

Wildlife World

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ISSUE 27

people's
trust for
endangered
species

UK

Water voles

Bat monitoring

Beavers are back

Red squirrel releases

The original mystery cats

Snow leopards were once the great feline enigmas but research is now revealing their lives like never before.

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Starry night toads

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Saiga life

How our partner in Uzbekistan is restoring the fortunes of the other-worldly antelopes of Resurrection Island.



Fetch us a scrubbery

Why the habitat requirements of hazel dormice are more complex than previously understood.

The whole hog

Our new hedgehog strategy is a blueprint for how we intend to restore the fortunes of our nation's favourite mammal.

Bringing the wild back to life

Wildlife World is published by People's Trust for Endangered Species

Our wildlife is disappearing. Almost two thirds of species in the UK have declined in the past 50 years. There's nothing natural or inevitable about this. It can be stopped. And everyone can play a part. That's why People's Trust for Endangered Species exists.

Find out more
www.ptes.org

Madras hedgehogs

Like UK hedgehogs, Madras hedgehogs have suffered great population declines in recent decades. Confined to southern India, they're impacted by habitat loss and fragmentation, and they're also taken for the pet trade and for use in traditional medicine. Our partner, Dr Brawin Kumar, is investigating what measures are needed to allow them to thrive again and using local people to map where hedgehogs are being killed on roads. Thanks to your support, we're confident Brawin will help these fantastic creatures to recover.

Welcome

Now that spring is here, the survey season has started in earnest. Many of us have carried out our first dormouse box checks of the year, keen to see the animals emerging from hibernation. In the coming weeks, we're looking forward to receiving your records of mammals living in green spaces near you or – later in spring – photos of stag beetles.

This year, we want to shout about our water vole survey because we're celebrating its 10th birthday. Water voles suffered a devastating decline in the 1980s and 90s, in part due to predation by American mink. PTES is now working with a partnership of NGOs, led by the Waterlife Recovery Trust, to eradicate mink from our waterways, enabling water voles, and other river-dwelling species, to flourish again.

Our cover story features an animal that needs no introduction for our long-term supporters – the snow leopard. Our editor, James Fair, looks at how our partners at the Snow Leopard Conservation Foundation have helped to protect a huge area of southern Mongolia for the species and what more they want to achieve.

Hedgehogs feature throughout this *Wildlife World*. Henrietta Pringle, our National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme Coordinator, describes her average day in the office, and our PTES in Action section features our new hedgehog strategy that we hope will lead to a recovery for the species in the coming decades. And of course, there's Brawin Kumar's work on hedgehogs in southern India – we're committed to helping the species across their range.

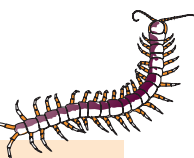
We hope you enjoy reading about our work as much as we enjoy writing about it.

Thank you

Nida



Nida Al-Fulaij is the Chief Executive of People's Trust for Endangered Species.



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Editor: James Fair
Editorial team: Nida Al-Fulaij, Zoe Roden, Rachel Lawrence, Emily Marnham
Art Editor: Zoe Roden
Illustrations: Hayley Cove
Print: 4-Print
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Contact us
PTES Wildlife World Magazine
3 Cloisters House
8 Battersea Park Road
London SW8 4BG
Registered charity no: 274206

www.ptes.org
enquiries@ptes.org
020 7498 4533

facebook.com/ptes.org
ptes-org.bsky.social
instagram.com/ptes_org

PTES
PEOPLE



Lucy Pendrick has put her artistic talent to good use by illustrating and writing an information board about the residents of her local nature reserve.

There's a green space on the edge of Wellington in Somerset, called The Basins, which includes an old mill pond that is now a haven for wildlife. A few years ago, wildlife artist Lucy Pendrick realised that as well as ducks and other wildfowl, The Basins was also a refuge for water voles, but that other people who visited the area didn't know they were there or realise what they were.

'They were posting all these photos and videos of water voles and asking questions about them,' Lucy recalls. 'They wanted to know what they were, and someone suggested we put up an information board about them.'

In her spare time, Lucy also runs a local wildlife group for the town, so she was able to not only paint the illustrations, but also write something that explains why water voles are special. She obtained funding to make and put up the board from Transition Town Wellington.

Lucy says locals have been thrilled to find out about The Basins' VIP residents. 'I was down there the other day, and a lady walked past and said, 'Isn't it amazing to have this?' and that she'd showed it to her grandchildren,' she adds. Some people have even asked for signs about other species – there's a healthy population of otters in the area.

As Lucy points out, sometimes it can be difficult to know whether letting others know about a local wildlife population is a good idea or not, but she feels in this case it has been completely justified.

'If we don't share information about the water voles, we're not inspiring anyone else to see them and fall in love with them,' she concludes. ●

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Policing climate COP leaves room for improvement

Scientists say the process by which nations discuss reducing their greenhouse gas emissions needs reform but is there any point when the US just left the treaty?

For the second time in less than a decade, Donald Trump has said he intends to withdraw the US from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. When he carried this out for the first time, in 2017, the effect was arguably marginal. Within four years, Trump's successor Joe Biden announced his decision to rejoin. But it feels like no way to deal with what is arguably the greatest existential threat to human life on Earth and enough to make one wonder whether this international environmental treaty serves any purpose.

If the country with the biggest overall carbon footprint (the US has emitted one quarter of all greenhouse gases since 1750) can leave the Paris Agreement with a flourish of a new President's pen, then where's the incentive for the rest of us to continue to restrict our own emissions?

It doesn't help that the last Conference of the Parties, or COP, held in Azerbaijan in November 2024, failed to make significant progress. More than that, the host country – a significant producer of natural gas and oil – was accused of using the talks to discuss potential deals, and the President addressed delegates by saying these resources were a 'gift from God'.

In response, an organisation called the Club of Rome has said that the COP – the vehicle for climate talks – is no longer fit for purpose and needs to be reformed.

A letter signed by climate scientists and campaigners pointed out there had been 28 COPs prior to the most recent one and that they had made great progress. As a result, there is now 'a remarkable consensus with over 195 countries having agreed to hold global warming to 1.5°C', it said, and signatories are also striving to phase out fossil fuels and stop deforestation by 2030.

But the current framework, the Club of Rome argued, while fine for setting goals, cannot deliver change at the speed that's

required. And in order for that to happen, certain changes are needed – for example, COP meetings shouldn't be held and run by countries who don't support the transition away from fossil fuels, and governments should be held properly to account on how successfully they are meeting targets to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

It's too soon to know whether any of the substantial list of requested changes to the process will be even considered. For now, at least, the letter has once again shone a spotlight on flaws in the process that are leading to insufficient action.

