

# Alderney Wildlife

## LIFE IN A GANNET COLONY

Discover the fascinating lives  
of our iconic gannets!



## SCIENCE WITH THE COMMUNITY: MONITORING THE MARINE NON-NATIVE SPECIES, THE PACIFIC OYSTER, ACROSS ALDERNEY

Delve into the introduction and potential environmental impact of  
the Pacific oyster in Alderney waters



**Spring 2024 | Community**

Protecting Alderney's wildlife  
for the future.

# Welcome

## Spring is here!



Spring has finally arrived in Alderney, bringing with it a mix of sunny days and chilly winds. I've been warmly welcomed into this tight-knit community and have immersed myself in Alderney's way of life. Events like

the Jumble Sale showcase the true spirit of Alderney, where everyone comes together to support each other and contribute to good causes and the island's wellbeing. During a recent social media training session organised by the Chamber of Commerce, I witnessed this community spirit as local businesses were strongly encouraged to work collaboratively to showcase the beauty and friendliness of Alderney. It's this sense of unity that makes Alderney so special.

In nature, communities play a vital role in the survival of many species. Animals benefit from group living in various ways, including extra protection, heat conservation, and reduced energy expenditure when flying. For instance, bat mothers often take turns caring for the bat 'nursery' while others hunt for food. However, along with its benefits, group living also presents challenges such as increased frequency of predator attacks and heightened reproductive competition for individuals.

In this issue, with the theme of Community, we explore the lives of gannet colonies and pollinator communities. We will also be sharing our work within Alderney's community, by asking for community input and using the feedback to help improve the management of our reserves and sites. Furthermore, we are engaging the community in monitoring our



island's environment, from Pacific oysters to bees and butterflies, as well as highlighting the work of Team Wilder, a project focused on our island community and its dedication to supporting nature.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the magazine and feel inspired to join us in our work to help Alderney's wildlife thrive.

Thank Doan

Outreach and Education Officer





CLIFF MINING BEE | LOU COLLINGS



PACIFIC OYSTER | AWT STAFF



OAK TREE PLANTING | THANH DOAN

pollinator communities and how we monitor them, along with a brief introduction to our new citizen science survey launching this summer.

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# Manager's Report

*“...even with a growing team of staff and interns, very little would be possible without the heart of the AWT, and that is you the members, and volunteers!”*

**A**fter saying a sad goodbye to our old friend Brian Bonnard in the last issue, I am pleased to start 2024 by welcoming some new friends to our community.

**Chloe, Niamh and Thanh** have joined us over the last few months from England, Northern Ireland and Vietnam respectively. With them comes new expertise, willingness, and passion to help us in our mission to see Alderney's wildlife thriving and protected for future generations.

**The AWT has grown over 22 years since its founding** thanks to the support of those residents and visitors who want us to make a difference, but also as a result of the growing interest the wider world has taken in Alderney's unique environment.

**Application rates for staff and intern roles continue to increase** year-on-year and this is because of what Alderney, and the AWT, can offer to young professionals. This in turn has enabled our team to expand and in doing so become an increasingly important part of our community, as anyone who has joined in one of the Georgian's Wildlife Trust pub quizzes knows.

**Putting all this into perspective, over the last 12 months** the AWT has secured well over £200,000 of off-island funding

for projects here on Alderney and this funding, alongside the strength of our team, is making a real difference! In 2023/24 the AWT has commenced a number of major projects including the most comprehensive review of our island's environment ever undertaken (Alderney State of Nature). We have also begun the most open and inclusive review of how land is managed for nature, as part of the creation of a new strategy for the island's nature reserves. Both of these undertakings will be open for you to have your say and I would encourage everyone to take part.

**It is important to add that** even with a growing team of staff and interns, very little would be possible without the heart of the AWT, and that is you the members, and volunteers!

**If anyone is interested in knowing more** about the people who make up the AWT community you can find updates and biographies on our website [www.alderneywildlife.org](http://www.alderneywildlife.org) in the 'Meet the team' pages, as well as through our blogs and posts on Facebook and Instagram. However, as an organisation that has been proud to be at the heart of Alderney for the last 22 years, perhaps the best way to meet the team is to just drop in for a chat.

By *Roland Gauvain*, CEO



# WILD NEWS

All the latest news from Alderney Wildlife Trust

## Big Channel Island Beach Clean



IN MARCH, AWT and volunteers conducted the 6th Big Channel Islands Beach Clean in collaboration with Guernsey, Jersey, and Sark. The total rubbish across all the islands amounted to an incredible 186+ kg! The rubbish collected on Alderney weighed 66 kg, including 58 kg from Clonque Bay and Platte Saline Beach, 4.5 kg from Longis, and 3.5 kg from Burhou. A fantastic effort from the Channel Islands community.

