

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust



Gaynor Jones Jenkins

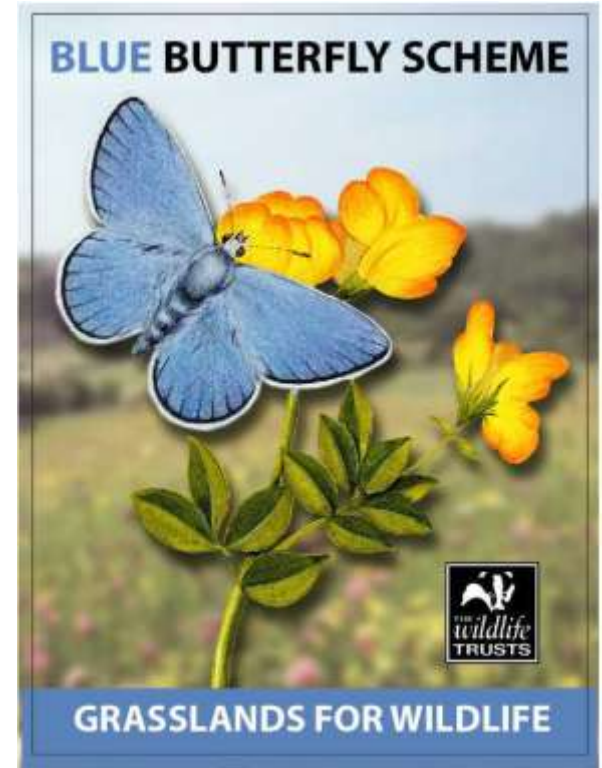


Southern
Conservation Officer





The Blue Butterfly Scheme Grasslands for Wildlife



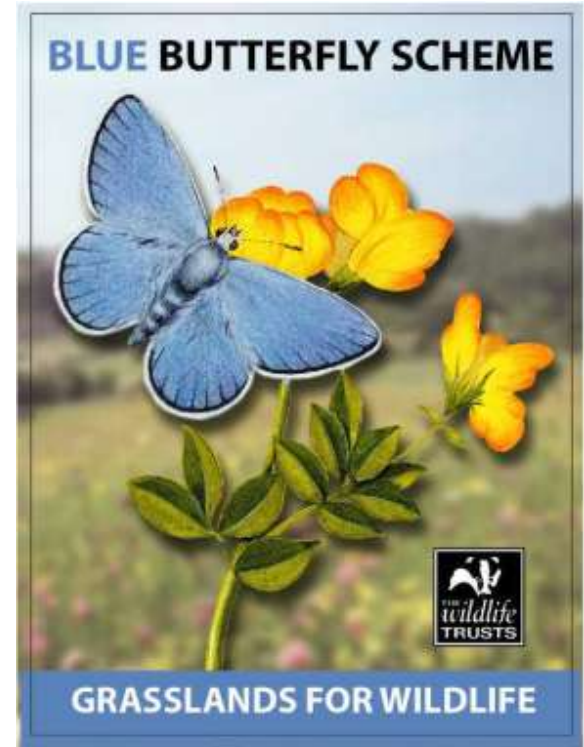
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The Blue Butterfly Scheme – Grasslands for Wildlife

Aim of the scheme;

- to encourage landowners to manage areas of grassland sympathetically for wildlife
- to enhance grasslands of limited wildlife value but with high community value – awareness raising
- to create new areas of wildflower meadow or species rich grassland wherever appropriate
- to raise awareness of the importance of grassland habitats
- to alter people's perception of grassland management
- to provide informal education opportunities

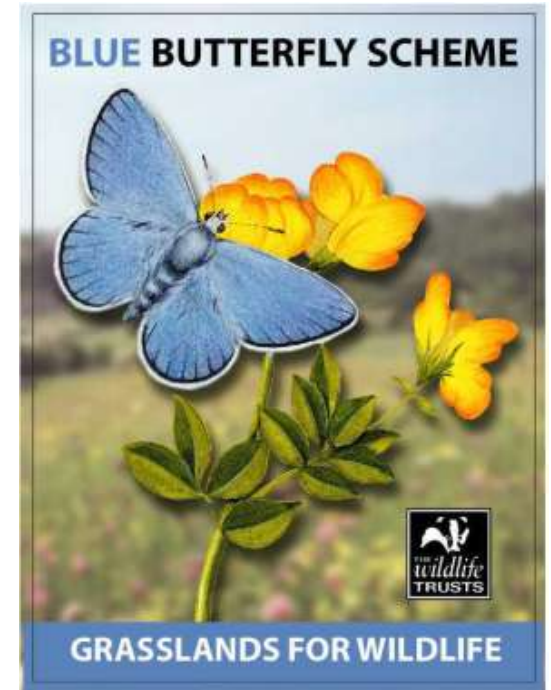


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The Blue Butterfly Scheme – Grasslands for Wildlife