This is politics on a global scale. Even here in the UK, where public support for taking action on climate change has remained



An organisation called the Club of Rome has said that the COP – the vehicle for climate talks – is no longer fit for purpose and needs to be reformed

strong despite our record of burning through eight Prime Ministers in just 17 years (and political control going from Labour to Conservative and back to Labour again), there is always resistance to our efforts to achieve net zero emissions. Some politicians argue that it stifles economic growth, which is detrimental to jobs and wealth creation.

The point is that delicate and vitally important environmental negotiations such as those on how we limit adverse changes to our climate are always going to be subject to many different and sometimes opposing forces. That doesn't mean they are of no purpose or (conversely) that there aren't ways to make them more effective.

And it also doesn't mean that a US President who decides to pull out of the international agreement has brought a wrecking ball to the entire structure, but it certainly adds further delays to achieving the Holy Grail of 'net zero' emissions at a time when we really need to be accelerating towards this goal. ●



James Fair is a journalist specialising in wildlife conservation stories and editor of Wildlife World Magazine.

The best news this year came when the government announced it would allow licensed reintroductions of beavers into the wild in England, but other developments are less positive.

Saiga, saiga, burning bright!

The work of conservationists dedicated to saving the Asian antelope with the strangest nose has been rewarded with an Earthshot Prize.



More good news for saigas, the alien-looking antelopes of Central Asia's steppes, that were once so rare it looked as if they were certain to go extinct.

While our partners in Uzbekistan, Elena Bykova and Olga Esipova, are continuing their excellent work on the saigas of Resurrection Island, (see p16-17) conservationists in Kazakhstan have been recognised for their efforts protecting the species' critical grassland habitat which faces multiple threats.

Altyn Dala won an Earthshot Prize – the environmental awards set up by Prince William – for its role in the extraordinary and uplifting recovery of the saiga population in the past 20 years, from an estimated 20,000 in 2003 to nearly 3 million today. Some of this is down to better protection from poaching, but Altyn Dala's key contribution has been to tag 250 individuals with telemetry devices that have allowed scientists to identify key breeding and feeding grounds. This has enabled the Kazakh Government to make evidence-based decisions on managing protected areas.

Trump cuts hit wildlife worldwide

From Congo to Cambodia, globally significant areas protected for nature are being impacted by new president's cuts to international aid.



In 2023, the US provided \$375 million (£300 million) to wildlife conservation projects across the globe, but recently elected US President Donald Trump's decision to freeze foreign aid could cut this vital funding source hard.

The environmental news website Mongabay reported in February of concerns this could hit vital nature and habitat protection work. For example, the US has funded conservation in Africa's Congo Basin to the tune of hundreds of million of dollars since the mid-1990s, including \$23 million (£18 million) to Virunga National Park, home to one third of the world's mountain gorillas.

US money funds rangers and scientists who map forests so that countries can receive payments for keeping them intact. Organisations that run this work don't know whether they will be able to continue.

Ranger teams that monitor wildlife in Sumatra's Leuser Ecosystem have also been hit, as has a project protecting Lumphat Wildlife Sanctuary in Cambodia. The Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association said it had been expecting USAID grants of nearly \$13 million (£10 million) this year.

While Mongabay stressed the loss of US funding doesn't mean the end for all this vital work, it does raise questions about what can and cannot be carried out.

Final step taken for beavers' complete return to England

After many decades of campaigning by conservationists, the government has passed a measure that allows for licensed reintroductions of beavers into the wild.



By any measure it's taken a long time, but beavers have at last been fully accepted as a species welcome in English rivers and wetlands.

Of course, there have been beavers living in the wild for some two decades – the two main populations are in Kent and on the River Otter in Devon – but these had established themselves as a result of accidental escapes (or possibly deliberate and illegal releases).

And over recent years, beavers have been released into enclosures all over the country.

In Scotland, a licensed release took place in Knapdale in 2009 and 2010, and the Scottish Government has since permitted numerous other landowners to do the same. There's also a substantial population in the Tay Valley, but again this was as a result of unlicensed releases.

But until earlier this year, there was no mechanism to legally reintroduce beavers into the wild in England. Then, at the end of February this year, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) announced it would allow licensed releases, and the first one took place just a week later on land owned by the National Trust in Dorset.

Having supported that original reintroduction in Knapdale, PTES is fully supportive of the new policy. Research has shown that beavers are great for flood management because the dams they build slow down the rate at which water travels downstream. The impact on the environment also includes improving water quality.

And they're also a benefit for many other species. Insects such as dragonflies thrive in the pools created by beaver dams, and birds such as herons and egrets can feed in them too.

Water voles, too, have been shown to flourish where beavers have been brought back. It demonstrates that (when required) managed, legal reintroductions – PTES also helps to fund the Scottish wildcat project in the Cairngorms, and has been carrying out dormice releases for many years – are a brilliant way to bring nature back.

Wildlife placed at risk from planning reforms

Speeding up development doesn't need to put wildlife at risk if it's done in the right way, say nature groups.



The planning system can be tricky to understand and seem of little consequence when it comes to wildlife, but it's becoming increasingly clear that government plans to reform it could have huge consequences.

Ministers – including the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer – have made it clear they want to see a more streamlined planning system that allows developers to progress their projects (housebuilding or infrastructure) at greater speed and with fewer obstacles thrown in their path.

A key proposal, which was set out in a working paper published at the end of 2024, would see developers being required to pay into what's being called a Nature Restoration Fund. But, in return, there would be reduced requirements for the private sector to carry out ecological assessments.

The Habitats Regulations, which protect some of the most important sites for nature in the UK, would be amended.

These are massive changes, and along with many other wildlife NGOs, PTES is concerned – not because we're opposed to development, but because we believe they're placing the blame on infrastructure project hold-ups in the wrong place.

We argue that current legislation is fine – indeed, numerous government reviews have shown that it is. The problem is the way it's implemented and the lack of funding for local authorities and nature bodies such as Natural England.

The RSPB is asking its members to write to their local MP to demand planning reforms that are really good for wildlife. We urge the same. The future of wildlife in Britain could depend on it.

Defra grants hedges the protection they deserve

Dormice, hedgehogs and many other species make use of hedges, so ensuring that funding for planting and restoration is maintained is very welcome.



The Government has the impressive target of planting or restoring 72,000km of hedges between now and 2050. The main vehicle for achieving this is offering grants to farmers, so it was a blow when, at the end of 2024, the hedgerow grant scheme was suspended.

Thankfully, Defra announced in February that it will be reinstated. That's great news, because hedges aren't just important for the wildlife they support, but also for the carbon they store and the benefits they offer for farmers, too.

