

# Curlew Action



## Newsletter November - December 2022

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Photo by RTS Photography

### Happy New Year

Merry Christmas and happy New Year from the Curlew Action team! 2022 has been a busy year for our small team and we would like to thank everyone who has supported our work so far, we could not have done it without you. In this newsletter we have reflected on some of our highlights over the last year and looked ahead to 2023, discussed our hope for the future and plans for our continued work to reverse the decline of Curlew and promote wider natural history education.



Photo by Brydon Thomason

# 2022 Highlights FEBRUARY

- We launched our webinar series 'Conservation: lessons from the Curlew', beginning with a webinar discussing Curlews on farmland
- Nesting Birds sign competition



## MARCH

- Webinar: Headstarting
  - Roger began his 1,000 mile walk
  - We partnered with UK Youth for Nature to support their Lines in the Sand campaign
- [Click to view campaign video!](#)



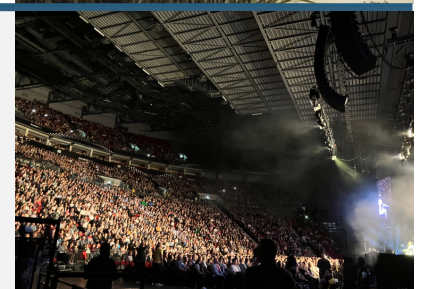
## APRIL

- World Curlew Day art & Poetry competition
- Natural History GCSE confirmed!
- Mary Colwell and David Gray webinar
- Curlew schools summit
- Merlyn Driver releases Simmderdim



## MAY

- David Gray takes Curlews to the world stage on his 2022 White Ladder tour
- Curlew Action gallery exhibition at Slimbridge
- Webinar: Curlews and Culture



## JUNE

- More Curlew talks, visits and David Gray gigs
- Curlew Country's addictive Curlew Cam



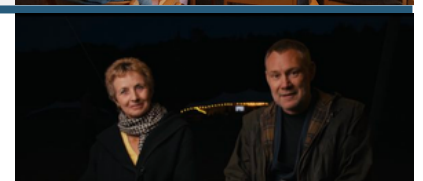
## AUGUST

- Mary Colwell spoke at the Eurasian Curlew and Black-tailed Godwit conference in Papenburg, Germany



## SEPTEMBER

- David Gray and Mary Colwell spoke at Gathering at Wild Ken Hill



## OCTOBER

- Webinar: Forestry
- Webinar: Curlews and predators
- Ellen & Roger attended the 30x30 progress report in Westminster





## NOVEMBER

- Curlew Action & Leica giveaway
- Webinar: Managing the uplands
- Roger & Ellen spoke at the Cameron Bespolka memorial day in Winchester
- Mary and Ellen attended the Curlew Forum meeting at WWT Slimbridge



## DECEMBER

- Curlew Action strategy launch at the Leica gallery in London
- Webinar: Why do we need a Natural History GCSE?



## Looking ahead

Curlew Action is at an exciting stage of our development as an organisation, we are a small charity with a big vision. As we look ahead to 2023 Curlew Action will be continuing to raise awareness about the decline of Eurasian Curlews in the UK and working to facilitate open discussion around the big topics involved in conservation. We will also be extending our outreach to encompass all Curlew species, reaching out to international partners to join forces in raising awareness, exchanging resources, advocacy and learning. With the new Natural History GCSE appearing in schools in 2025, we will be working to ensure the subject is a success, that teachers are trained and enthusiastic about the material and that children across the country are given the chance to take the GCSE. [Click here](#) to see our strategy document.



*"I hope I am right in detecting that the world is increasingly waking up to the value of nature. Not just its monetary value in terms of eco-services, and not just the spiritual and emotional benefits life on earth brings to humanity, I think it is more than that, people are realising that wildlife is invaluable in and of itself for the wonder and beauty it gives to the planet. A quiet, colourless world is unthinkable. Curlew Action has a unique and valued role to play in this awakening, helping forge a strong, lasting connection between people and the planet. In 2023, we will do even better and become a stronger voice for curlews and all they represent." - Mary Colwell, Founder and Director*



*"I'm just living for the day when the combined cumulative efforts of the whole curlew community can be reflected in the words: 'We did it. We reversed the seemingly endless decline and we removed Numenius arquata from the Red List. Maybe not in 2023, but surely coming soon. For so many more reasons than the survival of just that one bird, we need to hope so.'" Roger Morgan-Grenville, Chair of Trustees*

## 2023 Webinars

11/01

What happened at the biodiversity COP?

15/02

Cost of a Curlew

15/03

Curlews and silage

19/04

Curlews in myths and legends

17/05

Curlews and meadows

13/09

Curlews on the move

18/10

Curlews on the coast

We will be continuing our webinar series to discuss all things Curlew, click on each title to sign up. All of our webinars are recorded and following each event recording links will be emailed to all those who signed up.

*Please note that these are preliminary dates and may vary with speaker availability.*

### WEBINAR RECORDING

14/12/22

Why do we  
need a  
Natural  
History GCSE?



