

The Art of Nature Conservation

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Contents	Page
List of Figures	vii
List of Tables	xvii
List of Appendices	xix
Glossary	xx
Abstract	xxii
Acknowledgements	xxiii
 Chapter 1 Introduction	 1
 Chapter 2 Visual Culture of Nature Conservation	 5
2.1 Visual Culture of Nature Art	5
2.1.1 How This Research Builds on Existing Knowledge	11
2.2 Visual Culture of Nature Conservation – Producers (Artists)	12
2.2.1 Origins and Development of 19 th and 20 th Century Nature Art	12
2.2.2 Illustration	17
2.2.3 The Role of the Nature Artist	19
2.2.4 How This Research Builds on Existing Knowledge	19
2.3 Visual Culture of Nature Conservation – Users (Conservationists and Others)	20
2.3.1 Origins and Development of UK Conservation	20
2.3.2 Tourism and Recreation	21
2.3.3 ‘ <i>Recording Britain</i> ’ Project	27
2.3.4 Collins’ ‘ <i>New Naturalists</i> ’	28
2.3.5 Conservation Logos	30
2.3.6 How This Research Builds on Existing Knowledge	32
2.4 Statutory Nature Conservation	33
2.4.1 How This Research Builds on Existing Knowledge	39
2.5 Summary	39

Chapter 3	Methodology	41
3.1	Material Produced by the UK Statutory Nature Conservation Agencies	41
3.2	Interviews of Nature Conservation Agencies' Former and Current Staff	45
3.3	Two Surveys of Public Opinion	53
3.3.1	Introduction	53
3.3.2	Survey of Visitors to the Society of Wildlife Artists (SWLA) Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London	58
3.3.3	Web-based Survey of British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) Members (June/July 2015)	64
3.4	Survey of SWLA Artists	67
3.5	Reflections on Research Methods	69
3.6	Researcher Positionality	71
Chapter 4	Imagery Used by Two Nature Conservation Agencies: The Nature Conservancy and the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) (1949-1991)	73
4.1	Introduction	73
4.2	Logos of the Statutory Nature Conservation Agencies	73
4.3	The Nature Conservancy (1949-1973)	79
4.3.1	<i>'The Nature Conservancy: the first ten years'</i> (1959)	80
4.3.2	Artists Commissioned by the Nature Conservancy	88
4.3.3	<i>The Nature Conservancy: Handbook 1968 and Progress 1964-1968</i>	90
4.3.4	<i>'National Collection of Nature Photographs'</i>	97
4.3.5	National Nature Reserves (NNR) and <i>'Nature Trails'</i> (1968)	100
4.3.6	Working with Others	110
4.3.7	Nature Films	117
4.3.8	The Benson Report on the National Trust	118
4.3.9	<i>'twenty-one years of CONSERVATION'</i> (1970)	119
4.3.10	New Leaflets	120
4.3.11	Tone of Material	124

4.4	The Nature Conservancy Council (1973-1991)	125
4.4.1	More emphasis on advisory functions	126
4.4.2	Material for Children and Schools	133
4.4.3	Interpretation on NNRs	140
4.4.4	The ' <i>Countryside & Wildlife Series</i> '	146
4.4.5	Negative imagery	151
4.4.6	Scientific Reports	155
4.4.7	Impact of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act	157
4.4.8	The Aesthetic, Inspirational Approach	165
4.5	Summary of Imagery used by the Nature Conservancy and NCC	172
 Chapter 5 Imagery used by the nature conservation agencies: English Nature (EN) and Natural England (NE) (1991-2012)		175
5.1	English Nature (1991-2006)	175
5.1.1	Trying To Be Different	175
5.1.2	Campaigns and Merchandise	180
5.1.3	Corporate Standards	182
5.1.4	The Art of Conservation	188
5.1.5	Interpretation of NNRs	195
5.2	Natural England (2006-to date)	202
5.2.1	Re-Branding and Outreach	203
5.2.2	Marketing Moratorium	211
5.2.3	Artists-in-Residence	212
5.3	Case Study: The Nature Art of Barnack Hills and Holes NNR	214
5.4	Summary of Imagery used by EN and NE	227
 Chapter 6 Wildlife Artists and Illustrators		230
6.1	Artists for Nature Foundation and the Society of Wildlife Artists	230

6.2	SWLA Survey	239
6.2.1	Use of Art to Convey Nature Conservation Messages	240
6.2.2	Emotional Responses to Wildlife Art	248
6.2.3	Use of Artists' Work by Nature Conservation Organisations	251
6.2.4	Opportunities for Nature Conservation Organisations to Make Greater Use of Art to Promote Their Messages	252
6.2.5	Innovative Ways Art Could be Used to Raise Awareness of Wildlife and Wild Places and Their Conservation	255
6.3	Assessment of Wildlife Artists by Ian Langford, Langford Press (1956-2017)	260
6.4	Observations by Charron Pugsley-Hill, Artist and Nature Conservationist	266
6.5	The BTO ' <i>Flight Lines</i> ' Project: an Example of Artists and Nature Conservationists Working Together	271
6.6	Summary	276
Chapter 7 – Surveys of Public Views of Wildlife Art		279
7.1	SWLA Mall Galleries Visitor Survey	279
7.1.1	Favourite Nature Artists	280
7.1.2	Favourite Wildlife or Nature Image	287
7.1.3	Preferred Style of Nature Art	288
7.1.4	Nature Reserve Information	290
7.1.5	Nature Logos	293
7.1.6	Conveying Information	293
7.1.7	Childhood Nature Imagery	298
7.1.8	Conservation Motivation	299
7.1.9	Better Use of Wildlife Art to Promote Nature Conservation	301
7.1.10	Additional Comments	303
7.1.11	Main Findings from the Mall Galleries' Visitor Survey	303

7.2	BTO Members' Survey	305
7.2.1	BTO Respondents' Gender and Age Data	306
7.2.2	Nature Artists	307
7.2.3	Features and Characteristics of Wildlife Art	320
7.2.4	Art Media and Subject Matter	326
7.2.5	Nature Reserve Signs	331
7.2.6	Conveying Information	336
7.2.7	Childhood Nature Imagery	345
7.2.8	Motivation for Conservation	347
7.2.9	Better Promotion of Nature Conservation	348
7.2.10	Main Findings from the BTO Members' Survey	351
7.3	Summary Points of the Surveys	354
Chapter 8	Conclusions	356
8.1	Providing Information	360
8.2	Inspiring an Emotional Response	366
8.3	Widening the Appeal	372
8.4	Further Research	375
Appendix 1	Questions for interview with statutory agency staff	377
Appendix 2	Visitors' Questionnaire, Mall Galleries	380
Appendix 3	BTO Members' Survey	386
Appendix 4	Questions for Nature Artists	410
	References	411

List of Figures

Chapter 2 Literature Review		Page
Fig.2.1	Diagram indicating Nature Conservation's visual culture participants and influence	9
Fig.2.2	Two covers of Collins New Naturalist volumes	30
Fig.2.3	Marine Conservation Society Logos	31
Fig.2.4	Conservation International logos	32
 Chapter 3 Methodology		
Fig.3.1	Phillip Oswald, Cambridge Botanic Gardens 2014	51
Fig.3.2	Anthony (Tony) Herbert, at home, Shrewsbury, 2014	51
Fig.3.3	Jonathan Wray, site visit to Woodwalton Fen NNR, May 2013	51
Fig.3.4	Alan Bowley, Site Manager, Woodwalton Fen NNR, September 2016	51
Fig.3.5	Charron Pugsley-Hill © artist and conservationist	52
Fig.3.6	Mall Galleries entrance, 30 th October 2014	58
Fig.3.7	Harriet Mead, President of the SWLA, opening address, Preview evening (29 th October 2014)	59
Fig.3.8	Mall Galleries' main exhibition room and café area (30 th October 2014)	60
Fig.3.9	Two visitors to the SWLA exhibition, Mall Galleries, completing the questionnaire on train journey home (5 th November 2014)	61
 Chapter 4 Imagery used by Nature Conservancy and NCC		
Fig.4.1	Metal heading of Nature Conservancy reserve signs	74
Fig.4.2	Nature reserve sign in situ at un-named reserve (Nature Conservancy 1959:32)	74
Fig.4.3	Logo used by Nature Conservancy on majority of publications 1965 to 1973 (front cover ' <i>Nature Trails</i> ' 1968)	74

Fig.4.4	Roundel style used for 1963 National Nature Week publications and promotion	75
Fig.4.5	1934 RSPB symbol (RSPB 2012)	75
Fig.4.6	' <i>The Countryside in 1970</i> ' campaign logo (Nicholson 1965)	76
Fig.4.7	' <i>European Conservation Year 1970</i> ' logo (cover, Duffey 1969)	77
Fig.4.8	Department of the Environment 'Plant a Tree in 73' campaign leaflet depicting adapted ECY1970 logo	77
Fig.4.9	NCC publication's front covers demonstrating consistent type face, position and appearance of NCC logo (1979, 1981, 1982, 1986 and 1988)	77
Fig.4.10	English Nature and Natural England logos	78
Fig.4.11	NCC, EN and NE coffee mugs	79
Fig.4.12	Nature Conservancy meeting, Head Office, 19 Belgrave Square., London, 1959 (Nature Conservancy 1959:9)	82
Fig.4.13	L J Watson's painting: ' <i>The late Sir Arthur Tansley</i> ', first Chairman of the Conservancy" (Nature Conservancy 1959:8, and in Stamp 1969 Plate 1)	83
Fig.4.14	Front cover ' <i>The First Ten Years</i> ' (The Nature Conservancy 1959)	84
Fig.4.15	' <i>A pair of golden Eagles at the nest</i> ' from the <i>National Collection of Nature Photographs</i> ' (Nature Conservancy 1959:15)	85
Fig.4.16	Full page photograph depicting the ' <i>transition from Oakwood to Saltmarsh, Roudsea Wood Nature Reserve</i> ' (Nature Conservancy 1959:27)	86
Fig.4.17	Yearly staffing levels in Nature Conservancy at 31 st March from 1950 to 1959 (Nature Conservancy 1959:12)	87
Fig.4.18	' <i>The Naturalists</i> ' by L J Watson (1949) (EN postcard)	89

Fig.4.19	Scouts at Wye & Crundale Downs NNR and school children at Yarner Wood NNR (Nature Conservancy <i>Progress</i> 1968:25&26)	92
Fig.4.20	Three line-drawn maps (1946, 1963 and 1965) with summary graph depicting the loss of hedgerows from pre-1400 to 1968 (Nature Conservancy <i>Progress</i> 1968:49)	93
Fig.4.21	18 months' litter collections at Studland Heath NNR (Nature Conservancy <i>Progress</i> 1968:13)	94
Fig.4.22	Visitor impact on individual numbers of seven plant species in zones between dunes and the sea at Studland Bay (Nature Conservancy <i>Progress</i> 1968:14)	95
Fig.4.23	<i>'Members of staff manning the Conservancy's stand at the Wild Life Exhibition at Alexandra Palace, London, during National Nature Week, 1966'</i> (Nature Conservancy <i>Progress</i> 1968:70)	96
Fig.4.24	<i>'The brothers Kearton, Cherry (above) and Richard (below), photographing bird's nest in pioneer days of 1900'</i> (Nature Conservancy 1959:22)	98
Fig.4.25	Michael Copus' illustrations of nature trail signage and furniture (Nature Conservancy <i>Nature Trails</i> 1968:3, 4, 10 &14)	105
Fig.4.26	<i>'Children from a Burton-on-Trent school on the nature trail in the grounds of Drakelow Power Station'</i> (Nature Conservancy <i>Progress</i> 1968:31)	107
Fig.4.27	<i>'Mr Langley Roberts, Chief Warden of Caelaverock N.N.R., with his bird identification board'</i> (Nature Conservancy <i>Progress</i> 1968:17)	108
Fig.4.28	<i>'Display case illustrating the ecology of the wood ant, on the nature trail at Yarner Wood N.N.R., Dartmoor'</i> (Nature Conservancy <i>Progress</i> 1968:27)	108
Fig.4.29	Joyce Bee's line-drawing of Ptarmigan, <i>Cairngorms</i> NNR leaflet (Nature Conservancy 1973:7)	109

Fig.4.30	Syd Lewis' line-drawing of Golden Eagle, <i>Cairngorms</i> <i>NNR</i> leaflet (Nature Conservancy 1973:12)	110
Fig.4.31	Postage stamps promoting the 1963 National Nature Week	111
Fig.4.32	Artist's impression of the centre aisle of the Wild Life Exhibition, Alexandra Palace, London, Second National Nature Week, April 1965 (Council of Nature papers)	113
Fig.4.33	Uncredited line drawing wrapping around the front and back of the ' <i>Better Britain</i> ' competition leaflet (2 nd leaflet 1972)	115
Fig.4.34	Front of Nature Conservancy habitat leaflet (1973)	121
Fig.4.35	Line drawings of Alder and Sallow by Joyce Bee and Syd Lewis (Nature Conservancy ' <i>ponds & ditches</i> ' 1973:6)	122
Fig.4.36	Line drawing of "View of pond showing desirable features" by Joyce Bee and Syd Lewis (Nature Conservancy ' <i>ponds & ditches</i> ' 1973:5)	122
Fig.4.37	Illustrations by Syd Lewis (Dog violet) and Joyce Bee (Long-tailed Field Mouse) (Nature Conservancy ' <i>wildlife on farmland</i> ' 1973)	123
Fig.4.38	Illustrations by Syd Lewis (cover) and uncredited wildlife conservation sites (Nature Conservancy ' <i>wildlife on farmland</i> ' 1973)	124
Fig.4.39	Interior of NCC Mobile Exhibition Unit, showing extensive use of photographs (NCC 1975 <i>First</i> <i>Report</i> , plate 28)	128
Fig.4.40	NCC Mobile Exhibition Unit in 1975 (Sheail 1998:225)	128
Fig.4.41	Covers of three leaflets originally produced by the Nature Conservancy and revised by NCC in 1976. Artists were Syd Lewis, Joyce Bee, Denys Ovenden and Joyce Tuhill	130

Fig.4.42	NCC <i>Wetland Wildlife</i> leaflet (1975/6: cover & pp1,4)	131
Fig.4.43	Covers of three NCC ' <i>Nature Conservation Guide</i> ' Series (1979) and Robert Gillmor's line drawing of Heron, <i>Farm Ponds & Ditches</i>	132
Fig.4.44	Model of six wetlands designed for the <i>European Wetlands Campaign</i> (NCC 1976 ' <i>second report</i> ' plate 26)	134
Fig.4.45	Cardboard pond kit for children to construct and colour (NCC 1976 ' <i>second report</i> ' plate 27)	135
Fig.4.46	Cardboard woodland kit for children to build and colour (NCC catalogue 1982/83:5)	136
Fig.4.47	Cardboard display depicting blanket bog wildlife (NCC 1978 plate 9)	137
Fig.4.48	' <i>Nature is in danger</i> ' drop-down poster (NCC 1990)	138
Fig.4.49	' <i>Visiting National Nature Reserves</i> ' leaflet (NCC 1976)	141
Fig.4.50	First pages of ' <i>Holkham NNR</i> ' guide (NCC 1987); and ' <i>Oxwich NNR</i> ' guide (NCC 1988)	144
Fig.4.51	Description of saltmarsh, ' <i>Holkham NNR</i> ' guide (NCC 1987:4); and description of saltmarsh, ' <i>Oxwich NNR</i> ' guide (NCC 1988:12)	145
Fig.4.52	Five of six leaflets from the NCC ' <i>Countryside & Wildlife Series</i> ' (1977-79)	148
Fig.4.53	Cover and inside illustration, ' <i>Sand Dunes</i> ' leaflet, NCC ' <i>Countryside & Wildlife Series</i> ' (1977-79)	149
Fig.4.54	Illustrations from ' <i>Farming & Wildlife in the Borders</i> ' (NCC 1979:2-3)	150
Fig.4.55	Cover and illustrations, ' <i>Oil Pollution and Wildlife</i> ' (NCC 1979)	152
Fig.4.56	Photographs of the stricken Torrey Canyon and an oiled victim (Nature Conservancy 1970:22)	152
Fig.4.57	Diagram in ' <i>Conservation and the Offshore Oil and Gas Industries</i> ' (NCC 1974)	153
Fig.4.58	Covers of NCC science publications from 1979 and 1984	156

Fig.4.59	Range of ' <i>Conservation of...</i> ' and ' <i>Focus on...</i> ' booklets shown in NCC Catalogue 1982:11	158
Fig.4.60	Comparison of the front covers of NCC booklets: ' <i>Blanket Bogs</i> ' (1977) and ' <i>The conservation of peat bogs</i> ' (1982)	159
Fig.4.61	Artwork inside ' <i>Blanket Bogs</i> ' leaflet (NCC 1977)	160
Fig.4.62	Small colour photographs from inside ' <i>The conservation of peat bogs</i> ' (NCC 1982)	161
Fig.4.63	Cover of the NCC booklet ' <i>Wildlife, the law and you</i> ' (1982)	162
Fig.4.64	Humorous cartoons conveying messages about wildlife law to the general public (NCC 1982:6, 9 & 11)	163
Fig.4.65	Examples of humorous cartoons used to illustrate NCC's SSSI leaflet (1983)	164
Fig.4.66	Cover of ' <i>Bats in roofs</i> ' (NCC 1985)	165
Fig.4.67	Terence Lambert's painting commissioned by NCC (sometime 1973-1980) for their Council of Europe Poster	167
Fig.4.68	Poster, designed by Paulco O'Prater for the 1975 ' <i>European Wetlands</i> ' campaign	168
Fig.4.69	' <i>Wildlife in the City</i> ' posters (NCC catalogue 1982:8)	169
Fig.4.70	Three posters from NCC's ' <i>Here today – here forever?</i> ' series (1990)	170
Fig.4.71	Front cover of NCC's last annual report (1991)	171

Chapter 5 Imagery used by EN and NE

Fig.5.1	Covers of EN ' <i>Annual</i> ' and ' <i>Progress Reports</i> '	175
Fig.5.2	Swallowtail butterfly and otter illustrations ' <i>Nature Conservation in Broadland</i> ' (EN 1992:6)	178
Fig.5.3	Cover, ' <i>Sands of Time</i> ' (EN 2000) illustrations by T E J Brooker	179
Fig.5.4	T-shirt for EN's ' <i>Campaign for a Living Coast</i> ' bearing both EN's and the distinctive campaign logo	181
Fig.5.5	T-shirts for staff working on particular events	182

Fig.5.6	A4 format EN publications	183
Fig.5.7	Cartoon of the Earl of Cranbrook, Chair of English Nature, cutting the ' <i>Enact</i> ' tape, first edition of journal (EN 1993:2)	184
Fig.5.8	EN A5 habitat and management 'Initiative' publications	185
Fig.5.9	EN A5 species 'Initiative' publications	186
Fig.5.10	EN A4 'Sites' and 'Corporate' publications	186
Fig.5.11	EN A4 'Science' publications	187
Fig.5.12	EN A4 'Initiative' publications	187
Fig.5.13	EN orange 'initiative' publication: ' <i>Illustrated guide to grassland condition</i> ' (2002) featuring hand-drawn illustrations by Dan Powell	188
Fig.5.14	Front cover ' <i>England- the nature of the land: photographs of National Nature Reserves in England</i> ' (EN 1999)	190
Fig.5.15	Cover ' <i>Land Marks</i> ' (Rollins 2003)	191
Fig.5.16	Covers ' <i>English nature and the art of conservation</i> ' (Lincoln, J. ed 2004)	194
Fig.5.17	Comparing the approaches to visitors from two NNR signs: standard NCC NNR sign and EN information board at Parsonage Down NNR photographed in 2008	199
Fig.5.18	Covers of EN NNR leaflets predating 2002	200
Fig.5.19	Standardised covers EN NNR leaflets produced at or after 2002	201
Fig.5.20	EN NNR leaflet stickered for Natural England (2006/7)	203
Fig.5.21	Covers of two NE documents	205
Fig.5.22	NE 'Welcome' sign Parsonage Down, Wiltshire	206
Fig.5.23	NE 'Information Point' Flintergill Outrake, Yorkshire	207
Fig.5.24	Examples of infographics (Natural England 2014 MENE report)	210
Fig.5.25	Model of future Great Fen, Cambridgeshire, constructed by local youngsters using LEGO® bricks	213

Fig.5.26	EN Barnack Hills & Holes NNR leaflet, cover illustrations and detailed line-drawing of Pasque flowers (pre-2002)	216
Fig.5.27	EN (2004) photographs of Pasque flower and orchids	217
Fig.5.28	EN (2004) photographs of Pyramidal orchids and Cowslips	218
Fig.5.29	NE Barnack NNR leaflet	219
Fig.5.30	NE reserve sign at the entrance to Barnack NNR	220
Fig.5.31	NE reserve sign at entrance to the Stamford Road lay-by, Barnack Hills & Holes NNR	221
Fig.5.32	Pasque Flower at Barnack © Jonathan Tyler (2016) http://www.jonathan-tyler.co.uk/artwork/	223
Fig.5.33	Pasque Flower paintings © Jane Leycester-Paige	224
Fig.5.34	Artwork by the local school on Barnack NNR sign	225
Fig.5.35	'Barnack Hills and Holes' © Charron Pugsley-Hill	226
Fig.5.36	Barnack village sign, and logo of the 'Friends of Barnack Hills and Holes'	227

Chapter 6 Wildlife artists and illustrators

Fig.6.1	" <i>Revealed</i> " © painting by Darren Rees	244
Fig.6.2	" <i>Restoration</i> " © painting by Darren Rees	245
Fig.6.3	" <i>Lost Glory</i> " © painting by Darren Rees	246
Fig.6.4	" <i>In God We Trust</i> " © paintings by Darren Rees	247
Fig.6.5	" <i>Heal the World</i> " © Charron Pugsley-Hill, Author's Photograph	267

Chapter 7 Surveys of public views of wildlife art

Fig.7.1	" <i>Scissor Green Woodpecker</i> " © Harriet Mead	281
Fig.7.2	" <i>Egret and elephants</i> " © David Shepherd	282
Fig 7.3	" <i>Bull o' the Bog</i> " © Robert Gillmor	282
Fig.7.4	" <i>Swifts</i> " © Carry Akroyd	283
Fig.7.5	" <i>Spoonbills and Avocets</i> " © Robert Greenhalf	284
Fig.7.6	" <i>Wanderer and Mollymauks off South Georgia</i> " © Bruce Pearson	284

Fig.7.7	<i>“Autumn Pied Flycatcher”</i> © Darren Woodhead	285
Fig.7.8	Most frequently mentioned characteristics of wildlife art appealing to the Mall Galleries' visitors	287
Fig.7.9	Numbers of respondents expressing preferences for different styles of artwork	289
Fig.7.10	Preferences for artistic work for identification guides	290
Fig.7.11	EN and NE NNR signs Parsonage Down, Wiltshire	291
Fig.7.12	Preferences expressed by Mall Galleries' visitors to two NNR signs: by EN and NE at Parsonage Down NNR	292
Fig.7.13	Imagery Mall Galleries' visitors like to see on nature reserve leaflets and trail guides	292
Fig.7.14	Mall Gallery visitors responses to two images of people learning about the countryside	294
Fig.7.15	Preferences by Mall Gallery visitors for images promoting two conservation projects	296
Fig.7.16	Preference by Mall Gallery visitors to images encouraging engagement with and understanding of sustainability	297
Fig.7.17	Combined gender and age data for respondents to BTO members' survey	307
Fig.7.18	Levels of knowledge expressed by BTO members' of the seven artists featured in the questionnaire	308
Fig.7.19	Levels of knowledge of BTO members aged under-50 of the seven artists featured in the questionnaire	310
Fig.7.20	Levels of knowledge of BTO members aged 50+ of the seven artists featured in the questionnaire	311
Fig.7.21	How much BTO members liked the work of the seven artists featured in the questionnaire	312
Fig.7.22	How much BTO members aged under 50 liked the work of the seven artists featured in questionnaire	315
Fig.7.23	How much BTO members aged 50 and over liked the work of the seven artists featured	316

Fig.7.24	Likes and dislikes of BTO members of nine characteristics of wildlife paintings	322
Fig.7.25	BTO members' preferences to types of wildlife art media	327
Fig.7.26	Preferences by BTO members on information presented on 7 nature reserve information boards	335
Fig.7.27	Preferences by BTO members on the aesthetic qualities of the seven nature reserve boards	336
Fig.7.28	BTO members preferences for positive and hard-hitting imagery	339
Fig.7.29	Responses by BTO female members in two age groups to positive and hard-hitting imagery	341
Fig.7.30	Responses by BTO male members in two age groups to positive and hard-hitting imagery	341
Fig.7.31	BTO Members' preferences of two images used to illustrate two habitat creation projects	343
Fig.7.32	Preferences by Mall Galleries' visitors compared with BTO members about images intending to represent sustainability	345
Fig.7.33	Responses to ideas for better promotion of nature conservation using wildlife art by BTO Members	350

Chapter 8 Conclusions

Fig.8.1	Summary of evidence from this research demonstrating how the three main stakeholders (the statutory nature conservation agencies, nature artists and the public) interact in the use of nature imagery in promoting nature conservation	358
Fig.8.2	Negative imagery in RSPB Life Membership recruitment campaign (June 2019)	371
Fig.8.3	National Trust's advertisement (BBC <i>Radio Times</i> 22-28 June 2019:13) suggests inclusivity	374

List of Tables

Chapter 3 Methodology

Table 3.1	Number of separate items for each agency from all the collections	43
Table 3.2	Details of statutory agency staff interviewed	49
Table 3.3	Summary of Mall Galleries' visitor survey results	63

Chapter 7 Surveys of public views of wildlife art

Table 7.1	Visitors' favourite artists scoring 3 or more responses	280
Table 7.2	Number of responses to question about favourite wildlife image	287
Table 7.3	Visitors' most popular nature images	288
Table 7.4	Visitors' preferred artwork for identification books	290
Table 7.5	Childhood books mentioned by visitors	299
Table 7.6	Visitor comments about art positively motivating support for conservation	300
Table 7.7	Visitor comments about art making no difference to motivating support for conservation	301
Table 7.8	BTO respondents gender data	306
Table 7.9	BTO members' knowledge of seven artists work	308
Table 7.10	Levels of knowledge expressed by BTO members of the seven featured artists separated by age into under 50 year olds and 50 and over, as percentages of the respective groups	309
Table 7.11	Liking or otherwise of artists' work by BTO members	312
Table 7.12	How much BTO members said they liked the work of the seven artists featured in the questionnaire by age group	314
Table 7.13	BTO members' responses about 'knowing the artists' work well' grouped by women and men	316
Table 7.14	Male and female responses to Mead's work	317

Table 7.15	Popularity of other named artists	318
Table 7.16	Popularity of features in wildlife paintings	321
Table 7.17	Other characteristics of wildlife art that people liked	324
Table 7.18	BTO members' preferences for wildlife art media	326
Table 7.19	BTO members' suggestions for other media	329
Table 7.20	Nature Reserve signage: number of random allocations to BTO members	334
Table 7.21	Preferences for the information provided on nature reserve signs	334
Table 7.22	Preferences for the aesthetic quality of the nature reserve signs	334
Table 7.23	BTO members' preferences between two images for 'learning about nature'	337
Table 7.24	BTO members' gender preferences between two images for 'learning about nature'	338
Table 7.25	BTO members' preferences for hard-hitting imagery	339
Table 7.26	BTO members' preferences for positive imagery	340
Table 7.27	BTO members' preferences for imagery about conservation projects	343
Table 7.28	BTO members' preferences for sustainability images	344
Table 7.29	Influence of childhood books/imagery on BTO members' interest in nature	345
Table 7.30	BTO members' preferences for better promotion of nature conservation	349

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Statutory agency staff interview questions

Appendix 2 Mall Galleries' visitor questionnaire

Appendix 3 BTO members' questionnaire

Appendix 4 Questions for SWLA artists

Glossary

ANF	Artists for Nature Foundation
ARO	Assistant Regional Officer
BRC	Biological Records Centre
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEGB	Central Electricity Generating Board
CPRE	Council for the Preservation of Rural England
CST	Chief Scientist's Team
ECY	European Conservation Year
EN	English Nature
ENRR	English Nature Research Report
FRCA	Farming and Rural Conservation Agency
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
ITE	Institute of Terrestrial Ecology
NAFSO	National association of Field Studies Officers
NC	Nature Conservancy
NCC	Nature Conservancy Council
NE	Natural England
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHM	Natural History Museum
NNR	National Nature Reserve
PR	Public Relations
RDS	Rural Development Service
RSMA	Royal Society of Marine Artists

RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SWLA	Society of Wildlife Artists
The Conservancy	Nature Conservancy
UK	United Kingdom
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
WWII	World War Two

Abstract

This original research makes a first attempt to understand some of the origins of the visual culture of UK nature conservation, and how it has developed over the last seventy years or so. The history and communication work of the statutory nature conservation agencies are described using evidence provided through interviews with former and current staff members and analysis of published material. Interviews with wildlife artists and surveys of two specific groups of the public have revealed further information about imagery conveying nature conservation messages.

Overall, and despite some effective initiatives, the English statutory agencies have not made full use of the power of the visual arts to communicate problems of the natural world and to inspire actions to address these problems. This was initially due to a combination of corporate culture and lack of resources, and more recently it has been largely due to restrictions imposed by central Government. Science and facts have been paramount in underpinning policy and communications. Meanwhile, artists, including Artists-in-Residence, and their creative endeavours have stimulated an emotional response to the environment and its problems, with examples of successes in terms of securing funding, increasing voluntary effort and participation, changing behaviour and winning hearts as well as minds. This research has demonstrated the dichotomy of the two approaches, but found that when brought together art and science can be successful motivators.

Nature conservation visual culture encompasses elements of conservation and creativity, art commissioners and the buying public, land owners and countryside visitors, the welcome and the excluded, science and art, fact and emotion, confrontation and environmental deterioration, memories and aesthetics.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Nature conservation has a broad constituency including scientists, politicians and planners, educators and interpreters, land managers, creatives and the public. Actions undertaken for nature conservation benefit include: protection of habitats and species; the wise use of natural resources; land management of nature reserves and other areas of wildlife interest for the benefit of wildlife; recording and monitoring habitats and species; raising awareness of nature and issues it is facing; education and interpretation of the whole environment; and stimulating interest in and support for the natural world. The imagery associated with these individuals and organisations and their conservation actions together form the visual culture of nature conservation. The focus of this research was mostly for the period 1949 to 2017. It has considered the views about nature conservation art from selected professional conservationists, nature artists and two groups of the potentially interested general public.

The original aims of the research were to:

1. Ascertain how the visual messages about the conservation of nature have changed during the last 70 years, with a particular focus on the four manifestations of the UK statutory nature conservation agencies, by examining publications and material produced by these statutory agencies supplemented by interviews with current and former staff;
2. Examine how nature art created by artists and utilised by conservationists and others has developed and changed during this period, by examining material used, undertaking a literature review, seeking views of wildlife artists through the use of a short questionnaire, and interviewing artists and a wildlife art book publisher;
3. Explore attitudes towards nature conservation imagery among different stakeholder groups, by undertaking a survey of the opinions of visitors attending an exhibition of wildlife art in a London gallery, and an e-survey of members of the British Trust for Ornithology;

4. Identify the key constituents of this visual culture, including artists, conservationists and the viewing public, evaluate the impact of wildlife art on nature conservation in the UK, and assess how a broader membership of this visual culture could be encompassed.

Following a review of the relevant literature (Chapter 2) and discussion of research methods (Chapter 3), my research examines how imagery, and in particular hand-crafted art, was used to help convey nature conservation messages. I focus on the UK statutory nature conservation agencies, through the 20th century to about 2017, exploring how the images used reflected the work and ideology of the agencies. I have undertaken an analysis of material produced by all four agencies (focussing on England), that is, the Nature Conservancy, the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC), English Nature (EN) and Natural England (NE), including file notes, memorabilia and publications, a number of which were held in private archives. This analysis has not been undertaken before.

In addition, I conducted face-to-face and telephone interviews with seventeen staff who worked in these agencies to discuss the material they had used and produced, and its effectiveness. Having worked in three of these organisations in various roles, I felt well-placed to identify particular individuals who reflected the range of the agencies' conservation work including Directors and senior managers, and staff working on conservation and nature reserves, interpretation, information, publicity and press office. Most of them had held more than one role and they included representatives from all four manifestations of the agencies. Two of the staff members became professional artists and one was a wildlife book publisher. After leaving NE, one former colleague became the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), a conservation organisation which attempts to involve its members in bird ringing, data gathering and other projects focussing on birds. He helped instigate BTO's 2014 migration research project published as *'Flight Lines'* (Toms 2017). Most of my former colleagues were retired when interviewed, and three have since died, but two are still employed by the current conservation agency. The staff members

interviewed offered 434 years of service in the statutory nature conservation agencies with the earliest being employed in 1960. These interviews provide a unique set of recorded memories. The examined imagery and material derived from the interviews are set out in Chapters 4 and 5.

I considered the work of wildlife artists focussing on those creating imagery for nature conservation purposes. These included artists commissioned by conservation organisations to illustrate conservation principles, projects or publications, or design greetings cards or similar material, or who are inspired by wildlife or wild places to show their beauty or fragility or need for protection. I researched two groups of artists, the Society of Wildlife Artists (SWLA) and the Artists for Nature Foundation (ANF), asking members of the SWLA for their views on a number of topics, using a postal survey, and supplemented by two face-to-face interviews with creatives who had also worked as professional conservationists. Members of the SWLA depicted BTO's '*Flight Lines*' project in West Africa and the UK. This project presented a good opportunity to explore the interaction between conservation, art and science. This material is set out in Chapter 6. As far as I am aware, a survey of these artists' views has not been undertaken before.

I also studied how the artists' work was received by two particular groups of viewers, with results in Chapter 7. I offered a questionnaire to visitors to a London art gallery featuring an exhibition of work by members of the SWLA, and conducted an e-survey of members of the BTO. Once again, this type of detailed research of the views and reaction by these groups of people to wildlife art has not been undertaken before.

This thesis concludes in Chapter 8 with a summary of nature art used by the statutory nature conservation agencies, of wildlife artists, and how nature art has been used, what it can say about the user and the power it has to influence emotions and change behaviours in the viewer.

This research complies with the '*University of Nottingham Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics*'. Ethical approval was granted in 2014 with the research permitted to proceed as planned.

All respondents gave their permission for the interview recordings and for their real names to be used. There was one staff member who requested later that their recollections be anonymised. Consent was given by all those photographed.

All artwork is credited. Appropriate copyright issues for all artwork and photographs used in the research are addressed. Where permission has been with-held, the item has been removed with a statement provided to this effect.

My research, set out in this thesis, is the result of an original idea, by me, to explore the art of nature conservation, a topic not yet examined in any other research. It draws on existing visual culture and environmental literature but examines them together in a novel way and expands the concept of visual culture into a new sphere. Much of the research is completely original including: examination of statutory nature conservation agency imagery from 1949 to 2017; and interviews of former staff employed by the statutory nature conservation agencies from 1960 to the present day. The survey of nature artists, the survey of visitors to a wildlife art exhibition, and the survey of members of a wildlife charity about their views on wildlife imagery are also all original research, with no previous examples in research literature. The resulting data is all new material to contribute to a new area of geographical research. The conclusions derived from my research significantly contribute to ideas of how nature conservation art can assist in understanding the countryside: what it is, how it works and how best to manage it. Other conclusions from my research also show how nature conservation art can inspire an emotional response in the viewer, and how it can be used to widen the appeal of nature conservation to new and previously less-engaged audiences.

Chapter 2 Visual Culture and Nature Conservation

This review will consider elements of visual culture as they apply to nature art and its use in nature conservation from the last 150 years or so. I summarise the various approaches to visual culture, the history and development of nature conservation organisations and the imagery they used, and influences such as increasing public mobility, tourism and access to the countryside and associated natural history literature.

2.1 Visual Culture of Nature Art

The term ‘visual culture’ is difficult to define precisely, but it can be approximated to refer to a group of people who produce, use and generally understand a particular type of imagery, together with the art they create in all its forms and meanings. The boundaries of such a group, the art and imagery included or excluded, and what is understood can vary between members such that a particular visual culture can be amorphous and indistinct. A definition offered by Walker & Chaplin (1997:1-2) is:

“Visual culture can be roughly defined as those material artefacts, buildings and images, plus time-based media and performances produced by human labour and imagination, which serve aesthetic, symbolic, ritualistic or ideological-political ends, and/or practical functions and which address the sense of sight to a significant extent”.

This broad definition would suggest it could encompass all things and all people, but creativity, media, meaning and sight are key elements. Gold & Revill (2004:9) expressed a similar breadth of definition when using “the word ‘culture’ to describe any aspect of social exchange that communicates, values and opinions.”

Barnard (1998:9) proposed the idea of communication of identity as the purpose of a particular culture: “Different social and cultural groups, at specific times and places, use these different types of art and design to construct and communicate their identities”, but he also wrote that, for

example, representations of landscapes only become “meaningful” when cultural intentions are applied (Barnard 1998:12). Context and viewpoint are critical. Thus, from his example, in the context of farming or military strategy a landscape can be seen differently, in terms of, respectively, arable production or defensibility.

This ‘way of seeing’ was described by Berger (1972:9-19) when he wrote “Every image embodies a way of seeing” but “our perception or appreciation of an image depends also upon our own way of seeing”. Howells (2003) wrote that Berger explained that paintings are understood in the light of the social and political ideas of the time, and that this “political approach to visual culture is one that can both reveal and obscure the original meaning of a work of art” (Howells 2003:82). One could ask: ‘how is the meaning of an image to be ascertained?’ and ‘what did the creator originally intend to communicate?’ In order to answer such questions, Howells suggests various methods of studying works of art, their meaning or subject matter, that is, their iconology (Howells 2003).

In 1939, Erwin Panofsky published “*Studies in Iconology*” in which he proposed that a three-level system could be applied that would allow examination of works of art. Howells explained (2003:25) at the ‘primary’ or ‘natural’ level, what is required is:

“the very basic subject-matter of a painting: what (briefly) is shown and what atmosphere the subject-matter communicates... (there is) no need (for) any inside cultural, conventional or art historical knowledge....only ‘practical experience’ of daily life”

At the ‘secondary’ or ‘conventional’ stage, an image can be understood at a deeper level of meaning by bringing

“existing literary, artistic and cultural knowledge into play... (and) progress from the mere identification of motifs in level one to the interpretation of images in level two.” (Howells 2003:25)

The third 'intrinsic' level "reveals the underlying basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion", attitudes which the artist may not have intended to reveal.

I will use Panofsky's three levels of meaning in analysing some art work in the case study of Barnack Hills Holes National Nature Reserve (NNR) (see Chapter 5). Other thinking also provides helpful ideas and tools in understanding visual culture. Roland Barthes in '*Mythologies*' 1957 (described by Howells 2003:100) developed ideas of semiotics and formulated

"the concept of 'what goes without saying' (being) the most important of all mythologies to the student of visual culture. It inspires us to seek out the underlying cultural assumptions contained within a visual text; assumptions that seem so given, so natural, so inevitable, that they seem to 'go without saying' when in fact they don't. They are falsely obvious" (Howells 2003:104-105).

The depiction of reality, about which much nature art seems to be, depends on a number of factors, for example: what is seen by the artist before they paint or draw; what is seen by the viewer of the painting; what methods and skills the artist uses; and what memories both artist and viewer can call upon. Gombrich (1960:264), the art historian and commentator, wrote:

"To read the artist's picture is to mobilize our memories and our experience of the visible world and to test his image through tentative projections. To read the visible world as art we must do the opposite."

Gombrich also said that an artist "interpreted the world in terms of the schemata he made and knew", by which he meant that the more trained an artist was in technique the more realistically he could portray what he saw (Gombrich 1960:247). However, Howells (2003:131) suggested that it is questionable whether:

“painting, drawing and print-making can be...genuinely realistic...The illusion of reality in art is communicated by a series of learned conventions and artistic devices (schema and schemata) rather than by the faithful reproduction of the natural world itself”. (Howells 2003:131)

To frame the visual culture of nature conservation I have devised a diagram (Fig. 2.1) which depicts the participants and their relationships, with arrows indicating the strength of the influence of one area upon another. To explain the ‘visual’ in my diagram, the definition by Barnard (1978:17-18) is helpful:

“A definition of the visual in visual culture would be to say that it is anything visual produced, interpreted or created by humans which has, or is given, functional, communicative and/or aesthetic intent”.

For culture, Barnard wrote (1978:17-18):

“The broadest... definition of the cultural, as it is to be understood in the term ‘visual culture’, would be ‘the everyday objects and practices of a group of people, or an entire way of life’ or ‘anything that is meaningful to more than one person’....(or)...“that which a dominant social group finds meaningful”.

My diagram is derived from the visual culturists Walker & Chaplin (1997:88), and the ecologists, Krebs (1972:444) and Odum (1975:65). The second two described food chains and webs, where the energy source, or inspiration, of the sun is used by primary producers, which is then used or consumed by primary consumers, or users, who are in turn utilised by secondary consumers, or users.

In explanation, for artists depicting landscape, habitats or species, nature itself is the inspiration. These nature artists and illustrators can either be artists commissioned by the statutory agencies, non-governmental organisation (NGOs), the public, sponsors or industry such as card manufacturers, or could sell artworks through a gallery or from their websites.

Commissioned by conservation agencies, these artists will illustrate, for example, literature intended for farmers, planners and school children.

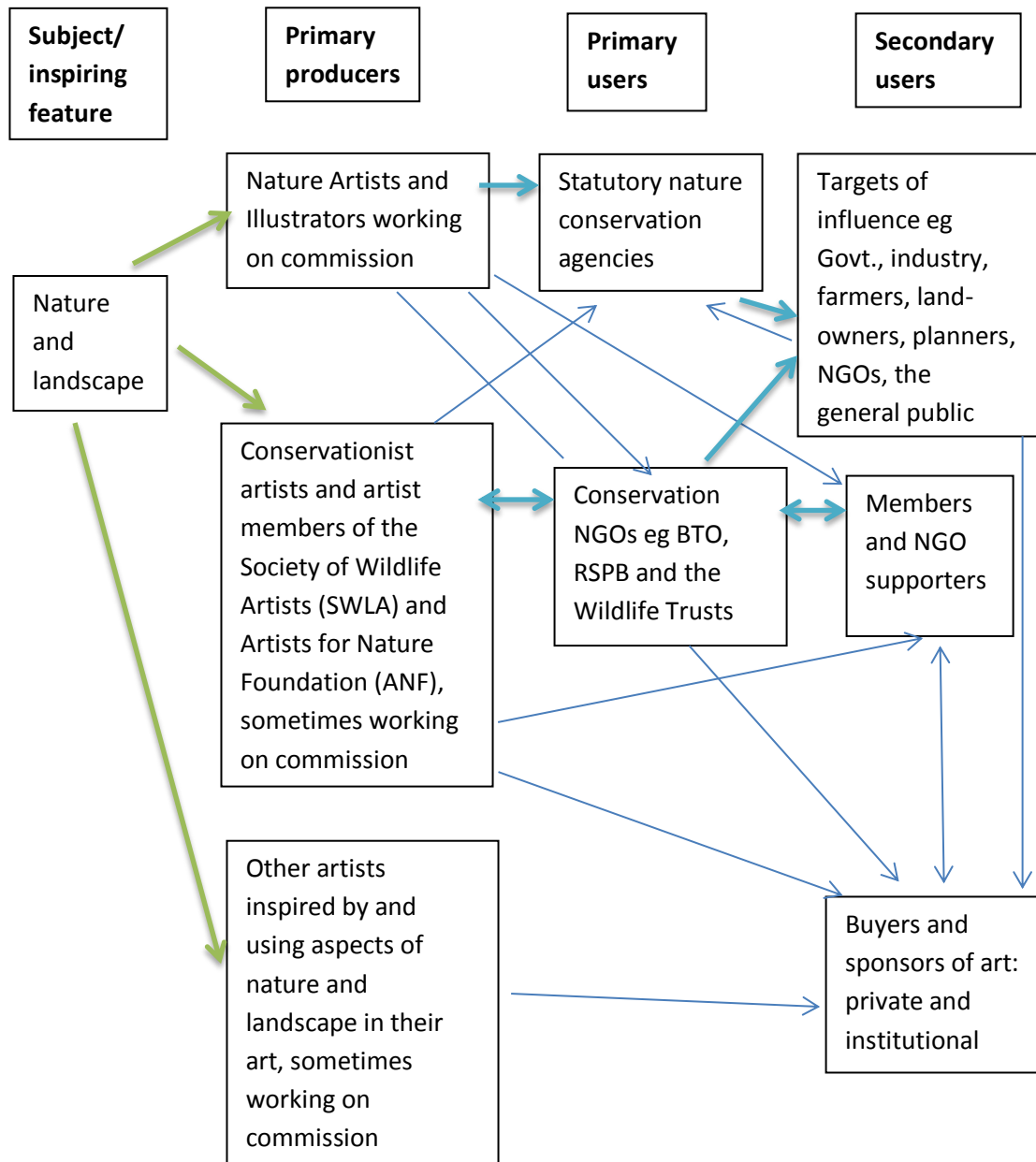


Fig. 2.1 Diagram indicating Nature Conservation's visual culture participants and influence

Conservation artists more specialised in fine art can be commissioned direct to a nature conservation NGO, such as the BTO's appointment of four artists

to illustrate their '*Flight Lines*' migration book (Toms 2017), or will produce, as a group, their own exhibitions and books for a nature conservation purpose, such as the SWLA. The sale of these paintings or books, particularly to NGO members and sponsors, will contribute to both raising the profile of a project, and in generating income for that project. Two particular artists who have independently created their own conservation foundations, Sir Peter Scott and David Shepherd, fall within this group. Scott founded The Severn Wildfowl Trust in 1946 (later renamed The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust), was founder Chairman of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in 1961, designed the well-recognised WWF panda logo and was President of the Fauna and Flora Preservation Society and of Butterfly Conservation. A wildlife painter, Scott was the founder President of the SWLA in 1964 (Scott 1992). David Shepherd, through his painting, established his Charitable Foundation in 1984 (Littlewood in Shepherd 1985), and by his death in 2017, over £8 million had been raised, much of it for the work of the WWF (McNay 2017).

