

# Curlew Action



## Newsletter April 2022

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Photo by Brydon Thomason

### World Curlew Day!



Marking the peak of the nesting season, when most curlew pairs will have laid a clutch of eggs, World Curlew Day on April 21st is an incredibly busy time for curlews (and curlew charities)!

To mark the occasion, we held an online quiz to test your curlew knowledge and released some beautiful new tote bags, which are available to buy now, along with some of the great products available on our new Partnering Shops page.

We also held an art competition, and a 'Curlew Summit' for our youngest ambassadors, whilst WWT held a talk between Mary Colwell and David Gray, and have been hosting an exhibition of our artists to celebrate the biggest day in the curlew calendar.

And if that wasn't already enough, we've also had some very exciting news regarding our campaign for better natural history education... Read on to find out more!





# A GCSE in Natural History!

After 11 years of campaigning, the GCSE in Natural History has officially been confirmed by the Department for Education and the exam board, OCR. Fittingly announced on World Curlew Day at the Natural History Museum, the GCSE, which was the initiative of Curlew Action director Mary Colwell, is an important step towards giving young people a better understanding of the wildlife around them, and humanity's place in the natural world. Congratulations to Mary and her fellow campaigners, whose hard work has finally paid off! Take a look at [our blog](#) to find out more.



We will conserve  
only what we love.  
We will love only  
what we  
understand.  
We will understand  
only what we are  
taught."  
- Baba Dioum



## Curlew Schools Summit

On World Curlew Day in Morecambe Bay, Lancashire, we held a summit meeting of the participants of our Junior Curlew Network project, which gets school children engaging with nature and working together to look after the curlews in their area. The day was organised by ambassador Steph Smith and her fantastic team of volunteers, and gave students a chance to show us their work so far, as well as discuss how they can continue to help their local curlews. Well done to everyone involved in this brilliant project - keep an eye out for our upcoming blog giving all the details.

Photos by Michael Coleran





# An artistic World Curlew Day!

On the 21st we announced the results of our annual art and poetry competition, which this year was run together with our partners, Leica Sport Optics, who helped us judge the competition and are providing exhibition space for some of our favourite pieces at a special event in London later this year. The competition provides a chance for curlew fans to demonstrate their creative prowess through either poetry or any kind of visual art they can dream up, and this year we saw some inspiring artwork and poetry, which you can check out [here](#).

Meanwhile our friends at WWT have kindly hosted an exhibition for us in their gallery at Slimbridge, celebrating curlews whilst raising funds to save them through beautiful artwork. Some of the pieces on display are available to buy through our website, which you can find [here](#).



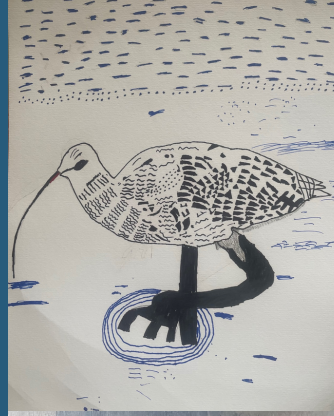
## Under 16 poetry 1st place

### 'Echo'

Wavers through the heather, halfway-heard and halfway-seen  
Tip-of-tongue suggestion of what could or might have been  
Pebble-flecked and painted wing, so swiftly taking flight  
Soaring, dipping, darting song, then fading in the light

Mud will clutch the spectre close, last footprint on its chest  
As echoes all about it what the air remembers best -  
It rings around and up and down and just beneath the sky,  
The final fleeting note of what was once a curlew's cry

**Blythe Jeffries, Aged 14**





## Curlew Calling

If you missed WWT's excellent live discussion on World Curlew Day between Mary Colwell and David Gray, you can have a watch [here](#). This is an engaging, funny and personal look into David's work and his relationship with nature, which skilfully weaves in important points about the plight of the curlew and how WWT are working to prevent it. If you like music and curlews, this is a must-watch!



## Young people draw a line in the sand

Back in March, Curlew Action partnered again with UK Youth for Nature, the UK's leading Youth movement calling on the government to act on the nature crisis. The youth group created a 50 meter sand drawing on Scarborough beach representing British biodiversity. By 7pm the drawing was washed away by the tide. Their campaign is a powerful message about biodiversity loss ahead of COP15. Click [here](#) to watch their campaign video.





# 1,000 miles later!

Our chair of trustees, Roger, has been walking the length of the UK over the last couple of months, and is now closing in on the finish line: Cape Wrath, a mere 1,000 miles from his starting point on the Dorset coast. This formidable journey, which you can find out more about [here](#), is set to finish at the start of May. Please do donate if you feel able to - all money raised will go into our crucial work to create a secure future for the UK's curlews.

*"I have always been happier to support the charitable efforts of people who are going the 'extra mile' than those who keep well within themselves. The way I look at it, if I am prepared to put my 62 year old body through a bit of punishment for a couple of months, it might inspire people not just to donate, but also to learn a bit more about what we do, and what we all need to do to save the curlew."* - Roger Morgan-Grenville



## Conservation: Lessons from the curlew

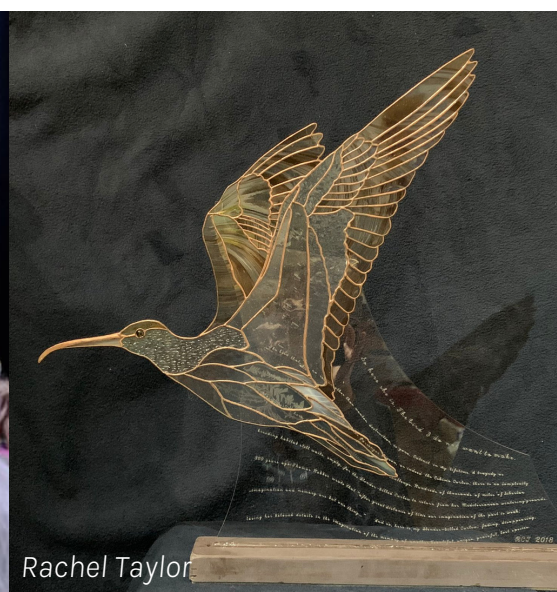
Thanks to all who attended our first two seminars. We were thrilled to see hundreds of you come along to hear fascinating stories from some of the best conservationists in the country. Our third seminar, on curlews in culture, features Mary talking to musician Merlyn Driver, glass artist and scientist Rachel Taylor and writer Karen Lloyd, and takes place on Tuesday 17th May. To learn more and sign up for free, click [here](#). Merlyn has recently released his beautiful curlew song, Simmerdim, click [here](#) to listen.



Rachel Taylor



Photo by @HedgehogHugh



Rachel Taylor



Don't forget that it is nesting season! Ground nesting birds are particularly vulnerable to disturbance. We can protect our nesting birds by staying on footpaths and keeping dogs on leads during this exciting time of year!

You can download our Ground Nesting Birds signs from the [homepage](#) of our website.



If you're looking for an interesting read, we recommend following Wader Tales blog by Graham Appleton. Graham summarises scientific research about Wading birds. A recent post is particularly interesting, on World Curlew Day Graham released a post called 'Curlews: After the shooting stopped'

"It is estimated that 120,000 Eurasian Curlew spend the winter in Great Britain, with a further 28,300 on the island of Ireland (Note). Counts made by Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) volunteers in Great Britain show that the winter population increased following the end of Curlew hunting in 1982 but has since decreased. A paper in Bird Study by Ian Woodward et al investigates how much the temporary recovery was 'cause and effect' and asks what other processes may be important, locally and regionally." Read the full blog post [here](#).

