

Plea to help save Scotland's butterflies

PLEA FOR LOCALS TO HELP SAVE SCOTLAND'S BUTTERFLIES

A butterfly biodiversity campaign is being launched in Central Scotland to raise awareness of the importance of the colourful creatures in the environment. Central Scotland Forest Trust (CSFT) is encouraging locals in West Lothian to play their part in helping to conserve the range of butterflies currently found in Scotland.

The 'Better Homes for Butterflies' initiative, part funded by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), forms part of the Year of Natural Scotland 2013, which aims to support responsible enjoyment of Scotland's natural heritage and to explore opportunities for promoting conservation.

There has been a decline in peatland butterfly populations in the Central Scotland Forest area in recent years, which experts partly attribute to a loss of habitat and a reduction in food availability.

Peatland and moorland specialist butterflies, including the Large Heath, the Green Hairstreak and the Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary depend on the quality and availability of boggy habitats in the ecosystem. Locals in West Lothian are being asked to get involved in the campaign by coming along to one of the CSFT events and learning more about the butterflies.

There will also be practical conservation days when locals can help restore a piece of peatland in their area, and there are lots of resources, hints and tips about how to create a mini peat-bog in the garden and how else to get involved [on the CSFT website](#).

As well as providing high-quality habitats for peatland and

moorland butterflies, peat bogs offer additional environmental value in their carbon storage properties, their ability to alleviate flooding and their positive impact on biodiversity.

Emilie Wadsworth, Biodiversity & Heritage Officer at Central Scotland Forest Trust, said:-“Following the success of our previous campaigns which focused on bees, bluebells and tree sparrows, we wanted to protect another popular species in the Central Scotland Forest area which is currently facing decline.

“Our ‘Better Homes for Butterflies’ drive offers a range of educational resources for local schools including teaching aids on butterflies and peatlands, as well as suggestions for how to create small bog gardens in the school grounds.”

Karen Morrison, Communities Officer at Scottish Natural Heritage, said: “In the Year of Natural Scotland 2013, this campaign is a great opportunity to find out more about the endangered butterflies that live in the boggy areas of central Scotland and what we can do to help them.”

Paul Kirkland, Director of Butterfly Conservation Scotland, said: “Butterfly Conservation Scotland is very pleased to support this exciting initiative to promote and protect our peatland butterflies. As well as peatland specialists, such as the Large Heath, peatlands also provide homes for other wetland and moorland species that are otherwise rare in the central belt, such as the Green Hairstreak and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary.”

For further information about the ‘Better Homes for Butterflies’ campaign please visit <http://www.csft.org.uk/out-a-about/better-homes-for-butterflies> or contact Emilie Wadsworth on 01501 824 791 / emilie.wadsworth@csft.org.uk

For further information about Central Scotland Forest Trust please visit <http://www.csft.org.uk>. You can also follow CSFT

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Submitted by [CENTRAL SCOTLAND FOREST TRUST](#)

