

Monday 26th June 2023

News release: Nature Recovery Network will create all-Island picture of efforts to encourage nature

Are you helping nature to find a home and flourish?

Manx Wildlife Trust and UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man today launch the Nature Recovery Network, aimed at encouraging everyone to do their bit for nature and getting an all-Island picture of the efforts to boost biodiversity.

Landowners, managers and custodians are encouraged to go online via www.biosphere.im or www.mwt.im and take a two-minute 'How Wild is Your Land?' survey.

Those with gardens (however small), allotments or other land, and those managing land within businesses, schools, public buildings, churches, private healthcare establishments, etc, are all invited to take part to help build up an all-Island picture of how we are encouraging nature.

They will receive back scores for their contributions to food, shelter, water, connectivity and natural solutions, and can opt in to receive free hints and tips on simple changes they can make to make land more nature friendly and increase their score, if they wish to.

If land scores more than 50% in the survey, it will be added to a new map – housed on www.gov.im – that will plot nature. But all efforts, no matter how small, are welcome.

No personal information will be public.

The map forms a new 'layer' on the Isle of Man Government's existing 'Island Environment' map and will build a picture of habitat and biodiversity across the whole Island.

A complementary interactive dashboard will show areas managed for nature, as they are added, so those with an interest can watch it grow.

The project is part of Manx Wildlife Trust's goal to see 30% of the Island's land and sea managed for nature by 2030. It enhances the aims of the Isle of Man Government's biodiversity strategy, Managing our Natural Wealth. And it supports the global 'conservation' role of UNESCO Biospheres, as well as many of the aims of UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man's local strategy, Working Together for a Sustainable Future.

Other areas managed for nature will be added to the dashboard, starting with marine areas designated for nature conservation.

Farmland is not currently included, as its contribution to nature is individually assessed as part of the Isle of Man Government's Agri-Environment Scheme, but it's hoped that areas of permanent interest for nature conservation on farms can be added so farmers can log their own invaluable input into nature conservation.

Clare Barber MHK, Minister for Environment, Food and Agriculture, said:

'Tynwald has declared a biodiversity emergency and the Isle of Man Government and Manx Wildlife Trust are acting for nature, but the positive actions of every landowner, manager and custodian contribute to creating space for nature and wildlife.'

'I hope those encouraging nature, ranging from those with the tiniest plots to much bigger spaces, will use the tool to log their own contributions to our UNESCO Biosphere's biodiversity and learn about other steps they can take to be even more nature-friendly.'

Graham Makepeace-Warne, Engagement Manager at Manx Wildlife Trust, said:

'Manx Wildlife Trust is committed to remaining at the heart of the drive to protect wildlife and connect people to nature. Nature's recovery depends on landscape scale action, and together we can achieve this by linking larger areas, like our nature reserves or conservation work happening on farms supported by the Agri-environment Scheme, with a network of wildlife friendly plots of private land that could, in time, span the whole Island. This is a fantastic step forwards in collaborative working and bringing people together to create change that could boost biodiversity and bring wildlife back.'

For more information, contact Graham@mwt.im.

If you require assistance logging your contribution via the tool, contact Manx Wildlife Trust on 01624 844432

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. Manx Wildlife Trust (MWT) is the leading nature conservation charity on the Isle of Man. It manages 24 nature reserves covering nearly 300 acres and runs events and activities for schools, youth groups and families. It has Visitor Centres at the Ayres National Nature Reserve and at Scarlett, near Castletown and a gift shop at its headquarters in Peel.

MWT works on a range of projects to benefit the Island's marine environment and its landscape. These include work to bring back breeding Puffins to the Calf of Man, creating a 60 acre nature and play trail in Ramsey and a travelling exhibition about Seals for 2017.

MWT works with many partners to achieve its objectives and is a membership organisation.

2. UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man is the only whole nation Biosphere. UNESCO Biospheres promote sustainable development, conservation and learning. Locally, its aims are delivered under its strategy 'Working Together for a Sustainable Future' and its five Es – economy, education, engagement, enjoyment, environment.
3. Nature Recovery Network is a Biosphere Isle of Man project developed by a partnership of Manx Wildlife Trust and UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man, utilising the government Small Business Change Scheme to fund work by Cabinet Office (Business Change Services and Government Technology Services - MannGIS).

For further information, contact:

Lucy Chapman – Team Wilder Coordinator
Office: (01624) 844432 Email: lucy@mwt.im

Dr Richard Selman - Head of Ecosystem Policy, Isle of Man Government
Office: (01624) 695740 Email: Richard.Selman@gov.im