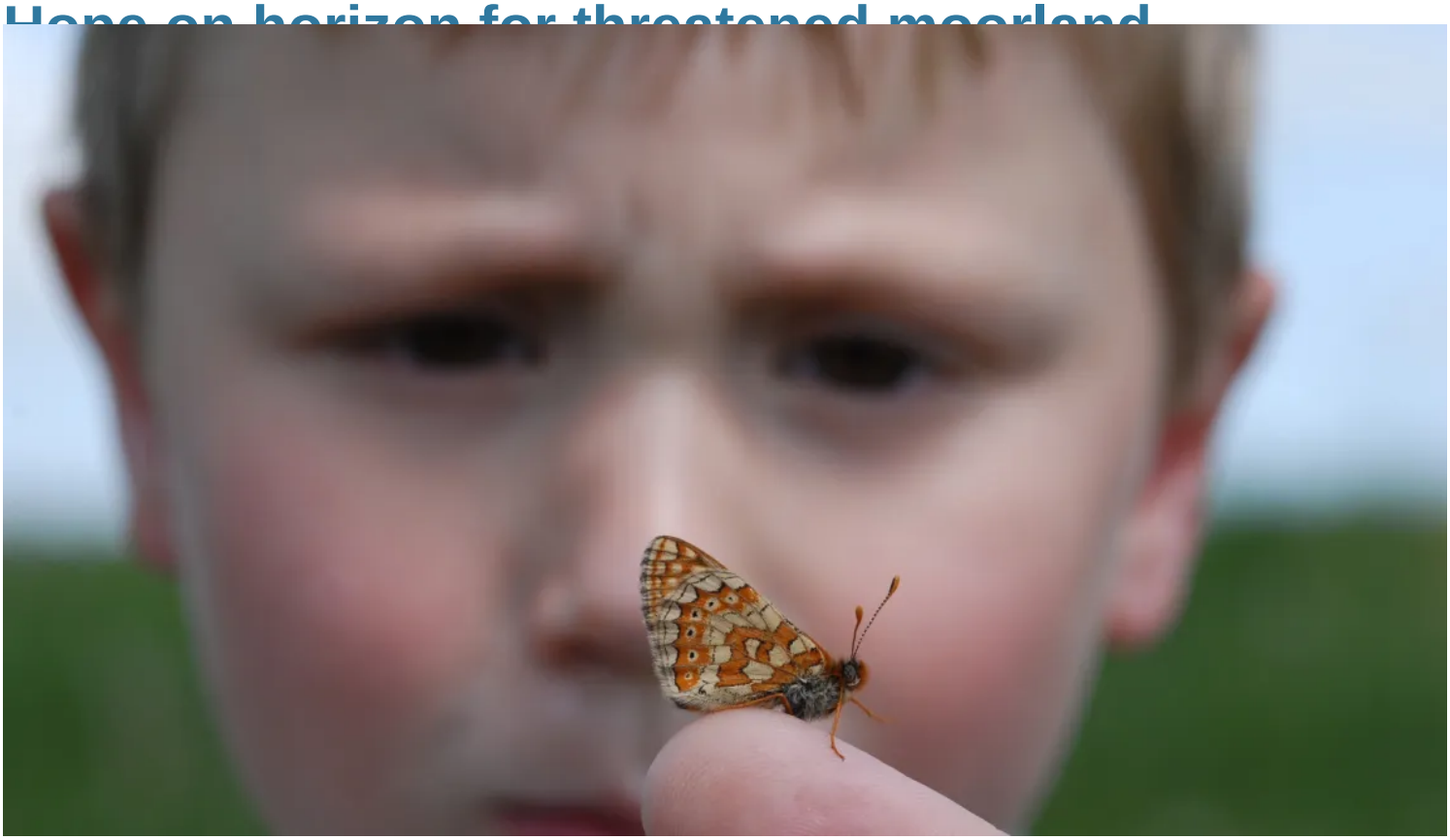
Hope on horizon for threatened moorland



People of all ages will help secure future of the Marsh Fritillary Amanda Cuff

The decline of three of the UK's most threatened butterflies could be reversed across Cornwall, Devon and Somerset thanks to a conservation project made possible by National Lottery players.

The High Brown Fritillary, Heath Fritillary and Marsh Fritillary have suffered a 70% reduction in their distribution over the past 40 years due to loss of habitat and changes in land management.

[quote= Nerys Watts, Head of HLF South West]"Beautiful and a source of inspiration for writers and scientists through the centuries, butterflies are an integral part of healthy landscapes and of our natural heritage." [/quote]

All The Moors Butterflies

Now a project called All The Moors Butterflies, led by charity Butterfly Conservation, is setting out to reverse the butterflies' fortunes on some of the UK's most famous moorland landscapes – Dartmoor, Exmoor and Bodmin Moor.

Another species to benefit will be the nationally scarce Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth which is still found across the south west. This stunning bumble bee mimic can be seen visiting plants in the daytime from mid-April until July.

Nerys Watts, Head of HLF South West, said: “Beautiful and a source of inspiration for writers and scientists through the centuries, butterflies are an integral part of healthy landscapes and of our natural heritage. Thanks to National Lottery players we’re delighted to support this project which will enable volunteers, landowners and farmers to play a role in creating a bright future for a number of threatened species on our moorlands.”

Community effort

Thanks to a grant of £318,100 from HLF, volunteers, landowners and farmers across the moors will work together to create new habitats, discover how land management work can benefit the butterflies and learn more about how they can help them recover and thrive.

Training days, guided walks, butterfly surveys and conservation work parties will be held across Cornwall, Devon and Somerset to give people of all ages the opportunity to take part.

Jenny Plackett, Butterfly Conservation’s South West Regional Officer, said: “Volunteers are at the heart of our work saving threatened species, but with this project we will be able to offer opportunities for a whole new audience, including young people and those with mental health problems, to have access to these landscapes, enjoy their unique wildlife and take an active role in conservation. With everyone working together, we hope to secure the future of our moorland butterflies and other wildlife as well.”

The project will launch in January 2017.



One of Britain’s most endangered mammals, the water vole Joan North

Britain’s most endangered mammal, the water vole, to be protected