The third group of artists inspired by nature may use aspects of wildlife or wild habitats within their work. However, they may not necessarily intend that proceeds from sale will benefit any conservation work, and the purchase of their work may be by people with no connection to nature conservation. In this research, I have not differentiated between amateur and professional nature artists, as they could all be considered as within the visual culture of nature conservation. However, in terms of commissions by nature conservation organisations and purchases by others, artists are likely to be professionals.

Gold & Revill (2004:10) wrote "depending on the topic being investigated, we can regard the products of newspapers, film, television and radio as equally worth of study as paintings, sculpture or formal landscape gardens." As that would constitute a very broad remit for this research, I have largely concentrated on artists within this visual culture who draw and paint, with some reference to sculpture and textile artists. Music, poetry and prose, newspapers, gardens are all very valid expressions of nature art, but if this

research had been broadened to include these aspects, the scope and size of the research would have been prohibitive. Indeed, I have had to contain the research by largely excluding consideration of artwork utilised by the voluntary conservation sector, such as the National Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), and so on, by other statutory bodies such as the Forestry Commission, Local Authorities, Water and Highway bodies, and by commercial organisations such as BP's sponsorship of the arts, and to limit nature artists to largely within two groups, the SWLA and ANF. Figure 2.1 and my description of participants within this nature conservation visual culture illustrate the difficulties in setting boundaries and the inclusion of groups within such a culture.

2.1.1 How This Research Builds on Existing Knowledge

The work by Walker & Chaplin (1997), Gold & Revill (2004), Barnard (1998) and Berger (1972) defined and explained the concept of visual culture, in the broadest sense. This research focused on one aspect of visual culture, and as Gold & Revill described, the range of possible material that could have been included is very large. My research, particularly in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 has had to be restricted due to limitations on time and space.

Based on the work of Panofsky (1939) and Barthes (1957), the conservation art of Barnack Hills & Holes National Nature Reserve was examined and described, as a case study in section 5.3. The work of Gombrich (1960) and Howells (2003) formed the basis of my research exploring the concept of realism in nature painting, and whether viewers of such paintings prefer more realistic or impressionistic images and in what situations (see section 7.1.3 and 7.2.3, the Mall Galleries' Visitor survey and the BTO members' survey, respectively). The work of Walker & Chaplin (1997), Krebs (1972) and Odum (1975) formed the basis of my diagram indicating nature conservation's visual culture participants and their relationships one to another (see Fig.2.1). In the light of my research, a more detailed depiction, of how statutory nature conservation agencies have worked with nature artists, is shown Fig.8.1.

2.2 Visual Culture of Nature Conservation – the Producers

'The Producers' are the full range of nature artists.

2.2.1 Origins and Development of 19th and 20th Century Nature Art

"Response to natural beauty is one of the foundations of the environmental movement", said Ansel Adams in a memorial conservation lecture at Berkeley, California (Adams 1975). Adams (1902-1984), an American photographer, specialised in black-and-white imagery of landscapes particularly of natural areas of the western United States. He was noted for dramatic photographs of Yosemite National Park and the High Sierras and took part in the campaign to establish Kings Canyon National Park, and a number of others to protect wilderness and various national parks from over-development. Adams' biographer, Turnage, reported that "Adams described himself as a photographer — lecturer — writer", but continued:

"It would perhaps be more accurate to say that he was simply — indeed, compulsively — a communicator....seen in a more traditional art history context, Adams was the last and defining figure in the romantic tradition of nineteenth-century American landscape painting and photography.... firmly in the tradition of Thomas Cole, Frederic Church, Albert Bierstadt." (Turnage 2019)

Landscape artists in the United States, such as Adams, generated emotional responses to the subject matter in their work, and were instrumental in inspiring the American Government to pass the National Park Act in 1872, with Yellowstone established as its first National Park. In responding to natural beauty, Adams (1975) wrote that: "The role of the artist in the environment is a complex pattern of adjustment between the objective and the subjective..." that is, nature artists balance what they see with what they feel. However, they also need to live and pay bills, and Hammond explained in *'Modern Wildlife Painting'* that there is a long history of artists "painting pictures that people wanted to buy" and this reflects not only the artists' abilities in a particular area but also the buyers' preferences (Hammond 1998:9). Examples from the 19th century include Thorburn's pictures of game birds, ducks and deer intended to celebrate field sports, and paintings of fearsome

beasts such as lion and tigers, seen on or described from expeditions to Africa. Occasionally, the emotional response generated was not that intended by the artist, for example, Allen, Watkins & Matless (2016) described the impact of Landseer's 1844 painting *The Otter Speared, Portrait of the Earl of Aberdeen's Otterhounds, or the Otter Hunt*. It was commissioned to celebrate his pack of otter hounds, but the brutality and cruelty depicted caused such public outrage that the painting was not exhibited for many years, and contributed to the work of groups campaigning against otter hunting.

Hammond (1998:9) suggested that wildlife art has experienced several changes over the last few centuries, and that "wildlife art reflects public attitudes to wildlife". He described nature painting projecting an "anthropocentric view (where) everything in the world was put there for the benefit of man." For example, Landseer's quarry paintings depicting hunted animals as noble creatures and worthy quarry for the huntsman. This view changed towards depicting a more natural reality of prey and predator, such as painted by Bruno Liljefors (1860-1939). Other changes that Hammond described are the development of photography, which can free artists from depicting every detail but which also can improve the accuracy of artwork, and ecological and field-based behavioural studies, that provide both artist and viewer an understanding of the under-lying science "far removed from the sentimental attitudes" Hammond (1998:9) of the 19th century.

Hammond, a magazine and book publisher, joined the RSPB as Editor of its magazine *Birds* for 11 years during the period 1966 to 1984, as well as being the RSPB's Director of Communication and a Director of Information and Education. He was Director for the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire and was instrumental in the ANF's visit to the Great Fen, Cambridgeshire, and its resultant publication (Gerard 2006). In '*Twentieth Century Wildlife Artists*', Hammond (1986) provided a history of artists from cave art to the Victorians, described wide-ranging styles, including sketches, watercolours, oils and so on, and themes during the century's wildlife art including game birds, photography, dioramas, print-

making and illustration for identification. In the second part of the book, he described the lives and works of 43 British, European and North American artists. For each, he included examples of their work and for all a small black-and-white photograph portrait. The only exception is the only female artist included in the book: Winifred Austen who died in 1964. Hammond (1986:9) “demonstrates the variety of approaches to the subject” using illustrations ranging from the super-realistic to the impressionistic, the humorous and both static and active wildlife (see also Van Gelder 1982).

Hammond’s *‘Modern Wildlife Painting’* (1998) expanded on some of the earlier themes, such as printmaking and illustration for identification, and discusses nature landscapes, working in the field, and the work of three particular artists and their influence: Liljefors, Fuertes and Thorburn. Of Liljefors, Hammond wrote (1998:10) that “few, if any, artists since Liljefors have achieved his passionate objectivity” and described how he painted animals in their environment from his own experiences as a hunter, and also wrote of his influence on subsequent artists. The book is illustrated throughout with the work of up to 89 artists, ten of them women, and concludes with brief biographies of them all. Many of these artists have contributed to conservation projects by the ANF and the SWLA.

Hammond described the variability in accuracy of artists throughout the ages, and provided several examples of nature artists who applied a “scientific base to their work” (1986:15-22), including Albrecht Durer (1471-1528), Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820), and Thomas Bewick (1753–1828). Another artist, Archibald Thorburn (1860-1935) has been described by the curator of the Thorburn Museum at Liskeard, Cornwall, as “one of the founders of modern bird painting, being probably the first wildlife artist to go out into the field and make innumerable sketches from life” (Southern 1981:12). According to Southern, Thorburn had “faultless technique and expert field knowledge” (1981:14).

Hammond (1998) described and gave examples of how 19th century artists often used zoo animals or dead specimens in an attempt to be as accurate

as possible. But with the development of optical equipment, including telescopes, binoculars and cameras, and sometimes from the comfort of nature reserve hides, greater accuracy from in-the-field observation could be achieved. Together with the study of ecology and behaviour, and painting *en plein air*, a term borrowed from the Impressionists, 20th century wildlife artists could convey their knowledge of the habitat in which the animal was seen and base depictions on their observations of behaviour. Some painted from memory and some from sketches made at the time. Some of the sketches reflect the spontaneity of a live drawing and other sketches were taken back to the studio to be made into a finished artwork. Describing his technique, for example, Michael Warren (b.1938 <http://www.artistsfornature.com/artists/>) wrote:

“I particularly enjoy taking all the elements of a field observation – the species, habitat, behaviour and weather – and combining them to create a studio image. The design of the painting is very important to me” (Warren 2007:9).

Similarly, Hammond (1986:145) reported John Paige (b.1927 <http://www.artistsfornature.com/artists/>) saying:

“Sketching from life is vital for me. Only by experiencing something myself can I begin to understand it properly and hope to produce a picture of some originality”.

The studio art work may be completed in oil or watercolour, or as a woodcut or lino-cut (for lino-cut methods see Gillmor 2006) or a print (for more on prints and print-making, see Hammond 1998 and Akroyd 2011) or sculpture or other media. Harriet Mead (www.mallgalleries.org.uk/artist/harriet-mead-pswla), current President of the SWLA, for example, employs objects such as barbed wire, rusty chains and nails in her found-metal sculptures (for an example see Gerrard 2006:159), and Jill Moger (b.1946 www.mallgalleries.org.uk/artist/jill-moger-swla), member of the SWLA, creates contemporary ceramic wildlife sculptures (Moger 2014).

On photography, Chris Rose (www.mallgalleries.org.uk/artist/chris-rose-swla) explained (2005:17):

“Photographs can be a useful reference for details of structure and plumage pattern... (but)...the artist’s time in the field is better spent recording shape, jizz and movement.”

Mitman (1996), writing about observing nature in the wild, explained how the objective at-distance observation techniques that cameras, and other visual technologies such as aircraft, radio-telemetry and satellite employ, were a change from the early use of cameras by field biologists. He described the views of Olaus J. Murie, a field biologist with the US Biological Survey who started work in about the early 1920s, and felt the camera was a tool to his ways of seeing. Murie explained it served “as an artistic medium (which) could capture the emotional essence of one’s unique experience with nature” (Mitman 1996:126-127). Murie admired documentary film-makers, including Disney’s nature documentaries for the beauty of the photography (although he disputed the accuracy of their content).

Wilson (1992) described the anthropocentric nature of Disney’s early nature films, in which wildlife is described in terms similar to human emotions, history and society. He pointed out similar characteristics in other nature films and television documentaries, including ‘*Wild World of Animals*’ produced by Time-Life, Jacques Cousteau’s underwater filming, and the National Geographical Society films. Wilson explained that as ecology became underpinned by “legitimate science” it replaced themes of “romanticism, spiritualism, or anthropomorphism” in nature (or science) television and films (Wilson 1992:144). He wrote that some nature films and television programmes had taken on a role of environmental advocacy, using examples from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation such as ‘*The Nature of Things*’, (particularly since 1975), and the Audubon Society and National Wildlife Federation’s programme “*Arctic Refuge: Vanishing Wilderness?*”, narrated by Meryl Streep, that portrayed arctic ecology and levels of North American consumption. BBC nature series and documentaries, such as “*Life on Earth*”

(from 1979) and “*The Blue Planet*” (from 2001), narrated and presented by Sir David Attenborough, would appear to be in a similar genre. The latter two examples present facts in an accessible narrative, with inspiring photography. There is a parallel here to Hammond’s history of nature art, moving from an emotional response to wildlife art to a more objective approach.

2.2.2 Illustration

Another aspect of objective nature art is provided by illustration. Herbals are books which depict and describe plants in respect of their medicinal and other value. Blunt & Raphael (1979:52-53) identified the first herbals dating from about 100BC developing thereafter, with the first translation into Anglo Saxon likely to have been about 1000AD (1979:32). Blunt & Raphael explained that the accuracy of the illustrations was variable, but they were used for identification of both useful plants and those to be avoided. These herbals could be thought of as the fore-runners of species identification books. Linnaean nomenclature, live collections, species descriptions and herbarium specimens have allowed the classification, description and understanding of the world’s plants. There are now many floras: books that depict and describe plant species particularly for identification purposes. Some are illustrated with photographs, such as Phillips (1980) for grasses, ferns, mosses and lichens, and/or line drawings, such as books for flowering plants produced by Polunin (1969) and Clapham et al (1952), or only line drawings, such as for sedges by Jermy et al (1968), and for grasses by Hubbard (1954). Some have detailed coloured illustrations, such as Keble Martin (1965) and Rose (1981). The majority of identification books employ several artists and photographers, the exception from the above selection being Keble Martin who both wrote and illustrated his work.

Illustrated identification books have been produced for all groups of wildlife, such as South (first published in 1907) for moths, Chinery (1973) for British insects, Maitland (1977) for freshwater fishes, and Petersen et al (1954) for birds. Some include detailed notes on distribution and rarity. Illustrations aim to be clear, unambiguous and many such books highlight particular

features useful or critical for identification. Some use photographs, others line or coloured illustrations, and some use both. Lewington (2011:3-11) described his own technique as an “entomological illustrator” of making a measured drawing using proportional dividers and a microscope, and the final artwork using tracing paper, watercolour paper, gouache and a fine sable brush. He discussed the relative advantages and disadvantages of artwork and photographs for the identification of insects, covering such aspects as light and shade, degree of focus, natural posture versus set specimen, printing and book production, and concluded that there is a place for both types of illustration.

The artist, field naturalist and teacher, Roger Tory Petersen (1908-1996), devised a “schematic drawing of birds with arrows pointing to the diagnostic characteristics” of several similar birds to aid comparison, and which was first introduced in Petersen’s own American ‘*Field Guide to the Birds*’ in 1933. This style has been applied to many other wildlife groups since (Hammond 1986, and Huxley in Petersen et al 1954:v-vi). Hammond (1986:14) wrote:

“It has to be admitted that much of what passes as wildlife ‘art’ is really ‘illustration’. This is not to undervalue it. Illustrations of wildlife subjects have done much to encourage interest in natural history..... To me the wildlife pictures that approach art are the ones that make me want to share the artist’s experience of seeing a particular animal in a particular place.”

An example of the difference in presentation is provided by two publications of British butterflies. The first is an authoritative reference work by Thomas & Lewington (1991), winner of the Natural World ‘Book of the Year’ award for 1991. The author at the time of writing was a Principal Scientific Officer at the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology and the illustrations by Lewington (graduating from The Berkshire College of Art and Design in 1971 – Lewington 2011) are extremely clear and good for identifying each species. It describes all British butterflies giving a general description and provides details of egg-laying, colour variations, habitat requirements, status, range, threats and conservation measures.

By contrast, Tratt (www.mallgalleries.org.uk/artist/richard-tratt-swla), artist, naturalist and member of the SWLA, published a reference volume providing details about where butterfly species occur, something of their rarity and conservation, and which clearly showed distinguishing features of each butterfly (Tratt 2005). In the two or three pictures of each species, Tratt depicted the butterfly as it might be seen in its habitat. Tratt's book is more likely to evoke memories of previous sightings, and inspire the viewer in how and where the butterfly might be seen, for example, camouflaged in dappled shade, sheltering on a gravel path or fluttering over chalk grassland. In the Foreword, Martin Warren, Chief Executive Butterfly Conservation, wrote that the book "is a celebration of British Butterflies" and he hopes will bring the reader "fresh inspiration and joy" (Tratt 2005:v).

2.2.3 The Role of the Nature Artist

Hammond suggested that "interest in conservation has grown as contact with animals has diminished" (Hammond 1998:12-15), and illustrated this by describing the general public's reduced contact with farm and wild animals counterpointed by the increase in natural history filming and the many wildlife programmes and series produced by the BBC Natural History Unit. Current literature does not address whether current wildlife artists believe they have a role in nature conservation, or if better use could be made of their art for nature conservation purposes, and if there are innovations which could help raise awareness. These are some of the questions this research, and particularly Chapter 6, seeks to address.

2.2.4 How This Research Builds on Existing Knowledge

The work of Ansel Adams in the USA provided an early example of the power of nature art to conserve landscapes: an example of effective communication (Turnage 2019). Hammond (1986) and (1998) described how and what artists communicated, and Mitman (1996) and Wilson (1992) discussed the power of nature photography and film. The ability of nature art as a force for nature conservation was explored further in interviews with nature artists with specific examples identified (see Chapter 6).

The discussion on illustration, particularly comments by Hammond (1986), form the basis of the exploration of preferences of styles and types of art in the new surveys of public opinion described in Chapter 7.

Hammond (1986) and (1998), Mitman (1996) and Wilson (1992) explored ideas on the role of the nature artist, but, to date, current literature does not address the views of wildlife artists themselves. By interviewing wildlife artists, my research further explores the role of nature artists.

2.3 The Visual Culture of Nature Conservation – the Users (Conservationists and Others)

2.3.1 Origins and Development of UK Conservation

I now turn to the ‘primary users’ in the visual culture of nature conservation: their history and their use of nature art. There are several accounts of the origins and development of the conservation movement in the UK during the last 150 years. Sheail (1976:3-4) described how the slaughter of wild animals in large numbers was made possible by the “wide-spread use of the breech-loading, double-barrelled gun and central-fire percussion cartridges”. He records the observations by several writers of how animal numbers plummeted, giving examples from the mid-19th century. However, it was only after the shooting of seabirds at Flamborough Head for ‘sport’ and ‘pleasure’ followed by their slaughter for feathers for the fashion industry, that concern started to be publicly aired. Sheail (1976) reported that, by 1869, the Sea Birds Protection Act had been passed and other Protection Acts followed. Instrumental in applying pressure to Government and the public was the Selborne Society for the Protection of Birds, Plants and Pleasant Places, founded in 1886, followed by the Society of Protection of Birds in 1889, which was granted its Royal Charter in 1904 (RSPB 2014, Sheail 1976, Stamp 1969).

The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty (known as the National Trust), was founded in 1895 (National Trust 2014; Stamp 1969),

arising from concern about the enclosure of commons in the 19th century. Under the 1907 National Trust Act (Sheail 1976), it was granted the ability “to buy and accept gifts of heritage for the benefit of the nation” (Marren 2002:63). It became “the first successful conservation pressure group in history”, and early on “acquired places of special interest to the naturalist, such as Wicken Fen, Cheddar Gorge and Box Hill” (Marren 2002:63). Sands (2012:9) included a photograph of Box Hill dated 1906, depicting groups and individual visitors plus a well-defined, eroded track up the Hill indicating the intense visitor pressure and the site’s need for protection and management .

The National Trust was not alone in its concern for the countryside: other campaigning organisations included the Commons Preservation Society, founded in 1865, the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves in 1912 which received its Royal Charter in 1916 (Sands 2012), and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) in 1926 (Sheail 1998). Unlike the other organisations which were focussed on species issues or on distinct areas of land, the CPRE was seeking solutions that would address wider landscape problems (Matless 1998). Its ‘*Save the Countryside*’ exhibition of 1928 toured the country and used display boards contrasting “good and bad, before and after, beautiful and ugly, good and evil, order and disorder” (Matless 1998:26). Sheail (1998:11) described how the CPRE used photographs, such as at Peacehaven, Sussex, to depict housing development along the cliff top, raising concerns in the 1920s that “the entire length of scenic coastline might become yet another form of ribbon development”. Waine & Hilliam (2016) also described how the CPRE used illustrated posters and publications to good effect to raise their profile, make their case against, for example, ribbon development, and to encourage donations to their cause.

2.3.2 Tourism and Recreation

A number of writers describe the origins of tourism, public access and recreation and their impact on the countryside, particularly regarding Commons, National Parks and outdoor recreation (Arvill 1976, Fairbrother 1972, Mabey 1980, Matless 1998, Reynolds 2016, Sheail 1976, Waine &

Hilliam 2016). Topics covered included the mass trespass on Kinder Scout in 1932, the concept of wilderness, the Youth Hostel Association, Ordnance survey maps and Scouting. Emotive posters and photographs were used to encourage and entice visitors to the countryside for enjoyment, health benefits, day trips and holidays. For example, Matless (1998) described how walkers in the countryside (the Ramblers' Association began in 1935), youth hostels (the Youth Hostel Association was established in 1930) and the use of maps contributed to a culture of greater mobility to and within the countryside.

The railways and motor transport assisted in this increased public mobility, with the public encouraged to visit and experience places that were likely to have more wildlife and nature than may have been present in more urban areas. Cole & Durack (1992) and Norden (2001) described how railway companies, which started during the nineteenth century, used posters to encourage the public to see attractive places and countryside and visit holiday and excursion destinations. Roy Strong, a former Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum, considered that the railway poster was encouraging the viewer to specifically buy something or go somewhere, often using an illustration that invoked an enjoyable memory. He wrote: "London Transport's advertising policy has been and still is based on a belief in the powers of evocative enticement" (Levey 1976 Introduction). As well as the traditional holidaying destinations such as spas, seaside resorts and cathedral towns, scenic areas including the Peak District, Snowdonia, the Lake District and the Highlands of Scotland were promoted "for healthy pursuits such as fishing, walking and climbing" in magnificent countryside (Cole & Durack 1992:23).

Above-ground railways were not alone in developing the excursion poster. The London Underground opened in 1863, but it was the arrival of Frank Pick in 1906, and soon leading on the Underground's publicity, that revolutionised its advertising.

“Pick...realised that almost every type of attraction in London was within reach of the Underground, or at least could be marketed as such....(and) believed very strongly in the need to educate Londoners about the attractions on their own doorstep.” (Riddell 1998:4)

Levy (1976) explained that Pick was innovative in the design of the posters, commissioning new as well as established artists to create attractive posters of the central London parks and places further afield, such as Kew Gardens, Richmond Park and Hampstead Heath (Riddell 1998). Matless (1998) reported that not only was Pick leading on all design matters for London Transport and Head of the London Passenger Transport Board, he also worked with the Design and Industries Association from its inception in 1915, and was an Executive Member of CPRE from 1926 to 1941.

Not confined to summer outings, the railway artists promoted seasonal events such as ‘*Chestnut Sunday*’ by Edward Bawden in 1936 (Riddell 1998:48), and ‘*Bluebell Time*’ by A E Marty in 1933 (Riddell 1998:49). By promoting bus travel as well as the Underground, country walks were also advertised, such as ‘*Easy Walks from Uxbridge Station*’ by John Henry Lloyd in 1911 (Riddell 1998:72). However, as Riddell observed the early posters depicted places such as “Golders Green, Pinner, Wimbledon and Hounslow ...as countryside”, but building in the 1930s resulted in “only a few open spaces amongst the new houses”. Some areas, such as Kenwood, near Hampstead Heath, were protected as parks, but others were lost to development. Riddell wrote:

“Ironically the Underground, designed primarily as a commuter railway, was partially responsible for the destruction of the very landscape that its posters promoted. Wherever a new line was built development soon followed, pushing the countryside still further from London. Without the ever-expanding tube railways, development would still have taken place around London, but it would have taken a different pattern. Today, it is almost impossible to imagine Hounslow Heath (now Heathrow Airport) or Perivale as the pleasant countryside they are shown to be in the posters” (Riddell 1998:70).

Norden (2001) explained that the inter-war years were the most popular for train travel, but by the mid-1950s the railways were in decline. Motorised transport was increasing: private car production trebled between 1953 and 1963. Matless (1998:62) wrote that: “between 1918 and 1939 open-air leisure in England took on a new scale and shape” and he described how motoring was supported by a wide range of illustrated literature (Matless 1998:63-67). Jeremiah (2010) described motoring in rural Britain in the inter-war years and how the countryside was promoted for pleasure and recreation.

Roscoe (1996) provided several detailed examples, describing how commercial patronage by fuel companies, particularly between 1950 and 1970, promoted a particular view of the countryside whilst at the same time linking the countryside to their products, namely the petrol to access the features described. Shell-Mex and BP produced several series of guide books and accompanying posters on the British countryside as well as sponsoring art exhibitions and a television series during this period in the 1950s and 1960s. Roscoe described this development as the start of “mass motor touring in Britain” (Roscoe 1996:89-90). The increase was due to greater availability of cars (from the growth in hire purchase and as cars became more affordable) and quicker access to the countryside through the improvement of the motorway network. Roscoe went on to suggest that this increase in mass travel was co-incidental with an increase in “natural history and countryside-based advertising” (Roscoe 1996:90) by the oil companies. However, as Allen (2010) described, prior to the 1950s, there was a growing interest in natural history books during and immediately following the Second World War with demand partly due to the lack of books, enforced off-duty time and paucity of public entertainment.

Roscoe concentrated on the role and activities of the fuel companies, but others were also producing guides on the attractions of the British countryside, and encouraging the public into their cars to find and explore these features of interest. One series of ‘*About Britain*’ guides were published in 1951 for the Festival of Britain Office (Matless 1998). Thirteen guides

were prepared under the direction of an Editorial Board, with the General Editor being Geoffrey Grigson, later lead author of *The Shell Nature Guide*, discussed below. These books were described, in the fly-leaf of every book in the series, as guides “to the living Britain” giving “fundamental facts about its scenery, its monuments, its buildings, its people and their work and characteristics”. The books included a number of black-and-white (and a few coloured) photographs of landscapes, stately homes, ‘modern’ agriculture and industry, as well as line drawings and a coloured relief map. Pertinent to the Roscoe paper, these guides gave suggested tours (with routes and features of interest on the way) “to enable” exploration of a district “in a short time by car or bicycle” (Grigson 1951:5-6).

Each of these books in the ‘*About Britain*’ series also included a section on wildlife and wildlife habitats. The sections talked of both rare and common species, for example, *East Anglia* (Mottram, 1951:22-25) mentions the Avocet that “has started breeding again...thanks to careful protection” and the reintroduced “Large Copper (though its future is doubtful) wavers around in Wicken and Wood Walton Fens” as well as the coastal Horned Poppy, Sea Holly and Sea Lavender. The same guide also wrote of the Broads being proposed as one of the 12 England National Parks and areas, such as Chippenham Fen, “which may be turned into National Nature Reserves”. These designations were proposed under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. The authors did not shy away from presenting controversy: in the guide to the ‘*West Country*’ (Grigson 1951:26), the debate was aired whether Braunton Burrows should be designated as a National Nature Reserve or be used for military training.

Roscoe (1996:93-95) provided examples of illustrations used, including the ‘*Shell Counties*’ series of paintings, describing landscape, nature, architecture and agricultural activities, commissioned during 1958 to 1963. The paintings were later accompanied by maps and text and used as wall charts to depict, describe and inform about features of interest in each county. They were “sent to all schools throughout the UK”. The advertising slogan used by Shell was “You can be sure of Shell – The key to the

countryside” (Roscoe 1996:93). The oil company was presenting itself as a quality provider of “intellectual” as well as “physical” access to the UK countryside (Roscoe 1996:94-95). Similarly, Forestry Commission park guides were offering a particular view of recreation and living in forest parks (Revill & Watkins 1996:100-128). Other examples included the Shell-Mex/BP ‘*County Guides*’ produced during the 1950s and 1960s, the ‘*Shilling Guides*’ dating from the 1960s and *The Shell Nature Book* (Grigson & Fisher, 1964) which described flowers, insects and so on that could be seen in different landscapes in different seasons. Once again, it featured paintings, keys and texts similar to the wall charts and posters described above (Roscoe 1996).

This expectation of what could be seen was a common thread in these types of books, whether it was a static building or mobile wildlife. A good example of the latter was the four part series of the Ladybird Nature Books “*What to Look for in Winter/ Spring/Summer/Autumn*” (Grant Watson 1959-1961) where the aim (stated with slight variations in the flyleaf of each book) was to “greatly increase” or “considerably add” to “the pleasure of a country walk”. Full colour paintings by C.F. Tunnicliffe illustrated the text. In all seasons, everywhere appeared harmonious and rich in wildlife with no hint or mention of the impact on wildlife of agricultural changes, pollution or development. This series, presenting an almost idyllic view of the countryside full of wild places and wildlife, proved to be influential on a number of staff of the statutory nature conservation agency interviewed in the course of this research, as several mentioned it with affection as one of the key books in their childhood interest in nature. This series was also mentioned as the favourite childhood nature book in both public surveys undertaken for this research.

From the point of view of nature and landscape conservation, however, possibly the most important influence by these fuel companies was on their “fostering a particular vision of Britain”, depicting the British landscape as a “combination of local architecture, cultural and natural history and cultivated landscape” (Roscoe 1996:92-93). These images contributed to ideas of regional and national identity (Roscoe 1996) retaining links with the past, and

so visiting the destinations selected in the books and posters helped to “reaffirm our national identity” and these places and landscapes “have come to constitute ...as lasting part of our culture” (Roscoe 1996:99). Jeremiah (2010) also referred to the cultural impact of motoring which helped to establish a particular view of rural Britain.

2.3.3 ‘Recording Britain’ Project

Moving from transport, the *Recording Britain* project, initiated in 1940 by the Ministry of Labour, employed a number of artists, some of whom had produced railway and Underground posters. Using watercolour and pen-and-wash, they captured scenes in towns, and cities in factories and field, that might be lost during and immediately after the war (Mellor et al 1990, Saunders 2011). The scheme used artists rather than journalists and photographers for their ability to capture “the colour and atmosphere of a scene, the intangible genius loci” (Herbert Read 1941, quoted by Saunders 2011:12, and Mellor et al 1990:7). The conservation element of the scheme was explained by Read (Saunders 2011:12) when he wrote:

“...it shows us exactly what we are fighting for - a green and pleasant land.... We are defending our very possession of these memorials; but when we have secured them from an external enemy; the existence of these drawings may serve to remind us of the real fight – the fight against all commercial vandalism and insensitive neglect – goes on all the time. There will be little point in saving England from the Nazis if we then deliver it to the jerry-builders and the ‘development corporations.’”

This sentiment echoes a Punch cartoon, used by Clough Williams-Ellis in his 1928 book *England and the Octopus* which presented the aims of the CPRE (Matless 1998:24-25). It depicted a Mr William Smith going off to war in 1914 leaving a green and pleasant rural landscape and returning in 1918 to the same place, but now transformed by industry, housing and all associated infrastructure.

2.3.4 Collins' '*New Naturalists*'

As the *Recording Britain* project was underway, Collins' *New Naturalist* series was in its inception. The series claims that it

"...is the longest-running and arguably the most influential natural history series in the world. The *New Naturalist* books cover a variety of natural history topics relevant to the British Isles. Renowned for exemplary research, beautiful covers and low print runs, they appeal to collectors and fans of natural history alike" (Collins 2018).

During 1942, William Collins approached Julian Huxley (zoologist, and prominent writer and broadcaster) about a new series of natural history books, and they drew together, with them, an editorial board which included Eric Hosking (a photographer), James Fisher (zoologist and author of the war-time best seller '*Watching Birds*'), Dudley Stamp (geographer and earth scientist) and John Gilmour (botanist) (Allen 2010; Marren & Gillmor 2009). They appointed Clifford Ellis (1907-1985) and his wife, Rosemary (1910-1998) as their cover artists, whose early work included posters for BP, London Transport, Shell and book covers (for biographies see Marren & Gillmor 2009 and Marren 2005).

Marren & Gillmor (2009) described how the first designs produced by the Ellises were so liked by William Collins, that he over-rode the wishes of the other members of the editorial board for photographic jackets. The only covers using a photograph were the *New Naturalist Journal* (Fisher 1948), the first edition of which bore a black and white photograph of hazel coppice and ground flora of Wild Garlic, and two 'regional' books: '*The Broads*' (1965) and '*The Snowdonia National Park*' (1966). Despite difficulties over restricted colours and the standard of printing, particularly during the early to mid-1950s, the Ellises produced 87 jacket designs for books and monographs over 40 years.

The series had a nature conservation purpose from the start: every *New Naturalist* book carries the following message usually placed on the second

page containing printed text, opposite the title page, for example, '*London's Natural History*' (Fitter 1945:ii):

"The aim of the series is to interest the general reader in the wild life of Britain by recapturing the inquiring spirit of the old naturalists. The Editors believe that the natural pride of the British public in the native fauna and flora, to which must be added concern for their conservation, is best fostered by maintaining a high standard of accuracy combined with clarity of exposition in presenting the results of modern scientific research."

Allen (2010) and Marren & Gillmor (2009) described the books, their appeal and their development. Marren & Gillmor suggested one of the reasons for the books' early success was that the cover designs were a new approach reflecting the newness and freshness of the series, and which now largely contributes to the collectability of the books. The impact of the set displayed together has been likened to that of "a Ming vase" (Marren & Gillmor 2009:vii). These authors described the covers in detail, particularly those with a clear conservation message, including number 49, '*Nature Conservation in Britain*' by Sir Dudley Stamp (1969), suggesting nature reserves were 'out of bounds' and places to be protected for nature and left undisturbed, and number 50 '*Pesticides and Pollution*' by Kenneth Mellanby (1967) (see Fig.2.2).



Fig. 2.2 Covers of Collins New Naturalist volumes No. 49 '*Nature Conservation in Britain*' (Stamp 1969) and No. 50 '*Pesticides and Pollution*' (Mellanby 1967)
(Copyright permission applied for)

2.3.5 Conservation Logos

The Ellises used symbolism to suggest the content and themes of the New Naturalist books. A similar idea underpins logos which are trademarks or symbols consisting of a picture or design, sometimes with letters, identified with a particular organisation or brand, including those of nature conservation agencies and charities. Nicholls (2011) described the history and development of the logos of a range of conservation organisations from the 1960s to the present day, identifies key changes in these images as the ideas about conservation have developed and suggests reasons for these changes. He wrote that "it is natural that conservation organisations should borrow motifs from nature" (Nichols 2011:287) and started with the panda emblem designed by Sir Peter Scott in 1961 for the World Wildlife Fund (now the World Wide Fund for Nature). Nicholls suggested early logos tended to be in black-and-white for ease and cheapness of reproduction for letter-heads, giving examples such as the Panda for WWF and the Oryx for Fauna and Flora International, dating from 1950. Although, black and white images have remained popular, he indicated that greens, blues and browns have

also been used. Nicholls suggested that early designs were prepared by artistic friends or supporters of the organisation and that the images at this stage reflected the interests of the core enthusiasts rather than a recognised conservation need. He explained that there was little known at the time about the Panda or its demise, outside China, when the logo was designed.

Nicholls wrote that logos changed during the 1960s to reflect conservation need, such as the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, which in 1963 used an image of the Dodo, to drive home the consequences of lack of awareness of conservation. On the other hand, organisations also used images to reflect their conservation success(s), for example, the RSPB adopting the avocet for its emblem linking to its “success in recreating the habitat suitable for breeding avocets in Britain during the 1940s” (Nicholls 2011:288) Nicholls (2011:289) described how later the demands for good digital reproduction required the use of stylized images with clear and simple lines, and organisations moved away from “species-specific” images to “simpler and more abstract” designs that seemed “better able...to communicate the increasingly complex business of conservation”. Two other changes in design are described by him. The first is the trend to introduce a human element into the design – “humans are part of both the problems and the solutions” (Nicholls 2011:288), with one of the examples given of the Marine Conservation Society which changed in 2000 from a detailed hermit crab (used from 1983) to a dolphin and human diving in an arc together (see Fig.2.3).



Fig. 2.3 Marine Conservation Society Logos

The other development has been in the globalisation of the image reflecting that not only is the problem a human one it is also a whole planet issue: we are all involved. As a consequence the designs have changed to circular motifs representing the earth using coloured circles, or rings of hands or leaves. One of Nicholls' examples is from the American-based Conservation International whose logo was transformed from a tropical scene to a simple blue circle underscored by a green line because "Conservation International is about more than just rainforests" (Nicholls 2011:288) (see Fig.2.4).



Fig 2.4 Conservation International logos

The topic of logos is extremely large and this review only takes a tangential view, but two papers offer some additional insight. Kinnear (2008) discussed the prevalence of greens in the logos of environmental organisations and suggested that not only is the colour contributing to their image but that "logos that are trying to represent themselves as eco, enviro, earth friendly, with plants, blades of grass, trees and many, many leaves". Monsef (2012) suggested that for commercial organisations reds, blues and purples are much more prevalent with yellows and greens much less popular.

2.3.6 How This Research Builds on Existing Knowledge

The work of Sheail (1976) and (1998), Matless (1998), Marren (2002) and Waine & Hilliam (2016) provide historical background to the origins of the need for nature conservation in England, and some of the context for Chapter 4.

Increasing access to, and development and recreation in the countryside (as described by Arvill 1976, Cole & Durack 1002, Fairbrother 1972, Levey 1996, Mabey 1980, Matless 1998, Norder 2001, Reynolds 2016, Riddell 1984, Roscoe 1996, Sheail 1976, and Waine & Hilliam 2016) placed increasing pressure on the British countryside. This pressure had the potential to cause damage to existing wildlife and habitats which provided the context for the establishment of the Nature Conservancy (see section 2.4). However, the visitors, residents and developers were also potential audiences for education about the countryside through books such as the '*About Britain*' Guides (see Matless 1998) and the '*Shell Counties*' posters (see Roscoe 1996), Ladybird Nature Books (Grant Watson 1959-1961), the Collins '*New Naturalists*' (see section 2.3.4). My research explores how the nature conservation agencies developed these education ideas for visitors and people using and managing the countryside (see Chapter 4 and 5).

The use of art and cartoons, such as in the '*Recording Britain*' project, depictions of the aims of the CPRE (see Matless 1998), and the covers of the Collins' '*New Naturalists*' series, all provide an historical background to the use of visual art in the campaigns for safe-guarding the countryside. This visual imagery had relevance for the statutory nature conservation agencies, and was further explored in Chapters 4 and 5, with some similarities in style and message noted.

The work by Nicholls (2011) on conservation logos was explored further in the survey of Mall Galleries' visitors (see section 7.1.5), and contributed to the discussion on jizz in Chapter 7 and conclusions in Chapter 8.

2.4 Statutory Nature Conservation

The UK's statutory nature conservation agencies, from the earliest Nature Conservancy and its subsequent bodies, are one of the major constituents in the visual culture considered in this research.

In 1915, Charles Rothschild identified 284 proposed nature reserves and described them as '*Areas worthy of protection*' in a list submitted to the Board of Agriculture (Sands 2012:7). It was not acted upon for the next twenty years, but ecological studies continued and in 1939 Tansley produced his "*magnum opus, The British Isles and their Vegetation*" (Stamp 1969:11). Sheail (1976) reported that in 1934 the Standing Committee on National Parks was formed, and following the 1941 Conference on Nature Preservation in Post-war Reconstruction, the formation of the Nature Reserves Investigation Committee in 1942 and the publication of the 1942 Scott Report (the '*Report of the Committee on Land Utilisation*') (Sheail 1998), the Dower report (on '*National Parks in England and Wales*') was published in May 1945. The Dower Report led to the establishment of the 'National Parks Committee (England and Wales)' from which arose the 'Wild Life Conservation Special Committee' (under the chairmanship of Dr Julian Huxley and seven co-opted scientists including Tansley as Vice-Chairman).

Sheail wrote that in 1946, the Cabinet's Scientific Advisory Committee reported that "a comprehensive national policy on biological conservation and control would benefit the field of pure science" and other land management functions, and "to be effective required a series of national nature reserves, fostering research through an ecological research institute and ...the service of fully qualified scientific officers" (Sheail 1987:142). These officers should provide a general advice service. The Huxley Committee added that the biological service should "operate an advisory service and encourage educational activities" (Sheail 1987:142).

In 1947, the Committee produced their report: '*Conservation of Nature in England and Wales*' (Cmd. 7122), and together with recommendations by another Special Committee on footpaths and access, resulted in the '*National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949*'. The 1949 Act allowed the formation of the 'National Parks Commission' and described the remit of the Nature Conservancy (Stamp 1969). Tansley, also the first President of the Council for the Promotion of Field Studies which later became the Field Studies Council (Matless 1998), was appointed Chairman of the Nature

Conservancy in 1949, and the first Director-General was Cyril Diver (Stamp 1969). Diver had undertaken a considerable amount of research in the Studland area, and largely as a result of this work, he was elected President of the British Ecological Society for 1940-1, and was a member of the 1945 'Wild Life Conservation Special Committee' (Merrett 1971).

Stamp (1969:48) reported that the Nature Conservancy Royal Charter:

"Laid down that the Conservancy... (had to consist of between 12 and 18 members) ... being at all times persons chosen for their scientific qualifications or interest in matters of nature conservation".

Sheail (1987:144) recorded that seven of the fifteen Charter Members of the Nature Conservancy were ecologists "namely Tansley, Elton, Ford, Godwin, Maclean, Matthews and Pearsall". After Diver resigned due to ill health, Max Nicholson became the second Director-General in 1952 and continued in this role until 1966 (Marren 2005). By 1959, members included Professor Pearsall, Dr Dudley Stamp, Dr Worthington, Professor A Clapham and Professor P Richards (The Nature Conservancy 1959). Stamp (1969:48) continued that the Nature Conservancy's duties were:

"The general ones of providing scientific advice on conservation and the encouragement and conduct of research, and the specific one of establishing, maintaining and managing nature reserves."

Toogood (2008:120-121) suggested that this focus on science broadened, particularly through the 'vision' of Max Nicholson. Science, evidence and ecology could "underpin planning of land use and resources" and when applied, could become "a single great mission...accepted as a national objective of over-riding importance" (Toogood 2008:135). The Conservancy, and Nicholson, were keen to promote public debate, and, concerned that BBC nature programmes such as "*Birds in Britain*" or "*Look*" avoided reference to nature conservation, persuaded the BBC in 1957 to present some lectures with a more balanced view, including large global problems.

Toogood described the general release film “*The Living Pattern*” and suggested that the narrative about the balance between human needs and wildlife protection “would be achieved through highly informed, scientific and progressive co-operation with nature” (Toogood 2008:131). Despite the diversity and potential application of its research, the Conservancy lost influence, and was subsumed within the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) in 1965.

Stamp also wrote: “It was clear from the beginning that the Conservancy had a major task in putting across to the public the concept of conservation. This meant education at all levels.” (Stamp 1969:53) He reported that “Every year a formidable list of publications bears witness to the research activities of members of the staff of the Conservancy” (Stamp 1969:54). He described the research stations and their work, and then discussed a range of conservation topics. Moore (1987:xx) wrote in his ‘Introduction’ that through “official activity”, that is, the work of the statutory agency, together with an increasing number of voluntary bodies, “conservation became part of the national life, but on a very small scale”. He continued: “essentially it was a service for a minority run by specialists”. He stated that it was recognised by all those concerned with conservation in the 1960s “that effective conservation could only be achieved...if it received a much wider support from the general public and government.” Nearly twenty years later, he wrote that “we are still at the beginning...of the general acceptance that conservation must be an integral part of human activity at all times and in all places” (Moore 1987:xx). Moore (1987:221-231) wrote a chapter on the ‘failure to communicate’, but omits mention of several initiatives in public engagement on the topic of nature conservation. Stamp, however, does report on National Nature Week (Stamp 1969), the ‘*Countryside in 1970*’ conferences in 1963 and 1965 (Stamp 1987), and mentioned the use of nature trails (Stamp 1969). Matless, Watkins & Merchant (2010) described the introduction of nature trails from an idea developed in the United States in the 1920s, how they featured within the UK’s 1963 and 1965 National Nature Weeks, and provided an example from East Wretham Heath Reserve

demonstrating success in embracing visitors where they were previously prohibited.

As well as the work by Lutz, who, in the 1920s, developed in the United States, “the idea of a nature trail along which individuals could walk and learn from labelled nature, either by themselves or with a guide” (described by Matless, Watkins & Merchant 2010:101), Tilden (1957) was also setting out principles of interpretation within USA National Parks. He described it as an

“educational activity” whereby “thousands of naturalists, historians, archaeologists and other specialists are ...revealing ...something of the beauty and wonder, the inspiration and spiritual meaning that lie behind what the visitor can ...perceive” (Tilden 1957:3-4).