## COP15: the 2022 Convention on Biological Diversity

COP15, the Convention on Biological Diversity, took place in Montreal from the 7th to the 19th of December. It was an opportunity for countries to agree on a new global framework to combat biodiversity loss, after the previous framework known as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets failed to be met.

The end of the negotiations on the 19th of December saw the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. This framework is made up of two sections: four long-term goals for 2050 related to the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity and 23 action-oriented global targets to be met by 2030 known as the Kunming-Montreal 2030 Global Targets.

The overarching aim of these goals and targets is to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, however, only time will tell if countries can live up to the promises they have made during COP15.

During COP15 events were not just happening in Montreal, but across the world to celebrate biodiversity. At Curlew Action we held a webinar on the importance of the Natural History GCSE for the future of biodiversity. If the 2050 goals for the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework are to be met, it is vital the future generations are provided with the knowledge to achieve them.



# Curlew Action strategy launch, Leica Gallery, London

In early December Curlew Action hosted an event at the Leica gallery in London to share our plans for making the future a secure place for Curlews and the wildlife that lives alongside them.

During the event we heard speeches from our Founder and Director, Mary Colwell and our Chair of Trustees Roger Morgan-Grenville, whilst listening to the incredible music of our patron David Gray. We would like to thank everyone who attended the event and for your continued support of Curlew Action. A special thank you goes to Ed from HebTroCo for joining us and for bringing a £570 cheque from sales of our Curlew Socks!

*Photos by Richard Bunce*





# Curlews in the news

## Curlew short story in the Guardian

Elizabeth-Jane Burnett released a lovely story in The Guardian called Country diary: a cloud of curlews carries me away. The poetically written story follows the bittersweet emotions of the writer watching Curlews along the coast in Devon, knowing that the birds are in such great decline. [Click here to read.](#)

## Bird numbers, including the Curlew, decline in Wales (BBC)

A recent article by the BBC has highlighted bird decline in Wales. Sourcing a new report by RSPB Cymru, one in four bird species in Wales are in serious trouble, with the Curlew still very much on the Red-List along with other breeding waders such as Redshank and Lapwing.

Work carried out by Natural Resources Wales suggested Curlew populations in Wales could be at risk of local extinction in the next decade without further intervention.

To prevent this, a 10-year action plan was launched to help with Curlew recovery, led by Curlew Wales (Gylfinir Cymru). [Click here to read.](#)



Photo by Kate Haselgrave

## A new wetland for waders at Airds Moss

The Airds Moss nature reserve in East Ayrshire is home to an array of ground nesting waders such as the Curlew. However, breeding populations have declined on the reserve along with the national trend in declining populations. Management at the reserve are working to reverse this decline through the introduction of highland cattle to enhance vegetation quality, peatland restoration and removal of linear features such as fencing that generalist predators use to navigate landscapes. Now, the reserve has been awarded funding from the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund (NRF) for a wetland creation project. The hope is that the creation of new wetland along with the other management methods outline above, will lead to an increase in local populations of ground nesting waders such as Curlews at Airds Moss. [Click here to read.](#)



Photo by Tony Pope



## **Farmers who won Nature Friendly Farmers of the Year saw curlew chicks hatch and fledge on their farm**

Two brothers, James and David Bonnar, were named Nature Friendly Farmers of the Year at this years Farming Life awards. James and David have worked with RSPB Northern Ireland for over a decade, helping to make their land a nature friendly place. One of the amazing results of this work, was the hatching and fledging of multiple Curlew chicks from the farm this year. The brothers hope to have another successful season of Curlew chicks next year. [Click here to read.](#)



## **The Duke of Norfolk and two other landowners in the South of England join forces to release Curlews onto their land**

The Times has highlighted a plan by the Duke of Norfolk to help increase Eurasian Curlew numbers in southern England. The Duke plans to release Curlews at Peppering Farm near Arundel Castle, West Sussex. Along with the Duke, Lord Cranborne will reintroduce Curlews on his land in Dorset and Philip Merrick will reintroduce Curlews to Elmley National Nature Reserve on the Isle of Sheppey, Kent. The three landowners hope to take eggs from sites in northern England, where Curlew populations are stronger, and incubate them down south until they hatch and are ready to be released.

Along with the release of chicks such as this, landscape scale changes to the way we use the land will be needed if we are to slow the decline of Curlews across the country.

Curlew Action founder and director, Mary Colwell, was quoted as saying the incubation of eggs and subsequent release of chicks “can help slow the rate of loss in particular places, while we put in place changes to the way we use the land”. [Click here to read.](#)

## **Curlews and predators**

In October 2022 we held a webinar on Curlews and Predators. Predation of Curlew eggs and chicks is one of the leading causes of their decline. It is an emotive and complicated topic to discuss, but it is important these discussions are held so that we can get closer to the solution of such a nuanced problem. As a result of the webinar two reports have been shared with us, which can be found in the links below. The first is a report released by Leo Smith, Save our Curlews Campaign Co-ordinator at Shropshire Ornithological Society, titled SOS Save our Curlews Campaign Report 2022. The second report is a response from the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) to the report above, titled Curlew, released gamebird and foxes; Comment on SOS Save our Curlews Campaign Report 2022.

**Report by  
Leo Smith**

**Response  
from GWCT**

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