

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

PRESS RELEASE: For immediate release
11 July 2016

Summer stunners sighted

Nearly four years after a project that saw new ponds created at Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's Lower Moor Farm complex near Cricklade to help dragonflies move more freely and start to populate other parts of the country, the Trust is now reaping benefits. Big numbers of dragon and damselfly can now be seen across the Sandpool section of the site after ponds and scrapes have been created.

Sandpool was dug for gravel and then used as a landfill site before being acquired by the Trust in 2009. Since then a number of habitat enhancements have occurred, including the construction of new ponds and scrapes. These ponds provide a link to the rest of Lower Moor Farm and into the Cotswold Water Park and allow species such as the hairy dragonfly, downy emerald and red-eyed damselfly opportunities to exploit new territories.

Working together with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, and with generous funding from The Hills Group via the Landfill Communities Fund, the aim of the project was to stop the decline and isolation of dragon and damselfly populations in the county. There are 34 species of dragon and damselfly recorded in Wiltshire of which 20 are found at the Lower Moor Farm complex. Wildlife corridors were created in order to encourage nationally important species such as the ruddy darter and the scarce and the declining downy emerald dragonflies to move more freely between Wiltshire and Gloucestershire.



Southern Hawker Male Dragonfly
image credit Steve Day WWT

“The funding from Hills has allowed us to create dragonfly habitats and make links for species across the landscape. This has been a great success and we want to continue the work. So over the winter volunteer work parties will help cut back and pollard willows and other vegetation growing around the ponds to ensure that dragonflies always have somewhere to lay their eggs.” said Neil Pullen, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Reserves Manager.

Isabel Clark from Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust said: “We were so pleased to work with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust on this important project in Cotswold Water Park, creating new scrapes and ponds for the benefit of dragonflies and other species. It has been a great success, with reports of both the ruddy darter and migrant hawker at the new areas in subsequent years*. This should aid the movement of the species in response to climate change and other environmental factors, which will subsequently contribute to their future conservation.”

Join Wiltshire Wildlife Trust to help provide habitat for dragonflies and other wildlife on their regular monthly volunteer sessions. They meet on the first Sunday of the month from 10.30am at the Lower Moor Farm visitor centre. No experience necessary just a passion for helping wildlife. Tea, coffee biscuits, gloves, training all provided.

*Source: Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records.

<Ends>

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Contact:

Sam Wilson

Communications Officer

samw@wiltshirewildlife.org

01380 736093

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust | Elm Tree Court | Long Street | Devizes | Wilts | SN10 1NJ

Notes to editors:

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's vision is to create a sustainable future for wildlife and people. We are unique in the county in combining the management of 37 nature reserves and working with local communities to promote sustainable living. The Trust is supported by 18,000 members and over 1,000 volunteers. For more information about the Trust please visit www.wiltshirewildlife.org

The Hills Group Limited

Established in 1900 The Hills Group Limited is a privately owned family company with a broad and successful portfolio of business activities which include recycling and waste management; quarrying of aggregates, the production of ready-mixed concrete; and building new homes. It is a dynamic regional business which, while centred on Wiltshire, has stretched its boundaries into neighbouring areas. The Group has a turnover of £96.8 million and employs over 400 people over 28 sites.

www.hills-group.co.uk