He discussed the principles of how an environmental story is told using photographs of Park Rangers demonstrating and talking to visitors at a range of sites. The number of visitors, or sightseers, to parks, museum, and historical sites and so on, had increased since the 1950s, and that managers of these areas had introduced interpretation to teach and explain to visitors what they were seeing. The various techniques used included paths, games, campfire stories, visual exhibits and so on, which Wilson in his book *‘The Culture of Nature...’* (1992:53-87) suggested allowed visitors’ a “first-hand experience”, increasing their “understanding and appreciation” “rather than simply communicate factual information”. These techniques also helped manage visitors in terms of safety and resource protection. Wilson described this, and other educational techniques, as bringing a greater awareness for people about their environment. He expanded the discussion from increased awareness to understanding and involvement in wider social issues such as environmental degradation and restoration, ethics, citizenship, regard to nuclear industry, sustainability, the future of life on earth and so on.

Wilson (1992:55) also explained that Tilden intended that interpretation had the goal of “appreciation of Beauty”, but that this seemed out of place in the 1950s “in a consumer culture devoted to the pursuit of happiness and the

good life” and those involved in the tourist industry abandoned references to ‘Beauty’ in their work. Reynolds (2016) discussed the concept of beauty in the world around us, and how it is subjugated to economic growth, monetary value and material things. She described (2016:51-52) how Lewis Silkin introducing the National Parks Bill in 1949, spoke of “...enjoyment of our leisure in the open air and the ability to leave our towns and walk on the moors and in the dales...”, that this ability is “...part of positive health and wellbeing...”, and it being a “...a people’s charter for the open air, for the hikers and the ramblers, for everyone who loves to get out into the open air and enjoy the countryside.” Reynolds pointed out that Silkin was speaking about the aesthetic value of the countryside and not necessarily about education and scientific endeavour. Later, she suggested (2016:62) that there had been “...very few political speeches about beauty”, but gave the example of Oliver Letwin in 2005 talking on the issue of climate change suggesting that discussions about the environment are “mechanical”. She reported that he said:

“...the language of politics needs to reflect the felt experience of the environment as sensations and impressions that are capable of moving us to delight and awe...We need to conduct politics as if beauty matters.” (Reynolds 2016:62)

From the beginning, the UK’s statutory conservation agency was formal, Committee-based, constituted as a part of Government, and its decisions and practices based on science, or at least the opinions and guidance of renowned scientists. These principles remained during its development which saw the Nature Conservancy (also known as The Conservancy) (1949-1973), become the Nature Conservancy Council (or NCC) in 1973-1991, and then English Nature (or EN) in 1991-2006, and finally Natural England (or NE) from 2006 to date (Stamp 1969, Sheail 1976, Sheail 1987, Sheail 1998, Matless 1998, and Marren 2002). Despite successive national legislation and international Directives, the continued loss and decline of wildlife and habitats has been observed and described by many authors (Marren 2002, Moore 1987, Porritt 1990, Reynolds 2016), and stated in reports and studies underpinned by data, such as State of Nature Reports (Brown et al. 2001,

Brown et al. 2010, Burns et al. 2013, Covey & Laffoley 2002, Defra 2018, Hayhow et al. 2016, Townshend et al. 2004 and 2008). Habitat and species losses and declines in quality and numbers would suggest that statutory mechanisms have not been totally successful. The evidence has been provided, but could the message have been made clearer?

2.4.1 How This Research Builds on Existing Knowledge

Section 2.4 provides the legislative background to the establishment of the statutory nature conservation agencies studied in Chapters 4 and 5.

Published information and imagery was used by the early conservation bodies to make their case, provide evidence for their campaigns and persuade opinion to their cause. However, a systematic collection and study of imagery used by the statutory conservation agencies is not currently available. My research seeks to address this lack of information, and explores the visual imagery used by the Nature Conservancy and its successor bodies (see Chapters 4 and 5).

Within the many duties demanded of the statutory agencies, was also the requirement to provide advice to and educate the public about nature conservation, including on and about nature reserves. The work of Lutz (in the 1920s), Tilden (1957), Wilson (1992) and Reynolds (2016) were influential on the interpretation of National Nature Reserves, and explored further by this research in sections 4.3.5, 4.4.3 and 5.3.

2.5 Summary

Having discussed concepts of visual culture in section 2.1, the rest of this chapter has considered a number of themes pertinent to the producers and users of nature conservation art. The use of imagery by the early conservation movement and associated tourism and travel industries has been explored.

This chapter acts as a platform building on existing research to explore firstly the material used by the statutory agencies, informed by interviews with former and current staff who produced, commissioned and used such imagery; secondly, a survey of current wildlife artists about conservation imagery; and, thirdly, sample research of public perception of nature conservation visuals. Exploration of these three areas will offer new evidence of the visual culture of nature conservation, and that this thesis will have a distinctive place in cultural geography.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

This chapter describes my research into three areas: the use of art and imagery by the statutory nature conservation bodies; views of current nature conservation artists; and what present-day viewers think of nature conservation art. A variety of imagery used by the statutory nature conservation agencies was obtained from various sources and analysed, with the analysis supplemented by information and memories derived from interviews of former and current staff. The results are presented in Chapter 4 covering the Nature Conservancy and NCC, and Chapter 5 for EN and NE.

To ascertain the views of members of the public, two surveys were undertaken: firstly, a paper questionnaire handed out by me to visitors to an exhibition by the SWLA; and secondly, an on-line survey of members of the British Trust of Ornithologists (BTO) asking similar questions to those posed in the first survey. The results of the two surveys were collated, analysed, compared and discussed in Chapter 7. The views of current nature artists were sought using a short questionnaire sent by post direct to all artist members of the Society of Wildlife Artist living in the UK. The results are presented in Chapter 6. Over-arching themes derived from the results of these three areas of research form Chapter 8.

3.1 Material Produced by the UK Statutory Nature Conservation Agencies

I undertook a detailed analysis of the material produced by the UK's statutory nature conservation agencies from 1949 to 2012. These agencies served as the UK Government's statutory advisor on nature conservation with a primary purpose of protecting and managing wild species and natural habitats. They would be expected to influence Government and its policies on all aspects of, and impacts on, nature conservation, and also to influence those likely to use, harvest, manage, damage, visit, and study the UK's natural environment. Their production, publication and use of nature imagery would

be part of how they executed their work. I examined the material looking for trends in the imagery, and comparing and contrasting between the different agencies. I concentrated on nature conservation in England as the material available to me was largely focussed in England, but referenced the other country agencies where possible.

The material studied is held in five private collections of former agency staff: Dick Seamons, Tony Herbert, Stewart Lane, John Hopkins and my own. I knew of Dick Seamons having worked with him in the EN library in 1993. Stewart Lane and John Hopkins were senior colleagues of mine in EN and NE. I was advised to contact Tony Herbert during the course of interviewing former staff, and that recommendation proved very fortuitous as he held a considerable archive of material. The collections reflect the personal interests of the above named, who were all employed at some time by one or more of the statutory agencies. They are not a complete archive, and are mostly in the form of external publications including scientific papers, magazines targeting specific audiences such as planners or SSSI owner/managers, material for schools, photographs and posters, conference proceedings, nature reserve guides, habitat and management guides, internal guidance, file notes usually written on headed notepaper with an official file number but since discarded, and newspaper articles. A number of other items intended to promote the organisation and its work, such as staff badges, desk flags and branded clothing were included in the study. Seamons considered his collection of items as a good representation of the material produced by all four agencies, particularly in terms of quantity and variety, and Hopkins included his complete 1979 'Welcome' pack for new staff. Herbert had a personal interest in interpretation as well working in the Interpretation Branch of NCC.

None of the material was catalogued, nor in date order, though much of Seamons' material was sorted by agency into large cardboard boxes. All the items were collated and counted (see Table 3.1). They numbered 812 separate items in total. Herbert held mostly Nature Conservancy material. He left agency employment in 1977 archiving this material for over 40 years,

and not surprisingly the quantity of stored material is not great. Seamons possessed material from all agencies, even though he had not been employed by the Nature Conservancy. Lane sent me some NNR guides.

Table 3.1 Number of separate items examined from each statutory nature conservation agency

Statutory Agency	Dates	Number of publications in the collections examined
Nature Conservancy	1949 - 1973	59
Nature Conservancy Council (NCC)	1973 - 1991	190
English Nature (EN)	1991 - 2006	537
Natural England (NE)	2006 - 2012	26

All the material was grouped into the four different agencies, and within each group each item was placed into date order. Every item was then examined for particular characteristics, such as, the number of illustrations and whether they were coloured or black-and-white, or photographs, line drawings or paintings, and what the subject matter included. The number and type of people, such as age and gender, were noted, and what they were doing, as well as information on flora, fauna and landscapes or habitats. The date of publication, and artists and photographers names were noted. The data was recorded in a spreadsheet. From this information, trends and differences between the agencies could be identified and are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

From the analysis of the material available, half of the Nature Conservancy material was staff-related, which may reflect personal interest or may reflect the emerging Nature Conservancy being initially concerned with building the organisation, and only later enthusiastically contributing to the '*Countryside in 1970*' campaign, the 1963 and 1965 National Nature Weeks and the '*European Conservation Year 1970*' work, perhaps seeing useful synergy in

working with others. As noted in Chapter 2, Stamp (1969:54) reported that “Every year a formidable list of publications bears witness to the research activities of members of the staff of the Conservancy”. These do not appear in the personal archives, although a list of *Publications and Reserve leaflets (1949-1965)* covering three pages of A4, and another *Publications excluding NNR leaflets (1965-1973)* extending to seven pages of A4 paper, are both in Seamons’ collection.

The large amount of material held on EN may reflect the prodigious amount of material that was produced, possibly as a response to the impact of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and/or that four of the staff holding this material worked for EN although they all also worked for the NCC. The amount of NE material held in these archives is relatively small: possibly reflecting the short period for acquisition from the start of NE; or, as mentioned by a member of the communications team in interview, that Defra applied a moratorium on publicity material in 2010/11. NE also preferred web-based material, particularly in a culture of the ‘paper-less office’.

In order to check that I had as complete a collection to study as possible, I sought permission to visit and study the NE Library, archive and publications store during 2012-13, but these had been transferred to a warehouse in Peterborough. I was advised that, although I could request to borrow specific items, if I wished to visit the warehouse to check material I would need a librarian to accompany me at all times, and none could be spared at that time. I examined the on-line National Archives at Kew (<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details>) in both 2013 and 2018 searching for files on the following topics: National Nature Reserves; the Nature Conservancy and Nature Conservancy Council; English Nature and Natural England. Much of the material contained in the National Archive consists of Committee minutes, reports, plans, correspondence, and so on. Having seen a number of these (such as Reserve Management Plans, Progress and Annual Reports) when working as an employee of the NCC, EN and NE, I know that these items contain very few illustrations, as they are

largely intended for Government, official or staff use, and were not intended to convey nature conservation messages to a wider audience.

The collections of items that were loaned to me or that I already possessed, and supplemented by answers to question during interviews with former staff, indicate that I had a very good coverage of the publicity material, guides and information produced by all the statutory agencies. The material is broader than that contained within the National Archives: an example of research 'triangulation' as described by Valentine (1997). I believe that no substantive material is missing from the holdings within the National Archives beyond what I have seen. The material that I borrowed from the private collections would not have been available from other sources. Those interviewed were producers and users, sometimes both, of material intended for public use. I feel that the material I have examined for this research is very representative of that which would have contained nature images.

3.2 Interviews of Nature Conservation Agencies' Former and Current Staff

To inform the model of the visual culture of nature conservation (see Fig. 2.1), I was particularly interested in how the statutory agencies presented themselves and their conservation messages through their publications and other media, including nature reserve information and scientific material. The publications, leaflets, magazines, journals and so on were examined for details of images used, colour, subject matter, and whether the image was for identification, illustration or inspiration. Themes and trends were drawn out and used as the basis of the first question in the interviews with former and current staff of the statutory conservation agencies. The themes provided an overall impression of the illustrations used and was tested in conversation. During the interviews, examples were described by the interviewees and these are depicted under the relevant sections.

The Nature Conservancy was established in 1949. I worked for each of the successor bodies at various times between 1981 and 2011 (for a total of 21 years), and consequently knew and had worked with colleagues in all of the

statutory organisations, and had collected literature and other material from this period. In order to supplement the analysis of the literature and material produced by the statutory agencies, and provide background, policies, use and so on of the material produced, I wanted to ascertain the views of staff that had outward-facing roles, such as, those who worked with the general public and in the library and information services, with the press, developers and planners, farmers and land managers, other agencies and Government departments. I contacted former colleagues, who I knew well and with whom I had worked closely as I felt they would be frank and helpful. Most were based in England. Seamons referred me to Philip Oswald who worked in the Nature Conservancy and NCC, and he in turn referred me to Tony Herbert and Bridget Smith, all three of whom I had not previously met. This process is known as snowballing (Valentine 1997).

In order to make contact with a wider group of staff, that is, those who worked in the Nature Conservancy or before I joined NCC and others who I did not know, I contacted, as a member, the organising committee of the 49 Club. This club is a membership group of approximately 300 former and current staff of the statutory agencies with contact details being listed in the annual newsletter. I requested permission to contact all members directly. Although permission was not given, I was permitted to submit a short article in 2012 about the research and inviting colleagues to contact me to discuss the work and to consider completing a questionnaire, with a follow-up item in 2013. I received three responses: from Stewart Lane who sent me some leaflets and a written response to the questions I posed in the article; Stephen Ward who suggested I interviewed him by telephone from Eire; and George Peterken.

To seek views of staff working in NE after I had left the organisation, I requested permission in 2012 to submit an article to the in-house staff newsletter. Permission was refused as existing staff were not allowed to express views to an external party without Defra authorisation. However, several of the people that I did approach were employed by NE at the time of interview.

For the colleagues that I knew, I contacted directly by telephone or email and they were mostly interviewed face-to-face either in my or their home. The exceptions were Alan Bowley and Jonathan Wray interviewed at Woodwalton Fen NNR, George Peterken at University of Nottingham and Stephen Ward by telephone. I met Keith Duff, a former EN Director, by chance outside a local supermarket, and after enquiring about what I was doing, he agreed to be interviewed for the research. This interview was particularly useful as we had worked together on a publication (Townshend 2004) and he had started the outward-facing 'Wider Environment' programme.

All those approached agreed to be interviewed and drew on their experiences through the organisation. The roles ranged from Directors, to Managers, to science specialists, to Conservation Officers, to those employed in press office, training, communications and the library, and several were employed as NNR wardens, also known as Site Managers. My sample of interviewees was selected on the basis of their work with and use of imagery, and not a random sample of staff. They offered a combined total of 434 years' service in the statutory nature conservation agencies with the earliest being employed in 1960. Some worked for more than one manifestation of the statutory agency, and some with experience from nearly 40 years work. These interviews provided a unique set of recorded memories.

The first interviews were undertaken in late 2012, with the majority being made in 2014 and 2015, and the last in 2017. The first two interviews with Seamons and Wray were pilots and informed the final questionnaire format. The initial questionnaire contained 40, short questions requiring mostly brief answers, but the length of the questionnaire I thought might discourage future responders. Subsequent interviews used 10 questions though some had more than one part (See Appendix 1), and encouraged a more conversational style interview.

As described by Valentine (1997) and Longhurst (2010), the interviews were in a semi-structured format, conversational style. Valentine (1997:111)

explained them as “conversation with a purpose”, and reflecting the interests, experiences and opinions of the interviewees. I was able to clarify points that were unclear, and explored areas of work and imagery that I had not been aware of previously. In the case of Herbert, during the conversation, he reminded himself of other artwork and found examples for me to borrow.

I found that face-to-face interviews were more interactive, contained more anecdotes and were more wide-ranging than replies received by email. Where responders had time to think about their responses, for example, Robertson requested the questionnaire before the interview, a more considered reply was given, and reference material laid out for me to view. Emailed replies were more focussed than from those given during conversation.

The seventeen interviews were all recorded with interviewee permission and transcribed, omitting words such as ‘er’ and ‘um’, recording laughter or a joke with a ‘!’, and not transcribing when people asked me not to, such as referring to sensitive health problems. From the transcripts, I grouped the subject matter into topics, mostly centred on the questions I asked. Key phrases, recollections, evidence and examples were noted, and, where relevant, were used within the analysis of publications and other material (see Chapters 4 and 5). All quotes from these staff used in this research were derived from interview on the dates shown below, and more than one recording is indicated, for example, Oswald (1). (For summary of statutory agency staff interviewed see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Details of statutory agency staff interviewed

Name	Agency				Role (s)	Dates of employment	Date of Interview / response	Length of interview	No of words in full transcription
	NC '49 – '73	NCC '73 – '91	EN '91 – '06	NE '06 – to date					
Alan Bowley		x	x	x	NNR warden Lullington Heath NNR/ Site Manager Woodwalton Fen (retired)	1976 - 2015	22.10.14	1 hr 31mins	9,196
Andy Clements		x	x	x	CO, Manager, Director (Now BTO CEO)	1982 - 2006	27.01.15	1hr 24mins	9,701
Anon			x	x	Member of the communications team	2001 – to date	28.09.14	2hrs	16,026
Keith Duff		x	x		Geologist, Chief Scientist, NCC & EN Board member (retired)	1975 - 2006	11.11.14	2hrs 7mins	13,115
Tony Herbert	x	x			Education Officer (deceased)	1965 - 1977	29.09.14	2hrs 42mins	15,995
Stewart Lane	x	x	x	x	Regional Team Manager, Manager External Partnerships (Sent views from 49 Club article) (retired)	1973 - 2008?	13.03.13	Written reply	911
Ian Langford			x	x	Planning specialist, team leader (also nature art book publisher) (deceased)		27.07.15	1hr 49mins	10,085
John Lincoln		x	x		NNR interpretation, Communications Manager (Now professional artist)	1987 - 2004	25.09.17	1hr 32mins	8,814
Philip Oswald	x	x			NNR warden, Head of PR, education, interpretation (retired)	1960 -1991	(1) 15.09.14 (2) 7.10.14	1hr 55mins; 3hrs 21mins	19,237
George Peterken	x	x	x		Ch. Scientist Team – woodlands (retired)	1967 – 1992	(1) 18.02.13 (2) 05.01.13	1hr 12mins; Written reply	8,478 946
Charron Pugsley-Hill			x	x	CO, People & Nature Team (professional artist)	1990 - 2009	13.10.15	2hrs 5mins	16,080

Table continued next page

Table 3.2 Details of statutory agency staff interviewed (Continued)

Name	Agency				Role (s)	Dates of employment	Date of Interview / response	Length of interview	No of words in full transcription
	NC '49 – '73	NCC '73 – '91	EN '91 – '06	NE '06 – to date					
Geoff Radley		x	x	x	CO, ecologist, manager	1979 – 2012; 2017-19	21.09.14	1hr 40mins	10,554
Heather Robertson		x	x	x	CO, grassland ecologist & Farmland Ecologist, Ch. Scientists Team (retired)	Late 1970s – 2008	21.10.14	1hr 30mins	7,797
Dick Seamons		x	x	x	Librarian, information (retired)	1976 – 2010	(1) 11.06.12 (2) 04.08.13	Total 1hr 50mins	2,477 1,051
Bridget Smith		x	x		Head of Staff Training & education (deceased)	1976 – 1991	06.08.14	1hr 19mins	7,785
Stephen Ward	x	x	x		Surveyor, CO, NNR, Manager Moved to SNH in 1991 (retired)	1969-1991	(1) 14.01.13 (2) 15.01.13	53 mins; 1hr 33mins	22,827
Jonathan Wray		x	x	x	Site Interpretation Officer, marketing specialist, Press Officer, Corporate Governance Officer (retired)	1986-2012?	(1) 15.10.12 (2) Site visit 22.05.13	Total 3hrs 46mins	11,617 13,180
17 Agency staff	5	14	15	10					

With their permission, five of the people interviewed are pictured in Fig.3.1, Fig.3.2, Fig.3.3, Fig.3.4 and Fig 3.5.

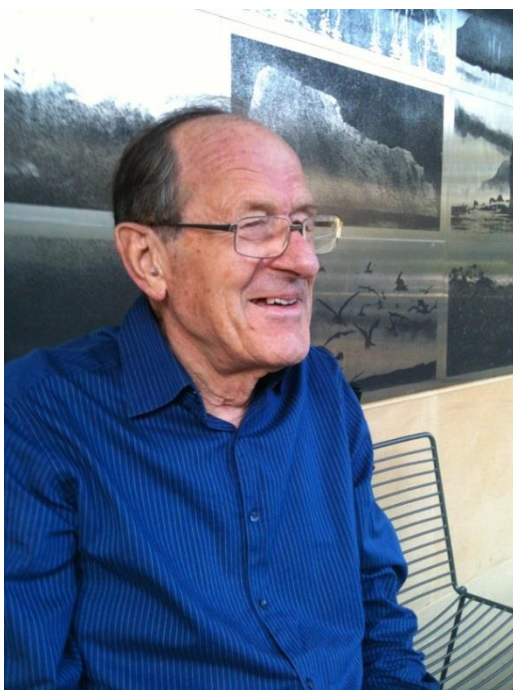


Fig.3.1 Phillip Oswald, Cambridge Botanic Gardens 2014
Author's photograph



Fig.3.2 Anthony (Tony) Herbert, at home, Shrewsbury, 2014
Author's photograph



Fig.3.3 Jonathan Wray, site visit to Woodwalton Fen NNR, May 2013
Author's photograph



Fig.3.4 Alan Bowley, Site Manager, Woodwalton Fen NNR, September 2016, Author's photograph



Fig.3.5 Charron Pugsley-Hill ©
Conservation Officer, member of People & Nature Unit,
and artist

I believe the seventeen staff interviewed represented many of the outward- and public-facing roles of statutory agency staff, with most of the interviewees holding several posts during their employment. They are only a sample of the hundreds of staff employed over the years, and although I tried to engage with others, they were either not forthcoming or I was refused permission to approach them direct. The majority of interviewees were well known to me and I think that permitted common understanding and trust. Although I kept to a standard set of questions, the conversational style of the interviews meant that people were free with anecdotes and impressions of even quite sensitive material. Although clear replies were forthcoming, it seemed that factual answers were harder to provide as the questions were probing events and names that took place a number of years ago, and some of the interviewees struggled a little to be confident in the accuracy of their answers.

Some of the questions were repeated (with appropriate rephrasing) in the subsequent questionnaires of the public, that is, the visitors to the Mall Galleries exhibition and BTO members. These included questions about imagery that fired imagination, favourite artists, style of favourite nature imagery, conservation organisation logos, nature reserve literature and information, and inspirational wildlife imagery.

3.3 Two Surveys of Public Opinion

3.3.1 Introduction

People viewing nature imagery are secondary users in my visual culture of nature conservation diagram (see Fig. 2.1) and I wanted to find out their opinions on: what impact nature imagery had; and whether conservation messages in art were successfully conveyed. I also wanted to see if they had suggestions to improve understanding of and involvement in nature conservation through the use of wildlife art. One way to test public opinion on these is to seek views of those at the interface of nature art and nature conservation. Two potential groups were identified: visitors to a wildlife art exhibition; and members of a wildlife charity, the BTO, who usually receive magazines and on-line news.

There are a number of possible galleries where a survey of visitors to an exhibition of nature art might be possible, such as the 'Nature in Art' Gallery and Museum at Twigworth in Gloucestershire, 'The Wildlife Art Gallery' in Lavenham, Suffolk, 'The Birdscapes Art Gallery' near Holt, Norfolk, and elsewhere. However, I had regularly attended since 2002 the SWLA exhibition held at the Mall Galleries, London, and felt that the number of likely visitors over a short space of time would make this a suitable location for undertaking the survey. In 2014, I made a direct approach to the Galleries using contact details provided on their website.

Visitors to the SWLA exhibition were likely to have been people interested in and wanting to view art, and specifically wildlife art. An interest in nature conservation would not necessarily be a constituent of their wildlife art interest, but the SWLA and a number of the exhibiting artists are known for their conservation work or their donations to conservation charities.

In 2014, the SWLA Mall Galleries exhibition was sponsored by the BTO, and included work by four SWLA artists as part of the BTO's '*Flight Lines*' bird migration project. The aim was to bring artists and scientists together to raise the profile of some of the issues facing African summer migrants such

as Swallow, House Martin and Cuckoo, and the research that is underway to help them. This project was made possible by a legacy from Penny Hollow, a long-standing member of the BTO and regular visitor to the SWLA exhibitions. It financed a team of SWLA member artists, Robert Greenhalf, Bruce Pearson, Greg Poole and Esther Tyson, to accompany the BTO's Head of International Research, Dr Phil Atkinson, on a trip to Senegal to record migrant waders and passerines on tidal wetlands in north-west, and then on to the dry Sahelian landscapes where transhumance is undertaken (BTO 2014). Since 2014, other SWLA artists have contributed to the project resulting in a publication combining art, science, photographs and text (Toms 2017).

The opportunity to survey BTO Members, in a separate exercise, arose during the Preview evening of the 2014 SWLA exhibition, when I met BTO staff who expressed an interest in the research that I was undertaking. Using artists to help depict the migration research project fitted well with the overall aims of this research.

The BTO describes itself as:

"An independent charitable research institute combining professional and citizen science aimed at using evidence of change in wildlife populations, particularly birds, to inform the public, opinion-formers and environmental policy- and decision-makers. Our impartiality enables our data and information to be used both by Government and NGO campaigners" (BTO 2015).

Their volunteers are involved in long-term monitoring and a range of bird surveys, which reflects the specialist nature of the members. The members are not necessarily interested in wildlife art, but will be in receipt of literature from the BTO often featuring images of birds, projects and volunteers.

The gallery visitors and the BTO members were both viewing wildlife imagery, although from different perspectives and format, and were within the visual culture associated with nature conservation art. I was interested to

compare and contrast their views of nature conservation imagery, and discover if there were any implications for conveying nature conservation messages.

I selected two survey methods. For the SWLA exhibition, I offered the visitors a questionnaire hoping this would provide more results than time-consuming one-to-one interviews, be less intrusive to people who just wanted to view art, and the questionnaire had the potential to be taken home and completed later. Remembering the principles set out by Parfitt (in Flowerdew & Martin 1997: chapter 6) and McLafferty (in Clifford et al 2012: chapter 6), I considered the length of the questionnaire both in the number of questions and how long it might take to complete, and allowing the questions to flow from one to another. An introductory question of a very general nature was followed by more substantial questions and finished with an open-format question inviting further comments. I tried to avoid jargon, double-negatives, leading questions, and used a mixture of open and closed questions. A choice of optional answers made for ease and quickness both to answer and analyze responses and also provided variety for the responder. I was aware that people tend to avoid extremes of answers on a scale, but in these surveys ends well as middle options were chosen. I also knew that if I referred to results elsewhere people may have provided an answer either to 'be different' or to 'go with the flow'.

A 'Google Scholar' investigation of similar surveys was undertaken using search terms such as 'UK wildlife art gallery visitor surveys', 'eco-art visitor surveys' and so on, customising the search by 'date' and 'relevance'. Hooper-Greenhill (2011) summarised and described how many surveys of visitors to museums were largely focused on visitor behaviour within galleries, on visitor movements, on visitors' understanding of the subject matter viewed, on visitor satisfaction and so on, and leading to consideration and possible changes to museum and art gallery design, and presentation of information and exhibits. By contrast, my research is focused on a particular segment of art gallery visitors and their opinions of the particular genre of nature art, and its actual and potential role in the public policy of nature

conservation, rather than what was on display in the gallery at the time of survey.

I researched the methodologies of visitor surveys to compare and contrast with my proposed methodology. Although some featured art gallery visitors, a number of publications concentrated on visitors to museums, national parks and other wildlife and heritage centres, but I felt that the survey principles and design were transferable, even if the results and conclusions were not applicable to my research. One survey (McKercher 2002) studying visitors to tourist locations in Hong Kong used an initial filter question, but I felt that was unnecessary as I felt all responses were potentially useful, that I had provided background information in an introduction to both surveys, and, in the case of the Mall Galleries, I was present to answer any questions. Sachatello-Sawyer (2002) studying the opinions of volunteers on a United States' National Park programme felt that allowing some time to elapse between the experience and the survey, 6-8 weeks in her case, resulted in greater reflection on the experience gained. My survey had to be undertaken on the day as I thought that people would not take the time or trouble to complete the questionnaire. However, over 60 people did take away the survey to complete later and returned it to me by post, and which allowed them post-visit reflection.

Mason & McCarthy (2006) described a survey questioning young people about visiting art galleries, where the interviews were conducted on the pavement outside a prominent gallery in New Zealand, the Auckland Art Gallery. Ballantyne et al. (2007) asked visitors to a botanic garden to complete a survey before entering the gardens. This type of approach would not have been possible for me as there is no sheltered waiting area outside the Mall Galleries, and the café area located inside the gallery provided a suitable area for potential responders to be approached and space for them to answer the questions. This area was especially useful as the exhibition is held annually in late October/early November with the possibility of inclement weather.

Taheri et al. (2014) undertook face-to-face interviews of visitors leaving a museum. They identified if interviewees were first time or repeat visitors, whether local or non-local and also asked about gender, qualifications and age. Whether visits were repeats or first time was not relevant to my study but several other researches also included questions about age, gender and education (see also Parker & Ballantyne 2002). At the Mall Galleries, I did not ask these questions, and in hindsight this data may have provided useful differentiating information. Although, a number of respondents provided in 'Any further comments?', their age, or status (for example, 'retired' or 'grandparent'), I recognised the omission, and I included questions of age and gender in the on-line survey of BTO members.

Where possible, I used imagery to add variety to the questionnaire and help explain the questions, but also because the questionnaire was about imagery. I hoped for a good return rate by exciting the interest of respondents and by tapping into a different thought process around the visual as well as text. The completed paper questionnaires were handed to me or returned using an SAE which I provided. I created an Excel spreadsheet of the results. A very similar questionnaire was used for the e-survey provided to members of the BTO, but the delivery and analysis were different. The invitation to take part was issued to BTO members in receipt of the BTO 'e-news' and undertaken on-line. The results were collated by 'Survey Monkey' (under licence to the BTO) and emailed to me as an Excel spreadsheet.

Marty (2007) undertook an on-line survey of visitors to museums with an invitation to respond via a link on the museums' websites. He described the limitations of this sort of survey, for example, the process does not use random sampling and is not necessarily acquiring representative data. As my BTO members' research accessed only those members with a computer and interested enough in the topic to investigate it further, these may not be representative of the wider membership. The results therefore are derived from a sub-set of members. As in my survey, not all respondents answered all questions, but like Marty, in-depth interviews would have been difficult in

the limited time that I had available and the numbers of people who were interested and responded.

Both surveys were anonymous, though I was happy to reply to questions if respondents offered contact details, and I acknowledged or replied as required. For both surveys, instructions and background information were provided. For the Mall Galleries' visitor survey see Appendix 2, and for the BTO members' survey see Appendix 3.

3.3.2 Survey of Visitors to the SWLA Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London

The SWLA holds an annual exhibition of members' artwork at the Mall Galleries London, which are situated at the east end of The Mall near to Admiralty Arch, Central London. The entrance is modest, and an A-board outside the door, tucked into the portico, advertised the exhibition inside (see Fig.3.6).

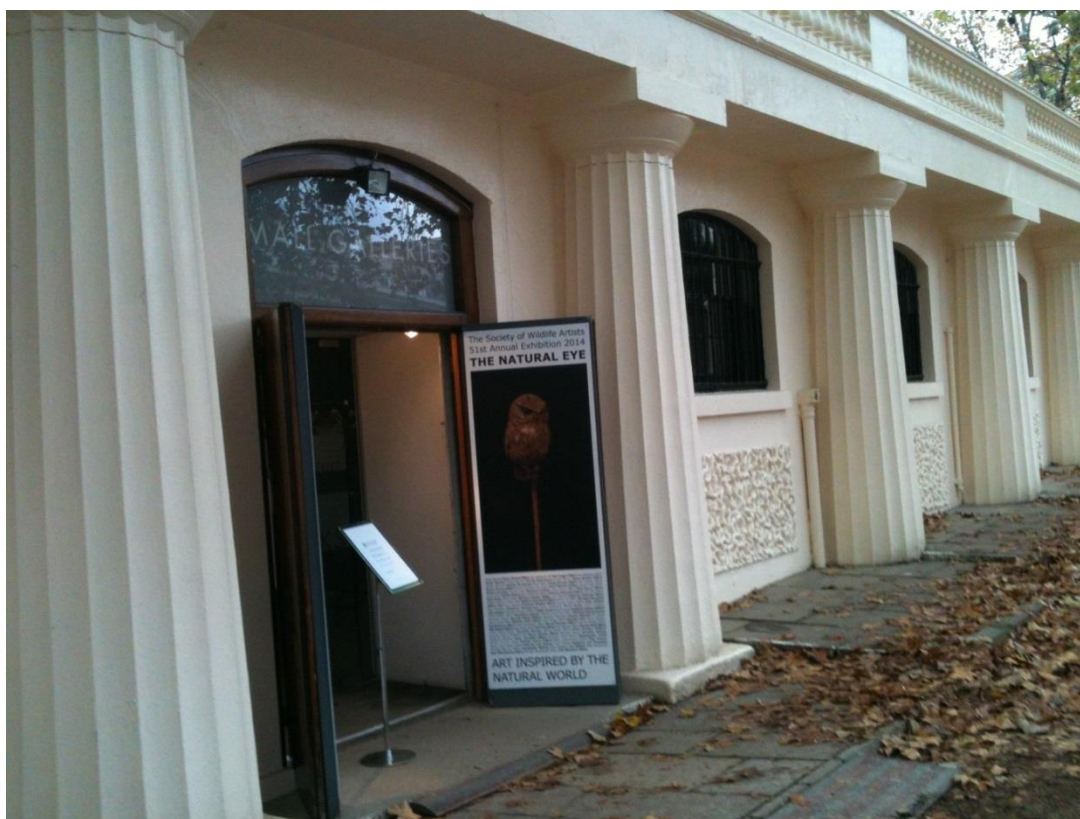


Fig. 3.6 Mall Galleries entrance, 30th October 2014, Author's photograph

The galleries consist of two main exhibition rooms either side of the central entrance, a small book shop and café, with two smaller exhibition rooms situated at the rear of the galleries. The exhibition was open, for a small entrance fee, to the public, and free to Members and Friends of the SWLA. The 2014 exhibition (Thursday 30th October – Sunday 9th November) opened with a Preview event for artists and prize-giving on the afternoon of Wednesday 29th October (see Fig.3.7), and an RSPB reception during the evening of Thursday 30th October.



Fig.3.7 Harriet Mead, President of the SWLA, opening address, Preview evening (29th October 2014), Author's photograph

An exhibition catalogue lists all the artworks with some featured on the central pages. There are introductory pages, details of recipients of awards, a number of adverts for art equipment and galleries, and contact information for SWLA artists and associate artists.

I had emailed Elli Koumoussi, Head of Education and based in the Learning Resource Centre at the Mall Galleries, requesting permission to conduct a

survey of visitors attending the October/November 2014 exhibition. The objectives of the research were explained, and draft introduction and questionnaire sent to her. Permission was granted for the survey to be conducted on three named days (Thursday 30th October, Wednesday 5th and Thursday 6th November 2014) and no amendments to the questionnaire were offered or requested by her.

On the first day when I met Elli, she suggested that I made a base on the bench in the centre of the main exhibition room, rather than at the Reception desk, which was busy with the sale of entrance tickets, exhibition guides, and books, cards and other merchandise, and welcoming visitors. However, a small number of questionnaires were set out on the Reception counter. The bench in the centre of the main exhibition room was conveniently close to the Gallery Café, and I occupied one corner at the end nearest the Café (see Fig.3.8).



Fig.3.8 Mall Galleries' main exhibition room and café area with respondents shown discussing and completing the questionnaire (30th October 2014), Author's photograph

I attended all three days, explaining the research and handing out questionnaires mostly to people in the central refreshment area where chairs and tables were situated. I provided pens and offered stamped addressed envelopes to those people who were unable to complete the questionnaire on-the-day but who wished to respond (see Fig.3.9).



Fig.3.9 Two visitors to the SWLA exhibition, Mall Galleries, completing the questionnaire on train journey home (5th November 2014), Author's photograph with permission given

The ten questions in the questionnaire had several parts: some were tick box answers to indicate preferences and others required a written response. All the questions were about nature art, wildlife artists and nature art imagery with the intention of ascertaining: what images or artists' work best engages the viewer; and what visual imagery best conveys conservation messages of enjoying and learning about the countryside; of understanding habitat and species loss; of encouraging involvement in conservation matters; and encouraging an understanding of and desire for sustainability. Many of the images were derived from my analysis of imagery produced and used by the statutory nature conservation organisations.

For this questionnaire, 192 responses were completed and returned from the 288 questionnaires handed out (a 67% return). Of these, 128 questionnaires were handed back on the day of issue, with 64 returned by post (mostly using the SAE provided) with the last one being received on Monday 21st December 2014. There were five refusals, that is, the person accepted the questionnaire and then returned it to me blank.

I populated an Excel spreadsheet with the results, where each row represented the answers from one responder and new columns for each new answer. Using the Excel spreadsheet, all the results and comments were recorded from all 192 respondents for all the questions and part questions, using one sheet for each part or full question with a separate column for each new response. Working through each respondent's questionnaire a '1' was recorded in the appropriate column to enable 'summing' of the scores. New columns were added as a new meaning or phrase or word appeared, again scoring '1' if a respondent mentioned this word or phrase. Where several answers were given, a score of '1' was given for each new piece of information.

As I transcribed the data, I undertook content analysis, similar to that described by Mason & McCarthy (2006), grouping responses into first level classifications where I could, using repeated words or descriptions or words with similar meanings. For example, in question 10, respondents were asked "Do you think wildlife art could be used better to help promote the conservation of wildlife and natural habitats? – if so please describe".

Among the many answers offered, twenty people replied using one or more of the following words: "more wildlife art in public places eg public transport, packaging, destination ads (holidays?)", and these responses formed one group. The groupings in the first level of classification were then sorted again and combined into a second level classification seeking a common concept or idea. In this example, "more wildlife in public places..." was combined with other responses such as "a poster campaign", "more articles and photos in newspapers and magazines", "more art on leaflets, noticeboards, promotion

calendars, posters etc”, “any publicity is good” and “must be eye-catching and prominently display” to form a group reflecting the thoughts of 46 people on the need to raise general awareness, and which included specific ideas.

This spreadsheet at the first level of classification consisted of 17 sheets with each sheet capturing the answers to each question or part of question. The total number of columns for all the sheets was 1,051 columns and 195 rows including some columns and rows used as spacers to assist navigation around the table, or for ‘summing’ data. For summary of survey results see Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Summary of Mall Galleries visitor survey results

Question No. & part	Question topic	No. of columns
1a	Name favourite artist	146
1b	Reason for being favourite	63
2a	Favourite image	58
2b	Reason for favourite	49
3	Preferred appearance of nature art	27
4	Preferred appearance of nature for identification purposes	29
5a	NNR signs	59
5b	NNR leaflets	19
6	Nature conservation logos	63
7a	Images of people learning about nature	56
7b	Images depicting damage to wildlife	47
7c	Images of nature conservation projects	52
7d	Images about sustainable development	65
8	Childhood images and pictures	108
9	Art and motivation to support conservation	68
10	Suggestions for better use of art for conservation	78
comments	Any other comments	64

3.3.3 Web-based Survey of BTO Members (June/July 2015)

During the SWLA exhibition Preview evening, I met Andy Clements and Mike Toms, respectively Chief Executive and Assistant Director of the BTO, and Brian Eversham and Oliver Burke, respectively Chief Executive and Director of Living Landscapes for the Wildlife Trust for Cambridgeshire. These four people were happy to be interviewed at a later date and, during the course of that interview with Mike Toms (27th January 2015), the offer was made to conduct an e-survey of BTO members for their views on wildlife art with a conservation message. This co-production resulted in a second survey targeting 40,000 BTO members who would not necessarily have an interest in art but were certainly interested in birds, their monitoring and their conservation. As the number of respondents was potentially high, a digital survey was ideal allowing the same survey to be seen by large numbers of people, and enabling easy collation of responses by electronic means.

The questionnaire open to BTO members was based on the findings of the Mall Galleries' visitor survey. Some questions were repeated or rephrased, some asked in greater depth and some questions were not repeated as the responses on the first survey were not informative. As the survey of BTO members would be conducted on-line through Survey Monkey, there were only three 'open' questions. For ease of completion, for collating the results and for me to analyse, most of the questions were 'closed' type with responses indicated on a 5-point Likert scale. Other on-line and face-to-face surveys reported using 5-points (such as Marty 2007) researching on-line use of museum websites, or 7-points (such as McKercher 2002) undertaking departure interviews at Hong Kong International Airport, or Ballantyne et al (2007) investigating environmental awareness, interests and motives of botanic garden visitors, and Taheri et al. (2014). However, I felt that 5 points would be easier to comprehend with less agonizing by the respondents on exactly where their answer should be placed, and quicker for me to analyse. More options may have provided more detail and nuance on respondents' opinions.

Age and gender questions were only asked in the BTO members' survey and, in some cases, this information helped identify which groups of people might respond better to particular visual messages. I note that Mason & McCarthy (2006:23) reported that

“people who participate in public culture activities such as visiting museums, galleries and libraries, are more likely to be older, highly educated, and with a higher income and class origin. About a quarter, or 23%, of the 18–25 age group participate in public culture, compared to 40% of the 60+ age group”.

However, they also reported that:

“a number of other studies concluded that, rather than any particular predisposition towards museums, the visitor profile (particularly age group) is influenced by exhibition content” (Mason & McCarthy 2006:23).

The process of drafting and refining the questions for the BTO members' survey was conducted via email and telephone with Mike Toms, of the BTO. An example of his input was in the questions about nature reserve signs. As Toms anticipated a large response to the BTO Members' survey, and because we wanted to limit the numbers of questions asked to thirty in total, he suggested randomly allocating an image to each respondent. Each respondent viewed only one image rather than all seven. This suggestion by Mike Toms was the most substantive alteration suggested by him, and he offered amendments to wording and so on which were mostly minor. The other contribution that Toms made was in sourcing suitable images for the wildlife artists both from the BTO library and the internet.

I sent the near-final draft for comments to 14 former work colleagues, and friends not involved in the conservation sector. I received verbal approval from two friends who said they had enjoyed completing it and constructive criticism from three former colleagues, all who had been employed by EN and NE. Of this latter group, Tim Barfield suggested clarification on knowledge of the work of the artist, which resulted in my providing an

example of the artists' work describing it as a 'typical example' rather than asking specifically about the piece provided. Dr John Hopkins observed that he was often contradictory and inconsistent when answering multiple choice questions, and thus to be aware of this phenomena in some people. Dr Heather Robertson provided several useful comments including: clarification over whether favourite artists could include deceased ones; wondered about sound images as well as visual images; and suggested that I did not include percentage results from the previous survey as some people (subconsciously or not) may wish to be part of the majority view or may prefer to take a minority view. She suggested using neutral terms when referring to previous results, employing vaguer terms like "some". With regard to the nature reserve signs, Robertson also suggested emphasising that I was seeking respondents' views on the *appearance* of the sign rather than the text itself.

The BTO members' survey was included as an item in the June 2015 BTO e-news and members invited to respond. The questionnaire was hosted by 'Survey Monkey', accessed by the BTO, and this programme compiled the raw data into an Excel spreadsheet, with the respondent's name and contact details deleted, before being sent to me. The survey opened on the 17th June 2015 and closed on the 7th July 2015. There were 223 responders with 6 blanks, that is, no response at all. Seven respondents stopped at Q17, that is, the end of the artists' questions, and one respondent stopped immediately after Q17. All the data was included in the analyses – see chapter 7.

Toms emailed me on 22nd June:

"We've had 205 responses to the questionnaire, with 261 unique clicks through on the link within the e-news that we sent out. Most of these responses came on 17th June (125), with 47 the next day and roughly 10 a day coming through at the moment".

He had hoped for "closer to 500 responses but given the other 'calls to action' in the e-news I guess it is about right." The survey was closed on 7th July at my request. By the end, there were 223 completed responses, with 387

unique clicks through the e-news link – which equates to a 58% response rate. A minimum of 213 completed the whole questionnaire. There were 12 follow-up emails from respondents which were all replied to, with most of the emails requesting a summary of the results.

The Survey Monkey programme collated the information, in a large Excel spreadsheet where each row represented the answers from one responder and new columns for each new answer, all the 'scores' being contained in 81 columns and 228 rows. The word or phrase answers to the 'open questions' were provided in full in one column for each of these three questions, with no column spacers or summing. In a similar way to that described for the results of the Mall Galleries' visitor survey, the results were collated and grouped, and then compared using actual and percentage data, and presented as graphs or charts in Chapter 7.

3.4 Survey of SWLA Artists

For the survey of nature artists, this Society was selected as members are able to exhibit their work in a London Gallery which is well-attended, is sponsored by nature conservation organisations, and the Society contributes to a range of conservation projects and campaigns across the world. Having considered their work and achievements, I wanted to discover the views of nature artists themselves and particularly about their impact on and effectiveness for nature conservation. As I had interviewed visitors to an exhibition of the SWLA, I felt these artists were an important element in my visual culture model. I contacted all 65 artists listed in the SWLA 2016 Exhibition catalogue with a short survey in the spring of 2017 (see Appendix 4 for the questionnaire).