## Australian flatworms discovered on Alderney



AUSTRALIAN FLATWORMS are an invasive non-native species originally from their namesake continent. They were first recorded in Alderney in 2023. These flatworms prey on earthworms, which play a vital role in soil health and quality. The predation of earthworms by Australian flatworms is concerning. The States of Alderney in collaboration with the AWT has published guidelines on how to identify, trap, and dispose of Australian flatworms and you can read this guidance at <https://bit.ly/3IYiRrk>.

## Science Talks

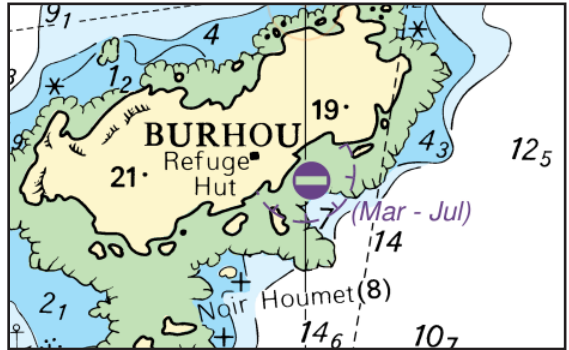


AWT AND THE ALDERNEY ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY co-hosted a Marine Life Rescue Talk on April 16th and three talks on bats on April 24th. The talks were successful, with approximately 50 people attending in total. During the Marine Life Rescue talk, attendees learned about the lives of turtles and marine mammals, as well as rescue procedures for injured or stranded animals. The bat talks covered topics such as bat ecology, rehabilitation, care considerations for injured bats, and intriguing findings from the 2023 Bailiwick Bat Survey.

# Puffin Friendly Zone onto Admiralty Charts

ALDERNEY'S PUFFIN FRIENDLY ZONE has held a local designation since 2018, prompted by observations of a decline in Burhou's puffin population and concerns of disturbance impacting breeding success. The zone was established through joint efforts of the States of Alderney, the Alderney Marine Management Forum, Alderney Harbour Office, local fishermen and the AWT. The zone is in place during the puffin's breeding season typically from March to end-July,

providing the puffins with a safe area to rest undisturbed by visiting or passing boats. This year, the zone will be added to the official Admiralty Marine Charts and recognised by the UK Hydrographic Office. This official recognition will help to enhance awareness of the zone, particularly among visiting mariners who may not be aware of local regulations and customs. In turn, this will hopefully afford better protection for Alderney's puffins, and increase their chances of successfully raising chicks.



# Top Sightings



## Hooded Crow

A hooded crow was spotted multiple times this spring, including on Kiln Farm on January 31st. Hooded crows were once thought to be the same species as carrion crows. Like carrion crows, hooded crows feed on dead animals, invertebrates and grain, as well as stealing eggs from other birds' nests.

## Giant Goby

A giant goby was seen during a public rockpooling session in Longis on January 14th. Giant goby spends most of its time hiding in crevices and very little is known about its behaviour. It is protected in the UK under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, making it a criminal offence in the UK to disturb individuals or damage their rockpool homes!



## Verella Verella

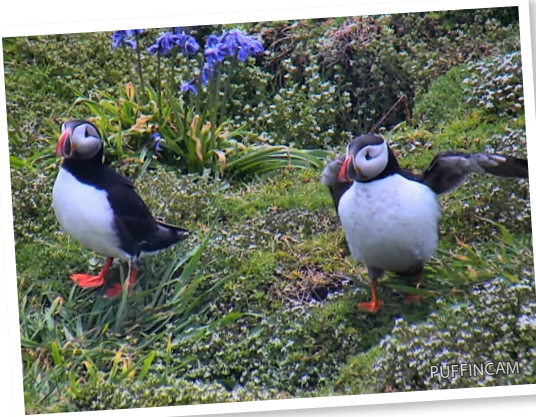
Hundreds of *Verella verella*, also referred to as by-the-wind-sailors, were found washed up onto Saye Beach on April 17th. *Verella verella* are not jellyfish but a colony of free-floating hydrozoan.



## Sea Hare

Multiple sightings of sea hares and strings of their eggs have been recorded this year in Longis Bay and Braye Bay. They are especially common in eelgrass beds.