That's not the only good news for hedges, either. Last year, Defra also added protection for hedges to domestic legislation that had been lost when the way in which farming is regulated was changed.

Previously, so-called 'cross compliance' (which ensured that farmers adhered to minimum standards) prevented landowners from ploughing or spraying herbicides too close to hedges and also stopped them from cutting them during the bird breeding season.

But cross compliance disappeared with the changes to the way we subsidise farming (previously through the Common Agricultural Policy, now through Environmental Land Management schemes), and for a while those extra protections for hedges didn't exist. But Defra knew there was a gap (we kept telling them), and has now acted to fill it in.



Ol' black eyes

One of our smallest native mammals – only the pygmy shrew is definitively smaller – the hazel dormouse punches above its weight in its appeal thanks to that lustrous golden-brown fur and its dreamy black eyes. But while its reputation for being photogenic is beyond doubt, this hasn't stopped the slide in its fortunes as demonstrated by PTES' 2023 report which found they **had declined by 70 per cent in the past two decades**. Traditional dormouse conservation **has focused on restoring traditional coppicing to broadleaved woodlands and better management of hedgerows**, but there is now evidence that **protecting and creating scrub habitat is equally important for these charismatic rodents**.

© Daniela Schwarz

Managing for dormice

Woodlands, hedgerows and scrub all need careful and constant management if dormice are to thrive in Britain today.

The reasons why dormice have declined so drastically, not just in the past 20 years but over many decades, are slowly becoming clearer. The loss of many woodlands is one important factor, but not managing those that are left is another. In the past, many of our woodlands were exploited as sources of fuel and timber and for other uses, and this resulted in habitats of greater complexity with an abundant food supply in which dormice could thrive.

Berried treasure

But reduced demand for traditional rural products means there simply isn't the same requirement for coppicing. Added to that, understory shrubs such as brambles – which provide flowers in the spring and blackberries in the autumn for dormice to eat – are affected by overgrazing by deer, of which there are too many in the UK because they lack predators and management has declined.

Carry on coppicing

To counter these trends, PTES provides advice to landowners on how best to manage habitat for dormice which also benefits other species of birds, butterflies and other insects. For example, in small woodlands, we recommend that coppicing is carried out in small blocks no greater than a quarter of a hectare to ensure there is always plenty of mature habitat where the dormice can feed, nest and hibernate. In a 10-hectare woodland, managers should be aiming to complete the cycle of coppicing the whole site over a 20-year period.

Scrub up

It's also important to maintain connectivity at the upper-tree level. This allows dormice to access the entire woodland without coming down to the ground, which they prefer not to. This work should be carried out during the late autumn or winter to avoid disturbing nesting dormice. PTES believes a brighter future for dormice in Britain is possible, but with climate change also creating problems such as warmer and wetter winters that disturb hibernation patterns, the need for optimum habitat has never been greater. Protecting and enhancing scrub habitat adjacent to woodlands and hedgerows, where dormice can also feed and nest, will be another critical factor in helping dormice to thrive again in the 21st century. ●

Scrapbook

We love hearing from PTES people, whether supporters or project leaders. Pictures, reports, emails, web posts and letters give a great sense of your passion for wildlife, so please keep them coming!



The Wight plant

Little Lynn Common is a small area of heathland near Briddlesford Woods on the Isle of Wight. It's home to a rare plant, the greater broomrape, which lives parasitically on gorse (above) and is both nationally scarce and in decline. When we visited in January, the gorse was already in bloom and the site looked glorious in the winter sun.

Read more about Rough Hill
ptes.org/roughhill



Message on a tea towel

Steve Oram, our Orchard Biodiversity Officer, receives data and information about traditional orchard habitats from many different sources, but this is the first time it has been in the form of a tea towel! This is the map of Tangmere community orchard, near Chichester in West Sussex, sent in by Matthew.

Find a community orchard near you
ptes.org/community-orchard

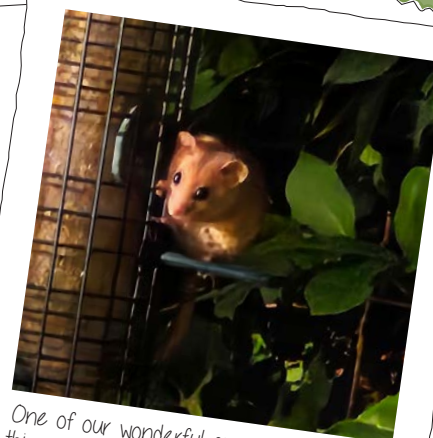


Dear PTES,

I thought you'd like to see a photo of our new Naturalist Hub, a coffee shop and conservation space outside of Bogor, Java. It's not only a cafe but also a meeting room that local conservation groups can use, an equipment rental station, a gift shop and has a bird watching area.

Best regards

Anna and the team



One of our wonderful supporters sent us this great shot of a dormouse making the most of a bird-feeder, in Barham, Kent.



Owl of delight

We had a very successful and enjoyable volunteer weekend at Briddlesford Woods in February. Our 30-person strong party consisted of staff and volunteers from the mainland and the Isle of Wight. We had great weather and we coppiced 0.1 hectares of hazel, built a tree cage out of sweet chestnut (harvested from Briddlesford), replaced five stiles, planted 120 trees (mainly hawthorn, guelder rose, spindle, wild privet and two disease-resistant elms) and tidied up the fencing around our seating area. While we were working, a barn owl flew out of one of the new nest boxes we had put up for them last January!

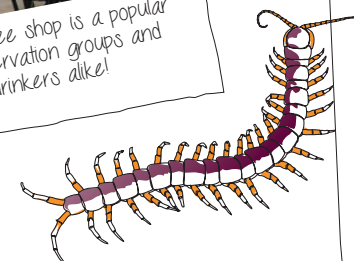


Class of grass

In October, our very own **Laura Bower**, attended a Westminster reception, hosted by Plantlife and sponsored by the Liberal Democrat MP for Bath, Wera Hobhouse, to draw attention to the importance of grasslands. At the event, Plantlife and partners called on the Government to create a Grassland Action Plan for England because of their importance for nature, food, climate, the economy, and health.



Anna's new coffee shop is a popular place for conservation groups and coffee-drinkers alike!



My role at PTES

Henrietta Pringle,
National Hedgehog Monitoring
Programme Coordinator



As the Coordinator of the National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme at PTES, I have the privilege of leading a new initiative aimed at helping one of the UK's most beloved yet vulnerable species: the hedgehog. This exciting programme is designed to gather valuable data on hedgehog populations across the country, helping us understand their needs, monitor their decline, and implement effective conservation strategies.

