more of them.

As someone with no background in botany I really appreciated the fact that only enthusiasm and not prior knowledge was needed. We learned a lot without ever feeling lectured.

I am looking forward to next year's courses!

Wendy Ross, NHSN Member

Heritage Explored

Your support is helping share the stories of local naturalists.

This year, your support helped NHSN secure funding for a new project, Nature's Cure in Times of Need, which will capture the stories of what nature means to people across the North East. Using material from the North East Nature Archive, a new film featuring artist, Mary Hancock, was created to inspire museum visitors and 14 artworks from NHSN's Margaret Dickinson Collection formed part of an exhibition in Berwick-upon-Tweed visited by 2,000 people.

Thanks to the kind donations of members, NHSN's library and archive collections grew with notable donations from Alisoun Gardner-Medwin and Peter Davis.



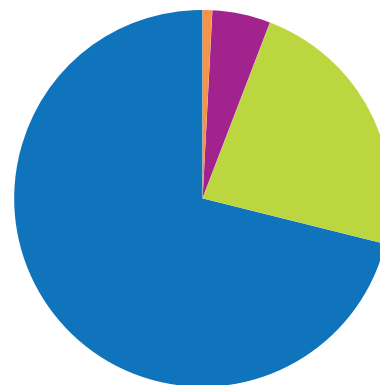
"This event revealed so much about natural history in our area and the importance of women in documenting and recording. I loved the watercolour plates of fungi and the notebooks of Kathleen Barratt held in the North East Nature Archive.

Thank you!

Michelle Wood, Event Attendee

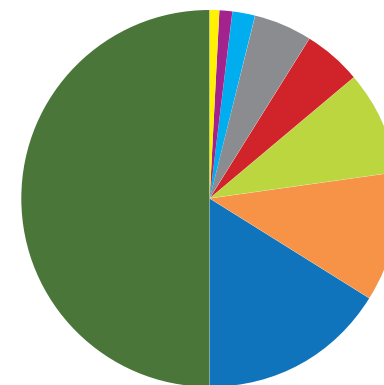
Finances

Income



Donations and legacies	£193,000	71%
Charitable activities	£62,000	23%
Investment income	£13,000	5%
Other income	£1,000	1%
Total income	£269,000	

Expenditure



Staff & Volunteer costs	£188,000	50%
Overheads	£58,000	16%
Depreciation	£39,000	11%
GNR & Conservation	£32,000	9%
Marketing & Publications	£20,000	5%
Events Expenditure	£19,000	5%
GNM: Hancock	£9,000	2%
Investment Fees	£4,000	1%
Library & Archive	£2,000	1%
Total expenditure	£368,000	

GNR = Gosforth Nature Reserve

A special thanks to our funders



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CHANGE



Percy Hedley
Trust

Bullfinch

© Brian Rutter



Thank you

From the Tees to the Tweed, the passion of NHSN members, like you, has made a difference for North East nature.

Thanks to you, NHSN has connected more people with the natural world than ever before. We cannot thank you enough for all you've done this year.


Grow your impact

Join in with events, talks, courses and citizen sciences taking place across the North East.

Tell a friend and share your passion for nature with as many people as possible. Would they enjoy NHSN membership, or a visit to Gosforth Nature Reserve?

Spread the word following us on social media, leaving comments and sharing NHSN's work. Details can be found below.

Stay up to date with North East nature

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