## Grey Seals and Puffins on PuffinCam

Alderney's PuffinCam has been live since late March, offering the public the chance to witness wildlife in action on Burhou. In early April, a few puffins were spotted on Burhou, tidying their burrows and reconnecting with their partners, while many more were still seen rafting on the water. Additionally, groups of seals were cap-

tured basking in the sun, resting during their moulting period.

You can watch the PuffinCam on our website: [alderneywildlife.org/puffin-cam](http://alderneywildlife.org/puffin-cam) or on the AWT Staff Facebook page [www.facebook.com/awt.staff/](http://www.facebook.com/awt.staff/).



## Black-crowned Night Heron

On April 21st, a night heron was sighted at Battery Quarry, marking only the second recorded sighting of this bird species on Alderney. The first record occurred in May 1987. Black-crowned night herons can use bait to lure their prey, mostly small fish, into striking range.

## Woodchat Shrike

A woodchat shrike was recorded on South Cliffs on the 24th of April. This sighting marks the third occurrence of this rare spring and autumn migrant on Alderney, with previous recordings in 1996 and between the 30th of April and the 3rd of May in 2019. They feed mostly on insects and have been recorded impaling surplus food on thorns.





# Life in a gannet colony

GANNETS | JOSHUA COPPING

**N**orthern gannets are the largest seabirds in the Northern Hemisphere, instantly recognisable by their six-foot-long black-tipped wings and exceptional diving skills. Plunging from heights with their wings folded, gannets catch fish using their dagger-like bills. They can hit the water at over 60 mph and have highly adapted skulls and neck muscles to survive the impacts.

**Over half of the world's Northern gannet population (55%)** breeds in the UK and Channel Islands, with around half a million individuals returning to our cliffs and islands every year. Most colonies are located on rocky islands safely away from mammalian predators such as rats and mice.

**Gannet colonies are large, noisy and smelly**, with thousands of birds claiming a spot to raise a chick. Nests are evenly spaced around 80 cm

apart, leaving just enough room to accommodate the breeding pair and a large chick without encroaching on their neighbours. Nests are substantial and are normally built with seaweed and marine debris picked up from the sea. It is not unusual to see gannet nests a rainbow of colours from picked up fishing line and marine plastics. However, this can sometimes cause entanglements.

**Pairs bond for life and are long-lived loyal partners.** Each pair returns to the same nest site each year, with older individuals returning to the colony first, followed by the younger, less experienced birds. Gannets are excellent parents and are fiercely protective of their nests - getting too close to a neighbour can result in violent fighting matches.

**Gannets lay a single egg and share incubation duties** until the chick hatches after around six weeks. The

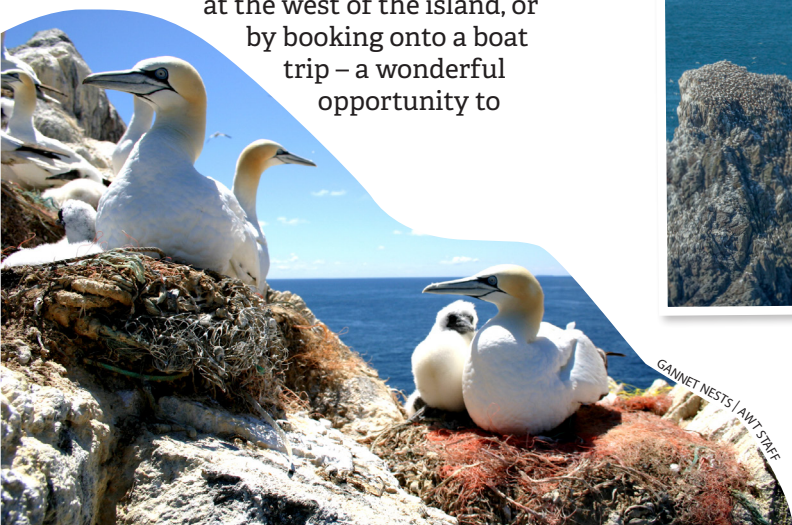
adults then feed the chick until it fledges at around thirteen weeks, ready to take on a life out on the ocean. Juvenile gannets have dark brown feathers and gradually develop their white adult plumage over the five years it takes for them to reach maturity. Immature birds can often be seen congregating in 'club sites' at the edges of the colony before they are ready to breed.

**Gannet socialisation** isn't just restricted to within the colony - they are known to forage together in groups out at sea, often diving in unison among shoals of fish. Juveniles are also thought to exhibit learned behaviours from following older, more experienced birds to the best foraging sites.