In my role, I get to work closely with an incredible network of volunteers, conservationists and academics, who are all inspiring in their passion and knowledge. A big part of my work involves travelling across the UK and providing training in how to set up our monitoring cameras, and I'm always so impressed by the commitment of volunteers, even in the pouring rain!

After we've done the surveys is when the fun really starts, however. As we gather the data from the cameras, we see where hedgehogs have been spotted and convert those sightings into population density estimates. It's these estimates – the numbers of hedgehogs in different sites and regions – that will help us pinpoint what makes a hedgehog healthy habitat.

This will allow us to target conservation measures to help our hedgehogs. Another bonus is when exciting things turn up in the images from our cameras; we've had pine martens, woodcocks, red squirrels and captured the moment a tawny owl pounced on its unsuspecting prey! The images are all online, ready for volunteers to look through and identify, so do have a look – you never know what you might find. www.nhmp.co.uk



Hen training some dedicated volunteers

The new ambassadors

A big thank you to our two fantastic ambassadors, **Patsy Stevenson** and **Robert Cazenove**, who both joined PTES as ambassadors last year. Between them, they've been busy raising awareness of PTES to new audiences, highlighting our wildlife campaigns and helping broaden our network with businesses. Patsy joined **Emily Luck**, our Water Vole Officer, and **Izzy Wyatt**, our Digital Communications Officer, on a water vole training course last year, sharing her exhilarating experience with her social media followers. Robert has been lending his corporate expertise, working hard behind the scenes to help with our fundraising efforts.



Welcome Ilana! If you hadn't guessed, Ilana is our Assistant Hedgehog Officer Anna's new daughter. Congratulations Anna!

Mountain enigma

Thanks to the work of our partner, the **Snow Leopard Conservation Foundation**, the loves and lives of this mysterious big cat are being slowly revealed.

In 1978, the American naturalist and writer Peter Matthiessen published his acclaimed and most famous work, *The Snow Leopard*. It was nominally an account of a trip Matthiessen took with the renowned field biologist George Schaller to a region of Nepal called Inner Dolpo.

Schaller's mission was to study the mating habits of bharal, or blue sheep, while Matthiessen hoped to catch a glimpse of a snow leopard – a predator of bharal, among other species.

But the book isn't really about snow leopards. It's a kind of treatise on Buddhism, with the author contemplating the tension between his desires (to see a snow leopard, for example) and accepting things as they are (not seeing one).

The Snow Leopard became a cult classic but it didn't do much for snow leopards because it established them not as living, breathing entities but more as beasts of myth and legend. Matthiessen had spent months with an expert scientist in snow leopard territory and came nowhere near seeing one. It was as if they didn't really exist – like another famous inhabitant of that region, the yeti.

No other big cat has to endure such invisibility. Lions, leopards and tigers can all live closer to areas of human habitation and certainly in more accessible, usually

lowland, parts of the world, though it's true that leopards, especially, can be elusive and hard to see. In general, they've all been more closely studied and are better understood than their mountain cousins.

Coming up for 50 years have passed since the publication of *The Snow Leopard*, and we do know much more about the species today, thanks to the work of numerous conservation groups and scientists who have dedicated many years of their lives to unlocking the secrets of this big cat. We're starting to get a handle on their behaviour and how many you're likely to find in a given area, and therefore overall numbers.

One of those groups is the **Snow Leopard Conservation Foundation (SLCF)**, which PTES has been funding since 2009 and which works not in Nepal where Matthiessen was writing about, but thousands of miles to the east in the Tost Mountains of southern Mongolia. Here, our partner Pujii Lkhagvajav, has been researching how the population is faring, as well as working with local communities and statutory authorities to gain better protection for both the cats and the region as a whole.

So, what has she and her team found out about the snow leopards of the Tost Mountains? The good news is that a



ABOVE: Team members of our partner in Mongolia, the Snow Leopard Conservation Foundation (SLCF), in the Tost Mountains. PTES has been funding the group since 2009, and they have made great progress in securing the viability of the region as snow leopard habitat in that time.

LEFT: The birth of any snow leopard cub (this one was spotted by SLCF chief executive Pujii Lkhagvajav and was also Dagina's (right) cub) is a cause for celebration. At least six cubs were born in the Tost Mountains to two females in 2023.



ABOVE: The Tost Mountains connect two of Mongolia's largest protected areas, and the whole region is home to snow leopards, but also other rare species such as Gobi brown bears, Bactrian camels, wild asses, argali and lammergeiers or bearded vultures.

LEFT: Dagina was a remarkable snow leopard who was known to have had five litters of cubs during her lifetime. She featured in the 'Extremes' episode of Planet Earth 3 and is believed to have had her last at the age of 13, the oldest known snow leopard to have given birth.

long-term camera-trapping programme has identified a stable population of roughly 20 adult cats living across some 1,700km², an area roughly the size of Worcestershire.

Much of the monitoring, using camera trapping and GPS collars, has been carried out by another organisation, the **Snow Leopard Trust (SLT)**. The SLT says its work suggests the Tost Mountains population doesn't change very much, but in the long term, it is dependent on cats moving in from other areas in order to minimise inbreeding. They know that snow leopards emigrate from Tost to neighbouring mountainous areas, crossing great tracts of steppe to do so.

'We assume that there are young cats immigrating to Tost, too, but it's difficult to prove since we don't collar cats in the neighbouring mountains,' says **Marissa Niranjan**, deputy director of the SLT.

'As long as their dispersals aren't hindered by, say, linear infrastructure such as railroads and fenced roads, there should be enough exchange among the mountains to sustain the population in the broader South Gobi region,' Marissa adds. 'Tost Nature Reserve provides both good habitat for snow leopards to live in and a stepping stone between mountains, but to ensure a

long-term, viable population, one needs to work at a landscape level.'

The ongoing work of the SLT reveals that at least six cubs were born in Tost in 2023 – two sets of triplets, one set to a female who was caught and fitted with a GPS collar in 2022, and another to an unidentified individual.

Much of this work has been carried out by the trust's senior scientist, Orjan Johannson, and he has made some fascinating discoveries about how big the home range of a snow leopard is. For

example, GPS collaring of three males showed how their home ranges butted up to one another but almost never overlapped. One male, whom he called Aztai, took occasional short trips into another male, Tsagaan's, home, but always returned to his own patch. Johannson assumes that these excursions had been to look for females.

Other data revealed a subadult male, Aylagch, dispersing from his mother (Kashaa) and moving 40km north from the Tost Mountains across steppe to the Nemegt Mountains. Overall, Johannson calculated that the average size of a male snow leopard's home range was about 220km², while female requirements were a bit less, about 130km².

Snow leopard fun facts

Snow leopards can't roar, even though their closest relatives (leopard, lion, jaguar and tiger) all can. But they do purr, mew, hiss, growl, moan, yowl and make a sound described as a non-aggressive 'chuff'.