The information required from this group was distilled into six questions with a mixture of open questions with space for answers and tick boxes to provide numerical data all shown on one side. The survey avoided long questions that are often off-putting because they are complicated and potential respondents have no time or little inclination. Only a few questions were

asked as I felt artists, who are often self-employed, would be concerned about the time taken to complete the survey. The questions corresponded to some posed in the earlier questionnaires especially the Mall Gallery visitor survey, and tried to avoid being 'leading' questions.

A covering letter provided a brief background to the research and attempted to engage the interest of the artists. An apology was given for the standardised approach, especially as a number of the artists are well-known conservationists. The artists' names and addresses were inserted at the top of letter.

My email address was provided for those who preferred not to write but a SAE was included to encourage return of the survey, as this approach had seemed to encourage replies in the Mall Galleries survey. The outward envelopes were addressed by hand, but return labels were used on the SAEs to save effort and look more professional. A six week deadline for returns was requested, as a deadline can be helpful in encouraging replies. All artists listed as full members of the SWLA in the 2016 Exhibition catalogue were contacted, although those with non-UK addresses were not included as I was unable to provide an appropriately-stamped SAE, and also those artists may not have been aware of UK nature conservation agencies (covered in questions 3 and 4 of the survey).

Although the questionnaire itself was anonymous, all those who responded provided their name. Twenty-three replies were received representing a 35% return rate. One requested an electronic copy of the survey, but did not return a completed questionnaire. The responses varied from short answers to several sheets of hand-written replies. Several artists sent me postcards or greetings cards of their work or referred me to websites. Darren Rees sent me four examples of his work that he felt provided strong conservation messages. Two of the artists had died since the catalogue was published: Basil Ede and John Eveleigh. Both widows replied, with Mrs Eveleigh sending me some information about her husband's work. I thus received informative replies from or about 21 of the artists, representing a 32% return

rate. The answers supplied by the artists in each section were grouped together, and common themes and different ideas and evidence identified. This information was set out in the different sections of Chapter 6.

3.5 Reflections on Research Methods

A variety of methods covered in this research included exploring personal archives, and face-to-face, on-line and postal interviews and questionnaires which enabled discovery of material and data from a range of sources.

The archival searches of statutory agency publications and other material had both negative and positive aspects. The disadvantages of using personal archives meant that these reflected personal interests of those staff contacted and not a complete record of material produced. Personal storage limitations meant that only a selection of material produced was retained, largely uncatalogued. Thus low numbers of stored material in a personal archive may reflect the amount of material produced by a particular agency, or could be due to gradual attrition or limits to actual storage capacity. Conversely, as well as 'official' documents and publications, the material in personal archives included magazine articles, memorabilia, hand-written file notes not considered worth officially transcribing and storing, unpublished material, confidential items and internal guidance. This material was not captured in 'official' archives and which I would not have been able to otherwise obtain. In addition, the staff members were still enthusiastic and interested in their material – when going through their material it felt like they were discovering old friends, which prompted further exploration of their storage boxes and shelves.

Interviews, particularly the open conversation-style ones, could provide a detailed snapshot of a particular event or time, and recollections could include details not captured elsewhere and added tangential material as background. The interactive interviews enabled conversation that included anecdotes and side-tracks, the ability to clarify points immediately, and were wide-ranging. As the interviewees were mostly contacted direct, I was able

to choose staff from both head office and a local team, and a range of representative jobs, including Directors, managers, scientific staff, conservation staff, press officers and those from support services such as librarians, training and publicity.

The disadvantages of interviews included detailed memories lost over time, distorted and slanted views, being distracted from the original question by anecdotes, and there is a chance that interviewees could commandeer the interview for their own agenda. Those interviewed were only a sample and not the full range of staff employed, and therefore may have provided only a partial view. The majority were people that I knew and/or worked with and thus most were from a particular locality, and may have come with similar backgrounds and views to my own. The emailed replies were more focussed, but I was not necessarily able to clarify details. Emails can get deferred and then not completed, and information via email is largely dependent on respondent's interest in replying.

Questionnaires undertaken face-to-face, by email or the internet include the advantages and disadvantages describe above. In addition, they could provide more random contact and a wider range of responses. On the other hand, it is difficult, if not impossible, such as with anonymous on-line surveys, to provide clarification if question is not understood, or explain that the answer supplied is not what the question asked. The response rate is dependent on the interest of those contacted and the analysis and manipulation of replies depends on my interpretation of what is written.

I believe that the different methods used provided a broad range of material derived from different yet complementary sources, and have enabled a wide-ranging appreciation of the visual culture of nature conservation.

3.6 Researcher Positionality

I have been interested in wildlife art and nature since childhood, developing knowledge of ecology through study at University, and followed by a career in nature conservation. I used identification books to learn about wildlife I had seen and I also enjoyed visiting art galleries and art exhibitions.

During much of my working life I used illustrations to explain conservation principles and desired habitat management. I tried to persuade and influence landowners and land managers, planners, developers, and the general public towards a sympathetic approach to wildlife. I found that illustrations were often very helpful and more successful than using just words. For example, illustrations were important for identification of species and to show how habitats could look and how beneficial land management could be done. I also used historical photographs to demonstrate past management practices and maps to show distribution and rarity of species and habitat types.

I believe my depth of interest in wildlife art and wildlife itself, together with practical experience in using nature illustrations to learn from and to explain to others, and a long career of working with a variety of conservationists have provided me with a good background to this research, to identify directions to take and contacts to make. I have collected literature and material over the years, and I have worked closely with a range of colleagues. My collections and contacts have provided me with an informed platform from which to take this research forward. I recognise that my interest and background in the topic could have influenced my thinking, but I believe the way the research has been conducted has served to counter balance any pre-conceived ideas and the final conclusions were derived from the research results. For example, the staff members from the statutory agencies who I initially contacted were well known to me, and some of them had held similar posts. However, even these people who I knew, had different experiences to me, and several of them put me in contact with former colleagues whom I had never met, and whose interviews provided new insights and balance to those interviews with colleagues with whom I had previously worked.

Similarly, although I was familiar with the work of many of the nature artists, I had not met most of them nor interviewed them. Furthermore, the questionnaires of public views about nature art of both the Mall Galleries' visitors and the BTO members were totally new. I did not know what to expect from the public questionnaires nor from the artists responses to their questionnaire. This new data has informed the research countering any preconceptions, but I believe my pre-existing knowledge has helped me to understand and interpret all the new information.

Chapter 4 Imagery Used by Two Nature Conservation Agencies: the Nature Conservancy and the Nature Conservancy Council (1949 to 1991)

4.1 Introduction

The statutory nature conservation agencies utilise the work of nature artists in their literature and information provision. The material produced describes, explains, promotes and encourages nature conservation activities in those they seek to influence, including Government, industry, planners, farmers and land-owners, others in the conservation sector and the general public. This information is presented to people of all ages, gender and colour. Following an introductory discussion on the logos of all four statutory agencies, material from the Nature Conservancy and the NCC are explored in this chapter.

4.2 Logos of the Statutory Nature Conservation Agencies

A logo is defined as a trademark or identifying symbol consisting of a picture, design and sometimes letters. All the agencies have been consistent in using their logo on all publicity material and publications, indicating the value placed on portraying their identity.

The Royal Crown signified the Nature Conservancy's authority: granted a Royal Charter and the statutory adviser to Government on nature conservation. It was used widely on publications and nature reserve signs. During the interview with G Radley, he remembered that in NCC

“the use of the crown on the letter head, arm bands, posters, on notices, the top of the headed notepaper, on nature reserve signs...(together with)...wearing uniforms, as did the Forestry Commission staff, driving green vans and wearing arm bands...tapped into the authority of Government...and gave the organisation a certain clout...particularly in the post-war culture” (see Fig.4.1 and Fig.4.2).



Fig.4.1 Metal heading of Nature Conservancy reserve sign, author's photograph



Fig.4.2 Nature reserve sign in situ at un-named reserve (Nature Conservancy 1959:32)

The Royal Crown was a constant feature on early Nature Conservancy material, but in 1965, NERC (itself set up by Royal Charter) embedded the Conservancy's work within the Council (Marren 2002). Subsequent publications included the 'Natural Environment Research Council - Nature Conservancy' logo on the front covers and the Royal Crown no longer appeared (see Fig.4.3). The design resembled the London Underground symbol, first used in 1908 designed by Albert Stanley (Martin 2012), and developed by Frank Pick during the First World War (Martin 2012, London Transport Museum 2010).



Fig.4.3 Logo used by Nature Conservancy on majority of publications, 1965 to 1973 (front cover '*Nature Trails*' 1968)

The NERC-Nature Conservancy logo was used until the end of the Conservancy in 1973, although during that final year the symbol was largely replaced with just the name 'Nature Conservancy'. Exceptions to this logo, used by the Conservancy, were on materials associated with the National Nature Weeks (1963 and 1965), '*The Countryside in 1970*' conferences and for '*European Conservation Year*' in 1970.

The logo for 1963 National Nature Week (Fig.4.4), an event organised by the Council for Nature, resembles an emblem used by the RSPB from 1906 in 'Bird Notes and News' (RSPB 2012). The version, shown in Fig.4.5, dated 1934 focusses on birds, whereas the National Nature Week one gives the impression of a holistic, partnership approach to the environment and its conservation in using symbols of plant, animal, bird and earth.



Fig.4.4 Roundel style used for 1963 National Nature Week publications and promotion



Fig.4.5 1934 RSPB symbol (RSPB 2012)

The first '*Countryside in 1970*' conference in November 1963 and the second in November 1965 brought together a wide range of organisations concerned with the impacts of social and economic trends on the countryside, and how these were to be treated. It was hoped that by 1970 a new strategy would be agreed and in place. The logo (see Fig.4.6) encapsulated the choices facing society and the individual, indicated by a small question mark above the date

‘1970’ together with a human figure holding a pair of binoculars in a landscape of hills, trees and wildlife on one side, and a pick in the other hand in a landscape of factories, building development, roads and litter.



Fig.4.6 'The Countryside in 1970' campaign' logo (Nicholson 1965a)

The Conservancy used the official logo for European Conservation Year 1970 (ECY 1970) (see Fig.4.7) on relevant material. This design would appear to be based on the European Flag and symbol, originating in 1955, where the circle of twelve stars represents the ideals of unity, solidarity and harmony among the peoples of Europe (European Union 2015), with the tree representing the environment. There were 21 countries taking part in this particular initiative and the logo not only represented Europe, but European peoples working together for the good of the environment. The Department of the Environment campaign: 'Plant a Tree in 73' (see Fig.4.8) adapted the ECY 1970 logo, perhaps hoping to re-ignite memories of the ECY 1970 initiatives:



Fig.4.7 'European Conservation Year 1970' logo (as on cover, Duffey 1969)

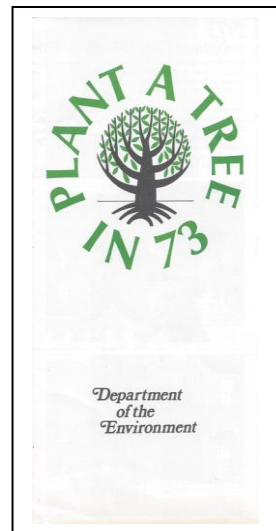


Fig.4.8 Department of the Environment 'Plant a Tree in 73' campaign leaflet depicting adapted ECY1970 logo

The crown symbol reappeared with the establishment of the NCC in 1973, and after some early variation in the placing of the crown and name, by 1977 these appeared centrally at the top of most publications and leaflets with the full name written in capitals (see Fig.4.9). The use and position of the crown symbol would indicate a clear, formal and authoritative corporate style.



Fig.4.9 NCC publication's front covers demonstrating consistent type face, position and appearance of NCC logo (1979, 1981, 1982, 1986 and 1988)

The arrival of EN in 1991 caused another change in agency logo: “The loss of the crown ...upset people (because) they felt it diminished the authority of the organisation” G Radley remembered. The new logo may perhaps have represented land and sea, but Oswald (2) recalled it was likened by Peter Marren to ‘a wing and a prayer’ perhaps reflecting the anticipated struggles ahead (see Fig.4.10). These struggles were realised, and the eventual bringing together of English Nature, the Countryside Commission and the Rural Development Service to create NE in 2006 (see Marren 2002:33-46), resulted in another logo design (see Fig.4.10). As with the EN logo, the resulting green square with the white and magenta lettering does not appear to represent wildlife or natural landscapes or engaging people with nature conservation, although the colours themselves may be considered ‘earth’ colours. It is bold and noticeable with similarities to an estate agent sign, such as Savills. The logos of other conservation organisations often tend to be much clearer in their intentions and focus, compared to the statutory agency logos (see Chapter 2).



Fig.4.10 English Nature and Natural England logos

Thus the four agencies’ individual logos have reflected their general, overarching remit without focussing on any one particular element. ‘Nature’ or ‘natural’ are consistent words, and the authoritarian impression from the early days has given way to something more egalitarian.

One item produced by three of the agencies was a coffee mug (see Fig.4.11). The NCC one was produced for sale. It came with an Easter egg

and depicted a badger or reed bunting. EN issued theirs in 1998 as a farewell from the Earl of Cranbrook with a quotation from E Fitzgerald:

‘Fill the cup that clears today of past regrets and future fears:

Tomorrow! Why, tomorrow I may be myself with yesterday’s sev’n thousand years.

Fill the cup – what boots it to repeat how time is slipping underneath our feet:

Unborn tomorrow, and dead yesterday, why fret about them if today be sweet!’

Natural England’s mug prosaically bore the logo plus the website address.



Fig.4.11 NCC, EN and NE coffee mugs, Author’s photograph

I now turn to examining published and other promotional items considering how the material might appear to the intended readership.

4.3 The Nature Conservancy (1949-1973)

The Nature Conservancy (NC) devised a system of identifying nature areas worthy of protection, and established research centres, programmes and offices for newly-recruited staff across the country, plus all the support services required. According to Peterken (1), the Conservancy was originally set up with biodiversity conservation and research as jointly important objectives. In hindsight, attempting to achieve these two objectives could explain subsequent tensions in priorities, presentation and engagement with the public. Stamp (1969:53) claimed “it was clear from the beginning that the Conservancy had a major task in putting across to the public the concept of conservation”. Initially, the agency had neither sufficient staff nor funding to

promote nature conservation, and consequently it had a low profile (Seamons [2]). Apart from annual reports direct to Government (Oswald 2), its first publication intended for an external audience was in 1959 and there followed various public-facing initiatives over subsequent years.

4.3.1 ‘*The Nature Conservancy: the first ten years*’ (1959)

This key document, ‘*The Nature Conservancy: the first ten years*’ (Nature Conservancy 1959) provides an insight into how the agency used illustrations to help explain itself and convey its messages. The author was not named, though acknowledgements were given to photographers, and the Conservancy was “indebted to Mr C J Bradshaw, of Eyre and Spottiswoode Limited, for much help & advice on the whole concept & production of this booklet” (p36). The booklet cost one shilling and sixpence to buy, was 36 pages with a soft cover and dimensions: 204 x 175 mm. The target audience would appear to have been the British general public, borne out by an un-authored hand-written file note (Ref N54/4 from Seamon’s archive):

“EMN* had noted at the Council meeting on 29th January 1959 that the booklet was ‘fundamentally...in aid of public relations and must be judged on its merits as making a start with the long overdue task of advertising the functions and work of the Conservancy’ ”.

(*Max Nicholson, Director General of the Nature Conservancy 1951-1965)

The Conservancy had “deliberately pursued a policy of avoiding undue publicity while still in the formative stage”, but the encounter with the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) over Dungeness had raised public interest, and the Conservancy wanted “the story of the struggle to defend nature and the countryside to be told in plain language.” (Ref N54/4 from Seamons’ archive)

In the same note, it was explained that Her Majesty’s Stationery Office (HMSO) was originally intended to produce the booklet but because it was “too complicated” for them, approaches had been made to the publishers,

Eyre and Spottiswoode. W.H.Smith was then deemed to be the most suitable outlet, but, because of a failure to get any television coverage, book sales were “disappointing”. It was hoped that the booklet would have “a PR value for about 5 years”. The file note ended with that by May 1962, 25,800 copies were produced, of which 6,000 were sold, 16,800 distributed by NC staff with the remaining 3,000 retained for the first National Nature Week the following year. Seamons recalled purchasing a copy “via a letter and Postal Order” when he was aged “about 14/15 years old”.

The booklet talked of “our country”, “our eyes”, “our children” and “our heritage” (Nature Conservancy 1959:1) possibly reflecting a general post World War Two (WWII) ethos of engagement with the country’s landscape and history. It referred to Parliament’s decisions “to try to safeguard the national heritage” (p1), defined terms such as ‘nature’, ‘conservation’ and ‘nature reserve’, and explained who the Conservancy was and what it was intended to do (p2). It also stated that the booklet was a “brief account that will try to answer these questions as plainly as possible” referring the reader to the preceding “Conservancy’s nine Annual Reports to Parliament” (p2). The agency appears keen to present itself as authoritative and responsible: reproducing the seal from its Royal Charter (p5) and in the section ‘The Governing Body’ it stated that of the eighteen members of the executive council, two were MPs (one each from the Government and the Opposition) plus the Chairman of the National Parks Commission. It continued:

“At present the other fifteen members include two members of the House of Lords and five professors or ex-professors in biological or geographical sciences. Three members are Lords Lieutenant of their counties; three are Fellows of the Royal Society and most are also Chairman or prominent members of other national bodies concerned with science or the land.” (Nature Conservancy 1959:8)

This level of gravitas and membership quality was reflected in the full page photograph of a meeting of the Conservancy in Belgrave Square (see Fig.4.12), together with the portrait of Sir Arthur Tansley, first Chairman of the Conservancy (see Fig.4.13). From our current perspective, the lack of

representation is very obvious: no women, no young folk, and no ethnic diversity, although this may reflect the lack of diversity at this time in people of sufficient standing and expertise thought able to sit on such a committee.



Fig.4.12 Nature Conservancy meeting, Head Office, 19 Belgrave Square, London, 1959
(Nature Conservancy 1959:9)

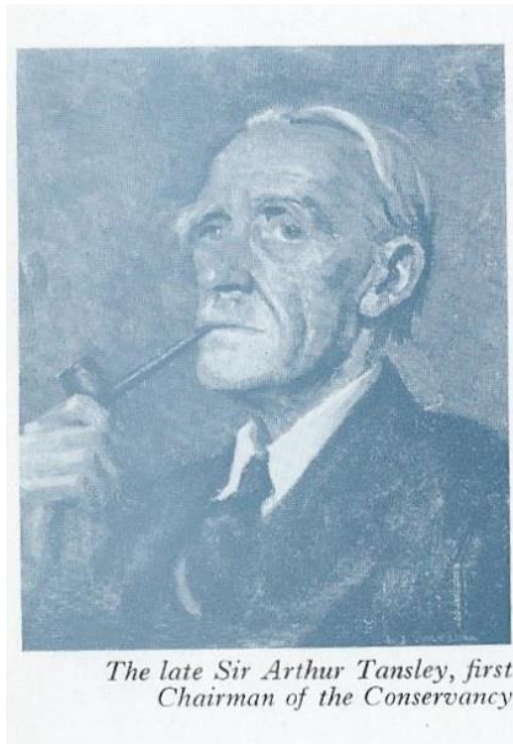


Fig.4.13 L J Watson's painting: "*the late Sir Arthur Tansley, first Chairman of the Conservancy*" (Nature Conservancy 1959:8, and also in Stamp 1969 Plate 1)

The tenor of '*The Nature Conservancy: the first ten years*' – and the justification of the establishment of the Nature Conservancy - was set out on p1 with a plea to the reader about the decline and loss of countryside and its wildlife:

"Our country, as we used to know it, is vanishing before our eyes. We see its coasts and fields chosen as sites for houses and power stations. Its green hills sprout steel masts and pylons. Its old oakwoods are clear-felled. Its grasslands, once bright with wild flowers, are now ploughed up and are reseeded. Its waters and its air are polluted. We seek peace and we no longer find it." (Nature Conservancy 1959:1)

The introduction went on to talk about the price of progress, but questions the environmental cost. It talked about the relationship between the land and people in years gone by, and whether this past relationship could be recaptured and whether the nation valued and understood its heritage. It briefly described how the Nature Conservancy was established with a purpose: "to try to safeguard the national heritage in the countryside" and continued with emotive language:

“Will wild nature be once more a partner, understood and valued by all, or become a mere doormat worn down to shabbiness? Will our country repeat, or will it avoid, the evils and disasters arising from what has been called the Rape of the Earth?”
(Nature Conservancy 1959:1)

This scene setting followed on from the photographs of species and habitats depicted on the front cover (see Fig.4.14). Uncluttered by text, names and places are listed on the back page perhaps designed to give the photographs greater impact.

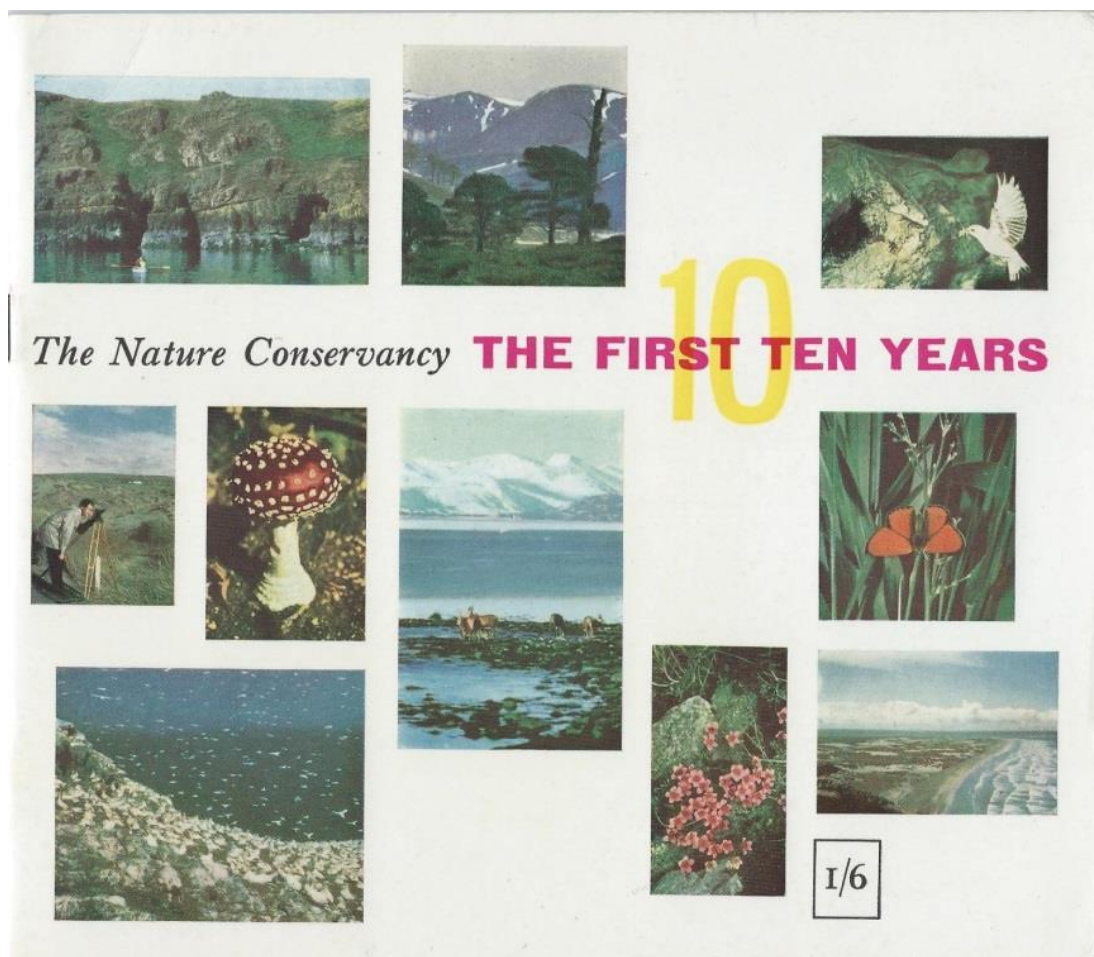


Fig.4.14 Front cover '*The First Ten Years*' (The Nature Conservancy 1959)

Only six pages of *The Nature Conservancy: the first ten years* are text only. The other thirty pages included an image or graphic. Apart from the colour photographs on the front cover, all the other illustrations consisted of black and white photographs taken from the *National Collection of Nature*

Photographs (Clark 1966). There are nine full page ones including five landscapes and three species, such as the Golden Eagle (see Fig.4.15) probably intended to impress and excite the reader, Adder and Silverweed.



Fig.4.15 "A pair of golden Eagles at the nest, from the *National Collection of Nature Photographs*" - full page photograph (Nature Conservancy 1959:15)

There were also twenty other small photographs, mostly on the margins of the pages, seven of which showed practical land management, such as Gordon Mason, Warden of Woodwalton Fen Nature Reserve regulating water levels in a dyke (p11), and fencing to fix drifting sand at Braunton Burrows in North Devon (p20). The photographs of the countryside suggested the grandeur and drama of the landscape, where it is to be viewed and admired, but not necessarily engaged with, as in the example of Roudsea Wood (see Fig.4.16).



Fig.4.16 Full page photograph depicting the “transition from Oakwood to Saltmarsh, Roudsea Wood Nature Reserve” (Nature Conservancy 1959:27)

There were also three graphs (for example see Fig.4.17), one table, one chart, a photomontage of press cuttings, and two maps. There were no drawings or sculpture depicted, with only one painting, that of Sir Arthur Tansley (see Fig. 4.13).

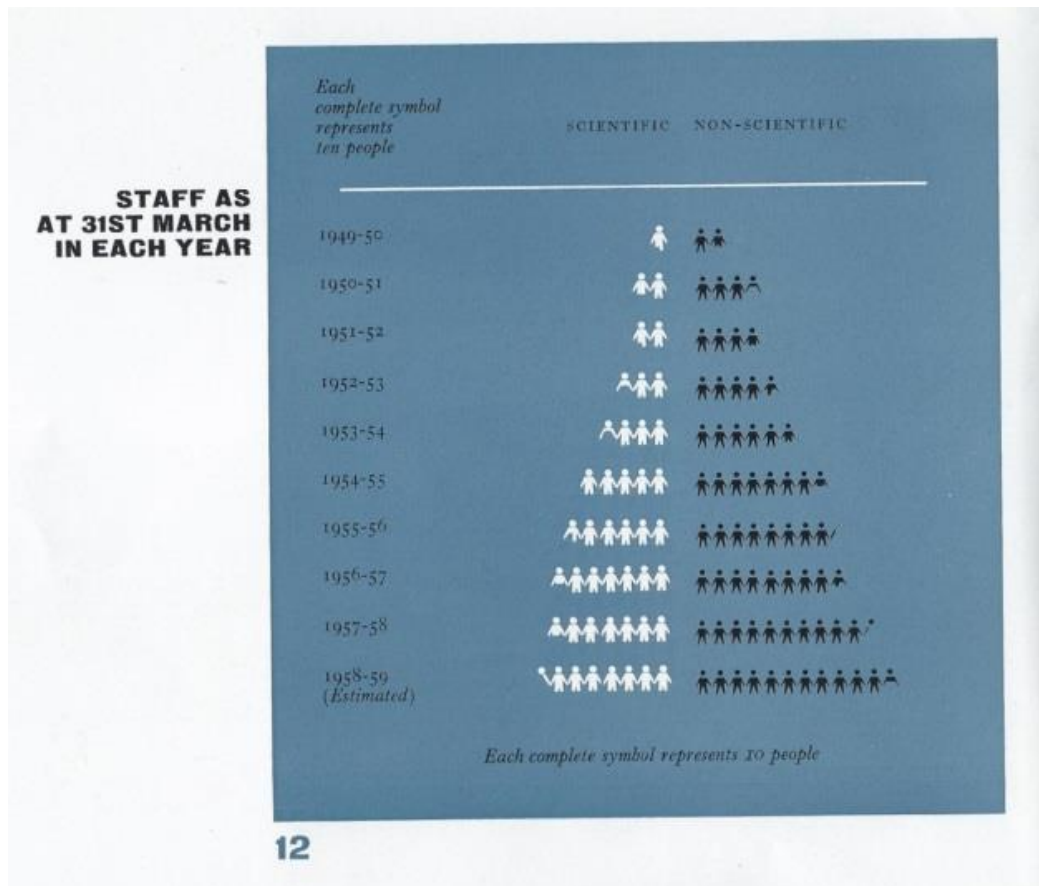


Fig.4.17 Yearly staffing levels in the Nature Conservancy at 31st March from 1950 to 1959, where it was felt necessary to explain twice that: “Each complete symbol represents 10 people”. Absolute numbers are difficult to determine from this diagram (Nature Conservancy 1959:12)

The lack of photographs of young people or families would appear to reflect the lack of engagement with these groups, but under the section ‘*Education in Nature Conservation*’ the work of natural history societies was applauded and the setting up of the Conservation Corps in 1959 for “groups of young people” able to volunteer for nature reserve management work was welcomed. However, the booklet stated that “the provision for education relating to nature conservation is extremely inadequate in this country” and that “public support for the conservation of nature and for the education of the younger generation in its importance needs to be greatly extended and strengthened” (Nature Conservancy 1959:28).

The publication of “...*the first ten years...*” set the standard for subsequent publications intended for public use: accessible language, using illustrations,

largely photographs, featuring British birds and animals, landscapes and some people, as well as graphs, diagrams and maps.

4.3.2 Artists Commissioned by the Nature Conservancy

“...*the first ten years...*” introduced the first commissioned artist. Although he painted for the Nature Conservancy, Leslie Watson (1906-1992) was exceptional amongst the commissioned artists in that he also worked as a professional landscape adviser: his professional life carried through into his art. Born in Harrogate, he attended Leeds College of Art and the Royal College of Art (1928-32), and was a founder member of the Royal Society of Marine Artists (RMSA). He regularly exhibited with the RMSA, and also at the New English Art Club, the Royal Institute of Oil Painters and the Royal Academy (Totteridge Gallery 2016). It is said that he believed that 20th century marine painting relied too heavily on photographs, and that more art work should be painted directly from nature. His work included paintings of ‘*River Thames at Richmond*’ (Totteridge Gallery 2016), ‘*Cornish Coast*’ and ‘*By the lighthouse*’ (Invaluable.com 2016). Two paintings by him are well known to conservationists: the portrait of Arthur Tansley (above); and also ‘*The Naturalists*’. A version of the latter is on display in the Botany School, University of Cambridge, and another in Natural England’s Peterborough office. The painting is reprinted on the Frontispiece of both Sheail (1987) and Marren (1995).

‘*The Naturalists*’ depicts E.B. Ford, A.G. Tansley, A.S. Watt and C. Diver and the scene was set on an East Anglian heath in the summer of 1949 (see Fig.4.18). Professor Ford was an expert on butterflies and author of what some consider was the best butterfly book ever written (Marren 1995); Arthur Tansley is regarded as the father of British conservation having worked on the classification of British vegetation from 1911 to 1939, and was the first Chair of the Nature Conservancy in 1949; Professor Watt worked on the ecology and dynamics of vegetation; and Cyril Diver was the first Director General of the Nature Conservancy and elected President of the British Ecological Society. The painting gives the impression that the two standing, Tansley and Watt, are the ‘gods of botany’, and the other two are on their

knees before them. Marren (1995) reported that an observer of the scene queried what they were doing and Watson answered: “Don’t you know? It’s the new religion!”

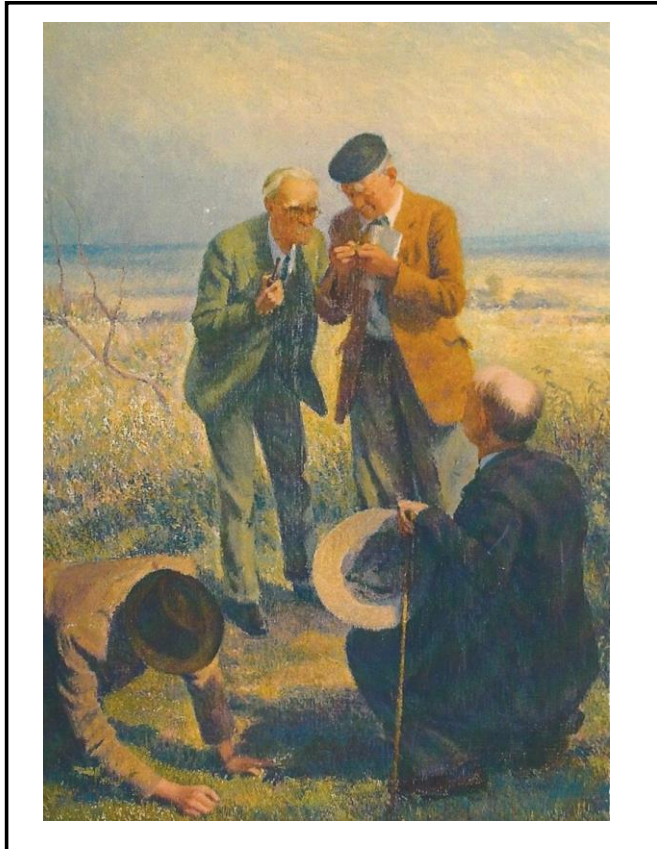


Fig.4.18 ‘The Naturalists’ by L.J. Watson (1949) from EN postcard

As well as being an exhibiting artist and landscape architect, Watson had been employed by the National Park Committee (1945-47) as their landscape adviser. He then became the Senior Field Officer for the National Parks Commission and worked for the Countryside Commission as a landscape consultant until 1973. Woolmore (2009) described Watson as “uniquely (providing) continuity and consistency in giving advice on landscape designations from 1945-73” in an “influential role often understated” (Woolmore 2009:18).

Artists Maurice Wilson and Michael Copus were both commissioned by the Conservancy to work on dioramas for the 1963 National Nature Week (see below). Maurice Wilson (1914-1987) was educated at Hastings School of Art

and the Royal Academy Schools. He produced a range of material: posters for London Transport (1949-1955) including '*Epping Forest*' in 1951 depicting wildlife in and around the Forest (London Transport Museum 2010); illustrating books and exhibition material (particularly for The Natural History Museum, NHM) especially on Palaeontological subjects (Illustration Art Gallery 2011, Charig 1989, and Oakley G 2012), providing artwork for Brooke Bond tea picture-cards (Illustration Art Gallery 2011 and (Charig 1989); and illustrated numerous nature books. Wilson was also a founder member of the Society of Wildlife Artists (SWLA 2013) later becoming Vice-President (Charig 1989). Michael Copus (1936 – 2000) painted large dioramas exhibited in the Wild Life Exhibition in the first National Nature Week (May 1963), and his work as an illustrator was included in Nature Trails (Nature Conservancy 1968) (see below).

Syd Lewis and Joyce Bee were illustrators much used by the Nature Conservancy as their names or initials appear quite frequently on Conservancy publications such as nature trail leaflets (see below). In addition to the work for the statutory conservation agencies, Syd Lewis illustrated books such as by Botting et al. (1999) and Grimes & Herbert (1989). Joyce Bee was an artist of educational posters and an illustrator. She produced a range of artwork on British natural history themes including: during the 1960s a series of watercolours for use in a new insect gallery at the NHM; contributions to entomology books such as Burton (1968) and Goodden (1981 & 2002); and designed the 1981 butterfly identification posters for the NHM and greeting cards (Natural History Museum 2015).

4.3.3. '*The Nature Conservancy: Handbook 1968*' and '*Progress 1964-1968*'

The next few publications to be considered used photographs and diagrams for illustration and not until the 1963 National Nature Week and the 1968 Nature Trails publication are artists mentioned again.

Annual Reports "laid before Parliament" (Oswald 2) were a statutory requirement available for purchase, but, when the Conservancy was

subsumed within NERC in 1965 (see Chapter 2), they were no longer a legal requirement. The voluntary bodies valued these reports and complained that the small section about the Nature Conservancy in the NERC Annual Report was insufficient. Bob Boote, the Director General who succeeded Nicholson, asked Oswald to write a summary document about the Conservancy in the period whilst it was within NERC, and Michael Blackmore, the then Press Officer, to write a companion volume about NNRs, which would be the first single publication about all the reserves. These two items, published on the same day, were '*The Nature Conservancy: Handbook 1968*' and '*The Nature Conservancy: Progress 1964-1968*' (Oswald 2).

In 1960, Oswald (1) was appointed as the Conservancy's reserve manager at Rostherne Mere NNR, Cheshire. He explained that Rostherne was a bird reserve, noted for its wintering wildfowl, with a bird observatory established there by public donation. Although it was a closed access reserve, Oswald had established contacts with the Universities of Liverpool, Manchester and Salford, to enable the reserve to be used for research purposes. His public relations skills, together with his teaching experience before becoming a warden, were noted by Tom Pritchard, the Regional Officer for the West Midlands, who was very keen on education and collaboration with Universities. In 1965, Pritchard transferred Oswald into the Education Advisory Section based in Attingham where he became Head of Section in 1966/67. Researching for the '*Progress...*' publication, he travelled widely through England, Scotland and Wales, commissioning and editing material. He was "proud of the result" particularly of inventing the heading 'working with others' which discussed collaboration with voluntary bodies and others.

Comparing with '*...the first ten years...*' the images of nature are much reduced in number: the *Handbook* contains no species' images but 13 photographs of a range of NNRs (with five of these on the cover), whilst the '*Progress...*' volume contains only one view solely of wildlife (with two on the front cover). The remainder of the photographs of nature in '*Progress...*' illustrate conservation issues such as the Torrey Canyon oil pollution spill, skiing development in the Cairngorms, and recreational impact on the Norfolk

Broads, or of people being involved with nature. The illustrations used in both publications consist of only black and white photographs.

Whilst '*Handbook...*' contains no images of people at all, '*Progress...*' suggests a big change in approach: more photographs of people (15 separate images) with more children, a total of nine in five photographs, and all active in some way (see Fig.4.19), reflecting Oswald's interest in education and collaborative working.

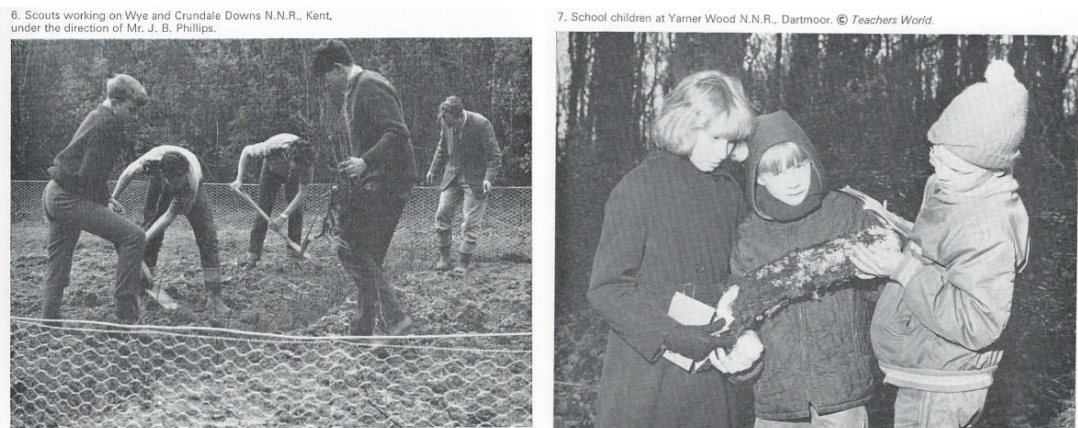


Fig.4.19 Youngsters busy on NNRs: scouts at Wye & Crundale Downs NNR (left); and school children at Yarner Wood NNR (right) (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:25&26)

Working with others provided the Conservancy access to other expertise and resources, a wider outreach and a populist approach. However, the agency retained its science and technical base, as demonstrated in '*Progress...*' illustrating its work with maps and graphs. Examples included maps demonstrating hedgerow loss in Huntingdonshire (p49) (see Fig.4.20), the extent of the Torrey Canyon Disaster (p42) and planning recommendations related to Poole Harbour (p38-39).

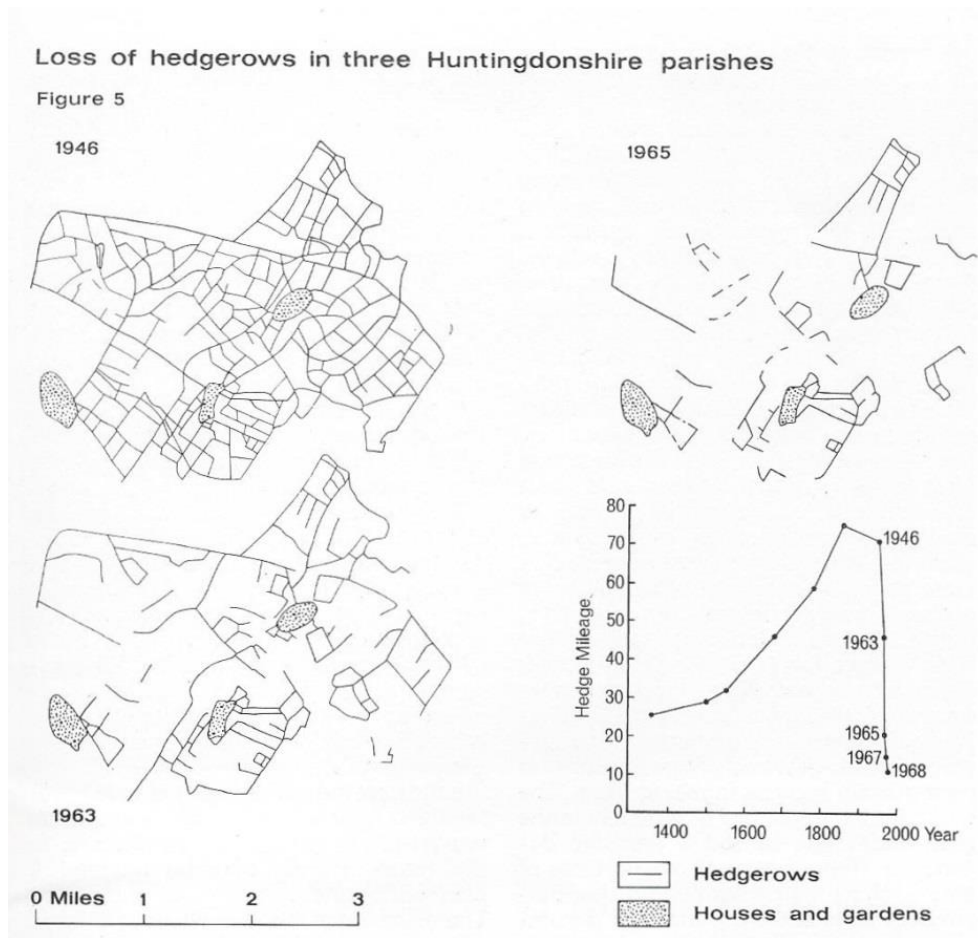


Fig.4.20 Three line-drawn maps (1946, 1963 and 1965) with summary graph depicting the loss of hedgerows from pre-1400 to 1968 (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:49). There is little explanation, and readers are expected to be able to interpret the maps and graph.

'*Progress...*' also included some graphs and charts to illustrate research findings. The graph about litter collection is self-explanatory (see Fig.4.21), but the Studland Bay one requires more concentration and expects numerical literacy in the reader (see Fig.4.22). It repeated the use of people images as in the staff chart Fig.4.17.