**The islets of Les Etacs and Ortac** within Alderney's Ramsar Site are home to over 2% of the world's Northern gannet population. Each year between February and October, visitors can witness this spectacular colony from vantage points located at the west of the island, or by booking onto a boat trip - a wonderful opportunity to

get a closer look at these magnificent diving birds.

By Niamh McDevitt





# Insect communities: The importance of pollinators

**I**n ecology, a **community** describes all of the living organisms found in a particular area. Studying community ecology means not only uncovering which organisms, including plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms, exist within an area but also understanding the intricate interactions that connect them.

**Perhaps one of the most fundamental interactions** is pollination. More than 80% of the UK's flowering plants depend on the pollinator community to reproduce, and in turn, pollinators need these flowering plants as food sources. Pollinator communities are incredibly diverse, in the UK we have 1,500 species of insect pollinators. Pollinators can be grouped into bees, including bumblebees, honeybees and solitary bees, as well as flies and beetles. To avoid competing for the same flowers, pollinator groups will occupy dif-

ferent floral 'niches'. For example, white flowers that release a strong fragrance at night are considered the perfect feeding spot by moths. Some pollinator interactions can be specialist. For example, ivy bees forage almost exclusively on ivy and as a result, are only active from September to November, when ivy is in flower.

**When a species disappears from a pollinator community**, it can have startling impacts on the plants that depend on them. Drastic declines in plant reproduction, as well as seed, fruit and vegetable production, are all impacts of pollinator loss. Equally, the disappearance of flowering through encroachment of new, non-native plants, can greatly impact the pollinators that aren't adapted to the nutritional content of their pollen and nectar.

**On Alderney, the AWT is striving to better understand** how healthy our pollinator community is. Each month between March to October, our ecologists head to Longis Reserve, Bonne Terre, Vau du Saou, La Grande Blaye and the South Cliffs in search of bumblebees along a pre-set route called a 'Bee walk'. Butterflies are also counted along these routes

every week between April and September. At the end of each summer, our findings are submitted to the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, to contribute to understanding national trends in pollinators.



side. Conveniently, it needs to be done in warm, dry weather! Records from this survey will complement our bumblebee and butterfly studies and help to provide



a bigger picture of pollinator activity from all pollinator groups. Stay updated with our social media to find out more!

**Within any given area, no plant, animal or microorganism**

**can exist independently** – they are all interconnected to form a community. By working to understand which species exist within Alderney's habitats and deciphering the relationships that connect them, we can gain crucial insights into how healthy the pollinator community is and ensure it is protected for future generations.

**We are in the 8th year of bumblebee monitoring** and 18th year of butterfly monitoring, which means we can begin analysing data to determine the stability of the pollinator community and implement conservation action when necessary to help prevent breakdowns in interactions. This is particularly important for subspecies which only occur in small populations, such as the Jersey white-tailed bumblebee and the Jersey Carder bee, or species that are low in numbers in the UK, such as the Glanville Fritillary.

**This summer, we will be launching a new monitoring scheme**, open for everyone to get involved in. Based off the UK's Pollinator Monitoring Scheme's 'Flower-Insect Timed Count', our new citizen science survey requires only ten minutes out of your day to record the number of insects that visit a particular flower. The survey can be done as many times as you'd like and you can choose where you do it, including gardens or the country-

By Dr. Tara Cox



Science with the community:

# Monitoring the marine non-native species, the Pacific oyster, across Alderney

PACIFIC OYSTER CLOSEUP |  
LOU COLLINGS

## The Pacific oyster

The Pacific oyster (*Magallana gigas*) is a marine mollusc native to Asia and considered a marine non-native species within our regional North Atlantic waters. This species has an oval grey-yellow shell, with a crenulate 'zig-zag' margin and can grow up to 18 cm long. It is a filter feeder, found from the lower intertidal rocky-shore environment down to a depth of around 80 m. Pacific oysters first start out as minute free-swimming planktonic larvae until finding a suitable hard substrate to permanently attach to and grow into the characteristic hard-shell appearance.

Since the 1960s, the Pacific oyster has been introduced intentionally across the globe as a key commercial food source. There are approximately 300+ commercial Pacific oyster farms within the UK, with several adjacent to Alderney on Herm, Guernsey, Jersey and France. There are no commercial farms on Alderney, but an attempt was made several decades ago at Longis Bay.

