

## What do Ecology Groups offer?

- Free training, including free booking onto Wildlife Training Workshops
- The opportunity to develop and implement, a wide range of monitoring projects on your nearest nature reserve, including:

**Breeding birds**

**Ants**

**Longhorn and soldier beetles**

**Water beetles**

**Limestone grassland flora**

**Woodland ride nectar sources**

**Woodland ground flora**

**Woodland structure**

- Free use of monitoring equipment, keys and identification guides
- A chance to contribute to the protection and enhancement of local wildlife and their habitats

**All you need to offer is some of your free time and have a willingness to learn!**

Species of wild flower, such as Devil's-bit Scabious, will be part of woodland ride monitoring. Rides and glades are important grassland habitats. They are protected and sheltered by the surrounding woodland, forming an invaluable resource for invertebrates, birds and plants alike.



Henry Stanier



Henry Stanier

Water beetles are a current topic for Monitoring Team Training. This focuses on the development of sampling and identification skills of required by Ecology Group members, in order to monitor the effectiveness of managing the scrapes, pools and ditches in the Nene Valley.

## Where to start?

To join the Wildlife Trust Ecology Groups contact:

**Henry Stanier, Ecology Groups Officer**  
Email [henry.stanier@wildlifebcnp.org](mailto:henry.stanier@wildlifebcnp.org)  
Telephone 01604 405285

For more information about Wildlife Trust Ecology Groups, try our website at:

**[www.wildlifebcnp.org](http://www.wildlifebcnp.org)**



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For more information about how to join the Wildlife Trust, try our website or telephone:  
**01954 713543**

or write to:

**The Wildlife Trust,  
The Manor House, Broad Street,  
Great Cambourne,  
CAMBRIDGE CB3 6DH**

or email us at:  
[cambridgeshire@wildlifebcnp.org](mailto:cambridgeshire@wildlifebcnp.org)



Bedfordshire  
Cambridgeshire  
Northamptonshire  
Peterborough

# Wildlife Trust Ecology Groups



Keith Balmer

How healthy are our woodland nature reserves? Longhorn beetles are just one group of invertebrates to be monitored by the Ecology Groups in 2006.

## Wildlife Trust Ecology Groups

are teams of volunteers who want to actively support and learn about their local wildlife and their habitats

### The challenge

is to improve habitat management, through monitoring, combining the skills of natural history with existing ecological knowledge and a scientific approach

### The result

is local people and wildlife, working together forever, to support the enhancement of our natural environment

**Protecting wildlife  
close to home**

Spring birdsong can be used to tell us what bird species are using the key *features* of our nature reserves as nesting sites. These *features* might include ancient woodland, scrub and reedbed. The monitoring of breeding birds, such as the warblers (Sedge Warbler pictured below), plays an important role in testing the effectiveness of our how we manage these *features*.



Richard Bedford

## Joining the team

As an Ecology Group member, you will be an integral part of the Wildlife Trust, a local charity that exists to protect and improve wildlife habitats and biodiversity.

Each group will have voluntary 'Coordinators', who will liaise with the Ecology Groups Officer and help involve you in the annual programme of monitoring.

Both beginners and experienced naturalists are welcome to join Wildlife Trust Ecology Groups. If you do not yet possess any field skills or experience, then all you need to bring is your enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.

Our annual programme Wildlife Training Workshops is just part of the support you will receive, for your training and development. As your skills develop, you will then be given the opportunity to apply and improve on what you have learned.

## Expanding your wild horizons

Join one of the following Ecology Groups and take part in the spring season of fieldwork in 2006:

- **Limestone**  
(limestone grasslands and associated habitats of Northamptonshire and Peterborough)
- **Bedfordshire and Luton Chalk**  
(chalk grasslands on the North Chilterns in Bedfordshire)
- **Nene Valley**  
(Northamptonshire reservoirs, and the gravel pits and wet meadows in the River Nene flood plain)
- **Greensand**  
(heathlands, woodlands and mires on and alongside the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge)
- **Cambridgeshire Boulder Clay Woodlands**  
(boulder clay woodlands of southern Cambridgeshire)



Mark Rickerts

The Limestone Ecology Group and Wildlife Trust staff, trialling woodland ground flora monitoring in spring.



Henry Stanier

The visually stunning, yet sensitive flora of our woodland rides is a key *feature* of our woodland nature reserves. The Cambridgeshire Boulder Clay Woodlands will be exploring how we monitor both this feature and the factors affecting it.

## Monitoring of nature reserves

Monitoring our reserves is an essential tool for improving the effectiveness of the habitat management on your local nature reserves.

The Wildlife Trust now seeks to identify the key *features* of each reserve, in other words, why we value each reserve (e.g. ancient woodlands). These features highlight why the area in which you live is special for wildlife.

For each key feature, a small number of essential *attributes*, which indicate the 'health' of the feature, are also selected (e.g. the dominant wild flowers on a woodland ride).

Successful management means that each attribute of each key feature is kept close to its desirable value. If not, management needs to change.

For each attribute, one or more monitoring projects will be designed (e.g. botanical point intercepts). Many will need only 1-2 days of your time each year, making monitoring enjoyable and sustainable in the long term.