Despite their name, snow leopards are most closely related to tigers – they diverged from their common ancestor between 3.7 and 2.7 million years ago.

Snow leopards can leap a distance of at least 9m, up to or more than six times their body length.

The snow leopard's binomial or scientific name is *Panthera uncia*, from where we get their other common name, ounce. But experts believe this comes from the word 'lynx' (over time, the French l'once became lynx), so it's a bit of a misnomer.

Snow leopards mainly live between 3,000-4,500 metres, with 5,400 metres the absolute top limit, making them (probably) the highest-living carnivore in the world but not the top mammal – a yellow-rumped leaf-eared mouse was found at the top of a dormant volcano 6,700 metres high in South America!

A study in the South Gobi region found that female snow leopards mainly preyed on wild ibex and argali (a species of sheep), while males had a higher proportion (about one third) of domestic horse, camels, goats and sheep in their diet.

Tost is just one area in Mongolia with snow leopards, and scientists have also worked together to survey the whole country and determine what the overall population might be. A total of 1,800 remote cameras were deployed over 128,000km² (an area the size of the whole of England!) for a total of 126,000 camera-nights, the equivalent of 345 years. This amazing effort put the population across the country at somewhere between 768 and 1,005 adult snow leopards, with a likely number of around 900.

This is part of a broader effort by the **Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP)** to secure more than 20 landscapes across the species' range where there are at least 100 breeding-age individuals. GSLEP is also coordinating the Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards (PAWS), which aims to establish an accurate figure for the global population once and for all. The current estimate is somewhere between 3,920 and 6,390, Niranjan says.

The Tost Mountains are just one small part of this giant snow leopard jigsaw. The IUCN puts the total occupied range at 2.8 million km² (almost 75% of the size of the EU) covering 12 countries – Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Russia and Uzbekistan.

It is action at the local level, such as the work of Pujii and her team, and others, that makes up some of the vital pieces of the jigsaw. As well as monitoring Tost's snow leopards, the SLCF has rangers who patrol the reserve to check for signs of illegal hunting or mining, as well as recording any wildlife sightings, and it works with local communities to reduce any conflict between herders and the cats themselves. With our funding, the rangers now have hand-held GPS units and binoculars that greatly assist their monitoring work.

It was the SLCF that provided the data which persuaded the Mongolian Parliament that the Tost Mountains needed official protection to prevent any possibility that mining – which could have threatened the existence of snow leopards – would go ahead. Tost was made a state nature reserve in 2016, and our partner now wants to go one stage further and get it designated as a national park.

Without the work of our partner, and other organisations dedicated to protecting this most precious of big cats, the snow leopard would probably have remained as it was portrayed nearly 50 years ago in the eponymous travel classic – a mountain ghost or spectre, enigmatic, almost mythological. Today, we know it's real – and your donations are helping to keep it that way. ●

Saiga resurrection

Our Conservation Partners in Central Asia report on the progress they've made to secure a future for the Uzbek population of this unique antelope.

A clearer picture of the saigas that inhabit Resurrection Island and the surrounding area in Uzbekistan is emerging thanks to the work of our partners – **Elena Bykova** and her daughter **Olga Esipova** – from the **Saiga Conservation Alliance (SCA)**.

The use of remote cameras, as well as fieldwork and annual aerial surveys, has revealed that about 200 saigas live in the Aralkum region, relying on isolated, 'island-like' habitats that experience low human activity and offer safety from threats such as poaching.

Resurrection Island was once an island within the Aral Sea, but because of the huge loss of water that occurred over many decades as a result of abstraction for irrigating crops, the vast, nearly 70,000km² (7 million hectares) lake shrunk to roughly 10 per cent of its size, leaving the island as merely part of what is now known as the Aralkum Desert.

Saigas – a species of antelope that is adapted to live in the steppe and desert habitats of Central Asia – have experienced

huge fluctuations in their fortunes in the past century. Some populations are now, once again, thriving, but those in Aralkum continue to be impacted by human pressure, including habitat loss and degradation, food scarcity and border fences and pipelines.

'Poaching, driven by the demand for saiga horns, remains a persistent issue, though stricter enforcement and community education have reduced incidents,' the SCA tells us.

One major success that the SCA has achieved since the partnership with PTES began is the designation of Resurrection Island and the surrounding area as Aralkum National Park. It covers about 1 million hectares or roughly half the size of Wales.

But designating a national park only has the intended impact if there's a formal plan for how wildlife will be protected, so the SCA is finalising a Biodiversity Management Plan, as well as collaborating with the authorities in neighbouring Kazakhstan to establish transboundary

protected areas. To minimise any negative effects of border fences and pipelines, it's lobbying the authorities to install wildlife-friendly crossing structures.

In time, the SCA hopes to nominate Resurrection Island as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, which would help to provide additional international recognition and support for its work.

Another aspect of Elena and Olga's work is helping local communities benefit from its saiga conservation work, notably through ecotourism. 'Through initiatives, such as developing homestay accommodation and training programmes, we've provided new sources of income for residents,' they say.

Finally, the SCA is also working with oil and gas companies to reduce the impact of their operations – the idea is to aim for 'no

net loss or better' when infrastructure such as a pipeline or road is built. 'These measures are critical for reducing the fragmentation of saiga habitat,' it says.

With the drying up of the Aral Sea, the exposed seabed is covered in a thick layer of salts and pesticides, which means it's resistant to revegetation. Nevertheless, the biodiversity of Resurrection Island itself is rich and varied, with records of 130 vertebrate species, including the Central Asia tortoise, pallid harrier and eastern imperial eagle, as well as saiga and 123 species of vascular plant.

The work of our passionate partners, which you help to support, should ensure that this unique habitat and its wildlife is protected for the foreseeable future. ●

ABOVE RIGHT: The steppe landscape of Central Asia is a harsh semi-desert environment.

RIGHT: Saigas are primarily poached for their horns which are used in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). The collapse of the former USSR in the early 1990s led to a big surge in poaching.

LEFT: Elena Bykova (far left) has been secretary of the Saiga Conservation Alliance since it was founded in 2006, and the group has achieved great things for saigas in the intervening years.