Historically, Pacific oyster populations across Europe and the UK were considered controlled and contained within these commercial farms, with little or no perceived environmental impact. This was due to the knowledge that Pacific oysters could not spawn/reproduce in cold temperate waters, needing sea water temperatures of 20 °C+ to do so. Recently, however, populations of 'wild escapees' have been found encroaching along the coastlines and estuaries of South-West Britain. In addition, due to the predicted increases of sea surface temperatures as a

result of climate change, the potential for this marine non-native species to reproduce and spawn quickly is of real, significant concern. For example, in one spawning summer season, a female Pacific oyster can release between 50 – 200 million eggs alone. As such, given the right conditions, the Pacific oyster has the potential to turn from a marine non-native species to a marine *invasive* non-native species, within our regional waters.

## The environmental impact of Pacific oysters

But does it matter?

What are the environmental impacts from a simple mollusc upon our marine environment? Marine invasive non-native species are considered one of the greatest threats to native biological diversity within the marine environment. Pacific oysters have the potential to physically modify the structure and function of native marine habitats, primarily by taking up all the available substrate or growing on top of other sessile species. This has a significant knock-on effect upon the native marine species present, by directly outcompeting them for space or indirectly interrupting their natural patterns of feeding or reproducing. Over a short amount of time, the local ecosystem and the services it provides can be put under serious threat. Pacific oysters can also be a risk to human



health due to their large sharp shells causing physical cuts and abrasions. This may reduce our recreational use of our beloved beaches and coastlines, particularly if the populations begin to expand and encroach rapidly. Pacific oysters can also reduce the efficiency and use of our commercial and recreational harbour/marina areas, by growing dramatically on the freely available hard infrastructure, such as pontoons or moorings.

### **Pacific oysters on Alderney**



PACIFIC OYSTER FOUND AT LONGIS BAY 2024 | THE MARINE BIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Aside from the initial attempt of a small commercial farm at Longis Bay, there are few historical records of the Pacific oyster on Alderney. Previous AWT intertidal Shoresearch species surveys undertaken at bays across Alderney have never recorded any present. In 2023, the AWT initiated an MSc research project with the University of Exeter to identify established marine invasive non-native species on Alderney. This project identified the presence of several Pacific oyster individuals within the remnants of the attempted farm at Longis. During the summer of 2023, a member of the public spotted an individual at Corblets Bay, with the AWT staff subsequently spotting another one at the East-end of Braye Bay. Based on these verified sightings, the AWT developed a citizen science Pacific oyster survey for 2024, as part of an internal AWT marine invasive non-native species work-plan. The aim of this survey is to record the presence, abundance, size and habitat preference of Pacific oysters on Alderney, with the community. Our surveys, (so far) have been a success, with members of our community finding small clusters (e.g. 4-10 individuals grouped together) of Pacific oysters at Corblets, Longis and Braye bays.

### **What next for the Pacific oyster on Alderney?**

For the rest of 2024, the AWT will aim to continue to undertake Pacific oyster surveys across Alderney with our superstar volunteer citizen scientists. The scientific evidence they collect will enable informed decision-making as to how to manage this marine non-native species in the future. Within the UK, several environmental groups, including other Wildlife Trusts, actively attempt to eradicate Pacific oysters across their coastlines through physical removal techniques. Following our AWT marine invasive non-native species work-plan, our next steps should first include engagement with key stakeholders such as the Harbour Authority, States of Alderney, and the community before any decision-making takes place, such as species eradication.

### **What can I do?**

Our AWT Pacific oyster citizen science surveys are open to anyone to join in, please contact [marine@alderneywildlife.org](mailto:marine@alderneywildlife.org) for further information. If you find a live or dead Pacific oyster on a beach, please report it to the AWT. You can either submit your sighting to our website sightings page ([www.alderneywildlife.org/wildlife/submit-sighting](http://www.alderneywildlife.org/wildlife/submit-sighting)) or pop into the AWT Information Centre to let us know. Tell us where and when you saw it and if you can, take a photograph of it. Alternatively use the online recording scheme, iRecord (<https://irecord.org.uk/>). This platform allows you to submit all your species sightings, including the Pacific oyster.

By Dr. Mel Broadhurst-Allen



CITIZEN SCIENTISTS LOOKING FOR OYSTERS | LOU COLLINGS



# Using Community Insights to Shape our Future Landscape

**N**ature reserves conserve biodiversity, geodiversity, and help wildlife to thrive. Yet, their importance goes beyond conservation. In our increasingly nature-depleted world, nature reserves serve as crucial links between people and nature. They provide outdoor spaces for learning and exploration, allowing people to access, enjoy and connect with our natural and cultural heritage. Recent research by the UK's Department for the Environment highlights the significant benefits of experiencing the natural world, with 90% of adults reporting that time spent outdoors is good for their physical and mental health.

