

## End of Project Report

Information provided in this report will be used to showcase your project on the Biodiversity Partnership web pages. Please expand boxes as needed or use a separate sheet.



**Project title: GardenWatch – A Weekend of Wildlife**

Date of Project report submission: December 2010

Date of Application: January 2010

**Sites/Location (if applicable):** The survey was carried out in gardens across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

**Contact:**

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**Project Objective**

The project aims to gather species records from private gardens across Cambridge and Peterborough through a weekend of garden surveys.

**Please answer the following questions about your project:**

**If any aren't applicable insert N/A.**

For Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) please see:

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/countryside/natureconservation/action/partnership/baps/>

- \* If your project involved habitat work, how much habitat area in terms of BAP habitat has been created/restored (please cross out accordingly)?

Participants in GardenWatch were provided with advice and guidance on how to accommodate wildlife in their gardens. It is hoped the project will contribute towards improving gardens for wildlife but this is obviously very hard to measure.

**Which habitat(s)?** Private gardens, ponds

- \* Which BAP species have benefited (or other species)?

Records of species were gathered to help us better understand the role gardens play in the larger landscape in supporting wildlife. These records covered some BAP species – common toad, song thrush, bats (not to species level), great crested newt, grass snake, common bullfinch, house sparrow, slow-worm, yellowhammer, common starling and cinnabar.

\* Did the project contribute to other Biodiversity action plan targets and actions? Which ones and how?

The 2009 review of the Domestic Gardens HAP identified the need for more data on the species that use gardens and the features this habitat offers. The development of GardenWatch is in response to this review so directly contributes to the HAP's targets:

1. Establish baseline data of gardens to understand quality of the resource. Members of the public encouraged to submit records and provide the Wildlife Trust with an insight in to attitudes towards gardening and wildlife.
2. Have a system in place for regular assessment of gardens. GardenWatch will be repeated for at least two more years.
3. Safeguard garden features that are important habitats for wildlife. Participants informed of the value of ponds, trees, hedges, lawns etc and urged to maintain / expand them.
4. Additional 10% of existing gardens managed positively for wildlife. GardenWatch provides guidance on enhancing gardens/balconies/allotments for wildlife e.g. creating a pond, making bird/bug/bat boxes, planting flowers as nectar sources.
5. 10% of gardens in each new development have wildlife features. GardenWatch did not engage with developers/planners but has the potential to do so in the future as it grows.
6. Widely positive wildlife friendly gardening practice in place for gardens with existing wildlife interest, with new features created where possible. Those gardeners who already have some features for wildlife are gently challenged to go a step further e.g. creating a wildflower meadow.
7. Inform and educate public of the importance of gardens for wildlife, and for people, and the opportunities for combating climate change. GardenWatch is a great publicity hook that enables the Trust to promote wildlife gardening via local media. The importance of gardens as part of the Living Landscape jigsaw is explained. GardenWatch 2010 was promoted at the Peterborough and Cambridge festivals with demonstrations of what people can do in their gardens to help wildlife.
8. Adapt appropriate communications materials for each target group. The materials for GardenWatch were available in a number of formats with varying degrees of information. For example the Spotters Sheets were produced as simple pictorial guides to common species and also with more information regarding the appearance of the species, preferred foods and behaviour.
9. Strengthen support for the 'Let our Gardens Live' manifesto and this BAP. The GardenWatch webpage linked to a number of external sources of information and built support of this HAP through fostering interest in wildlife

gardening and respect for gardens in general.

\* Did the project generate ecological data?  Yes  No  
Has the data been submitted to the Biological Records Centre?  
 Yes  No  
If no please state the reason why data has not been submitted. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* How many volunteers have been involved in the work?   2  

\* How many volunteer hours have gone into the project?   45  

\* Any other information you would like to tell us  
about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide a summary report of your project:**

What worked well, was/were your main successes?

What was difficult/challenging? What lessons have you learnt that could be shared with other projects, can be learnt for future projects?

GardenWatch 2010 was a pilot project and therefore had its fair share of challenges and lessons learned. The project team are now much more familiar with Survey Monkey as a means of gathering the data and the format requirements for CPERC. Preparing the resources for the survey took a large proportion of the overall time but now these will need minimal tweaking ready for the 2011 survey. Work has already started to promote next year's survey and we are rolling it out across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough. This should generate much more momentum and help us to establish the survey as an annual event in many people's diaries.

The project team undertook a SWOT analysis of the project to help with future planning. This identified a number of opportunities particularly on the publicity side of things that we are keen to take advantage of. We did discover that running GardenWatch after Springwatch meant that many of the local media were tired of nature and wanted something completely different to cover. So we have decided to move the GardenWatch period so it can benefit from the enthusiasm generated by Springwatch and extend it to include two weekends as this allows for people going away.

We offered a free gift from Vine House Farm Bird Foods to those people completing the survey online but this was not taken up. Only two of the 92 participants used the promotional code so we will be reconsidering the need for an incentive and what is appropriate.

The survey report, survey form and Spotters Guides can be downloaded from [www.wildlifebcnp.org/gardenwatch.htm](http://www.wildlifebcnp.org/gardenwatch.htm)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership Grant

**In this space we are interested in receiving your feedback on all aspects of the application process so that we might improve it in future.**

**Are you happy to share this information with other projects?**  Yes  No  
**Thank you!**

Please email this form back to Fabiola Blum,  
[Fabiola.Blum@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Fabiola.Blum@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or post it to  
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