Fact File

NAME	Saiga <i>Saiga tatarica</i>
IUCN RED LIST STATUS	Near Threatened
POPULATION	The IUCN puts overall numbers at nearly 1 million mature individuals and increasing. Fauna & Flora says the population in Kazakhstan is now 2.8 million (including animals that are not mature), but says the species is still vulnerable. A mass mortality event in 2015 killed 75% of the entire global population.
APPEARANCE	Distinctive bulbous nose and ringed horns that are typically 20-30cm long. Coat usually a sandy yellow or slightly darker.
SIZE	60-80cm at the shoulder and head and body length between 100-150cm. Males weigh 30-50kg, females 20-40kg.
HABITAT	Semi-desert, steppe and grasslands.
DIET	Grass, herbs and lichens. They can feed on plants that are poisonous to other animals.
BEHAVIOUR	Saiga live in herds up to 30-40-strong. They migrate over huge areas in search of grazing and can cover 80-120km in a day. Females typically give birth to twins, and it's said a newborn saiga can outrun a human by the time it's two days old!
DISTRIBUTION	Mostly Kazakhstan, with small numbers found in Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Mongolia.

Out of a djam

Encouraging the growth of fresh bamboo shoots is one strategy aimed at securing the future of endangered Djam-djam monkeys.

One of the world's rarest monkeys is the focus of a two-year project that PTES is funding in a remote part of Ethiopia.

Djam-djam monkeys are a subspecies of the Bale Mountains monkey and are only found in the Sidamo Highlands in the south of the country. They're restricted to 26 separate forest fragments with a total population estimated at just over 700 individuals.

Bale mountain monkeys are remarkable for feeding primarily on young bamboo shoots and leaves, one of the few primates in the world to have such a diet.

But the area Djam-djam monkeys are confined to is so degraded they've shifted their diet away from bamboo to grasses, herbs, insects and cultivated crops such as barley, maize and potatoes.

PTES is funding **Addisu Mekonnen**, an assistant professor from Bahir Dar University, to evaluate bamboo habitat restoration strategies and how to reduce conflict with farmers.

Mekonnen wants to trial selective cutting of bamboo stems older than four

years of age to encourage more growth of younger shoots and leaves. He also wants to encourage local people to cut bamboo stems very close to the root to maximise new growth potential.

To reduce crop-raiding, Mekonnen is recommending that farmers plant unpalatable crops on the buffer zones between areas of human habitation and where the monkeys live – crops that are commonly grown in Ethiopia such as teff, finger millet and noug.

'Djam-djam monkeys cause crop damage and economic loss for people,' says

Mekonnen. 'As a result, there is retaliatory persecution, though they are not hunted for food in the region because of cultural and religious reasons.' ●



Meet the Djam-djam monkey

- ▶ Djam-djam monkeys form large groups averaging 25 individuals in size. They live and forage together.
- ▶ They are semi-terrestrial, spending about one third of their time on the ground.
- ▶ They live in a mosaic of mixed bamboo forest, tree-dominated forest, scrubland and grassland.
- ▶ They are preyed on by dogs, wolves, hyenas, leopards and birds of prey. They use vocal communications to warn each other of potential threats.

Stars of the sierra

Colombian conservationists are working with local indigenous people to save the incredibly rare starry night harlequin toad.

A toad that was 'rediscovered' in 2019 is the focus of the work of our new partner in Colombia, **Fundación Antelopus**.

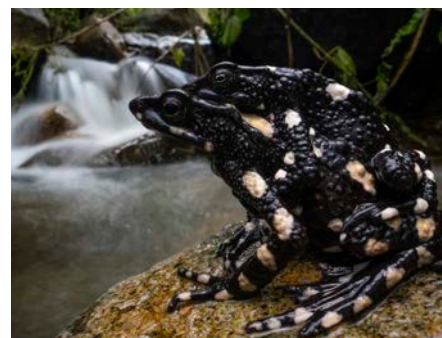
The starry night harlequin toad – so-called for the distinctive white spots on its black skin – is only found today in a small area of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta of northern Colombia.

Scientists had not been able to access the part of the Sierra Nevada where the toads live for nearly 30 years, but by establishing good relationships with local indigenous groups, they were allowed back in six years ago.

The known population of the toads in the Sogrome community where Fundación Antelopus is working is about 50 individuals, so still critically low and very vulnerable.

Threats to the species are habitat loss, pollution and the spread of the chytrid fungus which is deadly to amphibians.

Working with the Arhuaco people, who view the toads as water guardians, conservationists are carrying out long-term monitoring, pollution control measures and



assessing the risks posed by the presence of chytrid fungus.

Though believed to be found elsewhere in the Sierra Nevada, it is only in the Sogrome community that a population exists in an area covering at least 500m² – the minimum size believed necessary for reproduction to occur.

'Harlequin toads are a fascinating group of amphibians,' says Fundación Antelopus. 'Generally they spend most of their time in humid environments near water bodies such as streams which are crucial for their reproduction.'

The toads are insectivorous, feeding on small invertebrates such as ants, mites and beetles. Their skin contains toxic chemicals that are a defence against predators, and though not lethal to humans, they need to be handled with care. ●



Rebooting the hirola

Clearing invasive shrub and reseeding thousands of hectares of grassland will enhance habitat for this rare Kenyan antelope.

Increasing grassland availability for the world's rarest antelope, reversing decades of habitat decline, is the aim of our long-term partner in Kenya who we've pledged to support for another two years.

Restricted to a small area of eastern Kenya near its border with Somalia, hirolas have suffered catastrophic losses since the 1970s, with numbers decreasing from an estimated 15,000 to about 400 today.

A number of factors, including the loss of elephants from the area, overgrazing and changes in climate patterns, have led to invasive tree species transforming hirola's grassland habitat into woodlands – a 75 per cent decline in less than 30 years, according to satellite imagery analysis.

Our partner, **Dr Abdullahi Ali Hussein** of the **Hirola Conservation Programme**, aims to use local communities to clear and then reseed 2,000 hectares over the next two years and he expects this to help the restored area to reach about 20,000

hectares. The total grassland habitat available to the hirola right now is estimated at 150,000 hectares, so this would represent a significant increase.

As well as benefiting hirola, the programme will help local groups by increasing the amount of grassland for their livestock. Wood from the cleared invasive shrubs and trees will be made into 'hirola briquettes', certified high-heat, low emission compacted logs for use as a cooking fuel.

The hirola was never a widespread species – it has always been endemic to north-east Kenya and south-west Somalia, and its historical distribution is

estimated to have been less than 40,000km² (4 million hectares).

And while conservationists know what has happened to the species in Kenya in recent decades, its status in Somalia is a mystery, largely because the area has been badly affected by prolonged military conflict over the past 20 years. ●



Pick up a peccary

A rare pig-like, omnivorous mammal that is regarded as essential to the health of ecosystems it inhabits is being studied by our new partner in Paraguay.

A species that was known only from the fossil record, and – until 1971 – believed to be extinct, is the focus of our latest project in South America.