**Currently, we manage two nature reserves:** Longis Nature Reserve and Vau du Saou Nature Reserve. In addition, we have developed and managed the Alderney Community Woodland, and supported the Alderney Society in the management of the Bonne Terre Valley, an area of more than 120 ha, nearly 15% of the island. These sites provide easily accessible natural spaces in Alderney for people to enjoy, as well as supporting some of Alderney's flagship flora and fauna species, such as Sand Crocus, Alderney Sea-lavender, Glanville Fritillary and Dartford Warbler.

## Reserves and Sites Management Strategy 2025-2030

**It is now time for us to update the management plans** for these reserves and sites. Our three key aims for the new Reserves and Sites Strategy are focused on benefitting both our community and the Island's wildlife; these aims are:

### 1. Champion

To raise awareness of and connection to the ecological value and sustainable management of these sites through community engagement, education, and by enabling public access.

### 2. Study

To monitor the status and trends of the key habitats, species and features within the sites, as well as the interconnection between people and these places, to inform how we champion and protect them.

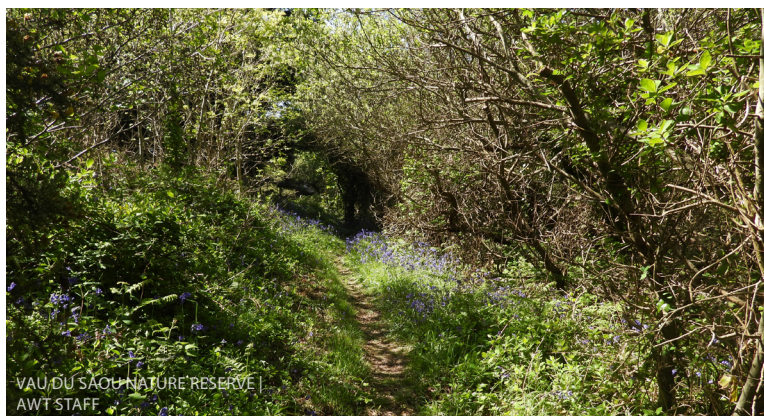
### 3. Protect

To conserve and, where appropriate, restore, habitats and species of high ecological and community value, taking into account





LONGIS NATURE RESERVE | AWT STAFF



important historical sites as well as the island's culture and heritage.



**Our new strategy will closely engage with the British Wildlife Trust's (TWT) 2030 national strategy.** To be better aligned with the shared goals and principles of TWT and the federation of the 45 other local Wildlife Trusts of which Alderney is a part, we have extended the usual duration of our strategies by one year. Additionally, this will allow us to be seamlessly prepared to incorporate the new post-2030 nature recovery goals into our next strategy.

**Once the draft strategy is complete,** we'll be opening up another public feedback opportunity this summer. This will be a chance for you, our members, to address any concerns or comments about the strategy. This final stage allows for the fine-tuning of our strategy to ensure it best reflects the aspirations of the community before finalisation and publishing.

### Our long-term vision

**With nature reserves and green spaces acting as a bridge** to connect communities with the natural world, our new Reserves and Sites Management Strategy will be informed by community insight to make these spaces more accessible and enjoyable. We hope this will inspire both residents and visitors to Alderney to engage with nature more deeply and have the opportunity to harbour the benefits these spaces can provide.

By *Chloe Hayward* and *Poppay Emmens*

### Plan of Action

**We kicked off the process by seeking your invaluable feedback and insights** through a combination of online and face-to-face visitor surveys that were conducted across our reserves and sites. These surveys gathered valuable information on everything from how you use these spaces, what aspects matter most to you, your suggestions for improvements, and even the types of events you'd like to see in the future.

**Additionally, we reached out to those who have a specific interest in these sites,** be they landowners, different users or government. Their feedback is vital to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the community's aspirations for these spaces. Together, these insights will help us cultivate more enjoyable and accessible spaces that benefit both people and wildlife.

**We're now delving into the data** gathered, coupled with a thorough review of our past management plans' successes and short-falls, to draft the Alderney Wildlife Trust Reserves and Sites Management Strategy for 2025-2030.





# Alderney's Team Wilder Community

“The Team Wilder way of working is how we connect, listen to, and collaborate with a wide range of people building reciprocal trusted relationships at a local level. We support and facilitate individuals, communities, and stakeholders, to make meaningful changes for nature’s recovery. This leads to more people influencing each other to take sustained collective action for nature and climate, to achieve 30 by 30 nationally.”

