



Chair's Foreword

I am pleased to present the Partnership's second Annual Report, which outlines our work from January 2002 to March 2003 (as we move from calendar year to financial year reporting).

This year we have attempted to be more quantitative in our presentation of progress towards the Action Plan objectives. It is important that we report honestly, and understand the barriers to future progress.

Things have come a long way since the Partnership was first launched in 1996, and we now have a very strong base of support linked to the many Borough **Biodiversity Partnerships** that have been established. Our partners have dedicated considerable time and energy to the Partnership's Action Plans and core activities. I would like to pay tribute to the huge range of partners involved. There are now 30 signatories to our Memorandum of Understanding. It is heartening to see our

work being used in national best practice – in the Biodiversity
Strategy for England and in the England
Biodiversity Group publication "Natural Partners, the achievements of local biodiversity partnerships in England".

One of the key reasons for the quality of the Partnership is the hard work of our co-ordinating staff. Whilst we are grateful for funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and others. the long-term survival of the Partnership will depend on a firm, reliable base of core funding, which we aim to secure through contributions from partners. The business planning process that is underway aims to achieve this.

I look forward to the Partnership making substantial progress in the coming year as we implement our newly emerging business plan.

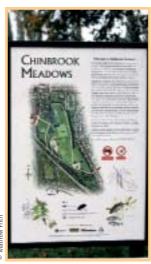
Professor David Goode Chair of the London Biodiversity Partnership

Introduction to the Partnership

The London Biodiversity
Partnership is a group of
public, private and
voluntary organisations
working together for
wildlife and people. It was
formed in 1996 to
progress a Biodiversity
Action Plan for London as
a response to the process
initiated at the Earth
Summit in Rio 1992,
when the UK government
signed the 'Convention on
Biological Diversity'.







Milestones 1996

- Partnership launched.
- Capital Assets published.

Milestones 1999

Appointment of the first Project Officer

Milestones 2000

- The Audit Volume 1 published
- Our Green Capital published.
- Launch of the Partnership's website www.lbp.org.uk with an online searchable species audit.

Milestones 2001

- The Action Volume 2 published
- First Heathland Forum held
- Chalking Up London's Downs project begins

Milestones 2002

- The Action Round 2 published
- London Bird Conference held at the Wetland Centre
- Second Heathland Forum held
- House Sparrow Survey
- Launch of www.black redstarts.org.uk
- First Grey Heron Day

Milestones 2003

 First Mistletoe transplants across London

New Action for Nature



Work towards Action Plan objectives and targets has moved faster over this period with excellent progress in some cases. Four Action Plans have reported no mayor delays in meeting their targets and nine Action Plans have only minor delays. This progress is testament to the individuals and organisations involved in implementing the actions as well as the broad base of partners who devised the specific objectives and actions in the Action Plan. However, some work on the majority of the Action Plans (17 out of 21 received during the

January reporting round) has been delayed and eight Action Plans are significantly late in delivering on their targets.

The majority of Chairs have highlighted two main factors affecting Action Plan progress; the lack of financial resources available for project implementation and the lack of staff and volunteer time required for coordination. The Partnership is hoping to address these issues through its Funding Strategy, and by securing further dedicated staff.

Bats Lead London Bat Group

Further trials were conducted on the long-term pipistrelle monitoring programme to increase knowledge of bat distribution and population change. This is now ready to be scaled up and established during 2003.



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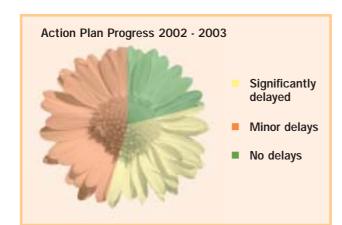
A program of training for bat box inspection licences has been set up and the first person has successfully completed the training.

A London Bat Group
member carried out a
useful assessment of the
effects of light on a
sensitive bat species for
the Bat Conservation
Trust. The study pointed
out that Daubenton's bats
are very sensitive to light
pollution and would try to
avoid it even with
moderate light output.