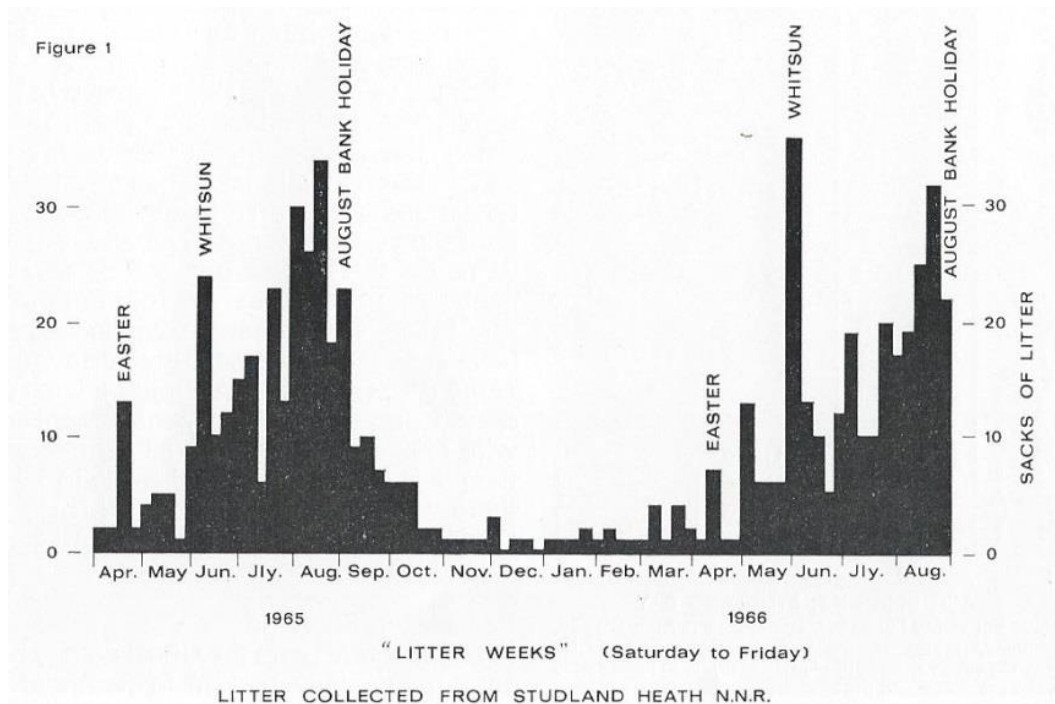


Fig.4.21 18 months' litter collections by sack-full from April 1965 at Studland Heath NNR illustrating the holiday peaks of Easter, Whitsun and summer (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:13)

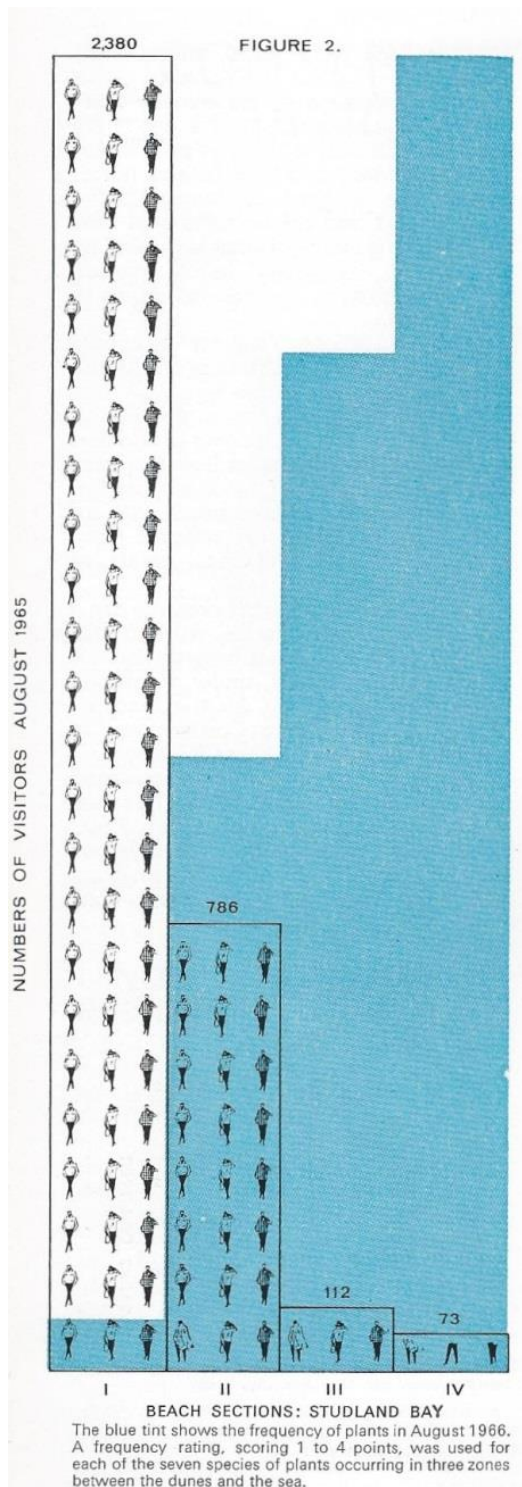


Fig.4.22 Visitor impact on individual numbers of seven plant species in zones between dunes and the sea at Studland Bay (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:14)

The impression given is of a science-based organisation, not afraid to provide technical information in a publication intended to be bought and read

by the public. It expected that readers would understand and interpret the graphs and maps, and appreciate what they indicated about the environment.

Staff based in research stations were most likely to undertake “esoteric, basic research” often “without even a ghost of a thought that they might explain it to the rest of the public”, Peterken (1) recalled. Many of the research reports produced through the early years - see

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C8457> - were likely to target specialist audiences and would have contained few illustrations apart from graphs and tables. Any images used were black and white photographs taken by Peter Wakely and Brian Grimes, usually of “habitats and NNRs which were used again and again”. Brian Grimes, also known as ‘Maps and Snaps’, masterminded the NNR and SSSI maps, and photographs for the national photographic collection (Oswald 2).

However, there were other initiatives. ‘*Progress...*’ included a photograph showing that models, as well as photographs, were used to engage with visitors (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:70) (see Fig.4.23):

16. Members of staff manning the Conservancy’s stand at the Wild Life Exhibition at Alexandra Palace, London, during National Nature Week, 1966.



Fig.4.23 “Members of staff manning the Conservancy’s stand at the Wild Life Exhibition at Alexandra Palace, London, during National Nature Week, 1966” (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:70)

Monks Wood Experimental Station was different. Peterken (1) recalled that work on the sudden decline of birds, and discovery of egg-shell thinning in birds of prey linked to pesticides in the early 1960s, provided “opportunities for communications” such as newspaper articles, particularly as “pesticides were big news because of...Rachel Carson’s book ‘*Silent Spring*’”. Monks Wood also hosted the Biological Records Centre to which the general public contributed records. Peterken recalled that the BRC encouraged “Regional staff to work with local newspapers on various campaigns”, and even “the Daily Mail ran a front page campaign to ‘find your local meadow’”. Peterken said: “Monks Wood was much more outgoing and catholic in its sources and activities. And that was one of its problems in a sense. Monks Wood was more famous than the Nature Conservancy”. They “constantly had visitors...including Harold Wilson PM, and Prince Charles one year...in the early ‘70s”. He said: “There was a lot of outreach at Monks Wood, but you could say there wasn’t a great deal in the rest of the Nature Conservancy”.

4.3.4 ‘National Collection of Nature Photographs’

Photographs were clearly preferred to creative work, possibly due to lower cost, but also reflected what was felt to be a ‘modern’ and technological approach to illustration. A major project, eventually forming the basis of a publication, was the collection of nature photographs started in 1955 on the initiative of Nicholson, with the co-operation of the Zoological Photographic Club, the Nature Photographic Society and the Royal Photographic Society. Its main aim was “to record and safeguard the best examples of British natural history photography for posterity” (Clarke 1966:11). Nicholson’s idea was to ask the

“very best nature photographers like Eric Hosking, to donate a first class print – all black and white – without giving the Nature Conservancy the copyright, although they could be used in exhibitions, and kept in perpetuity as a record of the wonders of nature that were trying to be conserved”, Oswald recalled (1).

Oswald continued: “One of the conditions of the gift was that they were special one-off prime prints. The costs were borne by the photographers for

the honour of being included in the collection”. The only cost to the Conservancy was curating the collection, undertaken by Grimes, and “storing the photographs in a fire-proof chest”. First held in the Belgrave Square headquarters containing over 400 photographs by 1959, the collection was moved to Taunton joining the mapping section, as the London offices outgrew their space. One of these images, a small photograph of Cherry and Richard Kearton (see Fig.4.24) is included twice in the *‘First ten years’* (Nature Conservancy 1959): on its own (p22) and on the display board behind the meeting of the Nature Conservancy (p9). The Kearton brothers were pioneers of British nature photography, and Richard has been called “the father of British nature photography” (Clark 1966:9).



Fig.4.24 “The brothers Kearton, Cherry (above) and Richard (below), photographing bird’s nest in pioneer days of 1900” (Nature Conservancy 1959:22)

The Collection was intended “to encourage interest in wildlife, photography and conservation generally” and exhibited in museums and galleries throughout the UK, for example, in “Edinburgh, Leeds, Cardiff and elsewhere”. One of the best attended exhibitions was in Nottingham in 1968 when it was seen by 150,000 people (File Note N129 by A Graham,

Interpretative Branch, Nature Conservancy 23 January 1975, Seamons' archive).

A selection of photographs from the Collection, together with some photographs showing how the images were taken, was published in an A4 hard-back (Clark 1966). Promotion of the Collection may have been helped by input from The Duke of Edinburgh: writing the Foreword and including two of his photographs (pp138 & 139). Nicholson wrote in his 'Introduction', that at the time of writing (1st December 1965), the collection held 1,240 photographs (Clark 1966:12). The book had a print run of 40,000 copies sold within six months of publication (File Note N129 by A. (Andrew) Graham, Interpretative Branch, Nature Conservancy 23 January 1975). The publication contained several hundred black and white images covering full and half pages, as well as double page spreads. Although the reasoning is not explained, there appears a huge bias towards birds (104 pages), and mammals (57 pages), with 12 pages of plants including fungi, 8 pages of reptiles and marine life; and 28 pages of insects. The number of bird images perhaps reflects, and with the hope of harnessing, the large and growing interest in birds. This interest had been steadily increasing for a number of years: for example, the demand for bird books led to the publication of 100 or so of these during 1943-8 (Allen 2010); and after the RSPB was founded in 1891 (as the Society for the Protection of Birds) membership reached 10,000 by 1960, and by 1969 exceeded 50,000 (RSPB 2014).

'The Collection' does not shy from the conservation message that "the increasing affluence of our present day society is destroying the natural treasures which were previously held in high esteem in this country". The purpose of publication was that "it is hoped that the photography contained in this book will stimulate the interest of all young naturalists and photographers" (Clark 1966:13). Furthermore, some of the photographs included conservation information in their captions. For example, the Late Spider Orchid (p39) is described as "extremely rare", and for the Golden Eagle (pp168-169), it stated that "there is some fear that its numbers may decline, because it feeds partly on sheep carrion which very often contains

dieldrin dip residues". Dieldrin was a pesticide that resulted in egg shell thinning and had been researched at Monks Wood. It was the subject of much campaigning for its ban during the 1960s (Carson 1963, Mellanby 1969).

The Collection reflected the interests and activities of the photographers, but there were difficulties: over access to NNRs; of staffing exhibitions and archiving; of storage and access; and the developing ideas of exhibition where 'action shots' were preferred to 'portraits'. Kodak suggested a more commercial approach but this was in conflict with the original agreement. The BBC Natural History Unit, the Library of the Zoological Society and the British Museum (Natural History) all refused custodianship. A hand-written note stated: "Finally, in 1981, the collection was disposed of to the Royal Photographic Society at the National Centre of Photography in Bath" (File Note N129 by A Graham, Interpretative Branch, Nature Conservancy 23 January 1975, Seamons' collection).

4.3.5 National Nature Reserves and '*Nature Trails*' (1968)

In the above publications, there appear to be few cultural references in terms of local traditional landscapes or buildings, or local history, art or literature and how they impact or interweave with nature. However, nature reserves and their interpretation provided a vehicle for engaging with the public in a different way. Although nature reserve interpretation was not initially widely accepted, there were several reserves that were innovative in their approach.

The 1949 Royal Charter required the Nature Conservancy, among other duties: "to establish, maintain and manage nature reserves in Great Britain, including the maintenance of physical features of scientific interest" (Stamp 1969:47-48). NNRs were areas of the "highest scientific interest" and by 1952 there were seven NNRs in England and two in Scotland (Stamp 1969:50), increasing to 70 covering 133,081 acres by 1958.

'Handbook...' described the establishment of nature reserves and discussed research and public access. Regarding the latter, it was clear that access on

NNRs was for the “use and enjoyment of visitors whenever possible”, but that this took second place to the “primary objectives” of conservation and research (p7). At the end of the introduction, the booklet claimed “nature conservation is widely recognised to be essential” and that the Conservancy, as “official guardian and trustee”, was aiming “through education and enlightenment, to teach that man and nature are interdependent and that the mistakes of the past must not be repeated” (Nature Conservancy *Handbook* 1968:10).

‘*Progress...*’ (1968:14-16) addresses interpretative facilities on nature reserves:

“By seeking to interpret its facilities, the Conservancy believes that it is fulfilling three duties. First, it is giving the public an opportunity to see what it is paying to conserve and why this is necessary. Secondly, by providing information and facilities, it is reducing the damage the public can so easily do. Thirdly, it is testing out ways of managing people on nature reserves, as well as the reserves themselves, and thus, by research, finding some of the answers to a problem which has really only just begun, the problem of mass leisure.”

The public appears to be: a means to an end; potentially damaging; and also a problem. Seamons (2) recalled that Nicholson “was concerned that too many people would want to visit NNRs” and that the Conservancy “was concerned with NOT encouraging people to visit reserves, as they didn’t have the staff or cash to cope”. One way to manage this pressure on nature reserves was through the use of nature trails. Nicholson had contacts in America, and on his initiative, he persuaded the National Park Service to permit one of their Rangers, Louis Kirk from Olympic National Park, to visit England, and “teach my chaps about nature trails and things like that” (Oswald 1). Louis Kirk, in full Ranger uniform attended the Conservancy stall in Westminster during the first National Nature Week, in May 1963, where he provided instruction on nature trails, and impressed Prince Philip with his smartness.

The first British nature trail was opened in 1961, and despite fears of allowing the public to visit reserves, nature trails were widely used in the UK during National Nature Week in May 1963 “when over 50 were set up” (Nature Conservancy *Nature Trails* 1968:4) and again in the second National Nature Week (April 1966) when a dozen trails were set out at Conservancy Reserves (Stamp 1969:183). The Conservancy found them “effective” in informing nature reserve visitors and “economic of staff time” (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:14). ‘*Progress...*’ reported that by 1967 there were eight trails on NNRs in England, five in Wales and 8 in Scotland. Ward (1) recalled that one of the first to be devised in Scotland was in 1963. Working as a temporary warden on Ben Lawers, he remembered:

“nature trails were all the rage in those days – the idea had come from America – and I laid out a nature trail on Ben Lawers with a short walk up to the nearest cliff behind a shed where I had a little office, with points laid out A, B or whatever, with what you might see at these points.... I was a warden on this mountain reserve and couldn’t possibly take everybody up who want to go. Visitors could book a guided tour, but this way 99% of the visitors could self-guide.” (Ward 1 interview)

The trail guide was on two sides of foolscap paper, and visitors were given a copy which they kept or handed back on their return.

‘*Progress...*’ (1968:16) described some of the trails in detail: where they were placed, how facilities were constructed; what they intended to show; where interpretative panels were placed with supporting facilities such as benches in picnic areas; how successful they appeared to be in terms of easing erosion or preventing rare plant collection; and their popularity with visitors. Leaflets were also produced and appeared to be well-received, for example, at Old Winchester Hill, 10,000 copies of the nature trail leaflet were distributed during ten weeks in the summer of 1967.

The ‘*Nature Trails*’ publication (Nature Conservancy 1968), costing Five Shillings (25p equivalent), described in much greater detail the value of nature trails, types, design considerations, their presentation and

management, as well as work with schools and nature trail centres, providing an example at Alvecote Pools, adjacent to the Rugby/Stafford railway line. The booklet likened a nature trail - “a tour out of doors” - to “tours of cathedrals and stately homes”. It explained that the trail enabled visitors to see special features of interest, without necessarily searching, without damaging anything and provided interpretation to help the visitors’ understanding and knowledge of where they are and what they can see. The publication referred to the origins of nature trails in the United States and used by the National Parks Service since the late 1950s (Nature Conservancy 1968:4) .

According to Herbert, nature trails are “a very simple technique, not involving a huge amount of capital investment, work at any time of day or night, and don’t rely on staff...very adaptable”. However, he warned that “the wording is very important: you mustn’t raise people’s expectations (about what they might see) otherwise people will be disappointed”. Herbert said:

“there is scope for on-site interpretation”, but again warned “you’ve got to be cautious that you don’t clutter the place up with so much signage that it becomes like a suburban street – that defeats the object and hence the benefit of a leaflet – all you need is a discrete marker post and then the rest is there. That’s the benefit of self-guided trails”.

The principles of nature trail construction and the associated interpretation were most likely to have been derived from work by Freeman Tilden (first published in 1957). Tilden was described by Gary Everhardt, Director of the US National Park Service in 1976 (in the Forward to the Third Edition) as the “recognized father of modern park interpretation” (Tilden 1984:xi). Tilden’s aim was to excite curiosity, and with the use of interpretation

“aid people in the direction of a happy and fruitful use of leisure...in the national parks, the state and local parks, the museums and the other cultural preserves” (Tilden 1984:105).

In the 'Preface to the Second Edition', Christopher Crittenden (of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History) wrote that with a "visitor total of 365,000,000 to all national and state parks" in 1964, interpretation provided: "a new channel of mass communication, a new means of reaching our populace. It is a great and wonderful opportunity." (Tilden 1984:xvii). The third edition of Tilden's standard work used only black-and-white photographs throughout, nearly all depicting people engaged in some way with the environment, and usually accompanied by a ranger or interpreter demonstrating or explaining something.

Tilden's work was referred to by Wray (1) as "the classic book on environmental interpretation". He explained the principle:

"You get them interested in it, you explain it to them, and once they understand it, the theory goes, they say 'Hey yeah, that's important, I will put my vote, my money, my moral support, my time into it' (Wray 1 interview).

The Conservancy's own '*Nature Trails*' publication (1968) included ten black and white photographs depicting people using the trail, or trail furniture such as signs and displays. There were also four line drawings by Michael Copus (see Fig.4.25). Two of the drawings illustrate trail furniture: a sign at Yarner Wood using clear animal footprints (Nature Conservancy 1968:3); and a leaflet dispenser (NC 1968:10); and two illustrate people: a family examining something on the ground with a child running through the meadow at Kingley Vale NNR with the crown atop the reserve sign clearly visible (NC 1968:4); and people using a raised walk at Malham Tarn Field Centre (NC 1968:14).

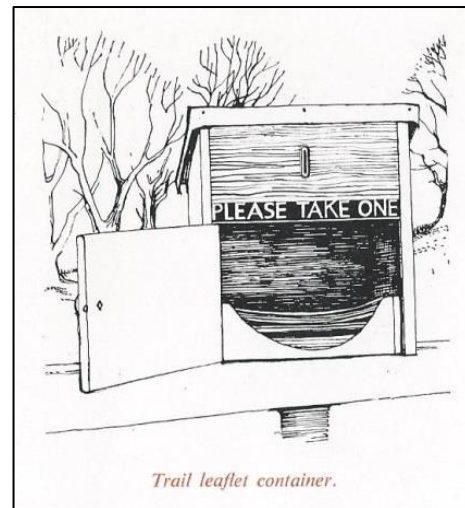
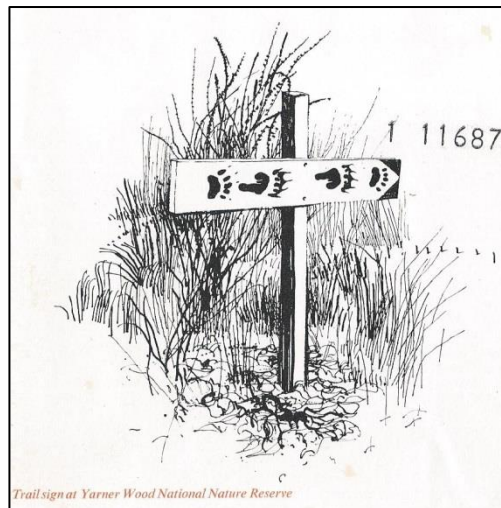


Fig.4.25 Michael Copus' illustrations of nature trail signage and furniture
(*'Nature Trails'* Nature Conservancy 1968:3, 4, 10 and 14)



The visitors on the raised walk drawing illustrated the aim of allowing people to see features of special interest which might have become “damaged through indiscriminate trampling” (1968:5). The trail helped to meet “an increasing demand for interpreting natural history and nature conservation to a predominantly urban population” (p5). The booklet goes on to suggest that: “the future of nature reserves will to a large extent depend on the degree to which the public understands their aims and problems” (p5)

After this publication, there were numerous examples of nature trails on reserves. Herbert said “they were a huge fashion in the ‘70s: I did dozens of them.” He continued: “they were certainly a major part of the work for the people at Attingham: writing the text, designing the leaflets, seeing it through the printers, distributing the leaflets”, and there were 112 NNRs at the time across the UK. Herbert said it:

“was very important what the people on the ground knew was there, and equally, if we went there we could see things that had potential, and introduce those as well. Working with people on the ground was crucial”. Some wardens “were much more enthusiastic than others”. (Herbert interview)

Richard Williamson (Kingley Vale) and Robbie Roberts (Yarner Wood) were “hugely enthusiastic”, but “other reserve wardens just didn’t want to know”. Herbert continued: some “reserve staff wanted to develop visitor facilities... (but)...the more hard-line nature conservationists didn’t see that as a priority, and indeed a distraction.” He thought there was a fear of changes that would be required from general access, disturbance to research, but he felt “it was a psychological thing rather than a practical thing – a kind of fear of people.”

Duff agreed with this view:

“There was resistance particularly from the NNR managers, and from other conservation staff....it took people quite a long time to get their heads round the idea that we needed to change how we look at things and how we do things.”

Herbert said they also tried to encourage people, such as local scout groups and YHA conservation holidays, to do their own trails because the researching for the trail made it become “a much more exciting exercise”.

Planning casework with the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) over Chartley Moss resulted in a partnership with the CEGB, particularly with their public relations officer and Oswald [1], to set up a school nature trail, at Bourton-on-Trent – see Fig.4.26 (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:31).

9. Children from a school in Burton-on-Trent on the nature trail in the grounds of Drakelow Power Station. © C.E.G.B.

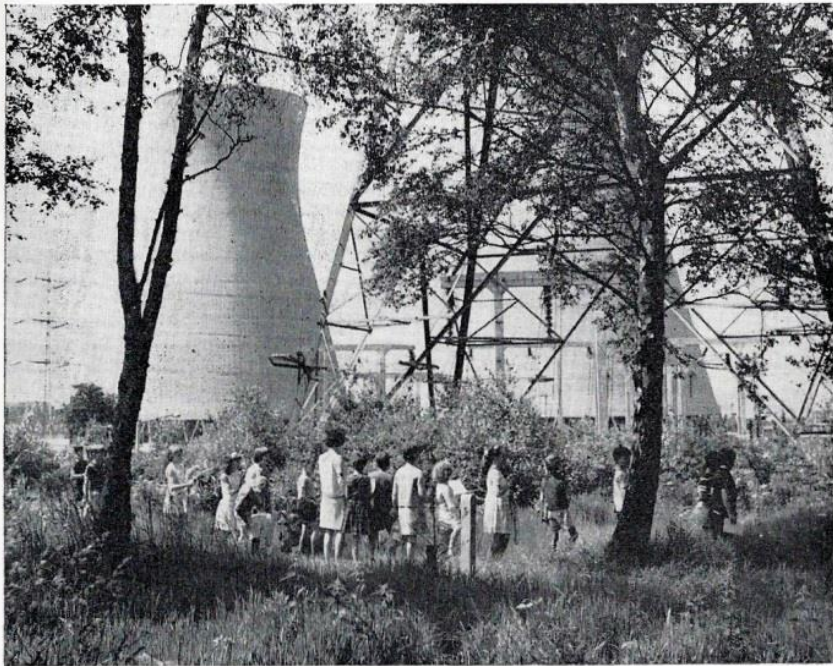


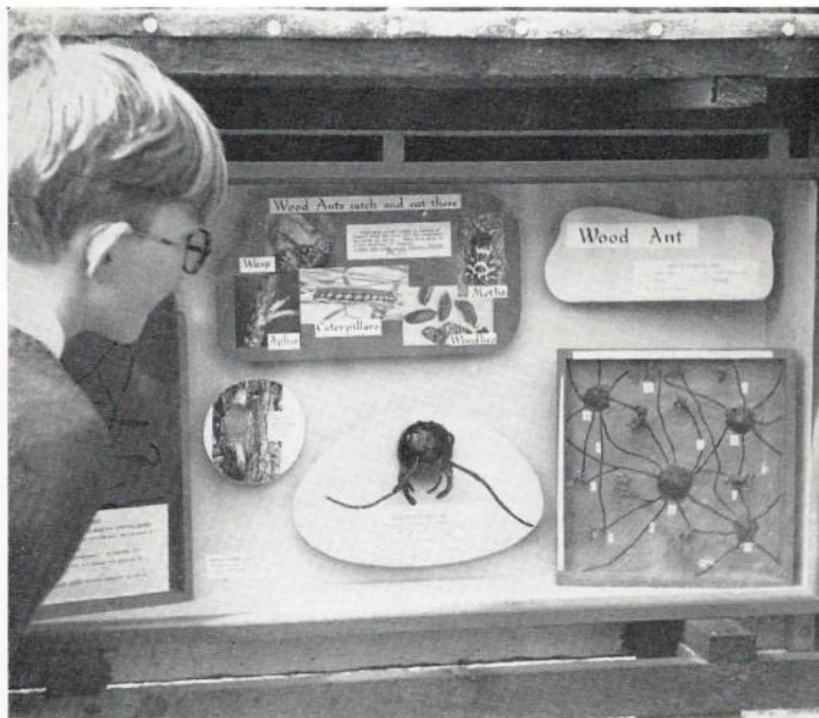
Fig4.26 'Children from a Burton-on-Trent school on the nature trail in the grounds of Drakelow Power Station' (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:31)

In some cases, specialist audiences were targeted with information boards. For example, at Caelaverock NNR, an identification board tried to ensure appropriate bird protection from wildfowlers (see Fig.4.27) and display cases constructed along the route of the nature trail at Yarner Wood supported the accompanying Teachers' Handbook (see Fig.4.28).



3. Mr. Langley Roberts, Chief Warden of Caerlaverock N.N.R., with his bird identification board.

Fig.4.27 'Mr Langley Roberts, Chief Warden of Caerlaverock N.N.R., with his bird identification board' (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:17)
This reserve operated a permit system for wildfowling.



8. Display case illustrating the ecology of the wood ant, on the nature trail at Yarnier Wood N.N.R., Dartmoor. © Mr. Leslie Jackman.

Fig.4.28 "Display case illustrating the ecology of the wood ant, on the nature trail at Yarnier Wood N.N.R., Dartmoor" (Nature Conservancy *Progress* 1968:27)
This was one of a series of display cases illustrating subjects described in the Teachers' Handbook

However, some reserves just offered a folded single A4 sheet or A5 booklet with brief descriptions with or without line drawings. An early example, '*The Nature Conservancy in South-West England*' (1968) leaflet only included a location map with information on whether a visitor's permit was required, and a brief description for each reserve on the main features of interest, but no illustrations of the NNRs. A more informative example is from the Cairngorms NNR guide (cost 10p) in which there is a detailed centre-fold map showing location of nature trails, main features of the reserve, places to stay, car parks and mountain refuges. There are three tone landscape photographs and several detailed line drawings of a Scots Pine, five arctic-alpine plants, Red Deer, Wild Cat, and three birds: Ptarmigan; Golden Eagle; and Crested Tit. The colours used are blue and pink. The artists are Syd Lewis and Joyce Bee. Two of the illustrations are initialled: a 'JB' at the bottom right hand corner of the Ptarmigan, page 7 of the NNR guide (see Fig.4.29); and 'SYD' bottom right hand corner of the Golden Eagle illustration, page 12 of the NNR guide (see Fig.4.30):

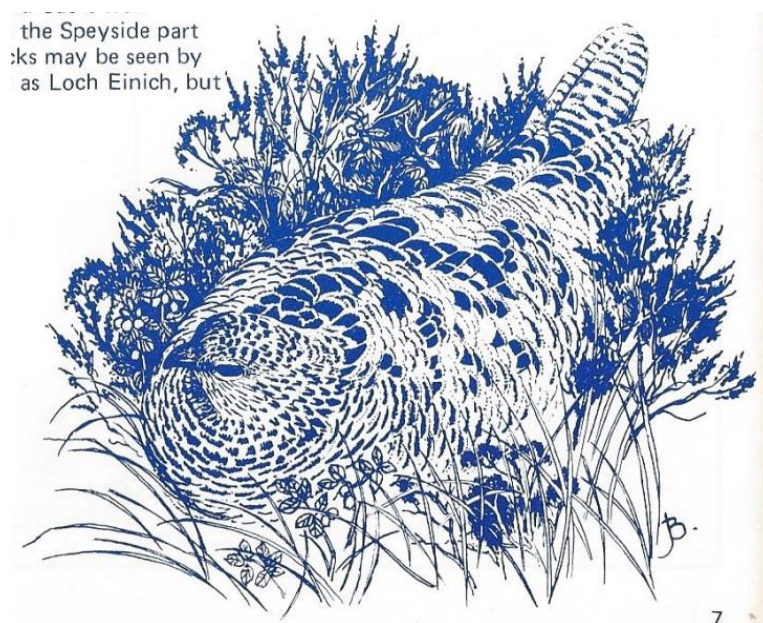


Fig.4.29 Joyce Bee's line drawing of Ptarmigan (initials JB at right hand corner), *Cairngorms NNR* leaflet (Nature Conservancy 1973:7)



Fig.4.30 Syd Lewis' line drawing of Golden Eagle (letters 'SYD' at right hand corner) *Cairngorms NNR* leaflet (Nature Conservancy 1973:12)

4.3.6 Working with Others

The Conservancy discovered that working with others helped realise their “major task in putting across to the public the concept of conservation” (Stamp 1969:53). Several of these partnerships were very successful, including with the Council of Nature and Council of Europe, and being involved with the National Nature Weeks, and the ‘Countryside in 1970’ project.

An example arose from an idea by Nicholson to convene a Study Group in 1960 whose findings were later published as ‘*Science out of doors*’. Chaired by Nicholson, it included lecturers and heads of departments from a number of Universities and schools, BBC staff including the Head of Educational Broadcasting, the Editor of Science Talks (Sound) and the Producer for the School Broadcasting Department, the Youth Hostels Association Education Officer, the RSPB’s Education Officer, the Warden of Malham Tarn Field

Centre, a representative of the Institute of Biology, as well as the Director of the Nature Conservancy's Monkswood Experimental Station and the Chairman of the Nature Conservancy's Scientific Policy Committee. Their aim "was to examine the role of field studies and their relation to school education and to science teaching in particular" (Tansley Club 1963:vi). The emphasis was on science, and the illustrations were mostly graphs and diagrams, but there were also ten pages of black and white photographs of field centres, and of youngsters undertaking conservation work, 'meeting sheep', using geological hammers, sampling animal populations and surveying vegetation.

In 1958, the Council of Nature was established "to be the voice of Britain's wild life" (Stamp 1969:64). Several senior staff within the Conservancy helped to initiate the Council of Nature, and much work of the Council was undertaken by the Conservancy. A wide range of natural history organisations supported the Council as members, and the Council itself worked with government departments on a range of issues. According to Stamp (1969:65), "publicity was regarded as important" and it organised the first and second National Nature Weeks (18-25th May 1963 and 21 April – 1st May 1966), and assisted with the 1963 and 1965 conferences for the 'Countryside in 1970'.



Fig.4.31 Postage stamps issued by the Post Office promoting the first National Nature Week drawing both national and international attention to the event, Author's collection

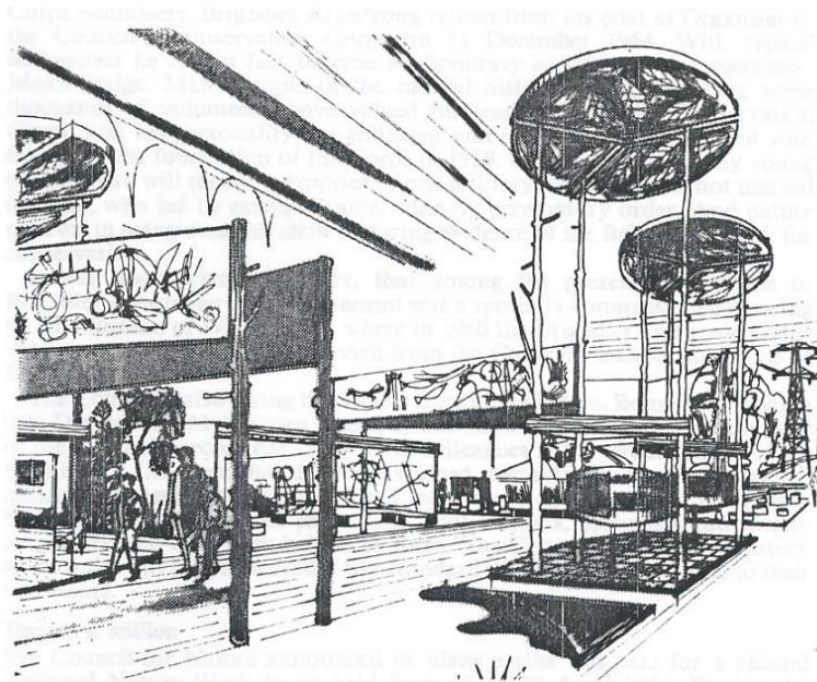
For the first National Nature Week, promotion achieved national and international publicity with the issue of two postage stamps (see Fig.4.3), and

a Wild Life Exhibition, sponsored by 'The Observer' newspaper, which took place in the Royal Horticultural Society's Old and New Halls in Westminster opened by Sir Keith Joseph, MP and Minister for Housing and Local Government. The exhibition was attended by over 46,000 people including an official visit by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh (information obtained from photocopied reports and hand-written notes contained in Seamons' archive, some with the heading '**News** from headquarters', all with a similar typeface, headings and page size and which appear to have been produced by the Council of Nature).

The theme in the Old Hall part of the Exhibition was how Britain's landscape and wildlife was being affected by industrial development and "bad social habits", directed by Brian Grimes, the Nature Conservancy's Technical Services Officer. A mural diorama, painted by Michael Copus, extended 121 feet and ten feet six inches high, depicting a cross-section of the countryside from the Suffolk coast to the Outer Hebrides. A second smaller diorama, twenty feet long, (again by Copus) showed the South Downs of Sussex. In front of the dioramas, there was a display of living wild plants, trees and shrubs, a rock formation, a waterfall and sand and shingle, with a continuous recording (prepared by the BBC) of songs and calls of birds appropriate to each habitat depicted. A third display, painted by Maurice Wilson, showed the evolution of the British landscape from the Ice Age to the present, accompanied by large photographs and watercolour paintings. In the New Hall, naturalists and conservationists exhibited their work, and the Conservancy's stand showed aspects of its research including a reportedly popular "working model on coastline research" (Council of Nature papers, Seamons' archive).

In support of National Nature Week, there were Open Days at the research stations and new nature trails launched at a number of NNRs with much coverage in newspapers and on the television. Events across the country included guided walks, talks, natural history field meetings, photographic displays, children's art competitions, films, books and exhibitions.

Following the success of the first week, a second National Nature Week was held in 1966. There were over 350 events: twice as many as during the first Nature Week, and these included open days at research stations, nature trails and conducted tours on NNRs. The Wild Life Exhibition held in Alexandra Palace was opened by HRH Duke of Edinburgh and visited by 90,000 people. The theme was '*Living with Nature*' and the Conservancy provided information, advised on the exhibition, and also designed eight murals including one of Kingley Vale NNR. An (unknown) artist's impression of the central aisle of the Wild Life Exhibition is shown in Fig.4.32. Stylised tree trunks and foliage were designed to give the effect of sunlight through forest canopy:



An artist's impression of part of the centre aisle of the Wild Life Exhibition at Alexandra Palace in April 1966. The main gangway of the Great Hall will be lined with tall tree-trunks surmounted by circular canopies of stylised foliage, to give an impression of sunlit forest. Alternate stands adjacent to this aisle will be those of major national natural history and conservation bodies, and of statutory Government organisations. Between these stands will be large display areas depicting the theme of the exhibition, to which the non-commercial stands will also contribute. The visitor's eye will be drawn as he moves up the exhibition to the immense display at the head of the Great Hall of the Palace. This will probably include a thirty-foot waterfall, an electricity pylon, a helicopter and other material to demonstrate the conflicting demands being made on our countryside.

Fig.4.32 Artist's impression of the centre aisle of the Wild Life Exhibition, Alexandra Palace, London, Second National Nature Week, April 1965 (Council of Nature papers)

Bob Boote, NCC Director General and author of '*Man and the Environment*' using the pseudonym Robert Arvill, was convinced that the Nature

Conservancy should be more outward-looking, and had a duty for the “dissemination of knowledge”. He gave lectures about the environment, and “was very keen on promoting the environment, particularly internationally”. With a senior executive friend in Shell, he initiated the ‘*Shell Better Britain*’ campaign and was also behind the European Conservation Year (ECY) (Oswald 1).

The Conservancy acted as Secretariat to the Standing Committee of The Countryside in 1970, tasked with promoting in the UK ECY 1970. A booklet (*The ECY 1970 Secretariat 1965*) explained the principles and what industries, organisations, local authorities and individuals could do to contribute to the Year’s work. The front cover colour photograph depicts a group of youngsters by a village pond, but the remainder of the photographs are black and white views of industry or farmland, or people active in the countryside including one of three Brownie girls examining an insect on a nature trail at Ranmore, Surrey. These photographs are all credited. However, the last four pages include four small uncredited line drawings, almost as though the publication had run out of photographs, or money, or were included as an after-thought.

Outreach efforts, particularly to youngsters, continued and as part of the ECY 1970, Shell and the Conservancy set up a competition for young people: the ‘*Shell Better Britain campaign*’. Oswald (1) recalled that initially Shell wanted it to be a competition, but “educationalists preferred the term campaign”. Every secondary, public and grammar school in Britain was invited to enter, and several thousand took part. A news-sheet of the competition finals, judged by Peter Scott, John Bradley Head of Shell Retail, Sir Jack Longland, and Dr Duncan Poore, a Conservancy Director, included many photographs of youngsters undertaking their project work.

Following the success of the 1970 competition, the following year the ‘*Better Britain*’ competition was started, and targeted groups of young people aged 10-20. Sponsored by the Conservancy, the Civic Trust and Shell, its purpose was “to involve young people in the study, care and improvement of land or

buildings near their home or school". The illustration on the cover of the promotion leaflet provided an example of a potential project (see Fig.4.33). The Conservancy's Interpretative Branch, based at the Attingham Park office, Shrewsbury, provided the administration for the competition, with Herbert as the lead.



Fig.4.33 (Uncredited) line drawing wrapping around the front and back of the 'Better Britain' competition leaflet (2nd leaflet 1972)

Herbert recalled that there was surprise that "Shell were prepared to go along with such a low level of PR, but they liked to permeate the community" and encourage a "feeling of reliability and reassurance" associated with their brand. For the Conservancy, they were associated with a professional resource and taking environmental considerations into many hundred schools across the country.

This competition continued, and NCC, together with the Civic Trust and Shell Marketing Limited, launched the third competition of the series in October 1973. They committed to co-sponsor further competitions in 1975 and 1976 (NCC '*first report*' 1975:68).

When Herbert and Oswald were asked to take on 'interpretation' in addition to 'education', Oswald (1) recalled they facilitated "embryo collaborations between County Education Authorities all over the country....such as adviser in environmental topics in neighbouring counties" and co-ordinated them with field studies centres. Nature conservation was part of wider discussions about topics such as food provenance, outdoor pursuits and rural studies. One of the proposals from the first '*Countryside in 1970*' in 1963, initiated by Oswald, brought together the Rural Studies Association, The Royal Geographical Society and the Inspectorate of Schools (with others) and resulted in:

"a big 3-day conference – the Keele conference - in March 1965, to thrash out with educationalists the way environmental education ought to be going... (and they)...reported back on progress in 1970". (Oswald 1 interview)

Oswald and Nettie Bonnar from the London office were joint secretaries of the organisation and management of the conference. Another of their initiatives was the establishment of NAFSO (the National Association of Field Studies Officers) and they convened their first annual conference in January 1971 (Oswald 1).

Oswald was joined by Herbert in the Education Branch in 1965. Herbert described himself as "liking the almost evangelical side of conservation...at a time of enormous expansion of public interest in the environment". By 1970, Oswald was Head of Branch. Oswald (1) described the other staff who joined them: Peter Green a designer formerly with Kellogg's who later moved to the Forestry Commission; Margaret Tunstall Exhibition Designer, specialist in visual graphics and formerly with the publishers David & Charles; Roy Harris, and later Julian Bateson, who drove a touring caravan during summer

months visiting agricultural shows; Michael Blackmore Press Officer, and later Jean Ross; Brian Grimes as Technical Services Officer particularly involved with photography and filming; and Mike Henschman on publicity. Together these created a small team and by 1976, the work had been split into: education and staff training; and press and publicity. Top quality photographers were used particularly in the 1970s, such as Heather Angel, Cash and Eric Hosking (Herbert).

4.3.7 Nature Films

The Conservancy was involved in producing films about its work and wildlife on reserves. The first appears to be the '*Living Pattern*', an Independent Artists Picture, 16mm running for 30 minutes, produced by Ralph Keene, directed and photographed by John Taylor, with narration written by Geoffrey Grigson, well-known broadcaster, poet, editor of the '*About Britain*' series for the Festival of Britain (1951) and co-author of the '*Shell Nature Book*' (1964), with acknowledgements to the National Benzole Company and the Nature Conservancy (final version of the text and credits of '*The Living Pattern*' dated 9 August 1962). Herbert took the film round to so many schools that he came to know the sound track. He said:

"There was a bit I really loved – it was about St. Kilda – and 'here the Atlantic lowers its head and butts against some of the tallest cliffs and stacks around Great Britain' – and I can't remember any more! But I loved the litany of words". (Herbert interview)

Three more films followed: '*Task Force*' 16mm 20 minutes long and produced by Charles Lacy, University of Edinburgh; '*Studland Heath*' 16mm 20 minutes long, and a silent '*Woodland Section*' again 16mm 20 minutes long, with both these made in-house by the Nature Conservancy's Technical Services.

These films were loaned out for public viewing. In 1967, a film about road-side verges '*The Secret Highway*' was being discussed, and in April 1968 Anglia Television, in its series '*East side Stories*', made a documentary called '*Black Gold*' based at Holme Fen, Cambridgeshire (File Note N.151/7 Vol. 3).

In 1969, the recently formed Interpretative Branch appointed a Films Officer to “develop and co-ordinate our activities in all aspects of public relations and education including the use of films and television” (letter from WO Copland, Interpretation Officer to S Scothill dated 25 April 1969). In the same letter, reference is made to work with the RSPB Film Unit on ‘*Broadland Summer*’ referencing the Conservancy’s Broadland report, ‘*Sea Swallows*’ about terns on Scolt Head NNR, and with the BBC on a programme about research at Monks Wood for a BBC1 series ‘*Wild World*’. In addition to films and television, Herbert recalled that in 1969 the Education Advisory Section at Attingham, and in particular Peter Green, worked with the BBC targeting 6th forms on “radio-vision used talks, with accompanying film clips and images”.

A survey of views by the general public in Bristol and Shrewsbury on wildlife conservation concluded that the media and television in particular, was very important in raising awareness and understanding (Fuller 1969:15-16). He wrote: “Television appeared to be a key factor – many people spontaneously mentioning programmes which they found particularly influential”. The survey was conducted by staff employed by the Nature Conservancy, but undertaken in their own time and “not an official Conservancy inquiry” (Fuller 1969:17).

4.3.8 The Benson Report on the National Trust

Despite the success of the national nature conservation events in which the Conservancy had been involved and the publications it had produced, it is interesting to see that the Conservancy was floundering on how to tackle interpretation and promotion of conservation. A new appointee to Interpretative Branch, W.O. Copland wrote an article on the front page of ‘*Headquarters News*’ (1969) sent to all staff. He described how he had started to consider “the most economical and effective ways of building ‘interpretation’ into the organisation and activities of the Conservancy as a whole”. Discussions about resources and development plans were underway at the time within the Branch, and with the Chairman of the Public Relations and Information Group, Professor Peter Hall of Reading University. However, Copland was seeking views from all staff about: “Interpretative

Planning; Publications; Audio/visual Aids and Exhibits; Site Interpretation (Signs, Trails, Reserve Centres, etc); Information/Education Services; Staff Training; Habitat Teams”. He felt the most urgent task was to explain the work of the Conservancy “in a way which will appeal to and be readily understood by any intelligent layman”.

In this article, Copland quoting from the Benson Report (The National Trust 1968) likened these statements to views he had heard about the Conservancy, and was “heartened” that both organisations were facing similar problems. Findings from the Benson report about the National Trust which Copland repeated were:

“There are wide differences among the Council and its committees in their attitudes to public relations”;

“Too few people are aware of the Trust’s existence; of those who are a high proportion do not realise what its purpose is”;

“It is important to explain what work is going on at properties to make visitors welcome...” (The National Trust 1968)

These dilemmas were well described by Oswald and Herbert in the interviews for this research. Discussions within the Conservancy at the time might well have impacted on the style of interpretation, use of colour, photographs or creative art, and the design and subjects depicted.

4.3.9 ‘*twenty-one years of CONSERVATION*’ (1970)

In 1970, the Conservancy published “*twenty-one years of CONSERVATION*”, on sale for 20p (20 new/decimal pence) or 4/- (4 shillings), summarising the work of the Conservancy 1949-1970. It described the history of the UK natural environment, the changes in agriculture and industry, referring to the National Park movement in the USA, legislation in 1949, the early priorities and widening work of the Conservancy, ecology, the role of NNRs, research, land management, planning controls and the trends and pressures on the environment such as pollution and pesticides, photography, farming and forestry, and concluding with the public. All but one page included one or

more photographic illustration, some in colour, as well as two graphs. These depicted: staff numbers from 1950-1970 in terms of scientific, shown as figures in white coats, and non-scientific staff; and acreages of nature reserves in Great Britain over the same period. Two artworks were included: Maurice Wilson's depiction of the evolution of the British landscape from the Ice Age to the present, first exhibited as part of the Wild Life Exhibition held in Alexandra Palace during the second National Nature Week in 1966; and the second a line drawing of the reserve centre at Aston Rowant, NNR, Oxfordshire. There were two photographs of species, several landscapes, researchers and land managers at work. There were no photographs of women or young people until the last double page spread, titled 'The Public'. The two women were in a queue entering the Conservancy exhibition in a tent at an unnamed show. There were five illustrations of young folk, including children with clipboards in a wood, Brownies holding an insect, and youngsters on an upland walk. The booklet was designed by Syd Lewis.

