Common pipistrelle bat in flight. Bat Conservation Trust. Image credit: Hugh Clark

Urgent action to save 37 of Scotland's most vulnerable coastal and island species is underway thanks to £4.2million funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The Species on the Edge project will support threatened nature and wildlife on Scotland's coastal fringe, from the Solway to Shetland, the east coast to the Outer Hebrides.

Species on the edge

From 1994 to 2016, 49% of Scottish species decreased. Of 6,413 species assessed, 11% faced a threat of extinction.

Species on the Edge will focus its support on 37 of Scotland's most at risk species, including:

- midge-munching soprano pipistrelles
- pollinators like the great yellow bumblebee
- rare amphibians such as the natterjack toad
- wading birds including terns, lapwings and curlews
- the 'jewel of the north', the Scottish primrose

Threats to their survival include land use change, climate change, pollution and invasive non-native species.

Working together for nature

The four-and-a-half year programme is led by NatureScot, working in partnership with Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, The Bat Conservation Trust, Buglife, the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Plantlife Scotland and RSPB Scotland.

The partnership will bring together expert scientific knowledge, local networks and unparalleled experience in engaging local communities and key stakeholders in plans to protect wildlife.

Their work will include habitat enhancement – including the sowing of essential wildlife-supporting plants – alongside vital surveys and data collection. There will also be lots of opportunities for people to volunteer, learn new skills and attend a wide range of cultural and community events.

Our support for Scotland's natural heritage

Caroline Clark, Director of Scotand at the Heritage Fund, said: "Scotland's coastline is dramatic, rugged, wild and beautiful. At the same time it is home to a fragile ecology, a natural heritage that we have a duty to protect.

"I am delighted that thanks to National Lottery players we are able to fund Species on the Edge to safeguard and encourage some of our most vulnerable coastal inhabitants."

> Scotland's biodiversity is in decline and, combined with the climate emergency, some of our most vulnerable species are now on the brink of extinction.
>
> *Francesca Osowska, NatureScot's Chief Executive*

Francesca Osowska, NatureScot's Chief Executive, said: "Scotland's biodiversity is in decline and, combined with the climate emergency, some of our most vulnerable species are now on the brink of extinction.

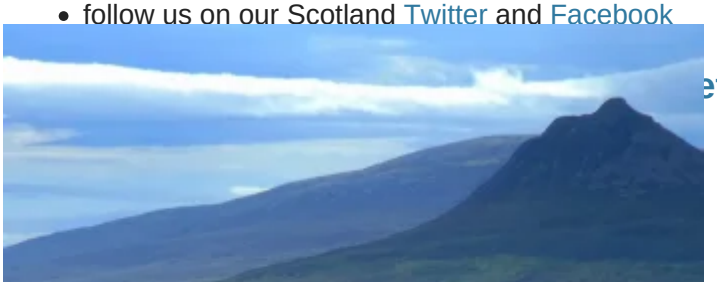
"Their survival isn't just important for conservation. Biodiversity loss is a global threat to human wellbeing so it's vital we take action to halt this decline now."

In addition to £4.2m from the Heritage Fund, Species on the Edge is receiving £500,000 from the Scottish Government, £133,136 from The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, £120,000 from the Dulverton Trust and £30,000 from the Banister Trust.

News in Scotland

To keep up-to-date with news of our funding in Scotland:

- sign up to our newsletter and select the 'Scotland' box
- keep an eye on our dedicated Scotland web page
- follow us on our Scotland Twitter and Facebook



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Flow Country project. Image: Steven Andrews

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Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire & Merseyside Young Apprentices: (from left to right) Samuel Gibson, Billy Hunt, Sam Phillips and Mia Francis. Credit: Mark Waugh

Investing in work placements for young people in natural heritage