Grey Heron Lead London Borough of Wandsworth

The annual count of heronries undertaken by BTO volunteers continued during 2002. Active nests at fifteen sites were counted during this period.

The assessment of conditions at heronries continues ahead of the production of best practice guidance for heronry management. Information is now held for Richmond Park,





James Farrell

Battersea Park, Lonsdale Road, Regents Park and Morden Hall Park.

In order to develop a programme to monitor breeding success at selected heronries, pilot guidelines were issued for five sites. Two forms will be sent out in 2003: one for general heronry counters, the other for respondees to the 2002 questionnaire.

Regents Park successfully tested six artificial platforms made from 3 metre diameter by 1 metre deep woven willow baskets. Four of these were subsequently nested in. Wandsworth Council is now considering a similar design to replace fallen trees on a heronry. London Heron Day was first tried out on 14th of April 2002 at Battersea Park, Regents Park and the Wetlands Centre. The event was very successful with 1,000 people attending in total.



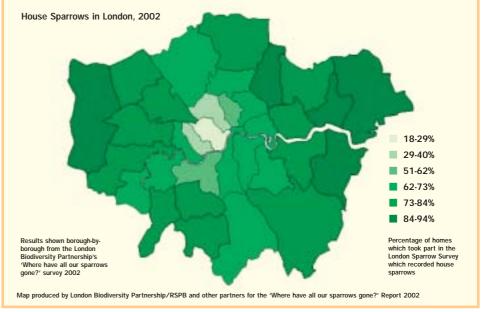
Further events were held in April 2003 extending to new sites around London.

House Sparrow Lead Greater London Authority

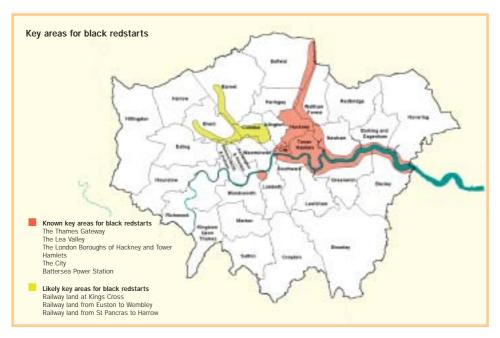
The first ever public London Sparrow Survey 'Where have all our sparrows gone?' was carried out during the summer of 2002. The survey attracted over 9,000 responses, counting almost 75,000 sparrows and creating a detailed picture of the capital's house sparrow population. This was the largest public wildlife survey in London to date, and one of the largest ever public single species survey in the UK.

The broad picture given by the survey is of a ring of urban London where

sparrows are still quite common, rather fewer sparrows around the suburban outskirts, a defined sparrow hotspot on the eastern side of London and a gaping hole in inner London. Another interesting result was that sparrows appear to be more likely to nest in homes built before 1945. A preliminary report of results was launched by The Mayor of London in January 2003 and attracted wide media interest. Further analysis of the data is intended for 2003.



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Black Redstart Lead London Wildlife Trust

November 2002 saw the launch of www.blackredstarts.org.uk a key resource for developers, planners and ecologists. It provides information on the bird's habitat requirements and research into green roofs in Britain and Switzerland. The website receives over twelve hits a day mainly from professionals and won the 2002-3 Golden Web Awards.

In order to encourage the creation of specific landscape schemes in new developments the chair and other members

of the Working Group have delivered over fifteen presentations on the black redstart and its habitat needs at conferences and at meetings with planners. Since the Plan was published over 15,000 m² of habitat mitigation in London is required specifically for black redstarts (primarily rubble-based roofs), through planning conditions. The first two completed black redstartrelated schemes were in place in 2002 at the **Laban Dance Centre and** the Creekside Trust **Education Centre in** Deptford Creek, Lewisham.



Peregrine Falcon Lead English Nature

A peregrine falcon advice note has been produced and distributed via local authorities and direct to developers as required.

The London Borough of Islington's Nature
Conservation Team has installed a peregrine nest box in the Old Street area and there are plans to install a second one during 2003.