(RSWT, 2030 Strategy)

**T**eam Wilder is a national project, with employees across the British Wildlife Trusts. Over the last month we have been collaborating to refine the Team Wilder definition (above) by co-creating what it means to us, and the people we work with. The intention is that this refinement will help our colleagues, and the communities we all serve, gain a better understanding of this way of working and how it can benefit residents, organisations and nature itself. No two projects, or people, are ever the same. It is vitally important to have a variety of tools that we can utilise to help our communities along their own journey, with the goal of benefitting nature along the way.

**building relationships** with Alderney residents, we launched an appeal calling on people to step forward with ideas and projects that they would like to explore with a little help from Team Wilder. The hope is that we can facilitate and support residents in their own wildlife friendly endeavours.

**We have had a great response** and currently have several projects already being worked up. I would like to express my gratitude to all those who got in touch. Thanks to you we will be able to expand our Pollinator Project by working with Pollinator Champions, promoting the benefits of wildflowers, more seed distribution and creating a healthy balance between functional spaces, and habitats that bene-

**After spending a year listening to, and**

fit wildlife across the island.

**We are also delighted to be supporting St Anne's School's Secret Garden**, alongside students, as well as a new micro allotment scheme, suited to families and community members who may benefit from starting their growing journey in a smaller, more manageable way. Both sites will benefit from new habitats including pollinator beds, small ponds, and the promotion of growing edible plants and flowers. With so much potential, there is also an opportunity to engage with young people, helping them understand and learn how conservation and ecology can help nature transform for the better.

**To achieve this work and provide longevity to these projects**, we have recruited volunteers to join the Team Wilder team. Together we can learn through our work, strengthening skills and relationships that bring benefit to both the community and our island's environment for years to come. If you are interested in joining Alderney's Team Wilder movement, please do contact our Team Wilder Community Support Lead to find out more, and discover how you could help others, and wildlife thrive, whilst benefitting your own health & wellbeing.

By *Abigail de Castella*

Team Wilder Community Support Lead

 @moments\_of\_calm\_uk

#### Photos:

1. Child making a wildflower seed heart at Island Hall Playgroup
2. Student from St Anne's school planting wildflower seeds within their Secret Garden
3. Our community of tree planting volunteers at Alderney's Community Woodland looking out across Braye Harbour. Together they managed to get 200 trees in the ground in just 2 hours.
4. Building a bug hotel within Alderney's Community Woodland

Photo credits: Abigail de Castella





*New community-wide project*

# Memory Lane:

# A Natural History of Alderney

***A new project in partnership with The Alderney Wildlife Trust & The Alderney Society welcomes all parts of Alderney's community to contribute to a collective living memory of the island.***

Led by the Team Wilder Community Support Lead, this opportunity is for members, islanders and visitors to share their memories of Alderney's landscape from days gone by, designed to create a lasting legacy for generations to come.



coast-  
lines,  
we would  
love to hear  
them.

## Why is this important?

Community memories allow us to tell compelling true stories regarding the value of the natural world. The aim of the project is to create a meaningful archive of Alderney's natural history from people who recall wonderful memories of Alderney and to capture these before they are lost and forgotten.

What does Alderney's environment mean to you? Were you raised on Alderney or did you visit as a young child? Maybe you fell in love with the island later on in life, now a place that you call home. Where did you play or swim, what profound memories do you have of Alderney's wildlife? You may remember Puffins at Clonque, or other discoveries while spending summers at Saye, Braye or Bluestone. Whatever your memories, sea, sand and

If you would like to contribute, we will accept a variety of formats, from postcards, poems or letters, to chatting about your memories with the Team Wilder Community Support Lead over a walk or cup of tea. If you have any old photographs, these would be a fantastic addition to illustrate your memories. To share this project further we will create a digital archive, and include a selection of memories in The Journal. We will also take a dive into The Alderney Society archives, helping us to understand what matters most to people through generations, what the community feels connected to in Alderney and how things have changed over the years. Many people know Alderney's natural landscape benefits the community and visitors from far and wide: by creating a clearer picture of the past, together we can strive to help our future thrive.

There are submission forms available at The Museum, The Alderney Wildlife Trust (AWT) Information Centre, Library and PJ's Café as well as on The Alderney Society and AWT websites. Please contact Abigail for more information [teamwilder@alderneywildlife.org](mailto:teamwilder@alderneywildlife.org)  
07534 055366 / 01481 822935

With thanks to support from the **Sure Community Foundation**, we have been able to invest in equipment that can be utilised for the interview stage of this project.

\*These memories may also be used to understand ways in which Alderney's natural environment has changed in living memory as part of the AWT State of Nature project.