4.3.10 New Leaflets

Posters and leaflets were part of a new approach. Herbert writing an article promoting the protection of roadside verges drew on the example of Swiss Government posters that depicted protected alpine flowers. He suggested that the Department of the Environment, or the AA, embark on a publicity campaign to help preserve species-rich roadside verges (Herbert & Wheeler 1973). By 1973, the Conservancy produced a series of 6-sided folded A5 habitat leaflets in two or three colours, plus black and white, with no photographs but including line drawings of species and landscapes (see Fig.4.34).

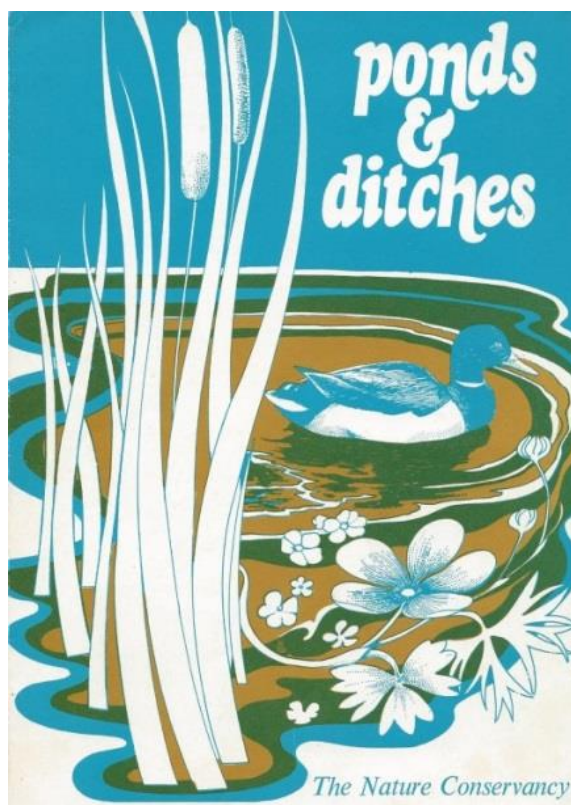


Fig.4.34 Front of Nature Conservancy habitat leaflet (1973), noting use of colour, modern style of design, and absence of 'NERC' and crown logo

According to Herbert, it was an early example, “fairly basic” but indicating a development towards more colourful, illustrated, eye-catching leaflets. For each habitat, the wildlife value, the management, the history and some conservation issues were described. The text tended to have a small font and be fairly dense, but clear line drawings in a small range of colours made the leaflets appear modern and useful for plant and animal identification, as well as providing practical illustration of habitat creation and management described in the leaflet (see Fig.4.35 and Fig.4.36). The information provided was straight-forward, and only on the back page, in a small font, was the Conservancy’s work described and contact details provided. The leaflets were professionally designed and executed by artists such as Syd Lewis and Joyce Bee.



Fig.4.35 Line drawings of Alder and Sallow by Joyce Bee and Syd Lewis (Nature Conservancy 1973:6)

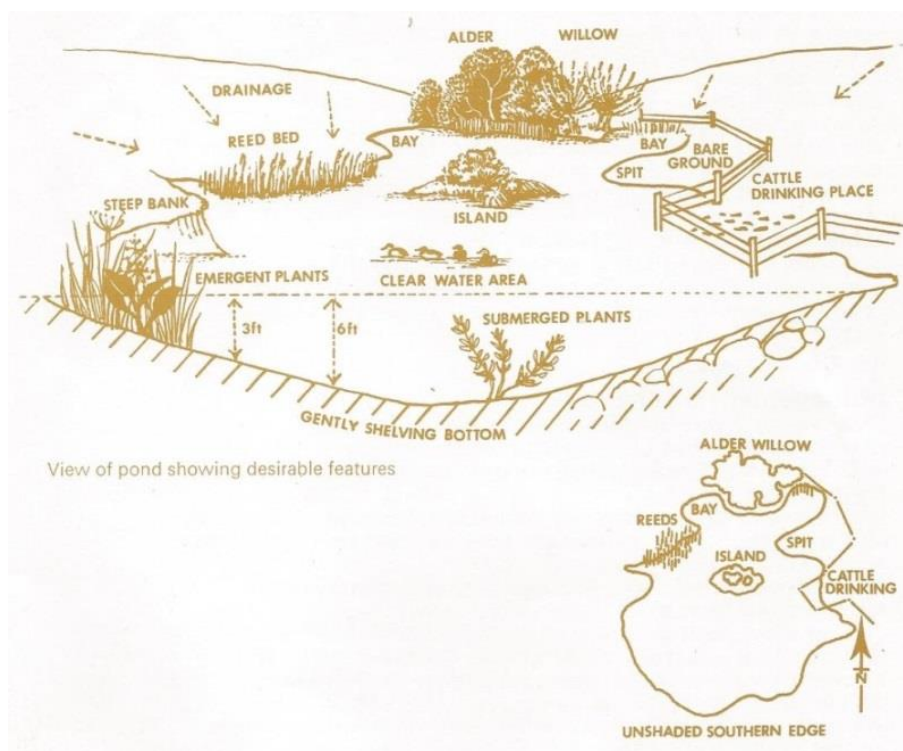


Fig.4.36 Line drawing of "View of pond showing desirable features" by Joyce Bee and Syd Lewis (Nature Conservancy 1973:5)

Another example designed and illustrated by these two artists served to provide illustrations that could help identify a few farmland species, for example Dog Violet by Lewis, and Long-tailed Field Mouse by Joyce Bee, even including their well-observed and distinctive method of opening a hazelnut (see Fig.4.37). It also provided an eye-catching view across a farmland scene, by Lewis, and a landscape with wildlife habitats (see Fig.4.38).



Fig.4.37 Illustrations by Syd Lewis (Dog violet) and Joyce Bee (Long-tailed Field Mouse) (Nature Conservancy 1973)

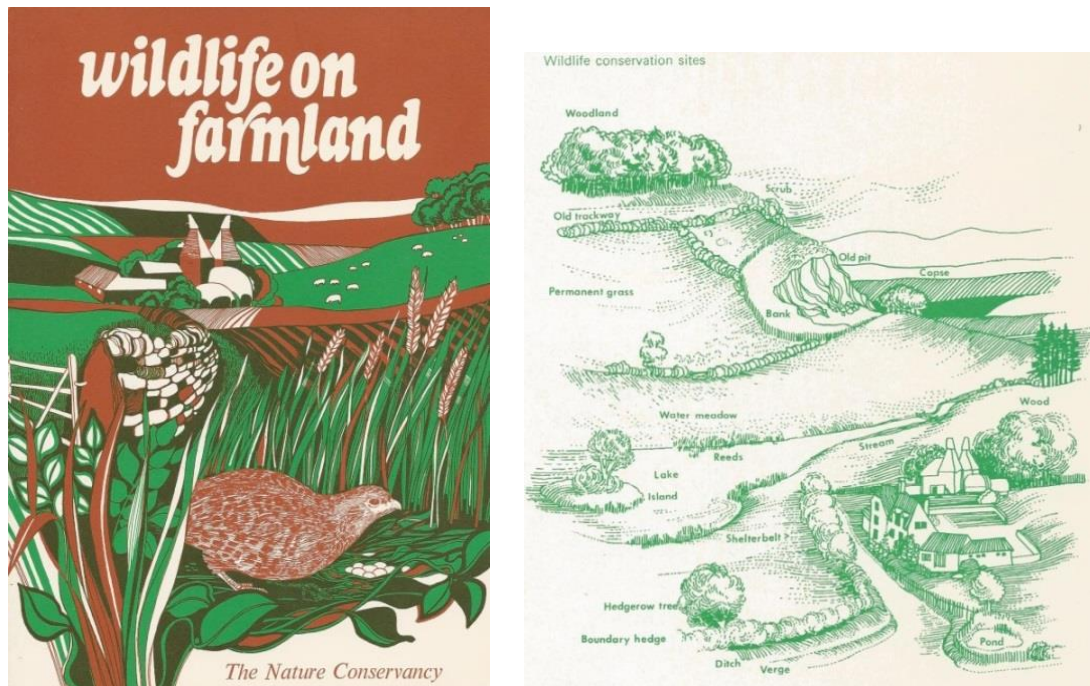


Fig.4.38 Illustrations by Syd Lewis (cover) and (uncredited) wildlife conservation sites (Nature Conservancy 1973)

The artwork from '*wildlife on farmland*', together with the ones above from '*ponds & ditches*', are largely illustrative and intended to provide information, but suggest a departure from the previous sole use of photographs.

4.3.11 Tone of Material

Asked for the best material produced by the Conservancy, Oswald (2) felt the leaflets described above, were "rather striking", and Herbert liked them too. The tenor of most of the publications was largely positive: images of wildlife and landscapes, scientists and land managers at work, and people including youngsters learning about and enjoying the countryside. The only images depicting a problem were about oil pollution, featuring the Torrey Canyon disaster in 1967 and oiled seabirds (The Nature Conservancy *progress...*1968:40 and Nature Conservancy 1970:20), and examining a dead bird of prey for pesticide residues at Monks Wood (Nature Conservancy 1970:23). Herbert said that although shocking images could be effective, the statutory agencies generally avoided such images because of "the political connotations" in not wanting to "appear to side for or against big industry, or whatever."

Herbert, in describing their work, explained that there was no format to follow: “it was a question of working with the people on the ground: if they had some great ideas for pictures or images, it was best to go with that, and not go in with preconceived ideas”.

He explained that interpretation was about getting a message across, using not just photographs, but also diagrams as “a way of telling a story” and “conveying a complex process”. He continued: “we were always on the lookout to do things to stimulate people’s interest and imagination in a variety of different ways, and not just pictures”, and gave examples, such as: “very basic techniques like labelling rings on tree trunks with dates to give an immediate sense of the past”. Herbert felt that to encourage people to maintain or conserve the natural world

“the initial step is always the important one in arousing the interest. Once somebody is excited by dragonflies then it’s much easier to persuade them to look after dragonflies, and all the rest of it – I think there was a lot of emphasis in just arousing interest and excitement in the natural world. The conservation bit follows from that, once you’ve got someone interested.” (Herbert interview)

Oswald (2) recalled that the Conservancy acquired a reputation as a “free for all” with “people doing their own thing”. Sir David Serpell, the Permanent Secretary for the Department of the Environment, “pressed for a more disciplined organisation” in the form of the NCC which followed.

4.4 The Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) (1973-1991)

The reasons for the end of the Nature Conservancy are covered in detail elsewhere (Chapter 2, Marren 2002:p31-34; Sheail 1998:182-194). With the change, ecological research was largely undertaken by the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology (ITE), later named the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH), but a small team of scientists was retained within NCC, as the Chief Scientists’ Team (CST). Peterken (1) recalled that this team maintained contact with ITE and commissioned research, but budget cuts were keenly

felt: “in the first two or three years the research budget fell from 22% of the total NCC budget down to 10% of the budget”.

The ‘first report’ by the NCC (1975:4) described the completion of a review of the research programme inherited from the Conservancy, and redirecting effort towards research that would meet its new “policy objectives”. The report described a close relationship with NERC and ITE “which includes many former Nature Conservancy staff”. The NCC’s CST was required to formulate the programme of research, direct and advise on in-house research by regional and NNR staff, and to commission research by NERC, universities, non-Governmental organisations (NGOs) and others (NCC 1975:27-32). NCC intended to share the findings of research, through “research reviews, position papers, technical symposia, management manuals and leaflets, and conservation handbooks” (NCC 1975:32). After various staff shuffles, Oswald became Communication Officer for CST in the mid-1980s until his retirement in 1991.

4.4.1 More emphasis on advisory functions

Sheail (1998:210) suggests the NCC placed “more emphasis on its advisory functions” than had the Conservancy. Taking a broader view, without the research priorities and having acquired NNRs and identified a suite of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the NCC demonstrated a notable increase in publications and material intended for a wider and less-specialist audience. Duff observed:

“my reading of the Nature Conservancy for most of its time was that it was very scientifically-driven....and certainly for the first ten years I don’t think there was much perception of the need to involve people... a lot of the time we did (our work) because we thought – or knew – it was the right thing to do... Only later we started thinking of how we influenced the great mass of the public ‘out there’, who actually have the final say... people tended to take what a scientist, or specialist, said as gospel....there was a sort of respect for knowledge which wasn’t questioned to the extent that it has been in the last 15 to 20 years.”

G Radley explained that this change in emphasis from science and research to more public outreach was partly brought about:

“in response to changes in public enthusiasm for science and increasing suspicions of scientists...‘men in white coats working in ivory towers disengaged from reality...or worse, mad scientists cooking up plots to destroy the world!’”

He explained that the NCC had inherited a science base from the Conservancy which had been

“a deliberate ploy to take advantage of the prestige of science in the post-war era to present conservation as a science, hence the term Special Scientific Interest, which was blatantly tapping into the public respect for science – bear in mind science had just delivered victory in the Second World War, science had delivered massive improvements in public health, was creating atomic bombs, jet airliners, penicillin, and television, and all this sort of stuff: science was ‘where it was at’. So trying to link your brand to science was a good move at the time... (However, the)... “NCC thought they could repeat the trick making the case for wider conservation ... (but)...got trapped in that as public enthusiasm waned for science”. (G Radley interview)

At the beginning, the NCC appeared to appropriate products and items originated by the Conservancy, including the leaflets shown in section 4.3.10, but also the Conservancy’s ‘Mobile Exhibition Unit’, mentioned in the Monks Wood Experimental Station ‘*Open Week Guide & Handbook – 9th – 14th October 1973*’. This Unit was intended to illustrate some of the different aspects of the agency’s work using panels of large colour transparencies demonstrating various projects (see Fig.4.39).

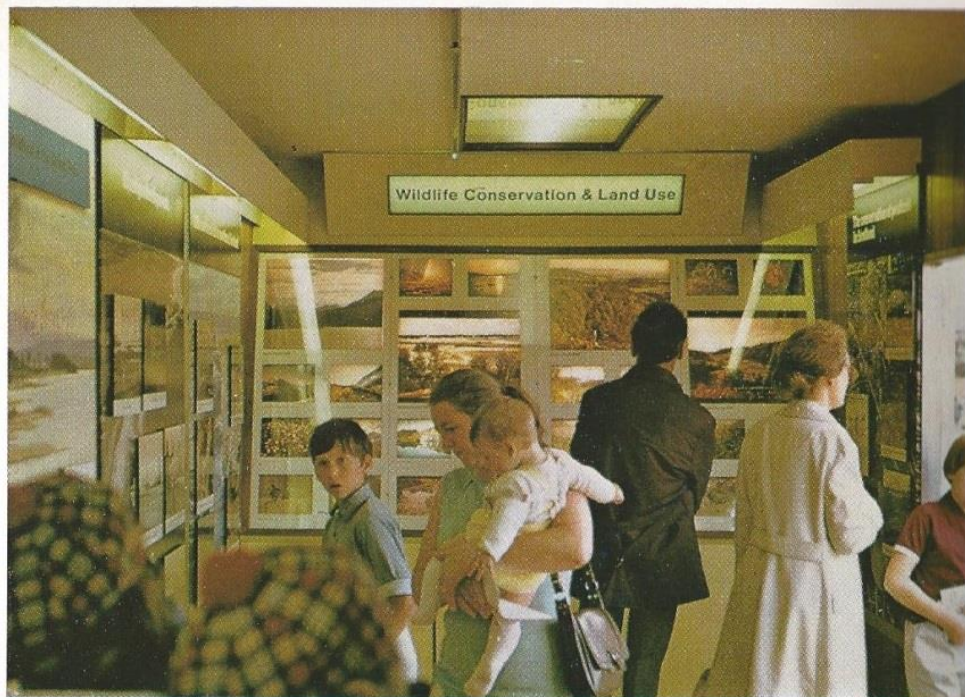


Plate 28. Nearly 50,000 people visited the NCC's Mobile Exhibition Unit during the summer of 1974.

(See p. 66.)

Fig.4.39 Interior of NCC Mobile Exhibition Unit, showing extensive use of photographs (NCC 1975 *First Report*, plate 28)

In 1974, the Mobile Exhibition Unit was visited by nearly 50,000 people during 48 show days at 30 Shows (NCC 1975:66) (see Fig.4.40). However, by 1978, its use at agricultural shows “proved uneconomic” and the unit was moved to Aviemore to assist in offering interpretation to visitors on the Cairngorms and Speyside (NCC 1978:83).

Copyright permission applied for

Fig.4.40 NCC Mobile Exhibition Unit in 1975 (Sheail 1998:225) (Copyright permission applied for)

A series of leaflets was available to supplement the information provided by the Mobile Unit, and to some extent also used by regional staff when visiting farmers and landowners. According to Duff these

“broad introductory leaflets were the first structured attempts to get across to the general public more widely what these things were about and were quite revolutionary at the time”.

The 15 A5-size leaflets were illustrated by one or two black-and-white photographs, mostly of wildlife or landscapes.

These early NCC publications, usually prepared by the Interpretative Branch managed by Mike Henchman, based at Attingham Park in Shropshire used line drawings, and colour was gradually introduced. With an acknowledgement to the Nature Conservancy and ITE, the NCC re-issued in 1976 *'Ponds & ditches'* together with *'Hedges and Shelterbelts'*, *'Pesticides'* and *'Treeplanting'*.

The credited artists are Syd Lewis (artist for all the front covers), Joyce Bee, Denys Ovenden and Joyce Tuhill. Denys Ovenden (b.1922) described himself on his website as a natural history illustrator, undertaking water colour commissions of wildlife and illustrating various natural history posters, and books particularly Collins' field guides of reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates and fungi. He has also worked for London Zoo and the BBC (Ovenden 2016). In the agency leaflets, a number of the illustrations are signed with his full name and sometimes with 'DHO', presumably his initials. Joyce Tuhill provided illustrations in publications from a range of genres: children's literature, guides, manuals and cookery books, from the 1970s to 2000 with the majority produced in the earlier years (World Catalogue 2010). She also illustrated in colour and black-and-white, such as Dyson (1974), a guide to the conservation of ponds and their wildlife.

The illustrations on the front covers are all sharp and clear, use two colours (in addition to black-and-white) and dominated by several enlarged images

of, for example, primrose, celandine and violets (*'hedges & shelterbelts'*), a wasp on a primrose flower (*'pesticides'*) and water crowfoot (*'ponds & ditches'*) and a representation of habitat in the background (see Fig.4.41). The use of large images in the foreground, strong blocks of colour repeated through the picture and banding across the image are reminiscent of Clifford and Rosemary Ellis designs for the front covers of the New Naturalist' series (see section 2.3.4).

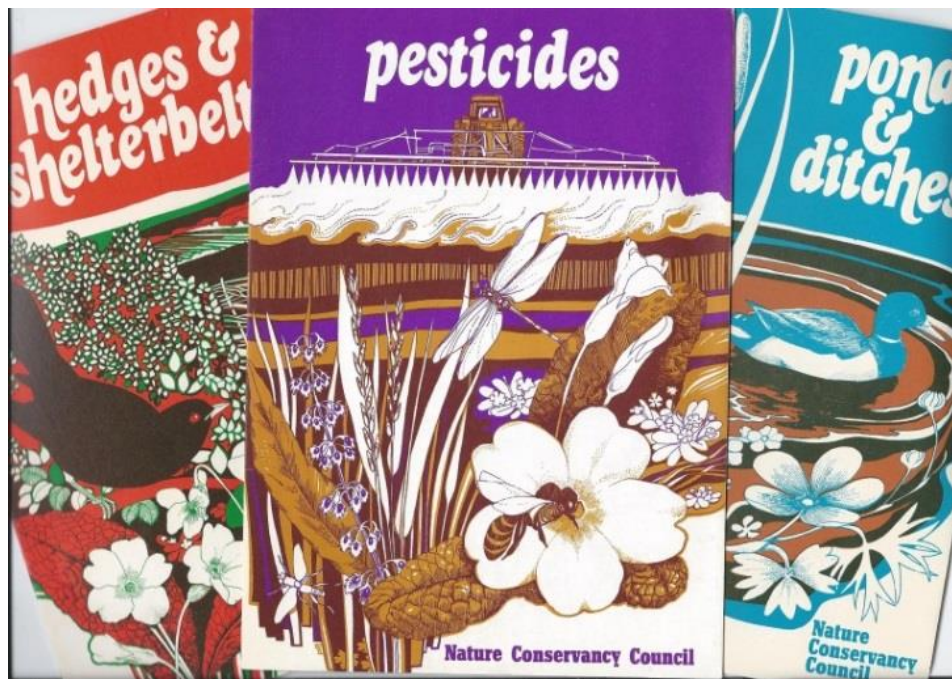


Fig.4.41 Covers of three leaflets originally produced by the Nature Conservancy and revised by NCC in 1976. Artists were Syd Lewis, Joyce Bee, Denys Ovenden and Joyce Tuhill

Other material was also available, for example, Ward (1) recalled that, when he was an Assistant Regional Officer on the Lleyn Peninsula:

“I used to have a very attractive leaflet... with an otter on the front... I used to carry quite big quantities in the car and I would give a copy to each farmer...but how much value they placed upon it I don't know. But it was a sort of visual interpretation”. (Ward 1 interview)

This leaflet also carried the European Wetlands logo, one of NCC's contributions to this campaign, and depicted wetland wildlife in drawings together with a coloured photograph (see Fig.4.42). On moving to the north-east as a Deputy Regional Officer, Ward (1) "certainly encouraged staff to carry booklets, interpretative booklets and give these out, but to what effect I don't know...."

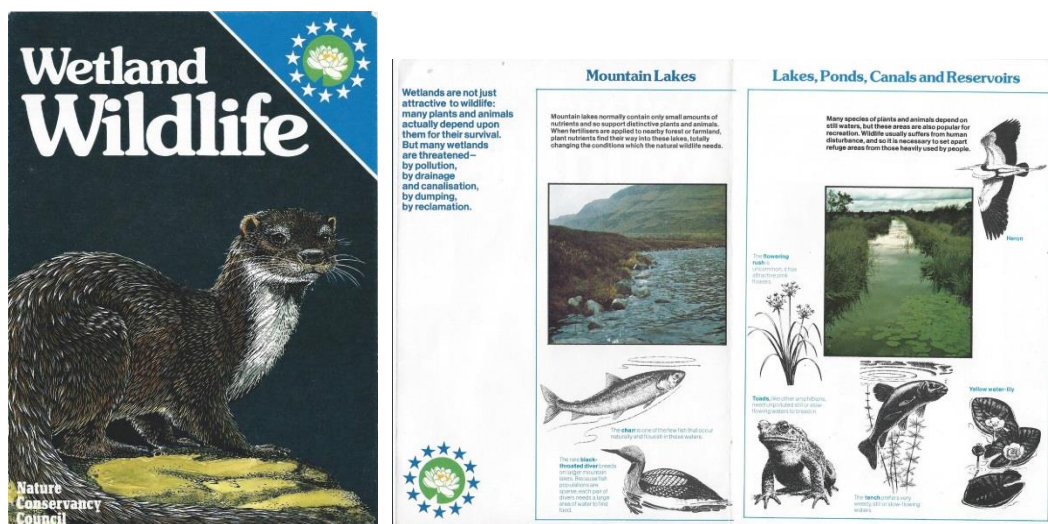


Fig.4.42 NCC *Wetland Wildlife* leaflet (1975/6: cover & pp1&4)

The four leaflets shown below were re-issued in 1979 but with a reversion to black-and-white line drawings, printed on coloured, thin card, as parts of the '*Nature Conservation Guide Series*' (see Fig.4.43). The illustrations are uncredited, but some repeat those in earlier leaflets, and a new one was signed 'Robert Gillmor', who by this time was a well-established artist and member of the Society of Wildlife Artists.



Fig.4.43 Covers of 3 NCC Nature Conservation Guide Series (1979) and Robert Gillmor's line drawing of Heron, *Farm Ponds & Ditches*

Robertson recalled that “when I was first starting work, in old NCC, there was quite a lot of use of art....then in the early 80s we were getting more colour photos...the art disappeared.” A number of the staff interviewed mentioned the photographer, Peter Wakely. Robertson recalled him visiting Regional offices, and taking him to Special Sites. Early on he took black-and-white photographs and moved to colour. Her “recollection was that the photographs were largely used for the NCC publications, like the Annual Report...” She continued “we could use them ourselves for a talk for example, but I don’t think we made a huge use of them”. Wray and Robertson agreed that Wakely’s photographs were “good, very clear and very attractive. And he could pick up the trends, the science, the management, but in a very professional and striking way.” These photographs were stored in the agencies’ collection and often used. However, a member of the communications team reported that few of them contained images of people and so were much less useful when depictions of people and nature were required, particularly in Natural England publications. Ward reported that he was “appalled when told that much of Peter Wakely’s

photographic archive had been discarded into a skip during an office move by Natural England.”

4.4.2 Material for Children and Schools

Continuing the outreach to youngsters started by the Conservancy, the NCC Interpretative Branch produced folding cardboard displays, in addition to exhibitions, wall charts and leaflets. During 1975/76, the Branch focussed on promotional material in support of the European Wetlands Campaign (NCC ‘*second report*’ 1976:60), including a leaflet and associated wallchart “particularly suitable for schools”, plus “a six-module exhibit illustrating the main types of wetlands, their wildlife and threats to them” (see Fig.4.44). A cardboard kit enabling children to construct and colour a model pond was also promoted (see Fig.4.45). In the summer of 1977, a collaborative project with Weetabix saw small models, with associated wildlife, of a pond, woodland, seashore and a townscape which could be cut out from the cereal packets. This reached an audience of several million and the NCC received “appreciative letters from conservationists, designers and housewives” (NCC ‘*Fourth Report*’ 1978:82). G Radley and Herbert both fondly remembered these models and their popularity with youngsters, and staff. G Radley reported that at agricultural shows: “we had the cardboard pond which was great – we could set that up, rather than being a table with two boring people standing behind!” These cardboard models were a “brilliant idea” according to Herbert, and produced

“when cardboard furniture was in vogue”. Peter Green designed the cardboard pond: it was “a simplistic form of diorama which you could create yourself – it wasn’t passive - very simple – slotting things in”. (Herbert interview)



Fig.4.44 Model of six wetlands designed for the *European Wetlands Campaign* (NCC 1976 'second report' plate 26).



Fig.4.45 Cardboard pond kit for children to construct and colour (NCC 1976 'second report' plate 27)

Another example, shown in the 1982/83 catalogue, was a model of woodland, constructed from cardboard, with its view underground of roots and burrows, and wildlife in its branches (see Fig.4.46).

project work on ponds and their wildlife.
Selected for the Design Centre. 95 cm wide × 140
cm tall × 40cm deep.

C1.2 Cardboard woodland
Price £4.50

This model introduces
children to the ecology
of an oak wood.
80 cm wide × 120 cm tall
× 60 cm deep.

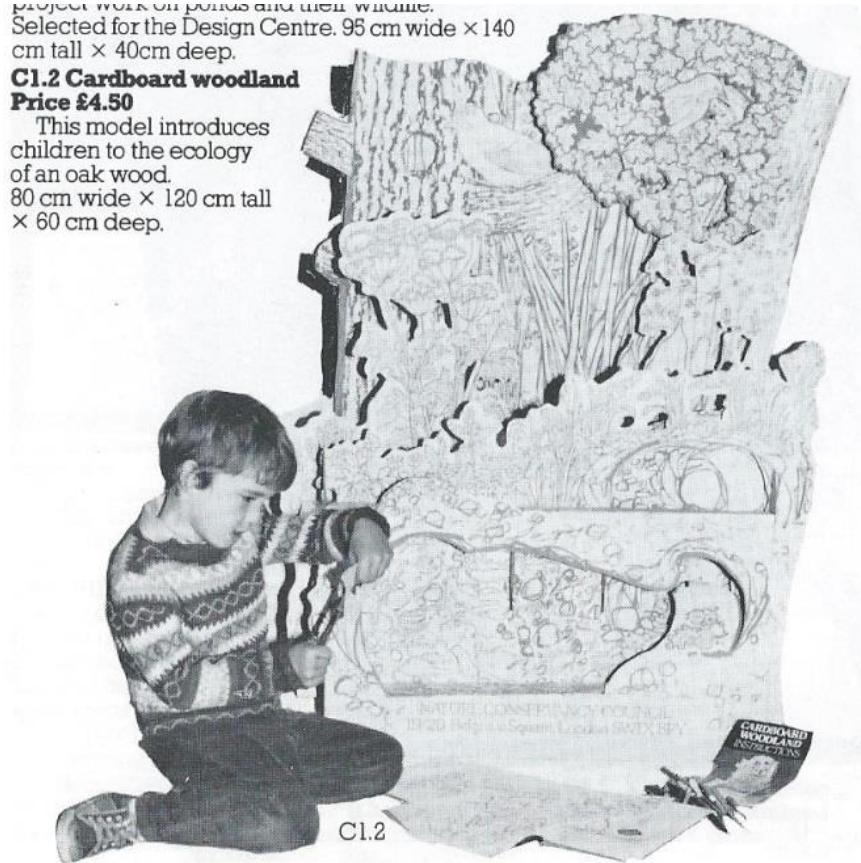


Fig.4.46 Cardboard woodland kit for children to build and colour,
shown in NCC catalogue 1982/83:5

Other examples were models of lowland farming and blanket bogs, which
were loaned to the Museum Service for touring exhibitions (NCC '*Fourth
Report*' 1978:82, illustration plate 9) (see Fig.4.47).

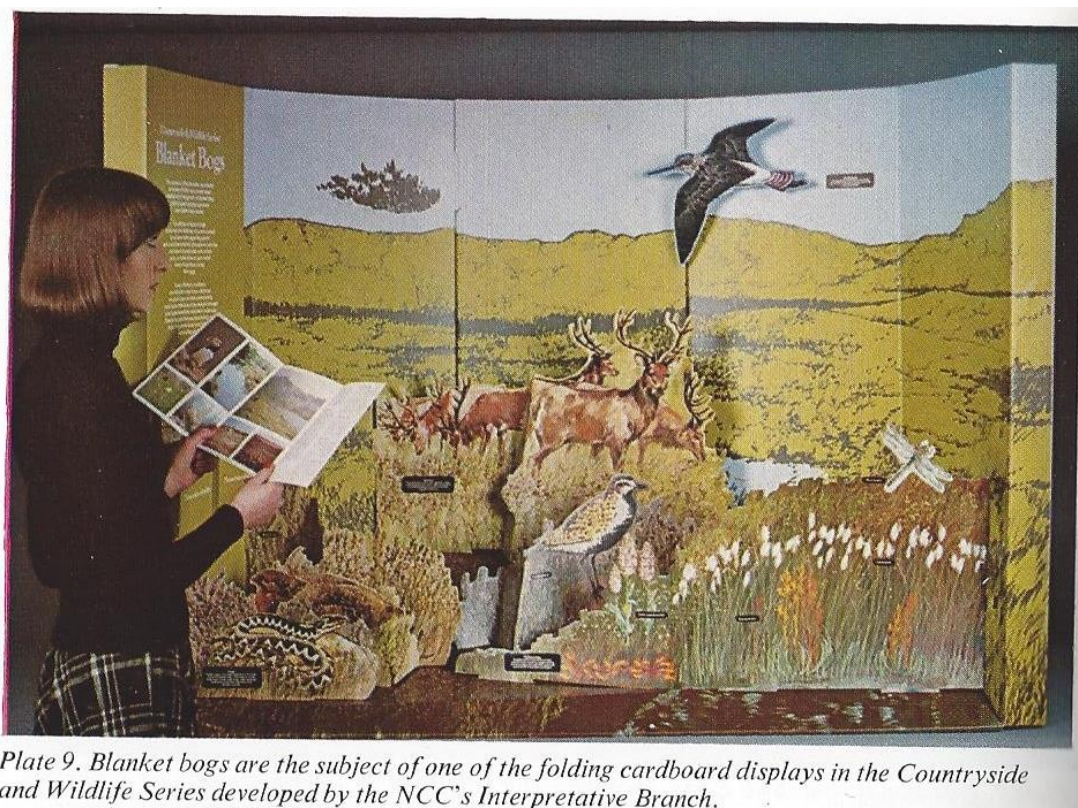


Plate 9. Blanket bogs are the subject of one of the folding cardboard displays in the Countryside and Wildlife Series developed by the NCC's Interpretative Branch.

Fig.4.47 Cardboard display depicting wildlife of blanket bogs used as part of a travelling display (NCC 1978 plate 9)

Along with these initiatives, the NCC continued to support environmental engagement with youngsters. It remained a participant in the '*Better Britain*' competition, together with the Civic Trust and Shell Marketing Limited, launching the third competition of the series in October 1973, and committing to co-sponsor further competitions in 1975 and 1976 (NCC 1975:68). The NCC continued reaching out to all parts of society with radio and television programmes, environmental education working with schools and Field Studies Councils and taking the Mobile Exhibition Unit across the country. By 1990, NCC reported a change in national education policy with greater emphasis on environmental studies in school curricula, and supported "this trend wholeheartedly" (NCC 1991:49). It facilitated the '*Policies for environmental education and training: 1992 and beyond*' conference, and contributed to the preparation of material such as '*Opening Doors for Science*' and '*An Investigative approach to A Level Geography and Environmental Evidence*', produced 100 eight-page publications and

responded to over 4,000 requests for information. In addition, over the period from 1985 to 1991, 2,800 schools received NCC grants (between £50 and £500) for conservation projects, such as, pond construction and wildflower meadows (NCC 1991:49-50).

One particular initiative, the publication '*Nature in Danger*' (NCC 1990) was illustrated using material provided by youngsters from two schools (Burrowmoor Primary School, March, Cambridgeshire, and Ken Stimpson Community School, Werrington, Peterborough) local to the NCC Head Office in Peterborough, and "aimed at people of their own age" (NCC 17th Report 1991:49). The first four pages of the drop-down chart are shown in Fig.4.48):



CONSERVANCY

This word is in our name because we want the natural world around us to be conserved or looked after.

It means:

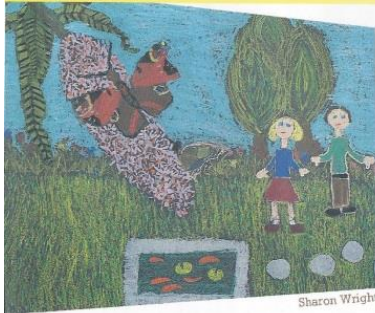
- we **care about** the natural world
- we want to **protect** it now
- we want it to be there in the future so that people can enjoy it and it can look after our needs.

COUNCIL

We are a team of about a thousand people working together to look after nature. We are led by a group of people called a Council. Our scientists are finding out more and more about how wildlife and wild places are changed by people and the ways in which we can protect nature.

We help the Prime Minister and Parliament decide what to do when nature is in danger. We are the Government's nature conservation agents and advisers.

Care for nature

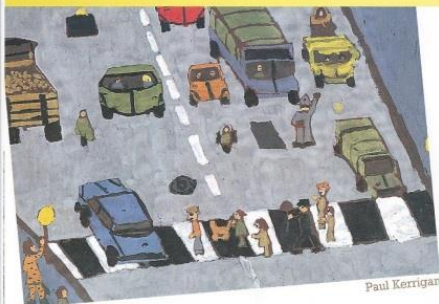


When wild places are destroyed, the wild plants that grow there are lost too. Then the animals that use the plants for food or shelter are left without a home, and they die or move away.

If we don't care for nature some of the wild plants and animals we love could become extinct. What a dull world it would be without badgers, bluebells or the woods they live in. Already, hundreds of kinds of plants and animals have become so rare they could die out for ever in Britain.



Nature belongs to the whole world



Nature in Britain is just a small part of nature on Earth. If we don't look after nature in Britain, the rest of the world suffers too.

Birds do not respect country boundaries. Many birds that live most of the year in other countries, visit Britain during migration, on their way to and from their summer or winter homes to find warmth and food. If we harm the wild places for these flying visitors they too will be in danger.

The waters which circulate around our coasts pick up all sorts of rubbish and pollution along the way. The dumping of rubbish from ships and the disposal of sewage by other countries in the seas around Britain may harm us, and our pollution may harm the wildlife belonging to other countries.

Acid rain is another problem which can start in one country and end up harming nature right across the world. Factory chimneys, coal-burning power stations and car exhausts all give off dirty gases which get into the air, and then into the rain. The air and acid rain can then travel from one country to another. So American pollution can harm British wildlife, and our pollution can harm the wildlife elsewhere in Europe.

The greenhouse effect will be a problem for all countries. A blanket of fumes, smoke and gases around the Earth stops some of the sun's heat from escaping into outer space. This blanket is getting thicker as we release gases into the air from power stations and car exhausts. As the climate changes on Earth, the wildlife will have to move or be stranded in places that are no longer suitable for them. Some may not survive.



We know that:

What harms nature usually harms us because we are part of it. If we protect the environment it will provide for us.

These are some key words: ● extinct ● species ● habitat ● wildlife ● pollution ● sewage ● acid rain ● climate



Fig.4.48 'Nature is in danger' drop-down poster (NCC 1990) used illustrations produced by children from schools near to NCC Head Office in Peterborough. The first four sheets are shown here (in order). The next four were titled: 'Did you know?'; 'Why are wild places being destroyed?'; 'There are laws to protect some of our wildlife'; and 'How can you help nature?'

4.4.3 Interpretation on NNRs

Some NNRs had been in the vanguard of raising awareness of wildlife with the public, but for most the situation was different. Generally, the arrival of the NCC brought no immediate improvement in the promotion of NNRs through their trails and guides, and, in some cases, worse promotion. For example, the '*Monks Wood National Nature Reserve Nature Trail*' produced in 1970 consisted of a twenty-sided A5 booklet with a centre-fold map, nine black and white line drawings of wildlife to be seen in the wood and one photocopied black-and-white photograph of a ride in October 1969. By 1977, the trail guide was reduced to an eight-sided A5 leaflet with one front cover illustration of hazel nuts and leaf, one map of the reserve showing the trail route and stopping points, and no illustrations inside.

The lack of welcome to NNR visitors was reflected in two other items (NCC 1976). '*National Nature Reserves in Great Britain*' had a dull, black, white and mustard-coloured photograph on the front cover of what appears to be a chalk downland coombe. Inside there is one small map depicting the distribution of NNRs in England, Scotland and Wales, and then follows a page for each site giving name, area, general grid reference, a brief description and whether a permit was required. No illustrations and no contact details are given – apart from the headquarters address in London.

The other item is a leaflet '*Visiting National Nature Reserves*' (NCC 1976). Inside there are broad guidelines about 'dos and don'ts', and permit details. On the front cover, shown on the right half of the illustration Fig.4.49, there is an illustration unclear about what it represents, but which has the appearance of a visual barrier. On the back cover (see Fig.4.49) there is a colourful illustration of a Snake's-head Fritillary, but this image has no connection to the information inside the leaflet, nor where it could be seen or anything about the plant. The artist is not acknowledged.

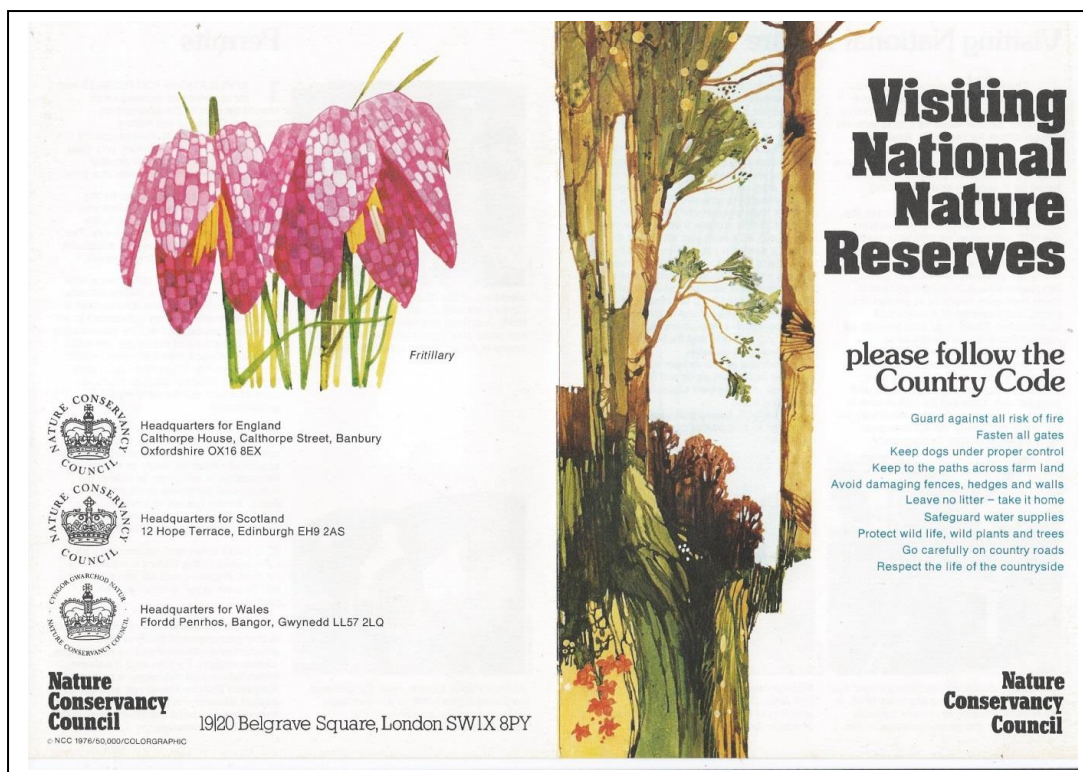


Fig.4.49 Front and back covers of '*Visiting National Nature Reserves*' leaflet (NCC 1976)

The NCC explained (1975:20) the dilemma of balancing its “primary duty of safeguarding the reserves” with “public access” through offering the public “opportunities for first-hand experiences.” Fifty reserves had “descriptive literature”, over thirty had nature trails, and twelve had “small buildings with displays interpreting their natural history or some special theme relevant to their management”. Of the recreational activities listed (NCC 1975:21) no form of art is included.

The NCC *‘third report’* (1977:70) explained that interpretation on NNRs was to be concentrated on reserves with large numbers of visitors or where provision could be made for increasing visitor numbers without prejudicing the reserves’ special interest, such as at Ebbor Gorge NNR, Somerset, Kingley Vale, West Sussex, and the Isle of Rhum, Hebrides. At Rhum for example, from April 1976 to March 1977, staff numbers had reduced from eleven to eight, but the island had been visited by 1,500 people (NCC 1977:49). However, when I visited the island in September 1978, the ‘interpretation’ consisted of a nature trail leaflet in the form of a folded A4 sheet, with no illustrations, briefly describing a number of ‘points of interest’ along the shoreline in the vicinity of the boat landing stage.

The remainder of the NNRs were generally permit-only visiting. Engaging the public – winning hearts as well as minds – and enabling enjoyment of nature reserves was in general not a welcome idea. Reserve Wardens, later known as Site Managers, were, and in some cases still are, well known for barely tolerating the public and the reserves were seen largely as ‘their’ domain. Smith said that despite it being

“a policy decision that NCC should be involved in interpretation....I think there were probably quite a few staff who thought it wasn’t our job to do education: in those days, the wardens, for instance, were very, very independent”. (Smith interview)

When Bowley talked about Lullington Heath NNR, during his tenure as the NCC Warden 1978-1991, he said the reserve had very few visitors, and he was expected “to patrol the public bridleway to make sure people didn’t put a

foot in. Very autocratic in those days, still are...” When asked why people were not allowed to wander around, Bowley replied: “we had nightjars, (ground-nesting birds), Dartford Warblers, but we wanted to keep it pristine, off-limits.” When asked for whom, he replied, jokingly: “me”, but continued: “I think those were the days when nature reserves were for the elite, for people who understood nature, and the hoi-polloi could stick to the footpath.” He went on:

“But I think that was one of the mistakes we made that people weren’t sufficiently given the chance to experience nature because we were so...precious about them (nature reserves), and didn’t recognise people come out to the countryside for different reasons.” (Bowley interview)

Peterken (1) expressed a slightly different view in that “no-one made a great effort to attract the general public. Open days, large car parks, that sort of thing. We didn’t attract them in, rather than be exclusive”.

Some later nature reserve guides had a similar structure and format to the revised ‘*Countryside & Wildlife Series*’ of leaflets (see Fig.4.50), with a mixture of credited small colour photographs of views and some species, for example, the reserve guide to Holkham NNR, Norfolk (1987). In addition there were uncredited black-and-white line drawings of species, and a central coloured map depicting main habitats, public footpath and car parks.



Fig.4.50 Above left first page, Holkham NNR guide (NCC 1987); Above right first page, Oxwich NNR guide (NCC 1988)

Other guides went further combining more line drawings including full page illustrations of views, explaining the ecology, suggesting items of interest to look out for, and even offering the occasional visual joke: the '*Oxwich NNR Explorers' guide*', offered a humorous illustration of "saltmarsh crouch" (artist not acknowledged) (see Fig.4.51). In addition, the Oxwich NNR, South Wales, booklet had considerably less text than the Holkham version, directly addressed the reader as 'you', acknowledged that saltmarshes can be "forbidding" but offered reassurance, and used more 'colourful' language such as "good hunting" and "myriads of ...other creepie-crawlies".