- Has been in existence for 5 years
- 45 sites currently in the scheme located in parks, cemeteries, Local Nature Reserves and Parish greenspaces
- The scheme is funded through grants, corporate support and in-kind funding from Partners. The funding allows NWT Officers to provide grassland creation and management advice and a small contribution towards seed and plug plant purchase.



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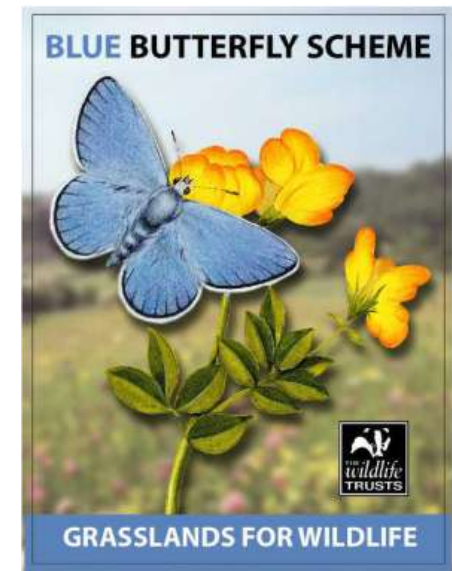
The Blue Butterfly Scheme – Grasslands for Wildlife

Developed initially in partnership with Local Authorities to:

- Identify altered management of grassland or meadow creation projects

Also developed to aid with:

- Altering the general public's perceptions of grassland management
- Altering land managers perceptions of grassland, its importance and its management
- Reducing management costs and use of fuel - green waste is a new issue



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But there's lots of grass around,
in parks, along roads, on farms
isn't there?

Yes, but most of the grassland we
see isn't species rich and / or isn't
managed to provide a biodiversity
resource.



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- In Nottinghamshire, unimproved species rich grassland has declined by **97 - 99%** since 1930.
- 46% of the remainder is in unfavourable condition and is fragmented

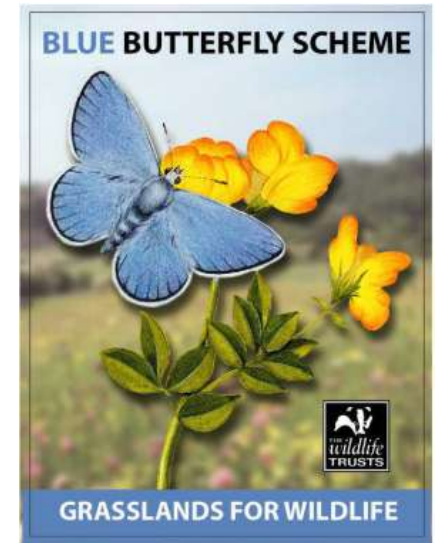


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The loss has been brought about through;

- Agricultural intensification i.e. conversion to arable land, fertilising and reseeded
- Loss to development, roads and infrastructure
- A lack of or inappropriate management



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The Blue Butterfly Scheme – Grasslands for Wildlife



- Species rich grassland supports most of our threatened and vulnerable invertebrates – the bottom of the food chain and pollinators!
- Not just butterflies, but bees, hoverflies, spiders, ants and moths (bat food!) and underground, unfertilised or sprayed (pesticide) grassland supports yet more creatures, such as earthworms, centipedes, millipedes, cranefly larvae, beetles – recyclers!



