

A river-monitoring workshop led by the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust

Over the last six months, HLF has awarded over £230,000 to natural heritage projects in Yorkshire, more than £83,000 of which will help to train volunteers as guardians of our local wildlife.

HLF's ongoing investment in natural heritage has given local groups in Yorkshire the opportunity to learn more about important local species, survey and monitor their numbers and help to protect the habitats that they desperately need.

Thanks to National Lottery players, local volunteers are gaining the skills to become custodians of local wildlife.

Recovery of tree sparrows in the Yorkshire Dales National Park

The UK's tree sparrow population has declined dramatically since the 1970s. In recent years it appears that the population is beginning to increase but it is still on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

To support the recovery of this once-common sight in the British countryside, the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNPA) is providing hands-on training to help local people to identify good habitats for tree sparrows, provide appropriate nest boxes and bird feeders and train them to monitor the birds in their local area.

Mark Hewitt, Wildlife Conservation Officer for the YDNPA, said "Discovering more about the delightful tree sparrow in the Yorkshire Dales will help us to provide better, more diverse habitats for a range of important, special birds. Local

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[quote=Mark Hewitt, YDNPA Wildlife Conservation Officer]"Local communities can play a real and genuine part in the conservation of a national priority species."[/quote]

Ure River

Rivers and water play an important part in our ecosystem, our industries and communities - and the River Ure forms the backbone of the Wensleydale area. Through its HLF-supported project, the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust is training a group of volunteer river monitors to collect data on the condition of the river to ensure that it remains a healthy environment for wildlife and people.

With family fun days, school visits, BioBlitz events and training days there will be plenty of opportunities for people to get their feet wet. By helping people to understand the importance of the river as a home for many species, including kingfishers, salmon and wading birds, the project will help safeguard the future of this beautiful river.

Ilkley Moor – nature for all

Ilkley Moor is famed for its stunning beauty, heather moorlands and carved rocks, and its tarns and becks are a vital part of the ecology of the moor.

The open and running water on Ilkley Moor provides valuable homes for important species such as otters, water voles and greater crested newts. Thanks to HLF, the Friends of Ilkley Moor are running community training days to get people involved in recording habitats and species data through mobile technology to feed into national databases.

The project will improve and enhance local habitats for biodiversity, allowing local people and tourists to continue to enjoy them into the future.

Feeling inspired?

If you've been inspired and want to apply for funding to help protect and share your natural heritage with local communities, find out more on our Yorkshire's Back Garden page.

To keep up to date with the campaign, follow us on Twitter and look out for the hashtag #HLFnature.

Get in touch

We run regular grant surgeries for you to talk about your project ideas. You can also submit a project enquiry form to get advice on your project so please get in touch!