Sand Martin Lead RSPB

The Working Group made significant progress towards increasing the number of artificial breeding sites for sand martins across London during this year. An artificial bank wall was created at Crossness Nature Reserve in the London Borough of Bexley and sand martin 'tubes' were placed in a new flood defence at Deptford Creek, Furthermore, sand filled boxes with tubes were placed at two sites within the Canary Wharf Complex and a sand martin bank is under construction at **Beddington** sewage works.

The East London Birders'
Forum has continued to
collect historic records of
breeding sand martin
colonies within London.

Water Vole Lead London Wildlife Trust



A pilot training day for pest controllers was held in Redbridge in August 2002, with further advocacy at the National Pest Control Exhibition in November and the Greater





London Pest Liaison Group. Further training days are planned.

Two Management Plans were agreed with Tilfen Properties, to secure the future of water voles at Thamesmead. The Environment Agency carried out the rehabilitation of 300m of ditch and the creation of 200m of new ditch at Crossness Nature Reserve.

A generic leaflet was produced for pest controllers, through the Wildlife Trust's Water Vole Working Group. This was launched in conjunction with a 'spotters card' which provides identification details of rats and voles for technicians to use.

Work has begun on improving banks at Morden Hall Park on the River Wandle with a view to reintroducing water voles within the next two years.

Kempton Nature Reserve (water treatment site) has undergone extensive habitat creation including reedbed and water vole islands, which may be suitable for the introduction of water voles in late 2003.

Systematic survey and monitoring of waterways in London continues.

Stag Beetle Lead London Wildlife Trust

Loggeries have been created in sites such as Sydenham Hill Wood Nature Reserve, High Elms Country Park, Richmond Park and Kew Gardens in order to significantly increase populations of stag beetles in London.

Outreach and awarenessraising work is planned for the summer of 2003 through the RSPB's and the Royal Parks "Wildlife for All" project.

Mistletoe

Lead English Nature
Mistletoe berries were
harvested from populations at Myddelton
House (Enfield) originally
established by gardener
E.A. Bowles a century
ago. These have been
used to try to establish
new colonies at Railway
Fields (Haringey) and
Enfield Lock (Enfield).





© Kew Garden



Black Poplar Lead BTCV

Members of the Working Group have continued to survey existing black poplars, establishing their sex, and collecting specimens for genetic research by the Natural History Museum, with funding from the Forestry Commission.

The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority has established tree nurseries and continues to collect and grow specimens.

Information on black poplar cultural history, management and identification has been distributed to tree officers through their monthly bulletin.

Tower Mustard Lead English Nature

Plants grown at Kew Gardens from seed collected at Stain Hill Reservoir were planted in the Alder Beds and Rock Gardens in 2002. Further

plants have been established at the Wetland Centre in Barnes.

Private Gardens Lead London Wildlife Trust

The organisations involved in the Working Group have continued to develop their own wildlife gardening schemes and public interest has increased in demonstration projects in Peckham and at the **Natural History Museum.**

In order to find out more about current gardening practices, the London Wildlife Trust carried out a first round of public surveys at garden centres across London. The results of this survey are being analysed.

To promote gardening for wildlife, the London Wildlife Trust has produced an information pack available for reproduction and distribution by other organisations. The information pack will be officially launched at the Londoners' Wildlife Gardening Day on the 28th June 2003.

Parks, Squares and **Amenity Grassland Lead Greater London Authority**

The new London Parks and Green Space Forum has provided an opportunity to integrate the London BAP objectives within the wider interests of green space policy-makers. The establishment of the Forum's Biodiversity Working Group will provide a strategic vehicle for the **Action Plan to deliver its** objectives.

Canals **Lead British** Waterways Best practice for the control of problem species is being identified and developed from information collated from the Environment Agency, **British Waterways and the**

Aquatic Plant Centre.

Waterway engineers and development teams are being instructed on appropriate management for biodiversity through an ongoing environmental appraisal system and joint work with Regional Ecologists.

The promotion of opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement is ongoing and a number of recommendations were made as part of development along the canals.

A number of sites have been identified for habitat creation and enhancement though initiatives such as the **Draft Water Space** Strategy for the Docklands. Furthermore, **British Waterways has** developed a partnership with the Royal Zoological Society at London Zoo to implement habitat





enhancement at Regents Park's canal corridor.