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- Species rich grassland also supports many of our most threatened wildflowers. Many of which would not occur naturally outside of a grassland situation.
 - A traditional grassland will also support a wide array of fungi, again many of which are threatened and many of which provide food for other species
- Grassland managed for amenity will not fulfil any of those functions



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There are many different types of grassland depending on the geology and position of your sites

- Wet grassland
- Dry grassland
- Acid grassland
- Calcareous (limestone) grasslands
- Neutral (pH) grasslands

They all support different species of grass, flowering plant, insect, fungi, amphibian, reptile, bird and so on and so on



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The Blue Butterfly Scheme – Grasslands for Wildlife

The scheme helps us to identify grasslands
existing species rich grasslands

- Many important but overlooked or unidentified grasslands – SINCS/LWS
- Often small fragments found in parks, churchyards, cemeteries, sports pitches, road verges and schools
- Scheme helps to identify sites and to talk to landowners about future management



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The Blue Butterfly Scheme – Grasslands for Wildlife

Future management can include:

- Halting the use of fertiliser or herbicides
- Halting amenity management
- Introduction of proper cutting regime
- Removal of grass cuttings – green waste!
- Aftermath mowing or grazing



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Grassland Creation or enhancement can involve

- Identifying appropriate areas
- Spraying off with glyphosate
- Spreading green hay or seed



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The Blue Butterfly Scheme
– Grasslands for Wildlife

- Plug planting in suitable grasslands
- churchyards, school grounds, parish greenspaces, LNRs



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The scheme also allows us to:

- Raise the profile of grassland as an important habitat
- Biodiversity Action Plans
 - Lowland Wet Grassland
 - Dry Acid Grassland
 - Calcareous Grassland
 - Unimproved Neutral Grassland
 - Pasture and Parkland
 - Arable Field Margins and Improved Grassland!
- Contribute to BAP Targets



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The scheme also:

- Increases biodiversity on many sites through;
 - increased flowering (and seeding) species
 - increases structural diversity



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Altering people's perceptions

- Identification of Blue Butterfly areas on site
- Interpretation leaflets - educating
- Interpretation boards - educating
- Website presence
- Mini Meadows Campaign – engaging



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The Blue Butterfly Scheme – Grasslands for Wildlife

The Blue Butterfly Scheme gives communities the opportunity to explore and enjoy these grasslands.

Engaging with nature, using natural greenspaces as outdoor classrooms.

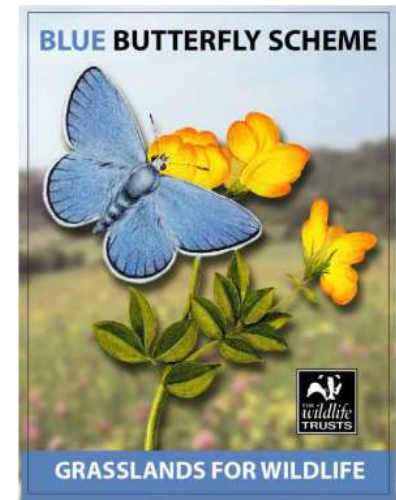


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The Blue Butterfly Scheme – Grasslands for Wildlife

- Scheme expanded to incorporate businesses, schools, churches and Parish Councils -
- Local Authority buy-in:
Green Flag Awards
LA and BAP Targets
National Indicators (NI 197): Improved local biodiversity – proportion of Local Sites where active conservation management is being achieved
- Leading to increasing interest and take-up of the scheme



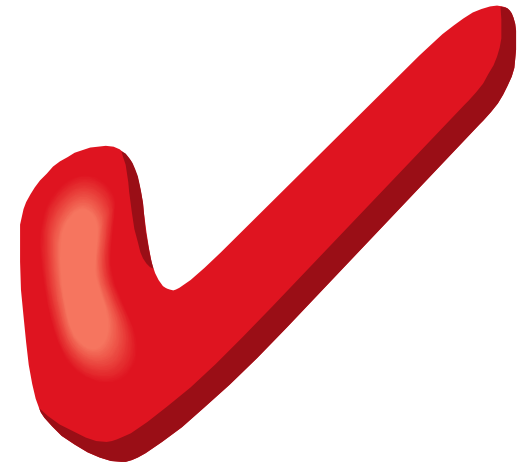
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The Blue Butterfly Scheme – Grasslands for Wildlife

Incorporating an element of conservation grassland management in your Open Greenspaces, could give you;

- Biodiversity gain
- Green Flag credentials
- Appropriate grassland LWS or SINC management
- Satisfy local, BAP or NI 197 Targets
- Educational resource
- Opportunities to engage local communities and schools
- An easily achievable additional element to enhance the visitor experience



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Thank you for listening

Any questions?