The Chacoan peccary, or tagua, is restricted to western Paraguay, small parts of southern Bolivia and northern Argentina. Numbers were put at just over 3,000 individuals by the IUCN Red List 20 years

ago, and no more recent population estimates exist.

Our partner, the **Society for the Preservation of Endangered Carnivores and their International Ecological Study (S.P.E.C.I.E.S.)**, says the tagua, along with its close relative the white-lipped peccary (which is more common and found in South America and into Central America), is

threatened by the expansion of cattle ranching, revenge killings and sport hunting and the release of non-native species such as wild boar.

S.P.E.C.I.E.S. says it will address these threats by talking to workers at four

ranches in Paraguay's Dry Chaco and by establishing a monitoring programme.

'We refer to peccaries as ecosystem engineers,' says S.P.E.C.I.E.S. founder, and chief conservation officer, **Anthony Giordano**. 'That's both because of their role in seed dispersal by eating the fruits of key tropical flowering plants and also their more destructive activities – opening up gaps in the forest by eating woody plants.'

Though peccaries can impact arable farming and agro-forestry through crop-raiding and feeding, Giordano believes that they are compatible with cattle ranching, especially if owners can be persuaded to adopt more sustainable practices that reduces habitat loss.

'Some of the people we work with are open to this and they seem really cooperative and collaborative and they appreciate the wildlife on their land,' he says. ●



Scrubbing up for hedgehogs

Much of the evidence now points to creating more complex, scrubby habitats on farmland and in the wider countryside in order to restore the fortunes of Britain's spiny mammal.

Among the many and varied wildlife declines Britain has suffered in the past half century, that of the hedgehog has been one of the most mysterious and difficult to understand.

Hedgehogs, after all, cause no problems for farmers or homeowners, and they're almost universally loved by people across the country. They can live in towns and cities, as well as villages and the broader countryside.

PTES has been working to protect hedgehogs in collaboration with **The British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS)** since 2011, and together we've made some important discoveries and used them to benefit hedgehogs.

For example, the **Hedgehog Street** campaign has proved highly successful in encouraging householders to work together to give hedgehogs a greater space in which to roam after research showed that one individual can roam up to 2km each night to satisfy their requirements for food, refuge and shelter and to meet a potential mate.

Our champions have made terrific progress in not only allowing hedgehogs greater access by the simple act of creating gaps in garden fences, but have also made their gardens more hedgehog friendly.

But more work, particularly in the countryside where the declines have been very marked, is needed, and that's why we

and the BHPS have developed an overarching conservation strategy for hedgehogs over the next few decades.

One of the key components of the strategy will be to resolve what is really driving populations down in agricultural areas. We believe that it is linked to declines in both abundance and diversity of invertebrates such as earthworms and beetles which form such an important part of their diet.

And we think this is linked to the way in which farmscapes have become more uniform over a long period of time, leading to a loss of the mix of habitats – grasslands, scrub and hedgerows – which are all vital to hedgehogs' survival.

So, we'll not only be working with landowners to see if the new farm subsidy scheme (called Environmental Land Management scheme or ELMs) that is replacing the system that operated when we were still in the EU is having any positive impacts, but also looking at whether the new spatial wildlife plans that local authorities are creating could also benefit hedgehogs.

We will also see whether places where nature restoration has occurred, such as the well-known rewilding site in West Sussex called Knepp, are helping hedgehog numbers to recover.

HEDGEHOG STREET
CITY OF WILDLIFE

PTES Chief Executive Officer **Nida Al-Fulaij** says it's likely that bringing back a mix of habitats that give hedgehogs a bit of everything they need is the right approach. 'I would love to travel back 15-20,000 years in time and see where hedgehog density was greatest, but I'm sure it would have been a mosaic habitat,' Nida says.

Patrick Barker is a farmer in Suffolk who tries to implement wildlife-friendly strategies, but while some groups such as farmland birds and insects have shown signs of recovery on his land, hedgehogs are 'just about hanging on' rather than thriving. 'I've come to the conclusion that the best management for hedgehogs is a whole-farm approach,' he says. 'Rather than trying to be specific, you need a landscape that can benefit everything.'

PTES will keep supporters up to date on what we discover on this next stage of the journey to bring back our hedgehogs. ●

Fact File

NAME

Eurasian hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*

IUCN RED LIST STATUS

Near Threatened

POPULATION

Most recent estimate for England, Scotland and Wales was 879,000, but there is a lot of uncertainty around this figure.

APPEARANCE

Unmistakable – the only mammal with spines native to Britain.

SIZE

Up to 30cm long, up to 2kg in weight.

HABITAT

Grasslands, scrub, hedgerows and woodland edges, plus parks and gardens.

DIET

Beetles, earthworms, slugs and other invertebrates. Will occasionally take eggs and chicks of ground-nesting birds.

Reds returns hit lucky 13

Native red squirrels are going back to the Glenelg Peninsula on Scotland's west coast, with one final location still to be decided.

The last decade has seen a remarkable repopulating of the Scottish Highlands with one of their most iconic mammals – the red squirrel.

Thanks to our partner **Trees for Life**, reds have been reintroduced into 12 locations across the Highlands. They range from Golspie and Spinningdale on the east coast, north of Inverness, to multiple places on the west coast from Iwerewe just south of Ullapool as far south as Lochaline opposite the Isle of Mull.

Now Trees for Life is working on a 13th squirrel reintroduction on the Glenelg Peninsula opposite the Isle of Skye. As this issue of *Wildlife World* was being prepared, project manager Sarah Woodfin was about to start trapping squirrels from established populations and then translocate them to their new home.

Seven squirrels have been moved to the peninsula so far and released into the Letterfearn Estate and some private gardens. Sarah says at least 20 individuals (so, another 13) are needed to give the project a good chance of success.

All the first 12 reintroductions have proved successful to date, with squirrels colonising their new homes, breeding and even dispersing widely – up to 17km away at one location.

Once all the translocations are complete, camera traps and a small army of committed local volunteers will monitor how the squirrels are faring. 'We won't know if they're breeding or not until we get evidence on the cameras or we start seeing kits,' says Sarah.

Trees for Life is hoping to carry out a 14th and final squirrel reintroduction, but it has yet to determine where that will be. ●



A red squirrel being transferred into a nest box, ready for transportation to a release site.



All 12 reintroductions have been successful to date.



Holy Wood, it's Bat Cam!

Our partner has come up with a new way of monitoring bats roosting in trees that could make it much easier and cheaper to carry out in the future.