Seven 'Friends of London Canals' groups have been established and further groups are being initiated.

Heathland **Lead English Nature**

A second successful **Heathland Forum was** held in September 2002, hosted jointly by the London Borough of Wandsworth and the Wimbledon & Putney Common Conservators. The day was well attended, with over 30 delegates present.

A reference list of site management materials and research papers on heathland management



was circulated via the Heathland Forum email database.

A list of key heathland species was devised by the working group and circulated to all site managers. The list has been included within the working group's draft **Heathland Restoration** Strategy and has been used to identify priority sites for restoration works.









Woodland **Lead Greater London Authority**

Much of the core work of the Action Plan has been postponed in preference for a bid to secure significant Heritage Lottery Funding. The aim of the bid is to ensure the long-term sustainability of London's heritage woodlands through higher quality management and increased public understanding, so as to maximise their potential for public access, biodiversity benefit and life-long learning. The **Forestry Commission has** provided £5,000 to develop the bid before submission of a Project **Development Grant.**

As part of increasing woodland cover in the capital, a total of 146 hectares have been planted by members of the working group. So far, approximately 115 hectares of woodland have been planted in Thames **Chase Community Forest** (London section) and Trees for London has planted approximately 6

hectares. The London Boroughs have also contributed by planting approximately 14 hectares. The Woodland Trust has been encouraging the natural regeneration of 3 hectares of sessile oak woodland in Joydens Wood and in the borough of Bexley, and they are planning to plant out 2000 sessile oak seedlings grown from acorns in the woods during 2003-04.

Wasteland **Lead London Wildlife**

Trust

The London Wildlife Trust published the report Brown Field? Green Field? on behalf of the London Brownfield Forum as a key action in the Plan. The Forum continued to develop criteria to identify a hierarchy of London wasteland sites in relation to their ecological and social value.

The Creekside Centre. Deptford Creek, opened as part of the Action Plan targets for enabling publicly accessible

wasteland sites. The Centre is a beacon site for landscaping and management that reflects the locally distinctive wildlife of the Creek and associated brownfield sites. This is a good example of the potential for wasteland habitat creation or retention within new development proposals.

Chalk Grassland Lead London Wildlife

Work on the 'Chalking up London's Downs' project continues. This project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, has enabled surveys, collation of data and the purchase of equipment, now including a seedharvesting machine. Displays and leaflets are scheduled for this summer. Partners are the **London Boroughs of** Bromley, Croydon, and Sutton, Corporation of London, Downlands Countryside Management Project, Butterfly Conservation, Greater **London Authority and** London Wildlife Trust.

Tidal Thames Lead Thames Estuary Partnership

The Thames Estuary **Partnership Biodiversity Action Group is working** to deliver actions contained within the Action Plan. Biodiversity issues are now incorporated into the 'Blue Ribbon' concept in the Draft London Plan. In June 2002 the Thames **Estuary Partnership** organised a boat trip to provide biodiversity training for Thames **Educators. The event was** attended by members of the Education and **Awareness Action Group** and the Thames **Education Network along** with partners of the **Biodiversity Action Group.**



Other Actions

London Bird Conference

English Nature, RSPB, WWT, and LNHS organised the first London Bird Conference on behalf of the Partnership at the Wetland Centre in November 2002. This provided an opportunity to raise the key conservation issues facing London's birds, update the recording community on the progress of individual bird Action Plans, and provide a forum for policy-makers, landmanagers and recorders to network. Over 200 delegates attended the 2day conference, which also provided the fitting occasion for the LNHS to launch their new London Bird Atlas by one of London's longest-serving ornithologists, Richard Fitter.

Other Action Plans

The Acid Grassland Working Group, led by Royal Parks, and Reptiles Working Group, led by English Nature, have both been established and an initial meeting held to plan the implementation of their Action Plans. Two meetings have been held for the Churchyards and **Cemeteries Habitat Action Plan and several** significant partners attended, such as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, **Association of Burial**

Authorities, London Borough of Lambeth, London Churches Group and English Heritage.

