

Species Technical Group Minutes

meeting 2

Mann Island

04/03/2024

Attendees

Emma Galbraith (LCRCA), Ben Starkey, Lorna Drake (Natural England), Andrew Clark, Jo Doolin (MEAS), Elina Doss (Merseyside BioBank), Eric Fletcher, Natasha Murwill (Cheshire RECORD), Richard Walker (moth expert), Dave Owen (St.Helens Council), Dan Foy, Mike Brown (NMARG), Andrew Wolfenden (MGET), Ben Hargreaves (LWT), Phil Smith (ecologist), Richard Scott (NWFC), Jane Turner, Dave McAleavy (TMF), Joe Philips (CWT), Paul Corner (MRT), Judy Clavey (Forestry Commission), Petrina Brown (Environment Agency), Gary Hedges (Liverpool Museum), Lesley Brockbank (Wirral Badger Group), Steven Cross, Tony Parker, David Earl (LERN), Limmuel Hardy, Ben Hargreaves, Joe Phillips (CWT), Burnett, Hannah (Liverpool University), Steve Garland, Don Stenhouse, Steven Cross, Ayla Paul, Phil Smith, Justine Patton, Jane Turner, Richard Scott, Tony Hunter (Liverpool Museums)

Part 1

EG welcomed the Species Technical Group (STG), thanked them for attendance and covered housing keeping.

JD then outlined the day and handed over to Natural England for an update.

LD gave a recap on LNRS purpose and the species long and short list processes. Further, national lists on macro moths, fungi, bryophytes and Hymenoptera are now available and will be shared with the group. **ACTION – share lists and slides from presentation**

MEAS (JD and AC) then updated on STG group progress.

JD noted that species long lists are going well and thanked members for their contributions. Hoping for a cut off date in a few weeks time to draw a line under this stage of work.

Some lists virtually complete e.g. birds, mammals, reptiles but others notably invertebrates still work in progress and requiring more input from the group.

All lists are subject to LERC checks in terms of IUCN and S41 designations which is ongoing. Data from RECORD will be required to complete this process and inform opportunity mapping. **ACTION – progress data request**

BH noted IUCN Red List for aculeates not expected until autumn 2024. The list is therefore more reliant on local expertise and information. Sawfly IUCN Red List has also been revised. PS noted bugs are lacking from the list. GH offered to look into this. Many rarities associated with Southern England. **ACTION – GH to review local true bug priorities for listing**

AC noted need for further STG focused session on inverts short listing. Help needed from the group.

ACTION – convene session

PS reminded group of Sefton Coast bryophytes 2017 study. **ACTION – MEAS access copy**

JD/AC noted emerging species habitat associations showing priorities for habitat action. Wetlands, intertidal and farmland notable for birds, for example.

AC shared that MEAS had done initial shortlisting of the birds list which showed emerging assemblages for wetland/waterbirds and farmland birds, for example. They had been shortlisted for requiring either bespoke habitat action or due to the need for water quality improvements. The water quality short list criteria is likely to apply to migratory/marine fish lists and riparian mammals too.

A discussion of to what extent local extinctions, re-introductions, natural re-colonisation should be prioritised in the LNRS followed. The example of nightjar extinction in the 1960s was cited by DF. It was acknowledged that if habitat creation / enhancement measures are appropriate then lost species should naturally recolonise.

Examples of osprey, bittern and corncrake (RS/JT) were also shared as priorities for re-colonisation.

LD noted there is a national list of translocation species priorities (?) which could be queried by region and shared. **ACTION share list with group**

PS noted climate effects particularly with inverts as species move northwards. They are initially rare but rapidly colonise and become more common e.g. ivy bee.

JD then introduced the habitat working group session at Mann Island on 18 March 2024. All welcome. Wider audience than STG. Based on Lancashire LNRS habitat event which was successful and hosted by NE. JP commented that GM events had separate sessions on individual broad habitat types. AC commented that we'll review outcome of 18 March event and decide whether follow up meetings are needed. Intended to get community as well as specialist views on habitat priorities.

Part 2

The second half of the session comprised a workshop session short listing the mammals long list.

This worked well with good discussion between the group on how to apply the criteria and the potential additional actions needed for certain species.

Need for action to address persecution and public disturbance was noted as important measures for certain species e.g. badger, brown hare, grey seal. Also the impact of ring necked parakeet on noctule bats was noted.

Concerns about badger setts being isolated and foraging ground being lost (EF/LB). Both should be protected and its hoped LNRS priority listing will help with their protection. AC noted Wirral and stronghold for species but fewer records in North Merseyside.

The need for trapping of invasive species e.g. American mink and grey squirrel and education around this was discussed (to benefit red squirrel and water vole).

Concerns around whether polecat should be shortlisted were raised due to their inter-breeding with domestic ferret and that essential they need bigger, better, more and joined-up to recover.

Water quality was also seen as an important issue for otter, water vole and water shrew.

PS helpfully shared reference information on marine mammals from the Lancashire and Cheshire Fauna Society Vertebrates of Lancashire (2017). **ACTION – ED check if MBB has a copy**

END

Appendix 1: Copy of Meeting Chat

[04/03 15:14] Paul, Ayla

the wider

[04/03 15:21] Brown, Petrina

From EA perspective i think we are ok with Otter not being included as they are actually very widespread, recovering well and quite generalist so would benefit from the general LNRS habitat improvements. They don't really need any bespoke action.

like 1

[04/03 15:22] Jane Turner (Guest)

same for Daubentons

like 1

[04/03 15:33] Jane Turner (Guest)

controlling Bottlenose WOULD be contentious

[04/03 15:39] Paul, Ayla

There are lots of community initiatives like Hedgehog Schools that could help this species without it being mapped

like 1

[04/03 15:47] Jane Turner (Guest)

Absolutely agree Lesley

[04/03 15:48] Joe Phillips

Finding there is a lot of subjectivity here as Andrew suggested - badger foraging habitat could come under B as an example?

[04/03 15:48] Steve Garland (Guest)

I'm afraid that I'm going to have to go now - I've sent Joanne an email with some thoughts. Unfortunately - as I'm based N of Lancaster, my direct knowledge of the Merseyside area is limited. Happy to keep involved though as there are broader issues applicable to Lancs and Cumbria projects I'm involved with.

[04/03 15:52] Joe Phillips

Marine species have a danger of being put into F/G, but this could end up being a bias and ending up with no/fewer marine species?

[04/03 15:54] Jane Turner (Guest)
Need to add Common Scoter then

[04/03 15:57] Clavey, Judy

Just remembered that the BCT has issued this guide. [LNRS \(bats.org.uk\)](http://LNRS(bats.org.uk)) Water quality also mentioned in relation to Nathusius.

[04/03 16:14] Paul, Ayla

thank you!

[04/03 16:16]

04/03 16:16 Meeting ended: 2h 59m 9s

[04/03 16:24] Dave McAleavy
Thank you