



Exmoor Conservation Grant Scheme

To discuss your ideas and find out more about applying for any of the grants mentioned in this leaflet please contact:

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Looking after Exmoor's environment for all to enjoy, in partnership with a thriving community

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Front cover photographs:

Main photograph - Hazel coppice, (A. Cox, ENPA);
Bracken raking, (A. Cox, ENPA);
Knotweed spraying (H. Lowther, ENPA)
Barn Owl (David Ramsden, Barn Owl Trust)



Are you wanting to encourage barn owls by putting up a nest box in your barn? Are you needing to carry out vital work on a veteran tree? Would you like to restore your old flower-rich meadow by carrying out some scrub clearance? If so, then the Conservation Grant Scheme may be able to help you.

THE EXMOOR BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Biodiversity simply means the variety of life. In 1992, the UK was among 150 countries to sign up to a Biodiversity Convention at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. In response to this the UK Government produced a UK Biodiversity Action Plan which outlined the actions which needed to happen in order to look after threatened species and habitats.

Exmoor's own Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was produced in 2001 covering 9 habitats and 8 species. A full version can be viewed on our website. One of the most important partners in many of the actions listed in the plan is farmers and landowners who support much of this wealth of wildlife on their land. The Conservation Grant Scheme can help you in conserving and enhancing the species and habitats which makes Exmoor exceptional for wildlife.



Hornet Robber Fly (Photograph - D. Boyce)

Examples of the species which are included in the Exmoor BAP include mammals such as dormouse, otter and bats, birds such as barn owl, skylark and nightjar and butterflies such as high brown and heath fritillary butterfly. Other rarities include the hornet robber fly, whitebeams, ballerina wax cap fungus and lungwort lichens.

Habitats include upland and lowland heathland, upland oak woodland, old meadows, parkland and veteran trees, marshy grasslands and bogs, rivers and streams, rocky outcrops and cliffs, hedgebanks and verges and bracken and scrub.

This list is not exhaustive and applications can include other appropriate species and habitats where there is a clear biodiversity benefit.

JAPANESE AND HIMALAYAN KNOTWEED CONTROL

Japanese and Himalayan knotweed are non-native plants whose vigorous growth excludes almost all of our native species, which cannot compete with the tall summer growth or the thick mulch of decaying canes and leaves in winter. Many species which are dependent on our native plants are also lost. Both types of knotweed are spread by means of stem, crown and rhizome sections and sections of rhizome smaller than a one pence piece can grow into a new plant! It is now a problem in many parts of Exmoor and its control depends on careful use of herbicides.

The National Park Authority is currently able to offer 100% grant for the treatment of Japanese and Himalayan knotweed and is helping to co-ordinate the treatment of all sites across the National Park. Contact us if you have either Japanese or Himalayan knotweed or you have seen it growing within the National Park.



Spraying Himalayan knotweed (Photograph - H. Lowther, ENPA)



Himalayan knotweed (Photograph - A. Cox, ENPA)



Japanese knotweed (Photograph - S. Hoddinott, ENPA)

OTHER GRANTS

Somerset Landscape Scheme

This grant scheme is run by Somerset County Council, and is aimed at conserving, restoring and creating wildlife habitats and traditional landscape features. Exmoor National Park Authority works in partnership with Somerset County Council to operate this scheme within the National Park. Grants are available for hedgelaying, hedge planting, hedgerow trees, orchard restoration, ponds, small scale tree planting schemes and woodland management. Funding of up to 50% of project costs is available to a maximum of £500 per project.

Grants available in the Devon part of the National Park

The National Park Authority now has small grants available for the same options as the Somerset Landscape Scheme (see above). A maximum of £500 per project applies with funding of up to 50%.



Newly laid hedge and fencing
(*Photograph - S. Hoddinott, ENPA*)



A typical traditional Exmoor orchard
(*Photograph - S. Bryan, ENPA*)

EXAMPLES OF WORK TO CONSERVE TARGET SPECIES AND HABITATS:



Control of scrub, where gorse, birch or bracken is encroaching onto unimproved grassland or heathland



Control of Rhododendron in woodland and heathland sites



Cutting glades and rides through bracken for butterflies



Removal of conifers from ancient woodland and former heathland sites



Use of environmentally friendly wormers and other veterinary products



Ditch-blocking to enhance and create blanket and valley bogs



Establishment and management of hazel coppice for dormice



Nest box schemes to encourage species such as dormice, bats and barn owls



Low intensity management of hedges for dormice, whitebeam and other wildlife



Fencing areas of unimproved grassland, heathland or wetland in order to enable or reinstate grazing, and fencing of woodland to exclude stock



Raking bracken for fritillary butterflies
(*Photograph - A. Cox, ENPA*)



Using wildlife friendly wormers can be beneficial to bats and other wildlife
(*Photograph - S. Hoddinott, ENPA*)



Unimproved grassland supporting a wide array of wildflowers
(*Photograph - ENPA*)



Veteran oak tree, Bury
(*Photograph - A. Cox, ENPA*)



Management of woodland to encourage regeneration, promote lungwort lichens and whitebeam and create deadwood habitats.



Creation of new pollards and management of existing veteran trees



Planting wet woodland (where appropriate) in valley bottom habitats



Clearing Rhododendron in woodland
(*Photograph - English Nature*)

Successful applications to date have included the provision of dormouse nest boxes in broadleaved woodland, control of bracken on slopes which support the rare high brown fritillary butterfly and help towards the purchase of specialised equipment to record moths on Exmoor. Projects will normally be funded by 50 to 80% up to a maximum of £2000.



Erecting Barn Owl box (*Photograph - David Ramsden, Barn Owl Trust*)



(*Photograph - David Ramsden, Barn Owl Trust*)

Hazel coppice supporting dormice (*Photograph - A. Cox, ENPA*)