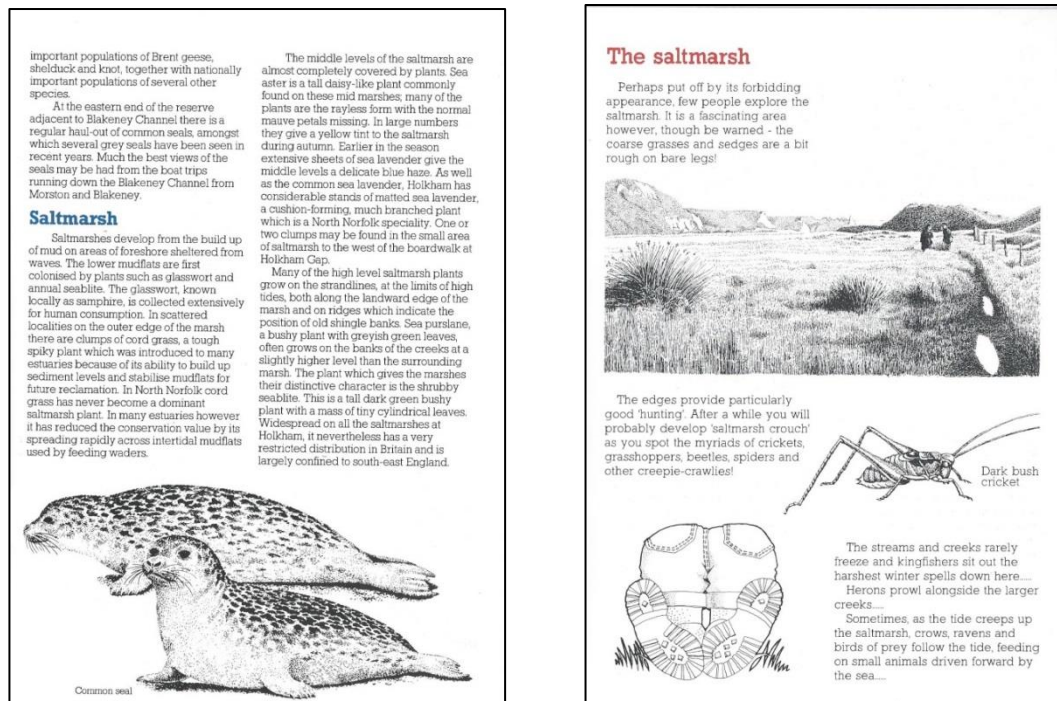


Fig.4.51 Description of saltmarsh, Holkham NNR guide, above left (NCC 1987:4); description of saltmarsh, Oxwich NNR guide, above right (NCC 1988:12)

In 1988, guidance was issued on the production of reserve information, including instructions on 'house style', such as, typeface (only Rockwell was permitted), layout, position of photographs, the use of standard paragraphs, the use of capital letters, and so on, as well as an annotated draft (Wray 1988). How these instructions were received by wardens is unknown, but one anecdote demonstrating the difference of opinion was provided by Bowley, who distinctly remembered the date (1987) because the hurricane prevented the "interpretation guru" from getting to Woodwalton Fen. On expressing dissatisfaction with the NNR's signage, Bowley had wanted 'you are here' stickers because the Fen is difficult to navigate, but was told: "Oh we don't do that". He continued: "our signage has always been pretty abysmal, and nothing's changed really".

Ward (2) was cautious about 'education'. He described the case of a visitor centre selling "the usual kind of things in visitor centres such as pencils and erasers from China and this kind of thing" which was constructed on Ben

Lawers by the National Trust for Scotland and the Conservancy, and later demolished, saying: “they must have spent tens of thousands building and more thousands demolishing it.” He gave another example of the Visitor Centre at the Cliffs of Moher, County Clare, Republic of Ireland, near where he lived at the time of the interview, built by Clare County Council who

“spent 32 million Euros on building a visitor centre there which involved excavating the hillside away, building the visitor centre and then putting the hillside back... the whole thing is not about interpreting nature, it’s about the entertainment industry....”
(Ward interview)

Ward continued:

“you can sink your entire resources in education and the world still wouldn’t be a better place for it.... the form of education I’ve always been interested in – is interpretation which I would describe as education that is so informal in the sense that the person being educated isn’t aware that they’re being educated and enjoying it and finding it interesting. So that at the end of it they say: “Gosh that was really interesting. I didn’t know that about that plant or that whatever”..... You can do that by guided walks and by good old-fashioned lectures”.

4.4.4 The ‘*Countryside & Wildlife Series*’

During the 1970s, impacts from a number of high profile environmental issues described by Marren (2002) were not confined to SSSIs or NNRS. Agricultural intensification, afforestation in the uplands, water quality and recreational pressure affected wildlife and natural habitats in the wider countryside. Leaflets and publications tried to address these topics, and one such example was the ‘*Countryside & Wildlife Series*’ of leaflets, which began in the second half of the 1970s.

The new staff recruited during the later years of the Conservancy to the Education Advisory Section, including Peter Green as Exhibition Designer, Margaret Tunstall and Julian Bateson helped to change and improve the nature of the material produced, and “really upped the game for NC and

NCC” (Herbert). The impact of Green was very apparent, and the leaflets were “much brighter and crisper, designed to appear out of leaflet racks” reflecting “all the psychology and skills of PR and marketing”. So many leaflets were created and sent out, that the team at Attingham used “some old GPO mail sorting racks” in which to keep them and aid distribution. Smith reported that the Interpretation staff had “a pretty free rein because they were considered the experts.” Duff recalled that:

“the NCC began to change in the late 70s/early 80s - there was a move towards recognition that we had to engage much more effectively with people 'out there'....I think that the Interpretative Branch was seen by a lot of people in the organisation as being irrelevant, but looking back I think they were far more visionary than the rest of us”.

Duff continued:

“I think they were pretty influential in changing the organisation – fairly radical over quite a long period of time without the organisation realising it – but without it we would have all been in difficulties”.

G Radley confirmed that

“there was a corporate culture, at least when I joined (in 1979), that regarded working on publicity as a bit suspect, and a diversion from the true business of science-based conservation, as they saw it, (of) notifying SSSIs, making the case to Government that the loss of habitats and species was important and needed to have something done about it, and they saw that as something that was done by official reports (rather) than by a campaign.”

He continued: “the whole organisation was run on a shoe-string” and there were “not a lot of staff working on publicity” but changes did start in NCC and “there was some quite good stuff produced...things like the cardboard pond, the conservation leaflets...and coloured posters”.

Duff recalled:

“in the ‘70s and ‘80s the use of photographs in leaflets was almost prohibitively expensive and illustrations were generally black-and-white. As colour printing became more common and less expensive through the ‘80s and ‘90s, it was much easier to include colour and at that point it was photographs that tended to be used. I think it was driven by a wish to show it like it was – accuracy rather than a graphic representation.”

He added: “It wasn’t until later on that anybody started thinking that something that approximated to artwork was actually sometimes a better way of doing it.”

The NCC’s ‘Countryside & Wildlife Series’ (1977-79) leaflets provided a good example of the new style, and as Duff described: “quite revolutionary in their time”. Six topics were covered: ‘Oak Woods’, ‘Blanket Bogs’, ‘Sand Dunes’, ‘Saltmarshes’, ‘The Last Glaciation’, and ‘Lowland Farmland’ (see Fig.4.52). To these were added additional titles: ‘Fens’ and ‘Towns & Cities’ in 1983. Care was given to the cover colours setting the tone for the subject: brown for farmland; purple for ericaceous bogs; blue for icy glaciation; orange for sand-dunes; and grey for lavender saltmarshes.

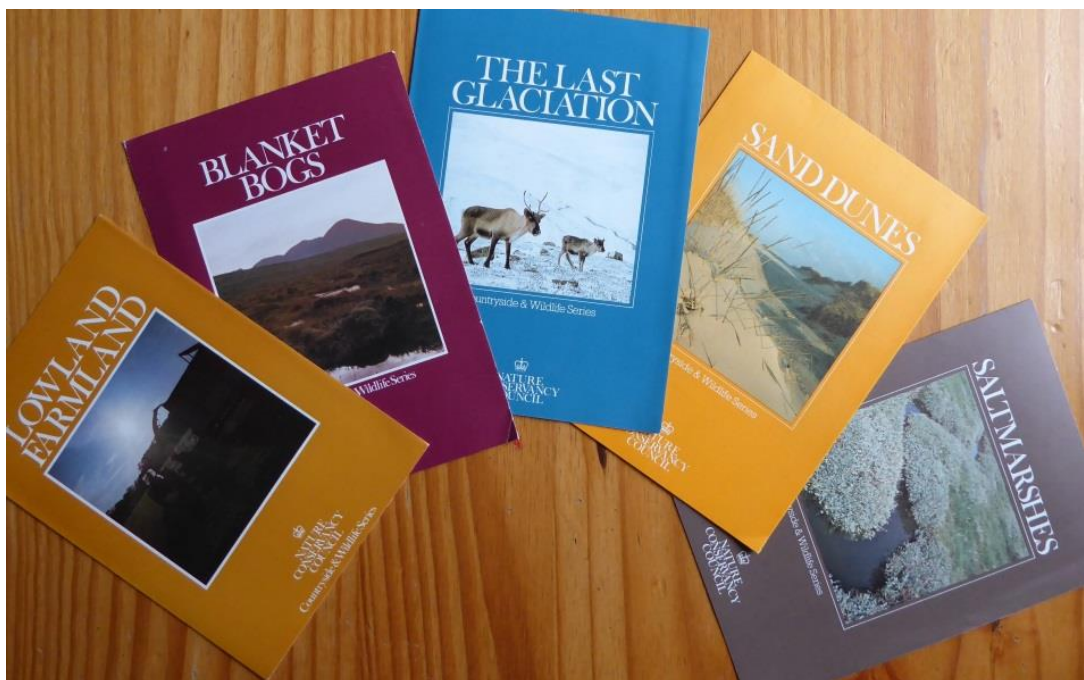


Fig.4.52 Five of six leaflets from the NCC ‘Countryside & Wildlife Series’ (1977-79)

These leaflets consisted of six A5 pages describing the wildlife found within these habitats, the issues they faced and suggested reading. They were all in full colours: the front covers bore a photograph, and inside an illustration spread across two pages depicting the wildlife that could be seen in the habitat. The artist was not credited. There were also companion wallcharts (70cm x 40cm) with more illustrations of wildlife of the wildlife together with habitat information. An example from the 'Sand Dune' leaflet (1978) is shown in Fig.4.53:



Fig.4.53 Cover and inside illustration, Sand Dunes leaflet, NCC Countryside & Wildlife Series (1977-79)

During the late 1970s, the NCC appeared to be attempting new types of illustration in their leaflets. An example is 'Farming and Wildlife in the Borders' (NCC 1979) (see Fig.4.54). The text is dense and in small font, it bears the crown and name in full, provides further reading and NCC office addresses, and artist/designer is uncredited. By contrast to most other leaflets, it has coloured illustrations: printed on buff-coloured thin card with the text and illustrations in green and yellow, depicting landscapes, key species some as line drawings, and distribution maps.

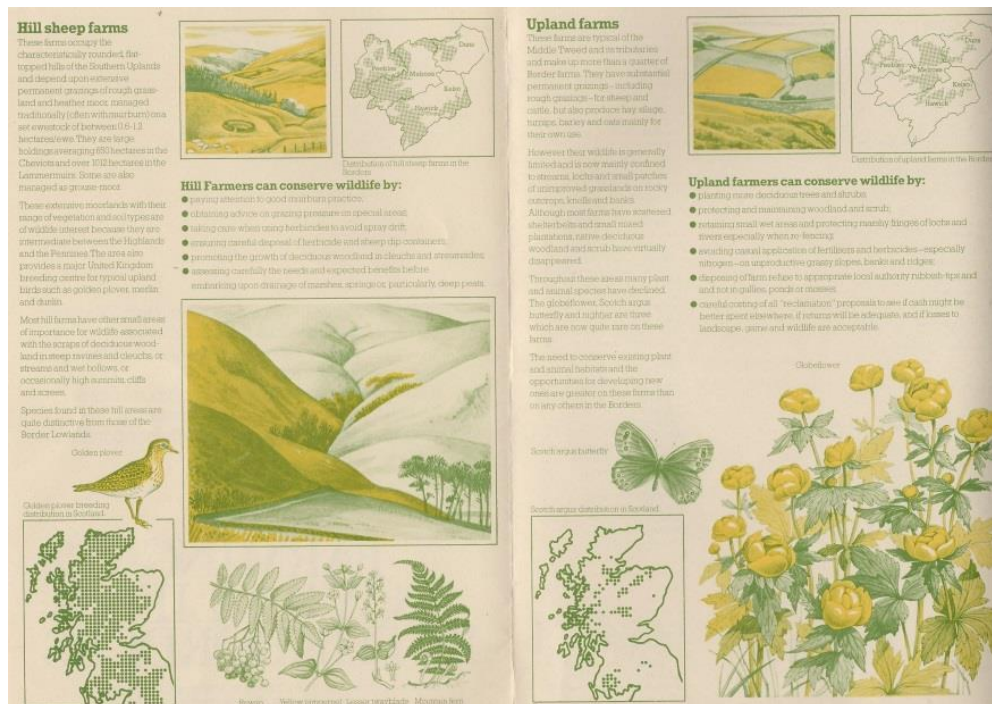


Fig.4.54 (Uncredited) illustrations from 'Farming & Wildlife in the Borders' (NCC 1979:2-3)

Despite all these publications, G Radley expressed a different view from the East Anglian Region perspective: "The Nature Conservancy had been gone six years by the time I joined (yet) we were still using some of the material – not necessarily relevant or important – we just hadn't used it up!" He continued:

"We used to go out to agricultural shows, and I remember being absolutely desperate for decent publicity material to give out to people. Latterly, we did get a few things which were good – the coloured leaflet series on pond conservation and those sorts of things. Once we had good quality publications with photographs in colour, you could give those out". (G Radley interview)

He also observed, that although the NCC was exhibiting at agricultural shows, "farmers just weren't interested". However, garden leaflets were welcome:

"You used to get occasionally farmers' wives and other members of the public who were interested in doing something in their gardens. And we had some quite nice leaflets round that...anything that was colourful we used with gratitude!" (G Radley interview)

Duff recalled that for a specialist audience an image with “full detail” was required, but that

“Detailed habitat management handbooks were illustrated by line drawings or sketches rather than photographs, possibly because we didn’t have a lot of photographs showing management practices.”

In addition, drawings could be clearer. He continued: “I think general artistic impression kind of stuff feels to me to be a more effective way of capturing the eye of the non-specialist” but he explained that the image

“needs to be conceived by someone in the same position. I don’t think there are many of us scientists who either have the skills or possibly the vision to imagine or understand what could be done...you need specialists in the arty field.” (Duff interview)

4.4.5 Negative imagery

A departure from the norm, ‘*Oil Pollution and Wildlife*’ (1979) leaflet had four artworks mostly in dirty brown perhaps reflecting the nature of the problem (see Fig.4.55). These are used in preference to photographs in depicting the distressing subjects of dead or oiled birds. The 1967 Torrey Canyon disaster, the development of oil fields in the North Sea and the increase in tanker traffic in the seas around the British Isles were all topical, and referred to in the leaflet. It is worth noting that the shocking images of oiled suffering seabirds are not used - rather, the oiled Guillemot is being cleaned and will join the other rescued birds (see Fig.4.55).

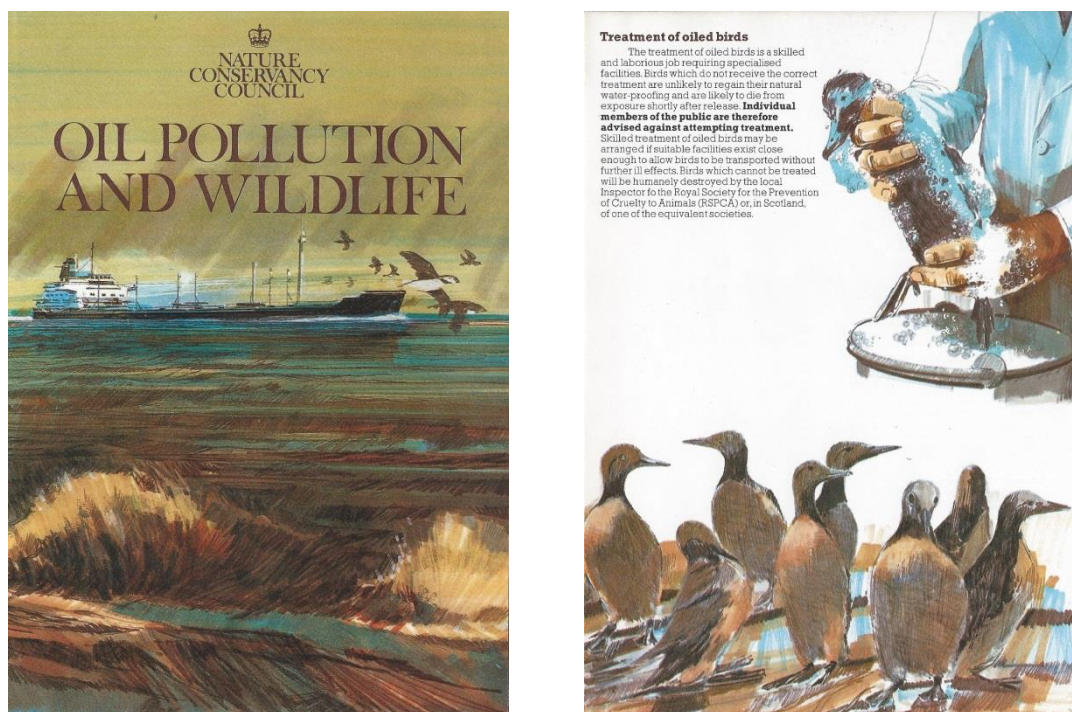


Fig.4.55 Cover and illustrations, 'Oil Pollution and Wildlife' (NCC 1979) – artist uncredited

This 1979 leaflet is in sharp contrast to that produced by the Nature Conservancy (1970:22) shown in Fig.4.56, where, although the oiled guillemot is still standing, it is likely to die, along with the thousands of other birds mentioned in the text.

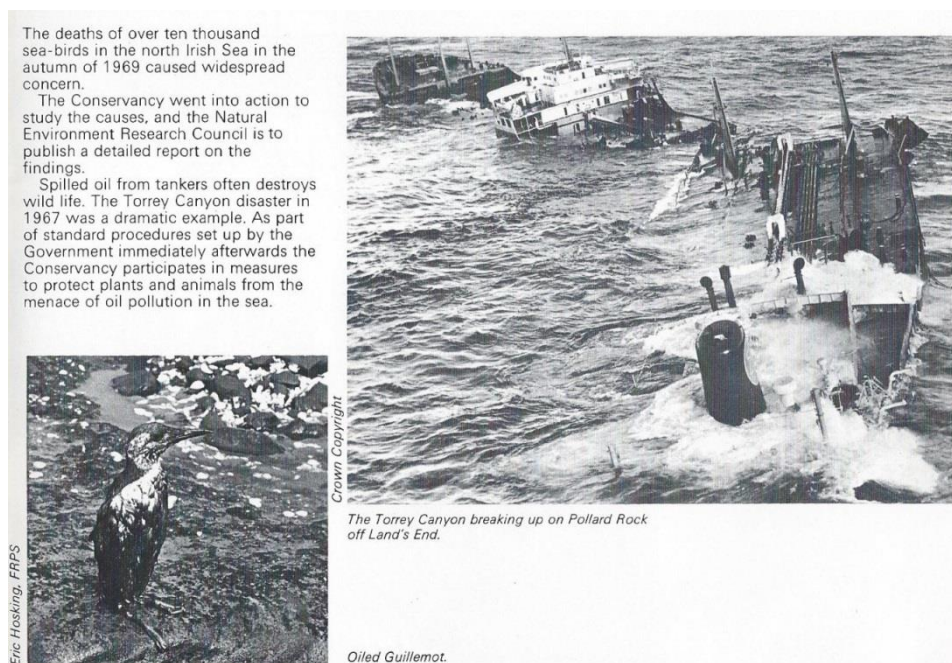


Fig.4.56 Photographs of the stricken Torrey Canyon and an oiled victim (Nature Conservancy 1970:22)

The NCC leaflet '*Conservation and the Offshore Oil and Gas Industries*' printed in 1974, included a diagram identifying the potential threats to wildlife posed by these industries (see Fig.4.57). The use of such negative messages and words such as 'threat' was unusual, but indicated a change from the explicit depiction in 1970, but not yet the more positive image of rescued birds and safe shipping depicted in 1979.

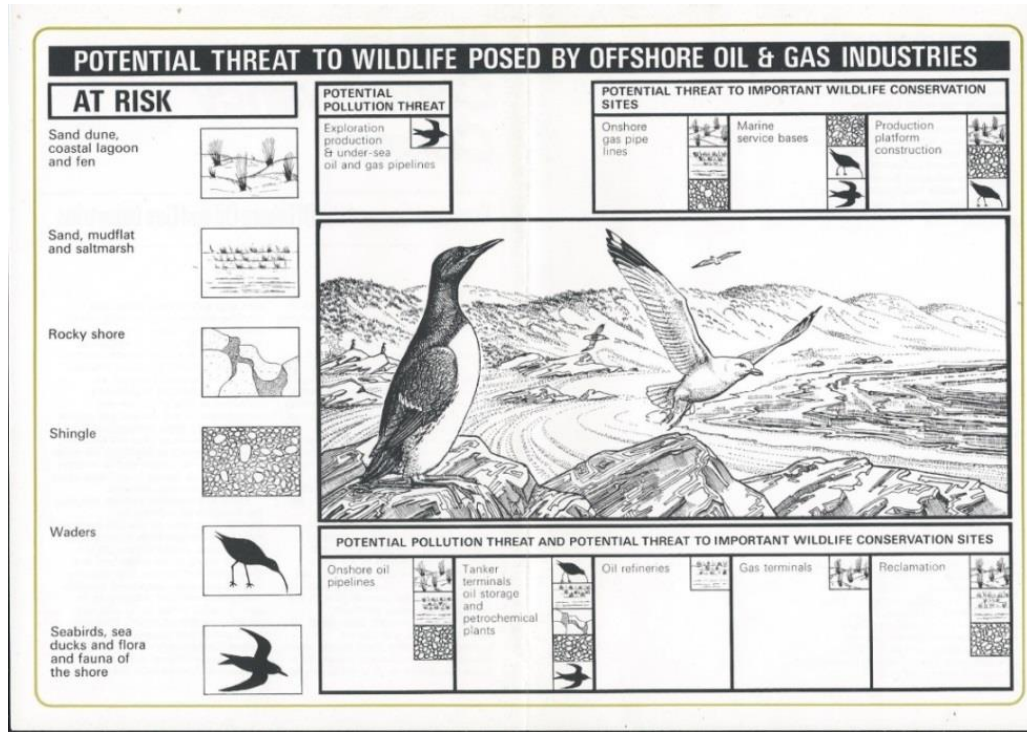


Fig.4.57 Diagram in *Conservation and the Offshore Oil and Gas Industries* – part of set used in the Mobile Exhibition Unit (NCC 1974)

As Herbert said, although shocking images could be effective, the statutory agencies generally avoided such images (see section 4.3.11). Smith recalled that:

“Shock tactics were not used, other than giving figures like 4% of grassland left... People have heard it so many times they don’t take any notice. I don’t think people want to be shocked.... And depressing people doesn’t inspire them – they just give up. I don’t think scare stories are very good educationally.”

Smith continued:

“Scientists really want people to understand the science, but it’s the interpreter, the person in between who realises how little you can get over of the science in a few moments, unless people are really keen to learn.... I think there are plenty of people who can’t understand a graph or a pie-chart....or percentages”.

In addition, stories of historic loss have low impact: Smith said that: “I find it fascinating that we don’t miss beyond our lifetime” and “its childhood memories that are very, very powerful”.

Bowley commented that: “I don’t think we have been anything like robust enough in spelling out the losses and certainly not assertive enough in badgering governments in doing anything about it”. But he continued:

“there is a danger in us being too much ‘doom-and-gloom’, and it washes over people....I am a bit more of the view now, that we should be a bit more positive (such as encouraging) the wow factor, saying this is what we’ve got, wouldn’t it be a shame to lose it?” (Bowley interview)

By contrast, Ward said:

“I wonder if the conservation movement’s use of art has not fallen into the category of ‘pleasing images’ rather than conveying the urgency of a situation. Clearly this is not the case with Greenpeace’s images of blood gushing from Japanese whalers.”

A member of the communication team explained that:

“NGOs will use shock tactics. The classic one would be the RSPCA showing examples of animal cruelty because how else do you illustrate why your charity exists? It’s to stop this kind of thing.”

The person continued: “We don’t...it’s the same policy for EN and NE.... We don’t have the visual evidence” for example, the dead hen harrier, the gun, the bullet and the alleged perpetrator, all supported by visual evidence and

corroboration. On prosecutions, a member of the communication team said “a general rule of thumb is that if you take a case to court and win you don’t crow about it, and if you lose you do not complain.” The person continued “And we don’t have any way to illustrate the shocking statistics of habitat loss....maps with dots are hard to understand (although) before and after photographs are helpful.”

4.4.6 Scientific Reports

Scientific research and publications continued both within the agency and contracted to ITE. Few illustrations were used in the reports, and graphs, diagrams and maps were more usual images, although covers may have been attractive: Peterken (1) and Robertson recall drawing illustrations for the front covers of their own reports. Robertson provided a design of *Trollius* superimposed on a piece of graph paper for the front cover of the monitoring of grassland report.

Examples of these research publications appear in both the 1980 and 1982/1983 catalogues, such as ‘*Wildlife in the City*’, ‘*Sea Area Atlas of the marine Molluscs of Britain and Ireland*’ and ‘*Otter Surveys*’. The covers of the majority of these depict photographs, graphs or maps, though the ‘*Wildlife Introductions to Great Britain*’ (1979) is unusual in that it bears a line drawing (artist uncredited) of various introduced species (see Fig.4.58). Inside there are six black and white photographs of introduced species.



Fig.4.58 Covers of NCC science publications: above left from 1979 and above right from 1984 (artists uncredited)

By 1983, surveys, research and reports were issued in a series '*Focus on nature conservation*', the first of which was '*Wetland and Riparian Plants in Great Britain*' by Palmer and Newbold. The cover of the series featured eleven small photographs of species and habitats with a window revealing the title of the report. Inside there were no illustrations, only text, maps and tables. Similarly, policy statements, such as '*Nature Conservation in Great Britain: Summary of objectives and strategy*' (1984) contained no illustrations within the document, but did have maps, a chart and a line drawing (artist not acknowledged) on the front cover (see Fig.4.58). The regularly-produced Research Reports Digests, issued by the NCC Information and Library Services, were without illustrations of any sort.

Robertson recalled that, as dictated by the Publications team, photographs were the only type of illustration considered for leaflets prepared by CST. The use of hand-crafted illustrations was not an option. The illustrations used "were largely trying to explain: they had to show something" rather than depict the 'Wow factor'.

4.4.7 Impact of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act

Adverse impacts on wildlife and their habitats continued through the 1970s and lobbying on Government from environmental groups increased. Together with the publication by NCC of Ratcliffe's '*A Nature Conservation Review*' in 1977, likened to a "Domesday Book of Britain's wild places" (Marren 2002), the case was building for stronger legislation to protect and better manage the UK's natural heritage (Sheail 1998). Even with this report, Duff felt "we were scientists... (and had not)...reached the point that we realised we needed to target the messages or the way we delivered them to the different target audiences".

With the arrival of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in 1981, NCC grew from a staff of about 500 with a budget of about £6 million to about 780 staff with an annual budget of about £39 million in 1988 (Marren 2002). Duff explained that although the 1981 Act was

"welcomed by all staff, it took a little while to realise what a hornet's nest it was going to stir up, because the process itself was a nightmare, time consuming and resource-intensive more than anybody had ever imagined"

Duff said the Act

"was probably one of the big drivers making, or helping, us to realise that we needed to engage much better with people - not just landowners and occupiers, but to the general public as well, to explain just what it was we were trying to do and why it matters".

Robertson recalled that:

"the Habitat leaflets that we were taking to owners and occupiers of SSSIs through the re-notification period were very good, because you could talk to them about all the technicalities of the Law, consultation and so on, but when you handed them this lovely coloured leaflet, their eyes lit up, and you could see that that meant much more to them than all the things you'd been saying! They'd feel some pride in having that habitat, be it woodlands or whatever and that meant a lot to them".

Marren described (2002) a general increase in the corporate and professional nature of the organisation, and this was reflected in the quality and number of its publications. Well demonstrated in the catalogues of publications, the Autumn 1980 catalogue had items listed on five pages, but only two years later the Autumn 1982 catalogue had 14 pages of items on policy, research and survey, annual reports, teachers project material with cardboard models, wallcharts and posters, nature conservation guides including species and habitat conservation, geology, regional titles, general titles, leaflets and postcards. The '*Conservation of...*' habitat series and '*Focus on...*' species booklets replaced the '*Countryside & Wildlife*' series and increased topics covered (see Fig.4.59). Lincoln recalled that branding material started in NCC: "we felt that if we wanted to get any message out, it had to be tagged with a brand, so that people could recognise where it was coming from...it was a proper marketing exercise."

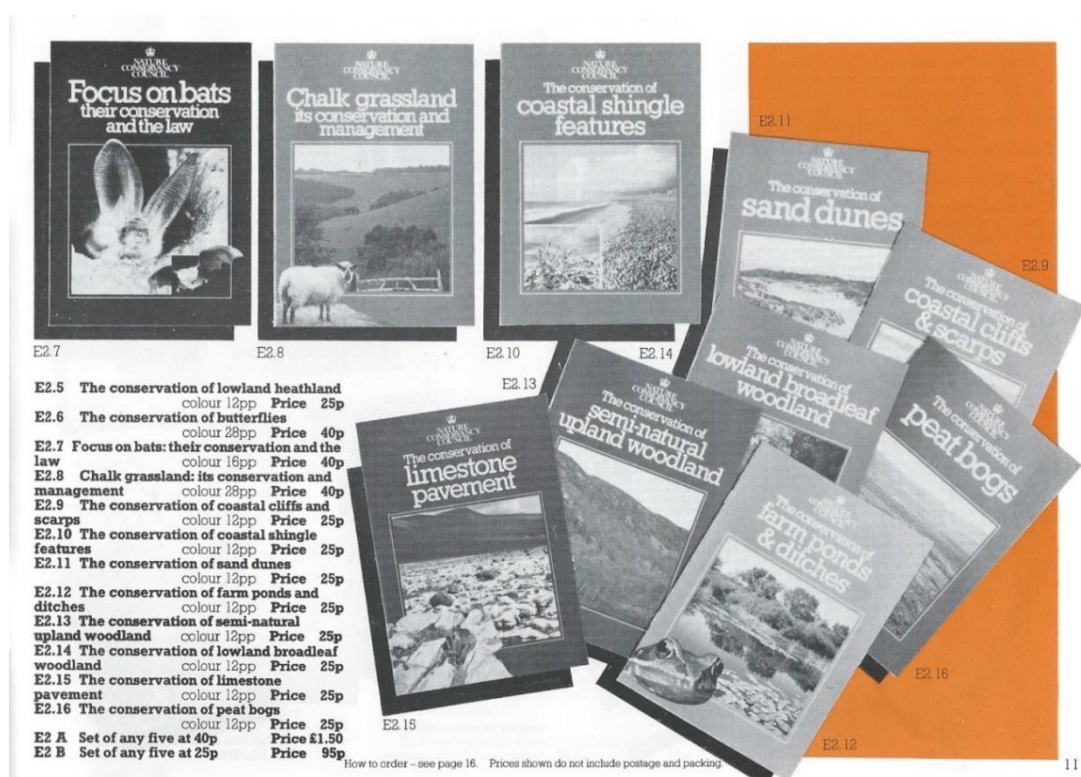


Fig.4.59 Range of '*Conservation of...*' and '*Focus on...*' booklets shown in NCC Catalogue 1982:11

These new booklets were printed on better quality thicker paper, the colours were brighter and the images sharper than the series' earlier versions. There

was more text, so more information, but the artwork had been reduced from the previous landscape with species to an occasional line drawing and largely replaced with photographs. Again, the artists were uncredited, but the photographers' names were listed and these, according to Herbert, were by "top quality photographers" including Heather Angel, Cash and Hosking.

Comparing the '*Blanket Bogs*' leaflet produced in 1977 and the updated version from 1982 demonstrates the changes in the appearance of the NCC publications (see Fig.4.60). The photograph on the cover of the 1977 leaflet is dull and uninspiring, although the two smaller photographs inside (one of blanket bog pools, and the other of the plant Bog Ashphodel) are bright. The habitat photograph from the 1982 booklet appears to have been taken on a bright and sunny day with an additional close-up of Bog Bean, and inside there are 13 smaller photographs of species, aerial views and problems.

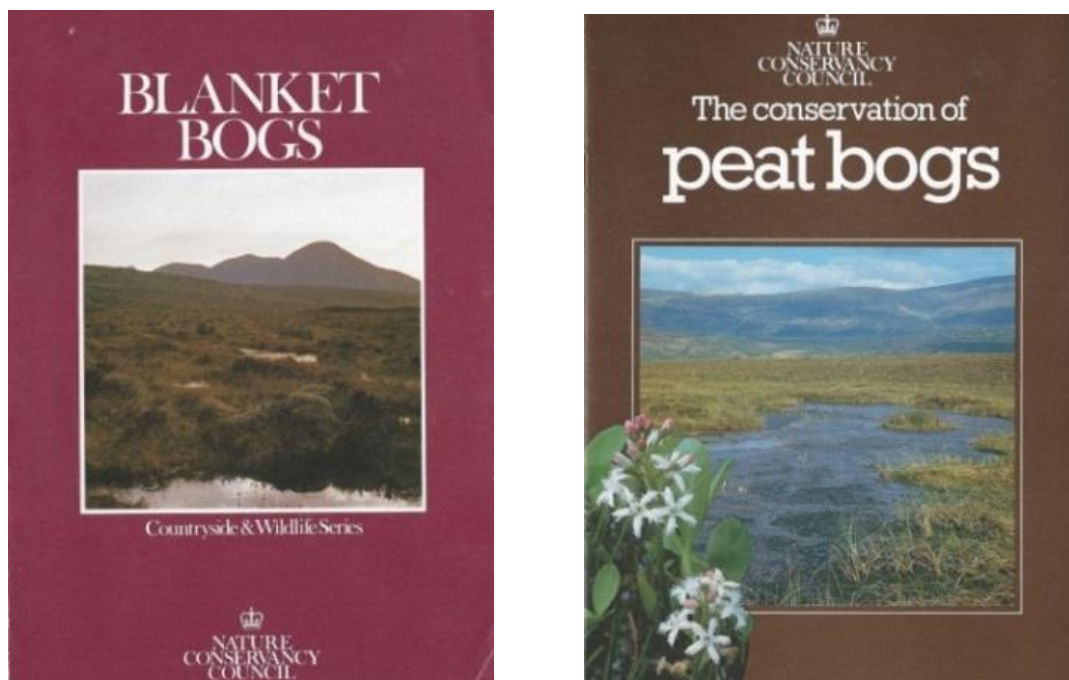


Fig.4.60 Comparison of the front covers of NCC booklets: '*Blanket Bogs*' (1977) and '*The conservation of peat bogs*' (1982)

The other big difference between them is the loss of the artwork (none of which appear in the 1982 booklet) and its replacement with photographs – see Fig.4.61

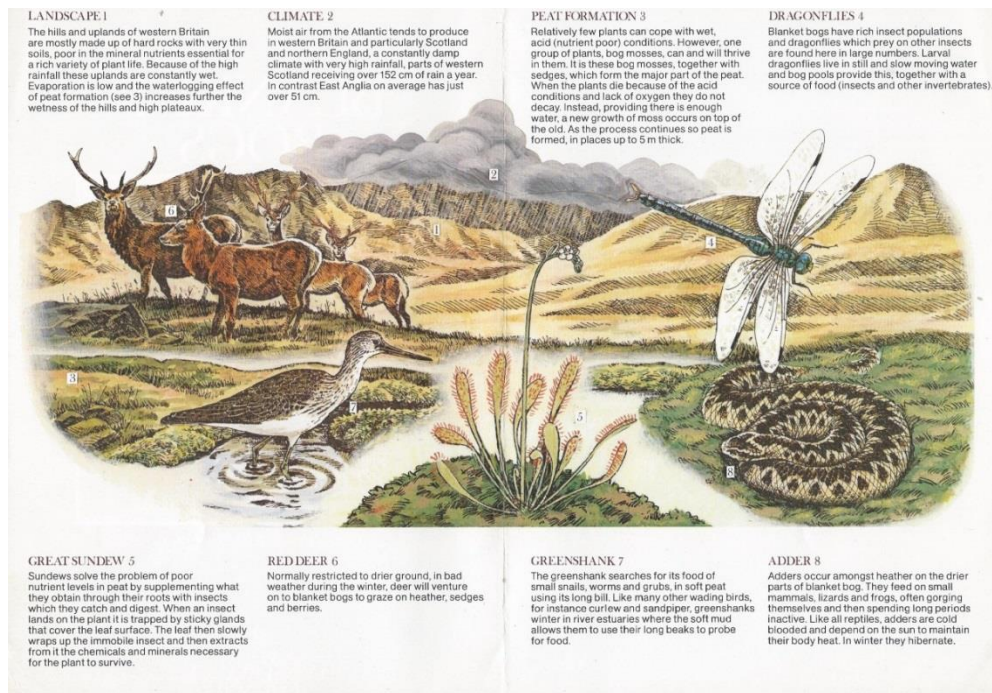


Fig.4.61 Artwork inside 'Blanket Bogs' leaflet (NCC 1977) – artist uncredited



Fig.4.62 Small colour photographs from inside '*The conservation of peat bogs*' (NCC 1982) depicting:

1. Claish Moss;
2. Sphagnum;
3. Moss carpet with lichens;
4. Drained peat bog;
5. Four-spotted Libellula;
6. Dunlin;
7. Eroded peat

John Hopkins, along with a cohort of new recruits, was appointed an Assistant Regional Officer (ARO) in February 1981 and joined the North-east Region team. He was given a set of material about general conservation issues plus leaflets for NNRs in the north-east all in a logoed, black plastic wallet. This set would have both informed the newly-appointed AROs of areas with which he/she might not have been familiar, and ensured that all the AROs had a consistent basic knowledge. The AROs would also know

what material was available to them to provide to land managers, SSSI owners, planners and others with an interest in a topic.

Three publications by the NCC provide examples of how humour was used to soften a sensitive message: '*Wildlife, the law and you*' (1982); '*SSSIs: what you should know about Sites of Special Scientific Interest*' (1983); and '*Bats in roofs – a guide for surveyors*' (1985). The first of these used line drawings and cartoons (by J Shackell) to put across aspects of Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and its production was financially supported by Shell UK Ltd (NCC 1982/1983 Mail Order Catalogue p13). The humour is quirky and probably intended to soften the impact of the messages about what the public can and cannot do and make them more acceptable. The Court scene on the front cover depicts members of the Jury as species protected by law (see Fig.4.63), and these are featured within the document in illustrations showing how they can be harmed through actions when the law is broken (see Fig.4.64).

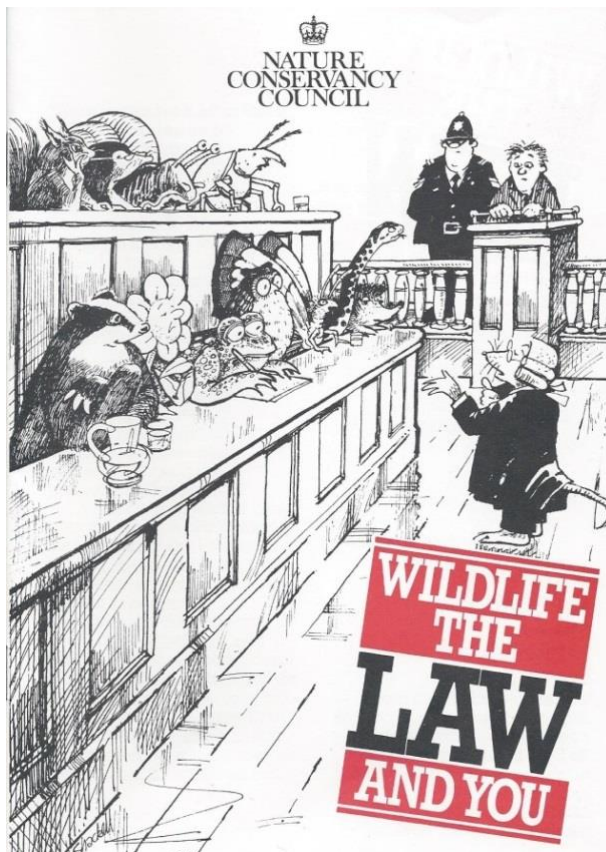


Fig.4.63 Cover of NCC booklet '*Wildlife, the law and you*' (1982) using humour to convey difficult and sensitive messages to the public

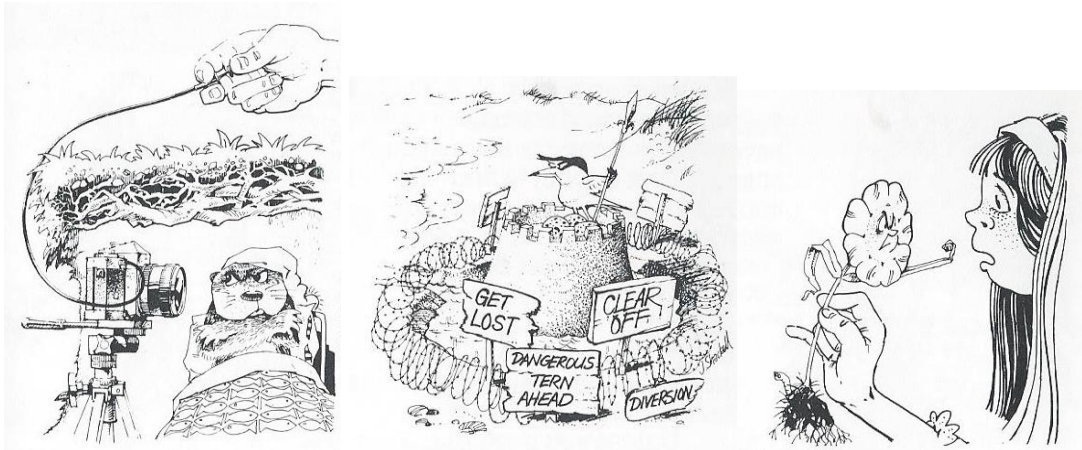


Fig.4.64 Humorous cartoons convey messages about wildlife law to the general public: not to disturb an animal at rest (p6); the need to protect less common birds, their nests and eggs (p9); and not to up-root plants (p11) (NCC 1982 '*Wildlife, the law and you*'))

The use of humour was not highlighted by the NCC in the annual report: rather they reported that the booklet was “an instant success and remained high on the NCC’s list of publications most in demand throughout the year” (NCC 1984). NCC also talked of its positive message that “everyone has a part to play in nature conservation” (NCC 1984). The accompanying poster used only photographs.

A similar publication '*SSSIs: what you should know about Sites of Special Scientific Interest*' (NCC 1983) dealt with a sensitive issue arising from the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), namely what land owners and managers were permitted to do on their land. John Shackell again provided humorous cartoons. On the left of Fig.4.65, the cover depicts an NCC staff member having agreed a management plan with the farmer with smiles all round, and on the right of Fig.4.65, there is an example of a potentially damaging operation, that is, re-seeding a flower-rich meadow.