Generic Action Plans Report

The London Biodiversity
Action Plan includes a
number of generic actions
for issues that cut across
the Habitat and Species
Action Plans. Progress
has been made on the
following:

Habitat Protection

English Nature has been providing advice on appropriate policy during the boroughs' Unitary Development Plan review process.

Species Protection

English Nature has produced various guidance notes on water voles, bats, birds and reptiles tailored to key audiences such as developers and planners. These are available from london@englishnature.org.uk.

Ecological Monitoring

Over the past two years
London Wildlife Trust, on
behalf of the Greater
London Authority, has
carried out habitat
surveys in the London
Boroughs of Haringey,
Havering, Hackney,
Greenwich and Barking &
Dagenham. The Boroughs
of Newham, Kensington &
Chelsea were also

surveyed. There are plans to carry out three to four borough surveys during 2003.

The Funding Strategy

To assist the process of fundraising on a wider scale, the Partnership has developed a Funding Strategy. This document, which was drafted for the Partnership by the **Greater London Authority** in consultation with other partners, aims to assist the funding work of the Action Plan chairs and other partners by matching up the actions with the most appropriate funding program. The Strategy also provides an overview of all the actions that are in need of resources. Copies are available from the Project Officer.





London Biodiversity Records Centre

The Somerset
Environmental Record
Centre was asked to
produce a plan for the
development of a
Biodiversity Record Centre
for London. They delivered

their plan in June 2002, and it has received a favourable response. A further consultation exercise involving the boroughs is currently underway to decide which of the three options set out in the plan would be

the most suitable to take forward. Once the results of that exercise have been received, the development plan will be implemented, which is envisaged to happen in 2004-5. The London Biodiversity Record Centre (LBRC) should be fully up and running in 2006, providing a one-stop shop for the diverse needs of its customers.

The Centre will be an essential resource for all partners involved in planning, implementing and monitoring the **London Biodiversity** Action Plan, and will become the primary source of biodiversity data for the private sector. It is also anticipated that the Centre will become an information resource to members of the public, and provide essential support to voluntary recorders and naturalists. all of whom will be able to use it free of charge.

Communications Guidance

The Communications
Working Group has
produced guidelines on
promoting the partnership
and information on press
releases, publications and
displays for the benefit of
all working groups. All
these documents are
available on the website.
The group continues to
provide advice on issues
ranging from press releases
to publicity events.

Progress at a Borough Level



During 2002-3 the London Boroughs of Camden and Hounslow published Action Plans and at the moment the majority of the boroughs are engaged in the biodiversity planning process.

The London Boroughs **Biodiversity Forum** (LBBF), continues to serve an important role in providing a forum for local authority officers to exchange information and impart support in the development of Local **Biodiversity Action Plans.** The Forum has had a significant input into the development of the **London Biodiversity** Records Centre and the Partnership's Project Board. About half of the **London Boroughs** regularly attend the Forum meetings.

The Future

The Business Plan

The Partnership's Project Board has been working towards creating a selfsustaining Partnership. The Business Plan, which will be ready in September 2003, lays out the Partnership's direction for the next five years and sets the rationale for establishing a more formal structure and administration. It indicates the level of funding required from partners for this and demonstrates the multiple benefits that can be gained from a selffinanced Partnership.

Action Plan Review and New Action Plans

The first round of Action Plans are due for review in December 2003. The revised plans will be published on the website.

As part of the review process, the Partnership is considering the production of three new Action Plans; Reedbeds - contact Richard Bullock: richard.bullock@wetland centre.org.uk, Veteran Trees - contact Nigel Reeve: nreeve@royal parks.gsi.gov.uk and Built Structures - contact Mathew Frith: Mathew2@peabody.org.uk

Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS)

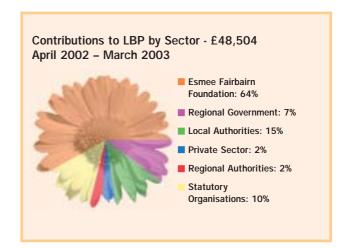
In order to have a nationwide co-ordinated approach to recording BAP progress, the UK **Biodiversity Action Plan** Steering Group is now about to launch BARS. This database reporting system has been designed to improve communication between local and national Action Plans and, most important of all, it will disseminate good practice across the biodiversity community.