By *Abigail de Castella*  
Team Wilder Community  
Support Lead



Photo credits: Abigail de Castella

Poem

# ALDERNEY



DID you come with me to Alderney  
One mild September day,  
Spent afternoons on the grassy dunes  
That fringe the sea at Saye?

Did you run your hand through the silver sand  
that gleams at Longy Bay?  
And did you go when the tide low  
Along the stone causeway?

Seabirds flock round the Fort a L'Etoc  
And over the harbour at Braye:  
Have you heard them call by the long sea wall.  
Stretching out from Fort Gros Nez

On the southern side mounts high tide  
To a point where rock meets clay:  
Did you follow the path winding back and forth  
Up the cliff from Telegraph Bay?

And have you been to Platte Saline  
At a time of storms and spray,  
When breakers reach up the shingle beach  
And harshly drain away?

At Fort Corblets when a sea-wind frets  
The bracken on the hill  
There's a thud and a shock when wave hits  
rock;  
Can you hear it, feel it still?

Does your heart not yearn for a swift return  
Away from trouble and strain?  
And will it sing when the heron's wing  
Lifts you back again?

J. B. GOUDGE.

*Alderney Society and Museum Quarterly  
Bulletin – September 1969  
With thanks to Penny Oakman*



# WATCH

## How to go rockpooling

Rockpooling is the gateway to learning about fascinating plants and animals along the shoreline. These creatures survive in a constantly changing environment, enduring rough treatment from the incoming sea, as well as huge changes in temperature.



### What You Need

- Buckets/clear Tupperware containers
- A field guide or ID Sheet
- Wellies
- Camera and/or pens and paper



### Instructions

- 1) Check the weather and the tide before you go!
- 2) Half fill your buckets or containers with sea water. Have more than one to keep bad-tempered animals apart!
- 3) Gently lift rocks and discover what creatures inhabit on or beneath the rocks. Carefully lift sea creatures into your containers. Watch out for spines and pincers. Take care when touching soft-bodied animals as they are delicate.
- 4) Only keep animals in buckets for a short time and keep them out of the sun. The water will warm up quickly and oxygen will get used up fast by scared animals.
- 5) Use an ID guide to identify the creatures. Take notes, draw the creatures or photograph them.
- 6) Return animals to where they were. Return rocks to their place and leave them the same way up when you find them.
- 7) Wash your hands after your rockpooling and before you have food.



Where to rockpool in Alderney: Longis Bay and Clonque

# Visit a UK Reserve



**N**estled just four miles from the heart of Leeds lies Rodley Nature Reserve, which opened to the public in 1999, just 3 years before the AWT was founded. Rodley Nature Reserve won the BBC's Nature Reserve of the Year award in 2018. The Reserve offers its visitors varied landscapes such as wetlands, meadows, woodlands, and pond areas.

**The four wetland areas** of Rodley, including the Lagoon, Duck Marsh, Reedbeds, and Wet Grasslands, were created by digging out rough grassland close to the River Aire. Rodley hosts different bird species throughout the year and boasts numerous bird hides, making it a great place for bird watchers. Depending on the season you visit, (and your luck, which is always needed when it comes to birding), you can spot oystercatchers, goldeneyes, goosanders, linnets, herons, lapwings, little ringed plovers, green sandpipers, finches, kingfishers, reed buntings, reed warblers, coots, moorhens

and little grebes. So don't forget to bring binoculars with you.

**If you visit Rodley in the summer months**, don't miss out on the chance to see a wide range of wildflowers and butterflies at the wildflower meadows and different dragonflies and damselflies at the Dragonfly Ponds. Families with children can enjoy pond dipping with nets, trays, and identification cards available on request. A visit to the visitor centre to see the harvest mice breeding tank and a stroll to the Manager's Garden hide to see the little owls are also recommended.

**Despite being a small reserve, Rodley Nature Reserve is worth a visit.** It's a great place for all age groups. However, it's important to note that the reserve, completely managed by volunteers, doesn't open every day, so it's advisable to check their website before planning your visit.

*By Thanh Doan*

# Thank you

Your support is vital for protecting Alderney's wildlife!  
[alderneywildlife.org/support-us/donate](http://alderneywildlife.org/support-us/donate)



FRONT COVER: SWALLOW | JAMES BRENTON  
BACK COVER: KING ALFRED'S CAKES | ALEX PURDIE

## *Champion, Study, Protect*

An Alderney Charity (Guernsey Charities Register No. CH261)

Tel: 01481 822 935

E-mail: [admin@alderneywildlife.org](mailto:admin@alderneywildlife.org)

