

# **Natural History Society of Northumbria**

## **Annual Report and Unaudited Financial Statement**

### **For the year ended 31 July 2025**



Charity Registration Number:  
1204306

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

# Your Action for North East Nature

## What a difference a year makes for people and wildlife

### NHSN Annual Report 2024-25

Another challenging year for nature was helped by many more people noticing and protecting wildlife, from Gosforth Nature Reserve to Northumberland and Durham, from habitat conservation to wildlife surveying. Thanks to you, 96% of NHSN funding is from members and supporters, such as grants by charitable institutions. Read on to discover what you and your membership helped achieve this year.



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#### Protecting Gosforth Nature Reserve

Conservation highlights for 2025 at 'Gossey Park' include breeding Common Terns and Barn Owls, newly recorded and Parsley Water-dropwort, a very rare plant not seen here for 100 years. Volunteers ensured you received a warm welcome, supported school groups, vital habitat management, wildlife recording, and hours of nature footage.

“We were thrilled to spot a Bittern, watching it move through the reeds, where we captured our very first photos, turning the visit into a truly unforgettable moment.”

NHSN Member

482  
school  
children

25  
local  
schools

200  
open day  
visitors

62  
volunteers

825  
trees  
planted

10,000  
visits

#### Nurturing Young and Early Career Naturalists

For almost 200 years NHSN has been there for young and early career naturalists, a tradition members are keen for us to continue through NHSN's Young Naturalist Appeal, student placements, 1829 Talks and NHSN's Field Skills Programme.

“The children loved getting the Young North East Naturalist booklet after their trip.”

Thomas Walling Primary School

“The programme has kickstarted a passion for botany and invertebrates for me.”

Field Skills  
Participant

100  
young  
naturalists  
inspired

16  
1829 Talks by  
early career  
naturalists

25  
students  
attended  
NHSN's  
Field Skills  
Programme

2  
twelve month  
student  
naturalist  
placements

#### Discovering Nature's Great Museum Outdoors

NHSN has a long history of managing natural history museums. Today our mission is to engage more people in 'nature's great museum outdoors' seeing nature close to home.

##### Citizen Science

Action for climate and nature conservation needs people's wildlife sightings to track and protect the changing variety and locations of common and rarer wildlife. Highlights in discoveries last year include rare Broken-belted and Bilberry Bumblebees, new sites for Dune Helleborine orchid and new locations for the uncommon Hieroglyphic Ladybird

“It's pleasing to know that my sightings are providing some insights into the natural world at a local level.”

Friends of Rising Sun Country Park

##### NHSN's Gosforth's Wild Web

Started in 2023 to support people keen to notice nature close to home in and around Gosforth Nature Reserve, across most of Newcastle upon Tyne and into North Tyneside. Raising awareness of wildlife helped inform conservation in Tyneside's urban wildlife corridors.

##### Ouse Burn Way

Restoring the Ouse Burn Way for people and nature is the vision of the Reece Foundation. NHSN members and local people are working towards a healthy wildlife corridor, which is vital to the future of Gosforth Nature Reserve.

“It was amazing to see and hear so many bats - a wonderful experience.”

Local resident on a bat walk

120  
field trips  
and  
guided walks

5,064  
people  
engaged

300  
wildlife  
recorders

3,500  
sightings  
of bees  
and ladybirds  
across the  
North East

15,000  
wildlife  
records

61  
sessions  
delivered  
to  
149  
children

3,555  
people  
in parks

172  
events for  
2,103  
people

105  
surveys

1,500  
species

#### Discovering North East Nature

##### Indoors

NHSN began in 1829 bringing the region's natural history community together at talks. These continue to be an informative and social event in our winter programme. NHSN courses and talks enable people to learn together.

##### Publications

Wildlife of North East Rivers was published, along with three editions of *The NHSN Magazine*.

##### Online

NHSN social media continued to grow followers, joining Bluesky this year.



1,260  
visits to  
NHSN Talks

320  
course attendees

41  
contributory  
authors to  
publications and  
the journal

43,200  
YouTube views

259  
subscribers

15,401  
social media  
followers

#### Celebrating the Social and Cultural Aspects of North East Natural History

NHSN's North East Nature Archive (NENA), run by volunteers, curates a unique local natural history archive. People shared their relationships with natural history through nature journaling and Talking Naturally interviews on NHSN's YouTube. Located in the Great North Museum: Hancock and home to over 10,000 items.

“Nature's Cure made a massive difference to me, way beyond the four sessions I've attended, more confidence in my art work, and courage in other areas of my life.”

Nature Journaler

280  
local people

15  
volunteers

1,013  
volunteer hours

32  
community  
workshops

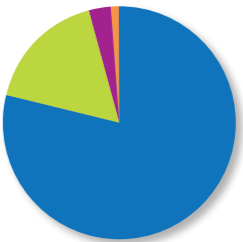
984  
people to explore  
their local heritage

19  
sessions sharing  
the treasures found  
in NHSN's long  
history

#### Finances

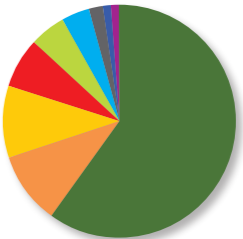
Thanks to previous legacy givers, NHSN has been able to continue an agreed plan to invest more income than received, to deliver opportunities set out in Action for North East Nature 2022-25.

##### Income



Memberships, Donations & Legacies	£355,000	79%
Charitable Activities	£77,000	17%
Investment Income	£14,000	3%
Other	£1,000	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£447,000</b>	

##### Expenditure



Staff and Volunteer Costs	£289,000	60%
Overheads	£52,000	10%
Marketing and Publications	£48,000	10%
Depreciation	£33,000	7%
GNR and Conservation	£27,000	5%
Events	£17,000	4%
Governance Costs	£9,000	2%
Investment Fees	£3,000	1%
Library & Archive	£5,000	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£483,000</b>	

#### Thank you

In one of the driest years on record, nature continues to face unprecedented challenges across the UK and here in the North East. It is up to all of us to do what we can to help and to inspire more people to understand, appreciate and protect the natural world. We are incredibly grateful for your support in making this possible.

NHSN's work is made possible with a growing team of passionate local volunteers dedicated to nature. From the bottom of our hearts, a huge thank to everyone who gives their time each year at Gosforth Nature Reserve, the 'Hancock Museum' and across the wider North East.

#### There are many ways you can help local nature.

- Share your passion with friends and family - perhaps they would enjoy a visit to Gosforth Nature Reserve or benefit from NHSN membership themselves.
- You can also spread the word by following NHSN on social media, subscribing to our weekly e-news and Eventbrite updates.
- Share your magic moments in nature through photos, comments and stories.

#### A Special Thanks To Our Funders



REECE  
FOUNDATION



Percy Hedley  
1990 Charitable Trust  
Tony Tynan family

Roe Deer  
© Steve Wallace

#### Behind the Scenes

Enthusiastic, skilled volunteers contributed so much time, experience, wildlife photographs and passion for nature last year. To achieve so much 'out in the field' volunteers are busy working behind the scenes, just like busy bees!

“It feels like I am making a big difference. The people there are all wonderful to work with which makes this whole experience so enjoyable.”

NHSN Volunteer

15  
early career  
researchers

79  
mailout  
volunteers

12  
volunteer  
trustees

12  
forum  
members