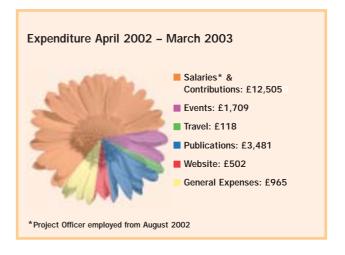
The London Biodiversity
Partnership has taken
part in the pilot scheme
and is now fully
committed to take part in
this initiative. We will
adopt BARS as our
monitoring and reporting
mechanism as soon as it
is available.

England Biodiversity Strategy

The Government published Working with the grain of nature, a biodiversity strategy for England in October 2002. This features a chapter on urban areas, and the various political and practical barriers that prevent the easy implementation of biodiversity conservation objectives. Reference is made to the Partnership in case studies on the Black Redstart Action Plan, and the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy. Representatives of the Partnership attended a workshop on implementing the Strategy at a regional level in March 2003, and are to provide further advice to **DEFRA's Biodiversity** Policy Unit within the context of London's regional government.

Financial Status





Signatories to the London Biodiversity Partnership

Members of the core working groups are asked to sign the *Memorandum of Understanding*. The purpose of this document is to raise awareness of the Partnership's work, and obtain commitment to this work at a high level within each partner organisation. This does not require a financial commitment, but asks for recognition of the need for dedicated core staff. Current signatories include:

British Waterways Ltd

BTCV

Countryside Agency

Corporation of London

English Nature

Environment Agency

Forestry Commission

Lee Valley Park Authority

London Boroughs of Barnet, Camden, Islington, Merton,

Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Wandsworth

London First

London Underground Ltd

The Mayor of London

London Natural History Society

London Wildcare

London Wildlife Trust

Peabody Trust

Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

Royal Parks Agency

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Royal Zoological Society

Thames Estuary Partnership

Thames Water Utilities Ltd

University College London

Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust



Project Board

Greater London Authority (Chair), Association of London Government, British Waterways, BTCV, English Nature, Environment Agency, London Boroughs Biodiversity Forum, London Underground Ltd, London Wildlife Trust, Royal Parks, RSPB, Thames Water Utilities Ltd, Wildfowl and Wetland Trust.

Management Working Group

London Wildlife Trust (Chair), Association of London Government, English Nature, Government Office for London, Greater London Authority, London Boroughs Biodiversity Forum, Thames Estuary Partnership.

Communications Working Group

BTCV (Chair), English Nature, London Boroughs Biodiversity Forum, London Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Thames Estuary Partnership.

Habitat, Species and Data Working Group

British Waterways (Chair), Environment Agency, English Nature, London Boroughs Biodiversity Forum, London Natural History Society, London Wildlife Trust, Royal Parks, Wildfowl and Wetland Trust.

London Biodiversity Records Centre

Greater London Authority (Chair), Environment Agency, English Nature, London Boroughs Biodiversity Forum, London Natural History Society, London Wildlife Trust.

London Boroughs Biodiversity Forum

LB Islington (Chair), LB Bromley (Vice-Chair, attends Project Board meetings), LB Wandsworth (Vice Chair, attends London Biodiversity Records Centre meetings), LB Sutton (Vice-Chair, attends Communications Working Group meetings), LB Hounslow (Vice Chair, attends Habitat, Species and Data Working Group meetings). All London Boroughs are invited to attend.

There are 2 'open places' at every Partnership meeting for anyone who wishes to attend.

Partnership Staff

The London Biodiversity Officer is a key motivational, force essential to:

- Co-ordinate events involving the whole Partnership
- Provide a secretariat to Working Groups
- · Build commitment from partners
- · Carry out project development
- Provide enthusiasm and day-to-day leadership
- Manage volunteers

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© Jan Hewlett. The photo represents the 2603 house sparrows recorded during the 1925 bird count at Kensington Gardens. Back cover photograph:

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