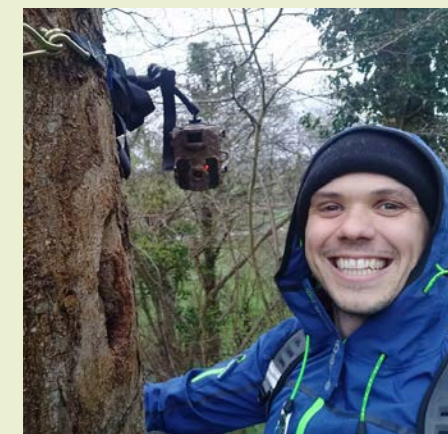
Remote cameras, or trailcams, are effective tools for monitoring bat roosts in trees – that's the conclusion of our partner, bat researcher and arboriculturist **Jim Mullholland**.

His work, which PTES helped to fund over the past five years, has also demonstrated that creating new roosts in trees provides new spaces for bats that they want to use.

Until now, finding which trees bats are using has usually involved climbing up and inspecting the hole or crevice, but this is laborious, potentially disturbing to the bats and not necessarily very accurate. It's known that bats change their roost sites every few days, so there's constant fluctuation of both species and numbers.

Jim has shown that off-the-shelf and relatively cheap trailcams can not only catch bats entering the roost sites but

usually allow an experienced researcher to identify the species. The project was particularly looking to see whether two bats that are wholly reliant on trees for roost sites – Bechstein's and barbastelles – can be monitored in this way.



'The idea is that this is equipment anyone can access,' Jim says. 'The whole set-up for one camera was £150, whereas custom-made ones cost around £800.' The batteries in the cheaper ones last a lot longer, too, which means less time is wasted constantly having to return to the site.

But roosting spaces for bats in trees are increasingly at a premium, so Jim also wanted to see if it was possible to create them. It is, of course, possible to put up bat boxes, but cutting them into trees is potentially a more natural option.

Using chain saws and large drills, Jim has been making two kinds of 'natural' roosts in living trees – the first are like woodpecker holes for bats known as 'void dwellers' and which attract Bechstein's, as well as other species. The second are long, narrow crevices which are more suitable for barbastelles. ●



Thanks to you

Thank you to all our fundraisers who have been raising funds for PTES. This is a great way to help endangered species and spread the work about what PTES does, so thank you all of you!

Dormouse delegation

Nida Al-Fulaij, our CEO, met up with two of our fellow dormouse enthusiasts in Germany last year.

We have wonderful supporters all around the world, including friends in Germany. Detlev and Ninette Seibert, long-term friends of PTES, gave another generous donation last year to support our hazel dormouse work. Nida was fortunate to spend time with them at the International Dormouse Conference in Germany last September, where almost 100 delegates came together to give updates on recent research and conservation projects. They share our passion for dormice and we're so grateful for their continued support of our critical work. ●

Find out more
ptes.org/dormice



Fern's summer sale

Our young supporter realised the value in her old toys and sold them for the benefit of nature.

Fern, aged seven, wanted to raise money for endangered animals by selling some of her old toys. She set up a stall outside her house over the summer holidays, and also ran a stall one day after school. She raised an amazing £55 for endangered species. Thank you, Fern! ●



Help for hedgehogs

Our new conservation strategy for hedgehogs got a real boost thanks to your invaluable donations.

Thanks to everyone who donated to our hedgehog appeal at the end of 2024. Together you helped raise more than £42,000 for hedgehog conservation. A big thanks to Henocq Law Trust and the Big Give, who doubled donations of those who gave during the Big Give week. All the support will help us implement Britain's first National Hedgehog Conservation Strategy. We're encouraging more people to make their gardens accessible and friendly to hedgehogs. And working with landowners, farmers and developers to make green spaces and farmland more wildlife-friendly, repair and restore hedgerows. Our national hedgehog survey, monitoring hedgehogs in different habitats, underpins all this work. ●

Find out more
ptes.org/hedgehogs

Sculpture funder

Our artistic supporter has created this fabulous likeness of a dormouse and helped us raise money for PTES in the process.

Tracey Ward made a lovely dormouse sculpture called 'Nestled' and donated 20 per cent of the sale proceeds to PTES, raising £140. This will really help our dormouse work, and we hear another dormouse sculpture is on the way! You can follow her work at [traceywardsculptor](https://www.traceywardsculptor.com) on Instagram and Facebook. ●



And thank you to all our supporters who have donated to our fundraising appeals. Your continued and generous support makes it possible for us to carry out conservation and fund vital research and campaigns.

Guiding light

Elizabeth earned her girlguiding badge and raised funds for PTES by doing a sponsored walk.

Elizabeth is another young supporter who has been raising funds, this time with a challenge to walk 50 miles in one month. Elizabeth is really happy that she can help the charity by fundraising and letting her friends and family know about the work PTES does. Elizabeth loves wild animals and would like to be a marine biologist when she's older. She decided to support PTES to earn a Girl Guiding badge, but wanted to do something more than just ask people for

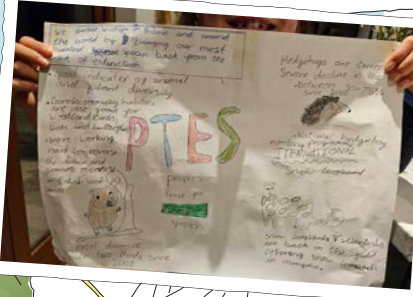


money, so decided that a walking challenge would be a fun way to be active and outdoors while also raising awareness and sponsorship for the charity. Elizabeth raised a great £165! ●

Hedgehog pal

Liliana wanted to help wildlife and raised money at her school fair.

Another young supporter, Liliana, raised a fantastic £28.30 at her school fair. We absolutely love Liliana's poster! Liliana says 'I chose to support you because I like animals and it's good to save them from extinction so that there are more species. Thank you for helping the animals with your charity. My favourite animal you support is the hedgehog. At my school fair I did a stall and I raised £28.30 for the charity. I made a poster, see attached. I hope you like it.' ●



Protection for pangolins

We support pangolin conservation programmes in both Ghana and Vietnam, and your donations have helped to further our goals.

We were delighted with the support PTES donors gave to our two new pangolin projects, one in Vietnam and the other in Ghana. In October, we asked for help with our project in Vietnam, where our partners at Save Vietnam's Wildlife are rehabilitating pangolins rescued from wildlife trafficking. With funding from PTES, six members of the team visited Taipei Zoo to study their Chinese pangolin breeding programme and learn about changes they've made in pangolin husbandry to improve their care and the survival chances of newborns. In January, we told supporters about the next steps for the work in Vietnam, and introduced our new Ghana project, where Veronica Dandzo-Adzagudu from the Threatened Species Conservation Alliance is leading a team to learn more about pangolin numbers in the wild, and where they live, to make it easier to protect them from poachers. So far, PTES supporters have raised over £33,000. Thank you all so much for helping to protect pangolins. ●



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