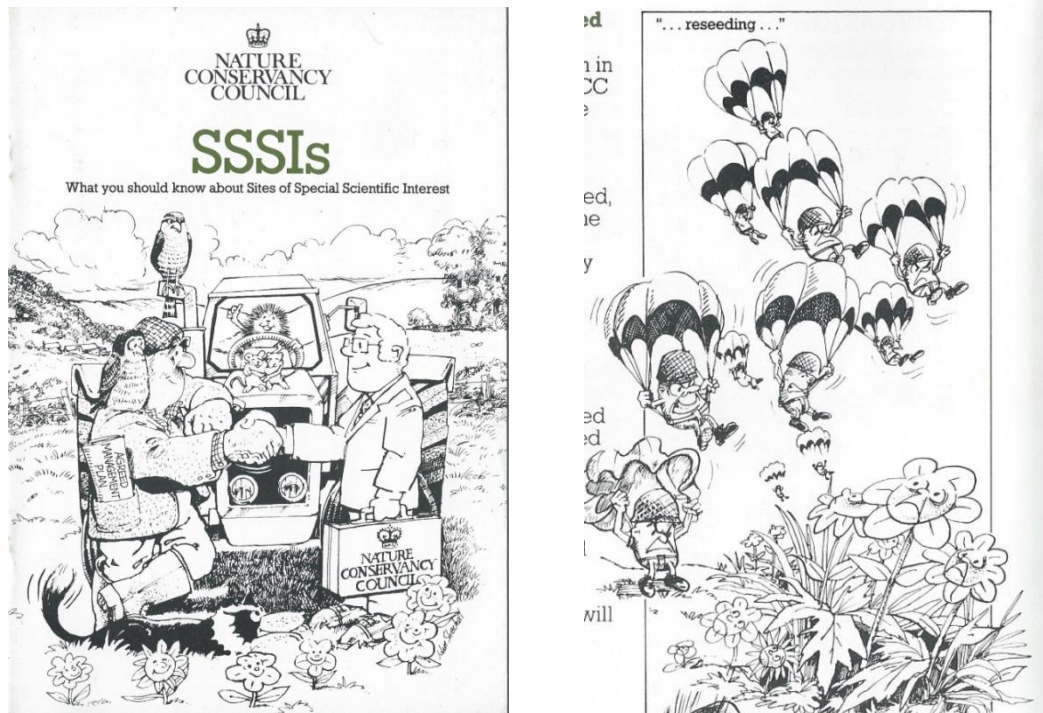


Fig.4.65 Examples of humorous cartoons used to illustrate NCC's leaflet on SSSIs (1983): the front cover, and a cartoon from p6 illustrating re-seeding, a potentially damaging operation

The third example, 'Bats in roofs: a guide for surveyors' (NCC 1985) is an example of best practice aimed at those undertaking bat surveys, bats and their roosts being protected by law. The cover has a cartoon of an unthreatening, comic character surrounded by smiling bats again probably intended to soften the message and make it more acceptable (see Fig.4.66).

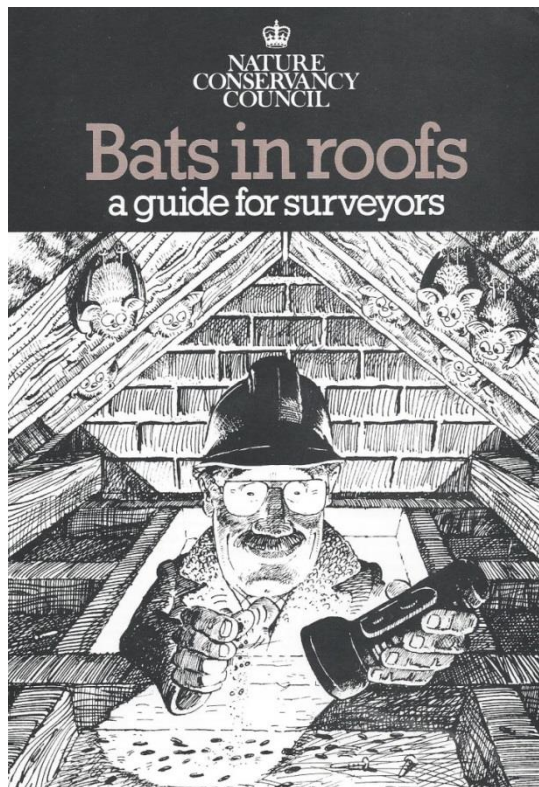


Fig.4.66 Cover of the NCC '*Bats in roofs*' (1985) leaflet using humour to introduce the text in an unthreatening manner

NCC continued to publish material, largely using photographs as illustrations, and promote its conservation work on television and radio. Specialist interest groups were targeted with their own journals, for example, '*Batchat*' (twice yearly from 1985/86); '*Earth Science*' (occasional from 1979/80); '*Topical Issues*' (quarterly from July 1985); and '*Urban Wildlife News*' (quarterly from 1984/1985). The NCC also proposed to issue a free newsletter for SSSI owners/occupiers and this proposal would be taken up by English Nature, the NCC's successor.

4.4.8 The Aesthetic, Inspirational Approach

The majority of photographs and artworks would seem to have been intended for identification, illustration or information purposes. Lane recalled that in the 1970s and 1980s, "it was recognised even then that big blocks of text in leaflets, displays etc or talks without illustration would be off-putting. In any case, nature was attractive, so use it." However, he felt that "most staff sought to use straight representation to clearly illustrate some point or

principle.” He explained: “When I joined, the scientific principles were very important and there was reluctance to stray too far from that in getting the conservation message across.” He continued:

“Nonetheless, there were some examples where an “art” element would have added something, in my opinion, for instance when a photograph was produced in a single colour (say green) instead of black-and-white, or using infra-red photographs, or some line drawing showing birds in flight. The acceptance and encouragement of an artistic element clearly increased over the years, especially since the 1990s.” (Lane interview)

Lane said:

“With time it was more clearly seen that to gain a wider understanding, the message would have to be made more appealing, and probably easier to grasp. So, although sound science was the essential underpinning approach, if staff wished to get a message across, such as changing behaviour or fostering interest, then more than straight science was needed to do that. Some individuals took this point on board more quickly than others of course.”

Peterken recalled that “Several of us once went on a landscape photography course in Snowdonia where we learned a bit about taking artistic photos.”

Several images connected to European projects were different as they neither informed nor could be used for identification, and could be said to be artistic or inspirational. Terence Lambert’s work, commissioned by Mike Henchman, for which Lincoln recalled “he was very proud”, gave a clear message that the conservation of nature is in human hands (see Fig.4.67), although Herbert found this “a bit folksy”.

Terence Lambert (b.1951) studied at Guildford School of Art as an illustrator. His work is based on a detailed knowledge and interest in natural history. He is a noted bird artist, for example, illustrating Collins ‘*British Birds*’ (Lambert & Gooders 1982) and also for landscapes and wildlife from around the world, including East Africa, Oman, Himalayas and Wales. He regularly visits,

exhibits and tutors at the Gloucestershire 'Nature in Art' gallery, which collection he describes as “the national collection of art inspired by nature” <http://terencelambert.com/2016>).



Fig.4.67 Terence Lambert's painting commissioned by NCC (sometime between 1973 and 1980) for their Council of Europe poster (designed by Conran Associates)

The poster appeared in the NCC 1980 and 1982 catalogues, was commissioned by the NCC for the Council of Europe in full colour and was urging the need for conservation of wildlife and natural habitats. Another Council of Europe campaign, in which the NCC participated, was European Wetlands Year, for which a number of posters were produced. One of these became Herbert's "favourites" for its "avant-garde design" (see Fig.4.68).



Fig.4.68 This poster, designed by Paulco O'Prater (1975) and commissioned by NCC for the European wetlands campaign, depicting a European cathedral's stained glass 'rose' window in the background of aquatic life, draws parallels with European architectural heritage, and implies the equivalence of their importance

Photography was also used to demonstrate the beauty of wildlife and wild places. The set of posters shown in black-and-white in the 1982 catalogue were examples of these. They were produced under the '*Wildlife in the City*' campaign, which included posters and wallcharts, along with a teacher's guide. In full colour, they depicted wildlife in a different way, with reflections and close-ups, which may have been to encourage the viewer to look for the beauty of nature around them (see Fig.4.69). Lincoln recalled "we went down a route of producing single species posters to see how they'd go...employing good photographers".



Fig.4.69 'Wildlife in the City' posters (NCC catalogue 1982:8)

Another example on the beauty and drama of nature was depicted in '*Scotland – the Nature of the Land: photographs of National Nature Reserves in Scotland*' (Baxter 1987) published in the European Year of the Environment 1987-88. Jointly published by the NCC and Colin Baxter Photography, this full-colour hard-backed book provided many photographs of wild land- and sea-scapes and wildlife that most readers would not have seen, nor were likely to. The photographs, being taken in different seasons, from different perspectives and in different light, result in a publication that could be described as a 'coffee-table book'. Twelve years later the idea was tried again for EN (1999).

Duff recalled that:

"It seemed to me that science was the main driver and the interpretation stuff was peripheral. And I don't think there was any high-level recognition how important it was to open things up, until very late in NCC days."

By 1990, the idea of dramatic photographs issued as posters had developed further. Peter Wakely, official NCC photographer (and other NCC employees), used their talents creating a poster series '*Here today – here forever?*' with its obvious conservation message (see Fig.4.70). The mountain scene has a wilderness-feel about it, but vulnerable to climate change or possible development for skiing. The saltmarsh scene shows no wildlife at all. However, their very recent presence is obvious from the hundreds of fresh footprints visible in the mud: now disturbed and gone. The lake scene is very lush with aquatic and marginal plants so we can guess that it is teeming with life but vulnerable to pollution or abstraction. All three posters depict special fragile habitats likely to support special wildlife, all of which could be lost without efforts to safeguard and conserve them. Robertson felt that although not shocking the viewer, these thought-provoking posters made "quite a strong statement".

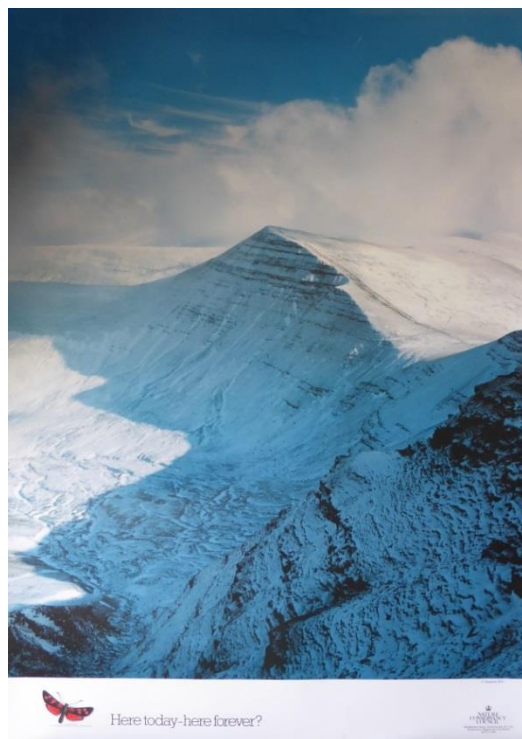
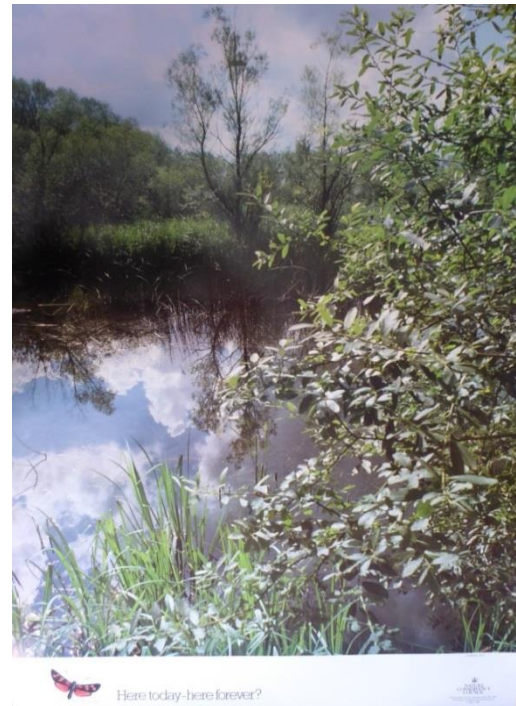
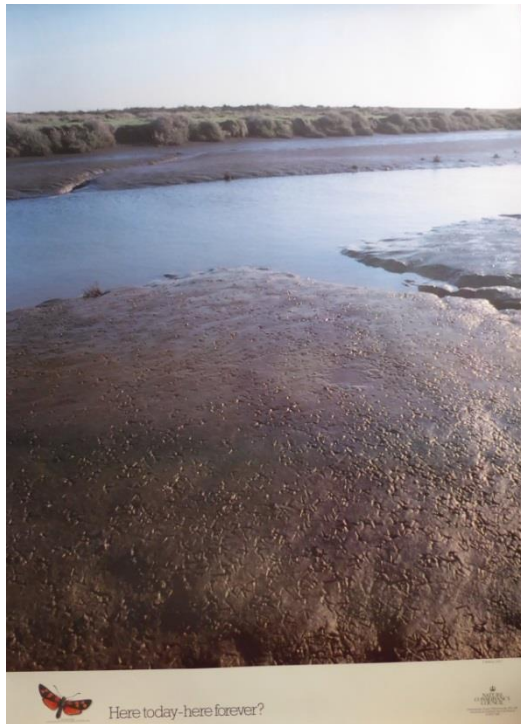


Fig.4.70 Three posters from NCC's '*Here today – here forever?*' series (1990)
Photographers were: S Campbell (above) and Peter Wakely (next page)



The front cover of the NCC's last annual report (1991) before the breakup of the agency bore a photograph by Peter Wakely of an East Sussex churchyard and the wildlife it was protecting and supporting (see Fig.4.71). The image reflected the tongue-in-cheek humour, sense of irony and affection of its staff for the organisation as it was about to close.

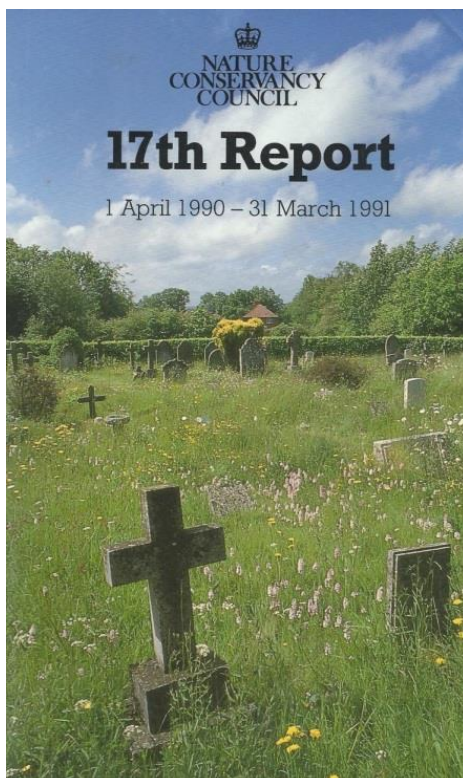


Fig.4.71 Front cover of NCC's last annual report (1991) bearing Peter Wakely's photograph of the wildlife protected and supported in an East Sussex churchyard

4.5 Summary of Imagery used by the Nature Conservancy and NCC

As set out in sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2 and 2.4 of this research, Arvill 1976, Cole & Durack 1002, Fairbrother 1972, Levey 1996, Mabey 1980, Marren 2002, Matless 1998, Moore 1987, Nordern 2001, Reynolds 2016, Riddell 1984, Roscoe 1996, Sheail 1976 and 1998, Stamp 1969 and Waine & Hilliam 2016, provided the background to the origins of the need for nature conservation in England. Turnage (2019) explained in section 2.2.1, that communication was key to effective promotion of conservation messages, but Moore (1987:221-231) described “the failure to communicate”. My original research draws on examination of publications and other material produced by the statutory nature conservation agencies and interviews with former staff.

My research has shown that, after a hesitant start, the Conservancy presented itself as authoritative, setting about its joint tasks of science and conservation, and passionate about its remit. Although variably successful, it tried to present scientific principles and data in a format and style accessible to the layman. The Conservancy used images where possible, although they were limited largely to black-and-white photographs and line diagrams because these were cheaper than using colour or employing artists. In later years, the Conservancy improved ways of translating the research on habitat management and produced handy leaflets with coloured diagrams and good quality illustrations. As shown in section 2.4, Stamp (1969) described the major challenges in communication faced by the Nature Conservancy, and Moore (1987) suggested that 20 years later there was still scope for better communication encouraging wider support from the general public and government.

Photographs of conservation staff and Council members predominantly depict white males. Female staff were employed, largely in administrative roles, but action shots such as reserve management or scientists at work, tended to depict men because that reflected the gender profile at the time. The organisation recognised early on that more needed to be done to engage young people in conservation and embarked on several high-profile

projects working with others to involve younger generations and to promote environmental education.

The Conservancy's work that could have most engaged with the public was through nature reserve interpretation, and despite the work of Lutz in the 1920s America, and Tilden (Tilden 1957, Wilson 1992) (see section 2.4), there were only a few notable examples. Some reserve wardens tried innovative techniques to help the public understand their reserves' wildlife interest, but many wardens did not.

At the start, the Conservancy had neither sufficient staff nor funding to promote nature conservation directly, and consequently had a low profile. In later years, its publicity material improved with more staff and resources. However, in working with others, such as the National Nature Weeks in 1963 and 1965, the '*Better Britain*' campaign, European Conservation Year in 1970, and '*Plant a Tree in '73*', it ensured wide engagement on nature conservation issues.

Following the start made by the Conservancy, the NCC continued to promote nature conservation in all areas of its work and with more staff and resources had greater outreach. Although the Interpretation Unit was not highly rated by staff at the time, in hindsight its work has been seen as visionary. Its messages were taken out through the Mobile Exhibition Unit, and following the introduction of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in 1981, which had a major impact on all areas of its work, the NCC produced a wider range and more professional-looking, informative, colourful and in some cases humorous material. A mixture of full colour photographs and artwork by professional illustrators helped convey key nature conservation information and messages. There were more hands-on activities for children, and through grants and information packs, greater encouragement given to children and young people to become involved in its work. In its last years, the NCC embarked on more inspirational style artwork in a book and posters. The lack of engagement with the public on NNRs remained the outstanding issue to address.

Referring back to Nicholls (2011), unlike other nature conservation organisations, none of the four statutory agencies' individual logos have included wildlife or habitat imagery. However, they have been consistent in using the words 'nature' or 'natural', and colours employed have 'natural' associations being shades of green, brown and blue. For discussion on logos of nature conservation organisations see section 2.3.5, and which forms the basis of part of the survey of visitors to the Mall Galleries (see section 7.1.5).

Chapter 5 – Imagery used by the nature conservation agencies: English Nature and Natural England (1991-2012)

This chapter examines the imagery used by EN and NE, followed by a case study of the visual culture of Barnack Hills and Holes NNR, Cambridgeshire.

5.1 English Nature (1991-2006)

5.1.1 Trying To Be Different

In 1991, EN published (1991) '*English Nature: who we are... what we do...*' and '*A parliamentarian's guide to nature conservation in England*' including a pull-out '*Fact and figures: Information Guide: As at 30 September 1991*'.

These items were in different designs and colours, but were consistent in the use of the logo and high quality photographs. EN continued using the logo, although the colours varied in shades of blue, yellow or white. The cover designs of the annual reports and the '*Progress*' reports differed but all the illustrations inside were photographs (see Fig.5.1).



Fig.5.1 Covers of EN Annual and Progress Reports: (Top left *First Report* 1991-1992 and top right *8th Report* 1998-1999; with *Progress* reports (from left to right) from '93, '94, '95, 1997, and 1999), demonstrating the range of styles, colours, cover illustrations and variety of logo colour, size and position.

Several of the interviewed staff commented how different to NCC EN tried to be. For example, a member of the communications team said:

“(EN) were trying to do things that appealed to the general public and not just specialist audience. They did quite a lot of outreach, and they had people working on NNRs, and there were quite a lot of events, like guided walks, or making things, or whatever”.

Duff gave the reasons for this difference:

“In the mid ‘80s, there was still a view that ‘we are the scientists. We should tell them the science, what is happening. Science will over-ride everything’. I think there was in the late 80s a growing waking-up for much of the organisation the fact that science didn’t actually carry the weight with many of the people we were trying to influence in the way it had in the past....so I think that was why from the start of EN we tried very consciously to be very much more people-focussed than the previous organisations had been”.

Duff continued: "We developed the idea to look at sites as a whole in the context of the wider countryside". He recalled General Managers were enthusiastic, and “talking to people throughout the organisation...ideas crystalized". In early days of EN

"there was a strong commitment to do things differently (to NCC) but we had a very difficult relationship for the first few years with the NGOs, particularly with Wildlife and Countryside Link, who were convinced that we were selling out on the special sites and that we weren't doing the pure science that we had done before...There was a lot of pain in the NGOs and in our own staff about the split (the break-up of NCC into the four country agencies) ...and the first 3 or 4 years were difficult and the external audience who had previously been our supporters were sceptical and suspicious". (Duff interview)

A member of the communications team recalled that it was during these early years that EN earned the nickname ‘toothless watchdog’ but after “Andy Clements won the Battle of Dibden Bay”, when EN objected to development

proposals by ABP Ports, the agency became respected and seen as the “organisation of record” and had “a serious role in terms of news reporting and the environment”.

The new approach included EN embracing technology: “Google was in its infancy” when a member of the communications team started in 2001. Combining web-based technology with outreach to the public led to initiatives such as at Lathkill Dale NNR. The member of the communications team recalled an early on-line sensory experience of the reserve: a series of images with a voice-over by Ben le Bas, Site Manager, could be viewed. As the computer mouse moved over the screen, the effect and sound of the wind could be seen and heard. Other events at NNRs not only included guided walks and activity days, but also “things that appealed to the general public and not just specialist audiences”. One of these was at Castor Hanglands NNR, where a group of deaf-blind visitors were invited to the reserve to experience the woodland and handle natural objects. Unfortunately, due to budget cuts and other priorities, EN dropped its school grounds funding work in the mid-1990s (Wray 1).

Another example of this very different approach was provided by Pugsley-Hill who joined EN as an Urban Officer in 1991. She described this role as being “quite different to mainstream conservation”, undertaking projects such as “performance art”: for example, a “rather scary Halloween event in the dark in Bretton”, a suburb of Peterborough. She said they were

“using different forms of art – not just images – we were quite experimental in what we were doing. But at that time for urban conservation, it was quite acceptable to take those risks.... I think a lot of the more traditional conservationists thought I was crazy: ‘what the hell is she doing now?’ (But) “it was really interesting in how it brought different audiences in, that were happy with art, but weren’t happy with conservation, (and then) went on to do more conservation”. (Pugsley-Hill interview)

The Natural Areas initiative (1996-1998) initially provided scope to regional staff, who prepared the Natural Areas descriptions, to use a range of

illustrations. Later they were all standardised: photographs were on the front cover of each report and inside black-and-white line drawings depicting key species.

Two other regional EN publications demonstrate the early freedom for illustrations: '*Nature Conservation in Broadland*' (1992) produced by the Norfolk Team, and '*Sands of Time*' (2000) by the East Midlands Teams. The otter image is very similar to that used on the cover of the 1975 NCC Wetland Wildlife leaflet (see Fig.4.42). The '*...Broadland*' publication uses high quality colour photographs on the cover and in a double-page spread, but also eleven detailed black-and-white line drawings at relevant places in the booklet (see Fig.5.2):

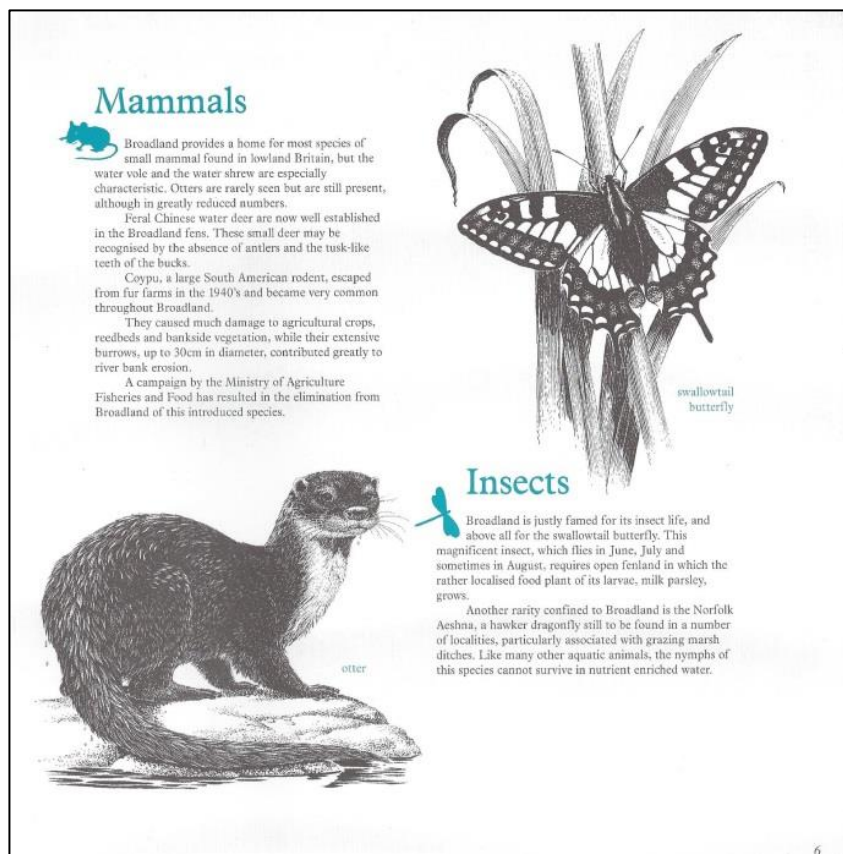


Fig.5.2 Illustrations of swallowtail butterfly and otter, '*Nature Conservation in Broadland*' (EN 1992:6) artist uncredited

The '*Sands of Time*' is a collection of memories of local people of Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes NNR, Lincolnshire, illustrated by black-and-white

photographs and line drawings, with the cover bearing two paintings by local artist T E J Brooker from Louth, Lincolnshire (see Fig.5.3).

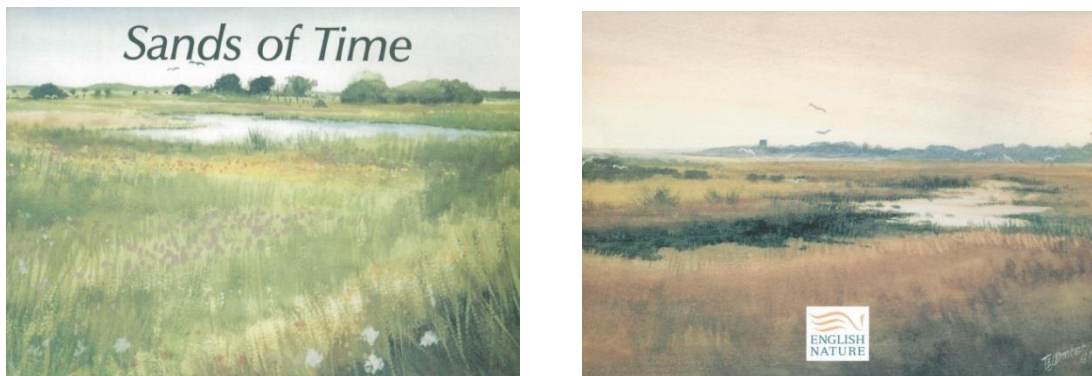


Fig.5.3 Front and back covers of *Sands of Time* (EN 2000) illustrations by T E J Brooker

Robertson recalled that for the Chief Scientist's Team publications such as English Nature Research Reports (ENRR):

"Pictures did have a role, but there wasn't much scope for them because it was all black-and-white suitable for multiple copies. We didn't – I didn't – use many photographs. Graphs and diagrams were certainly used, but I don't think they worked in a general public leaflet as they were too obscure and people didn't understand them." (Robertson interview)

Robertson continued: "If you wanted to illustrate a technical issue, you would use a graph instead of a photo – very dry!" Duff recalled that:

"Until well into EN days, most publications from the scientists who thought they were aiming at the general public, tended to be illustrated by accurate photographs. 'Nature Conservation in Great Britain' (Ratcliffe 1977) had quite a lot of pie-charts and histograms because we were trying to highlight habitat change and loss. This was what you might call the traditional way of publishing science. It changed as we realised that we had to be more imaginative in the way we got out the messages...but I'm not sure we ever got really good at it..."

Duff concluded:

“If you are really going to engage effectively with the non-traditional audience for conservationists, you’ve got to find ways that chime with the audience. It might well seem daft or trivial to the specialist, but actually if it is what the audience responds to best and it gets the message over and gets them engaged, that’s what you need to do.”

5.1.2 Campaigns and Merchandise

The ‘*Campaign for the Living Coast*’ (EN 1994:8-9) was another example demonstrating how different EN’s communications became, cited by both G Radley and a member of the communications team. The campaign was launched with a big reception at the QE2 Centre, London. Attention-grabbing features included a fishing boat full of ice and fish, which G Radley said “gave a focus and something to talk about”, and, although the publicity manager “got into quite a lot of trouble” for that stunt (for wasting fish), a member of the communications team also described it as “the ‘good old days’ when you could try something like that”. G Radley described other features:

“We had big bold coloured hoardings with very few words on –a complete change from the NCC which would have had closely-typed text. Even if they might have had big hoardings explaining exactly why the ‘*Campaign for the Living Coast*’ was a good idea, for us these were reduced to very few words or none: visual messages.”

G Radley said that the event:

“was received very well – it made a big impact – it made the press, and we followed it up with a roadshow going round to coastal authorities, and on the whole we got a pretty sympathetic hearing because it was a positive message”.

The Campaign was science based, derived from research on geomorphology and coastal processes. G Radley said:

“We used lots of big, colour photographs, coloured diagrams...lots of imagery, and so a complete change from the NCC...and we made progress in getting our

message across. One of the signs of that was that we changed the language – people talked about managed retreat, and soft engineering. They didn't always agree with it, but they were talking about it". (G Radley interview)

G Radley said that the campaign hired a PR consultant from private industry, and "a civil engineer from a big construction company" was in charge of the campaign. The campaign had its own logo which appeared on associated material such as posters, event material, desk flags and t-shirts (see Fig.5.4). The campaign continued until about 1995/6 (EN 1997:15-16) and although it was gradually replaced by other maritime initiatives, G Radley recalled this particular campaign would have indicated that EN was different to the preceding NCC.



Fig.5.4 T-shirt for EN's 'Campaign for a Living Coast' bearing both the EN and the distinctive campaign logo, Author's photograph

Other publicity material was produced for other events and campaigns, such as branded clothing for staff for the Species Recovery Programme or working at particular events, such as NNR Open days called '*Wild Days Out with English Nature*' (see Fig.5.5). Additional logoed items, that were for both staff use and to be given away for free, included caps, cloth bags, pens and so on, all designed to raise awareness of the organisation and its work.



Fig.5.5 T-shirts for staff working on particular events, Author's photograph

5.1.3 Corporate Standards

From 1991, EN published a variety of journals and newsletters, including: '*English Nature newsletter*' (replaced by the '*English Nature magazine*' after three issues); '*Earth Science*' (which by 1993 had become '*Earth Sciences Conservation*'); and '*Urban wildlife news*' (EN 1992:122-123). By 1993, EN had also introduced '*Enact*', '*Sitelines*', and '*Nature's place*' (EN 1993:23) (see Fig.5.6).



Fig.5.6 A4 format EN publications:

Left (left to right, top to bottom): '*Hampshire and Isle of Wight Team Plan 2002-2003*' (2002); '*2004 SSSI Awards*' (2005); '*English Nature Magazine – January 2004*'; '*Urbio: urban biodiversity and human nature*' Spring 2006; '*sitelines*' Issue 52 Summer 2005; '*flora english nature*' winter 2002, Author's photograph

In these publications, there is a consistent use of high quality photographs of landscapes, species, people, machinery and equipment, and so on, with very few or no hand-crafted illustrations. A set of the '*Enact*' series, for example, from No 1 in spring 1993 to autumn 2003 consisting of 47 issues, contained only photographs, with occasional graphs, diagrams and maps. There were no created illustrations, apart from the first edition where a cartoon of the Earl of Cranbrook, the Chairman of EN, was depicted cutting the '*Enact*' tape (see Fig.5.7). The first few editions also included some cartoon strips but these were soon dropped.

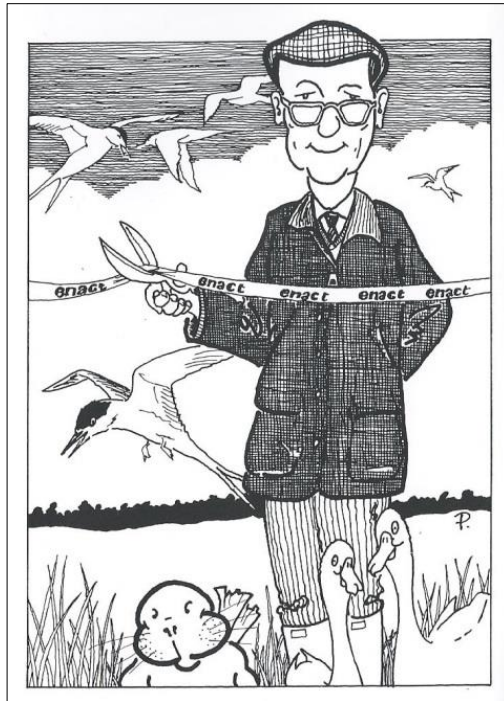


Fig.5.7 Cartoon by Paul Lacey of the Earl of Cranbrook, Chair of English Nature, cutting the 'Enact' tape, first edition of the journal (EN 1993:2)

Similarly, publications within the '*English Nature Research Reports*' (ENRR) and '*English Nature Science*' contain no illustrations. Only tables of data, maps and graphs were used, for example, ENRR by Brown et al (1994) and EN Science publications by Farrell (1993) and Parker (1995).

However, in 2002, the branding and creativity of earlier initiatives ended, and English Nature issued its '*Corporate identity manual: Presenting English Nature in style*'. The A5 size sheaf of pages held together by metal studs, were contained within a metal embossed box. Accompanying the manual was a CD held in the box lid. The manual covered the correct logo, permitted corporate colours and formats, text, layout, branding, typefaces, legends for maps, signage for reserves, use of vehicles, display boards and types of paper, and so on. The section on '*photographs, illustrations and graphics*' (EN 2002:30-33) explained the importance of illustrations, as these "all communicate more effectively than words alone" and the aim should be "to use the best and most effective imagery possible" (p30). Most of this section was devoted to the use of photographs: "illustrations should be used either where photography cannot be used or it is more appropriate to use

illustration for aesthetic or practical reasons”. Examples where illustrations could be used in preference to photographs were: where something does not yet exist such as a building development; where something is difficult to capture in a single photograph; to help in definition; or to explain a management technique (p33). However, the emphasis was in giving “a clear, consistent message” (p33).

The manual provided the colour coding for the cover of publications: blue for ‘corporate’; orange for ‘initiatives’; brick red for ‘science’; and dark green for ‘sites’ (pp16-19). From this time, the vast majority of publications adhered to this instruction. Examples of the range of material published (from 2002 – 2006) under this guidance are shown in Fig.5.8, Fig.5.9, Fig.5.10, Fig.5.11 and 5.12), and every one of them used colour photographs, with no hand-crafted illustrations. From the author’s experience (at the Local Biodiversity Action Plan conferences in 2006, 2007 and 2008), these publications were very popular, particularly those in the A5 format. According to Seamons (2) and based on the number requested and sent out, “the most popular leaflet was about wildlife on allotments, and hundreds were handed out to allotment holders”.



Fig.5.8 EN A5 habitat and management ‘initiative’ publications left to right, top to bottom: ‘Wildlife on allotments’(2006); ‘Grazing management of lowland heathlands’(2005); ‘Management of bare ground’(2005); ‘Wildflower meadows’(2004/5); ‘Biodiversity’(2002); ‘Garden ponds and boggy areas’(2005); ‘Purple moor-grass and rush pastures’(2004); ‘Lowland heathland’(2002); and ‘Designing sustainable communities for people and biodiversity’



Fig.5.9 A5 EN species 'initiative' publications left to right, top to bottom: *Enjoying moths and butterflies in your garden*'(2005); *'Dragonflies and damselflies in your garden'* (2005); *'Minibeasts'*(2004); *'Reptiles in your garden'* (2003); *'Return of the red kite'*(2002); and *'Amphibians in your garden'*(2002)



Fig.5.10 A4 EN 'Sites' publications left to right, top): *'Fenn's Whixall & Bettisfield Mosses'* (2002); *'Hartland Moor: recollections of 50 years as a National Nature Reserve'* (2004); *'The Lower Derwent Valley: a working landscape'*(2002); *'Paston barn'*(2005); and 'Corporate' publications bottom: *'Wildlife-friendly gardening'* (2003); and *'Plants for wildlife-friendly gardens'* (2003)

Duff reported that the detailed handbooks that EN produced had more detail than NCC ones, such as management for bats, woodland ride management, reptiles and newts. These handbooks “might have been aimed at landowners and land-managers, but was probably more digestible to other people in the conservation business”.



Fig.5.11 EN A4 format ‘Science’ publications: English Nature Research Reports left to right: ‘Nature and psychological well-being’ ENRR 533 (2003); ‘Dungeness before 1960’ ENRR 571 (2004); ‘Phoenix House therapeutic Conservation Programme’ ENRR 611 (2004); ‘The condition of lowland BAP priority grasslands’ ENRR 636 (2005); and ‘The biodiversity of three traditional orchards within the Wyre Forest SSSI in Worcestershire’ ENRR 707 (2006)



Fig.5.12 EN A4 format ‘Initiative’ publications left to right: ‘Sustainable grazing in the English uplands’ (2004); ‘Getting wetter for wildlife’ (2005); and ‘The Species Recovery programme: Proceedings of the 10th anniversary conference 5-7 December 2001’ (2002)

5.1.4 The Art of Conservation

There was great consistency in presentation across a wide range of topics. One exception to this standard set was an orange 'initiative' publication: the '*Illustrated guide to grassland condition*' (2002). The idea from Steve Peel, grassland specialist, used an A3-size sheaf of documents with entirely hand-drawn illustrations depicting how ideal neutral grassland should appear in March, May-June, and October onwards for three wildlife targets, namely lapwing, snipe and plants and animals (see Fig.5.13). The same format was difficult to do with photographs, because the changes are subtle and need more than one frame. According to Dr Richard Jefferson pers. comm. 2004, this document was a "trial approach" and feedback was requested to Dr Christine Reid. Apparently, the guides were well received by farmer/land manager and conservation adviser alike.

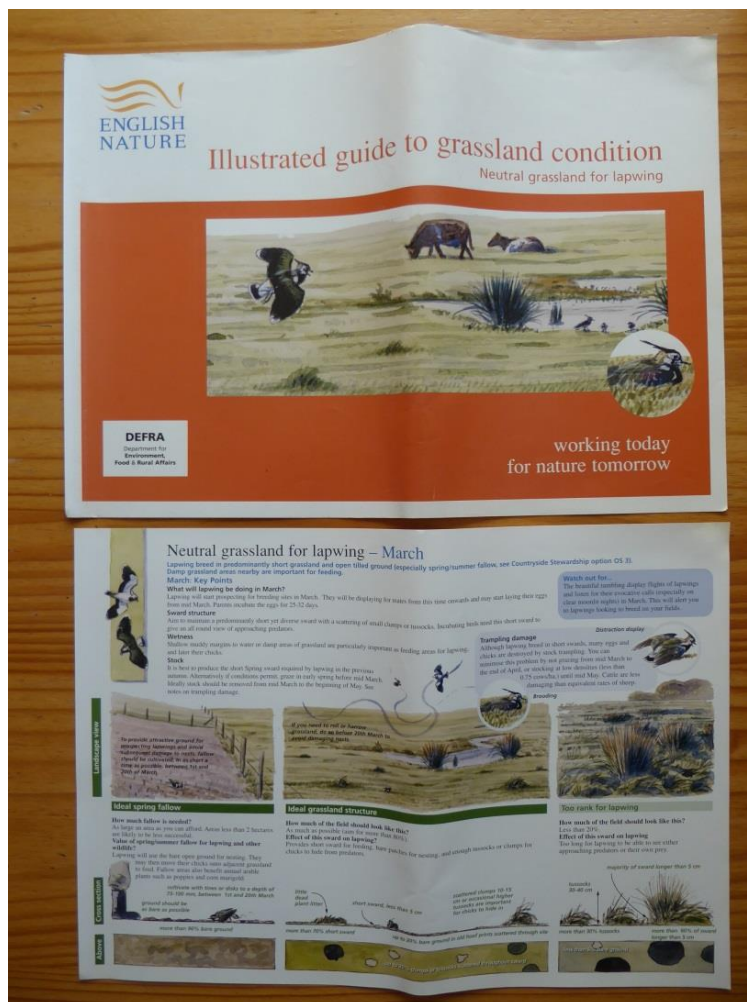


Fig.5.13 EN orange 'initiative' publication: Cover and second sheet (March) of the '*Illustrated guide to grassland condition*' (2002) featuring hand-drawn illustrations by Dan Powell

I have found only two wildlife artists acknowledged in all the material produced by EN: Dan Powell, creator of the artwork for the '*Illustrated guide to grassland condition*' (EN 2002), and John Davis. Dan Powell attended the wildlife illustration course, at Dyfed College of Art, Carmarthen in 1980. He illustrated the field guide '*The Dragonflies of Great Britain*', and his drawings and paintings have appeared in wildlife books and publications. In 1995, he was awarded the Artists for Nature Foundation prize which resulted in a field trip to the Pyrenees and an exhibition in Barcelona. He has also won British Birds' *Bird Illustrator of the year* in 1996. His website includes examples of his work for nature reserve interpretation panels, icons and logos, cards and so on (www.powellwildlifeart.com). According to Powell from the Land Gallery 2011 (www.thelandgallery.com/artists/artists/powell_d):

"It is impossible to say why so much satisfaction can be gained from close encounters with humble species such as Dragonflies. The fact is, it can. Don't try to rationalise it or excuse it. Just do it. The more you do it the easier it becomes, but the pleasure never diminishes."

Two other examples where the extensive use of illustrations helped get a complicated message across were from agri-environment scheme Handbooks and the accompanying '*Farm Environment Plan Features Manual*' (NE 2008). According to G Radley, a drawing or diagram often proved better than photographs at conveying ideas, such as the structure of a Devon hedge, or the features that make a veteran tree so good for wildlife.

Like the examples above, several other notable publications produced centrally gave much greater emphasis to artistic interpretation of wildlife. In EN's '*Arable Plants*' field guide (2003), impressions of past landscapes, provided by artist John Davis, helped illustrate the historical context of this group of plants. Davis paints largely in watercolour, often depicting seasonal landscapes. He is a member of the SWLA, has provided illustrations for RSPB, British Wildlife and BBC Wildlife magazines (<http://www.mallgalleries.org.uk/users/john-davis-swla>) and illustrated '*Jewels Beyond the Plough*' (Jefferson 2013).

Three particular publications by EN are noteworthy for using art to promote nature conservation: *'England: the nature of the land: Photographs of National Nature Reserves in England'* (1999), *'Land Marks: Impressions of England's National Nature Reserves'* (2003), and *'English Nature and the art of conservation'* (2004).

The first was a collection of photographs by Graham Nobles, of National Nature Reserves taken in different seasons (see Fig.5.14). The resulting 'coffee-table' style book with near full-page full-colour photographs was published by Colin Baxter Photography for EN, the company which also produced NCC's book *'Scotland – the Nature of the Land: photographs of National Nature Reserves in Scotland'* (1987).

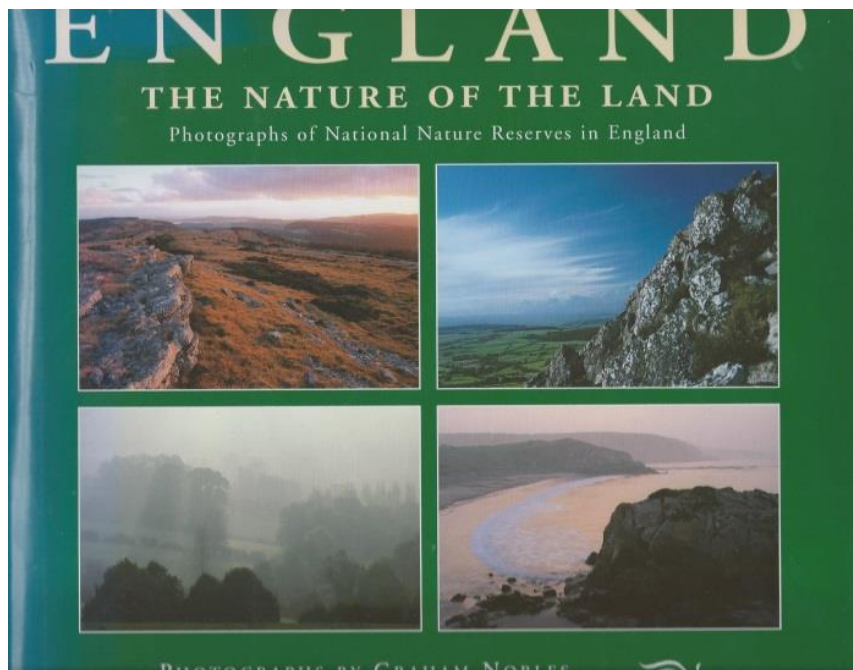


Fig.5.14 Front cover *'England- the nature of the land: photographs of National Nature Reserves in England'* (EN 1999)

The second, *'Land Marks'*, arose from Andy Clements' initiative to broaden the appeal of landscape and EN's work, and he asked John Lincoln to consider options. Written by Julian Rollins, with assistance from Ronald Blythe, author and poet, and Suzanne Bosman, an art-historian, the book described the history of twenty-one English NNRs covering not only the wildlife of the NNR, but also art, poetry, old photographs and archaeology

associated with the reserve (see Fig.5.15). In the Preface, Lincoln explained that the book was suggested by Tom Wall, Site Manager for NNRs in the West Midlands in early 2002, who thought that “portraying works of art linked to or that were actually about NNRs...would be of interest to a wide audience” (Rollins 2003). In interview, Lincoln said:

“It was becoming clear to us in English Nature that by concentrating solely on interpreting and explaining NNRs by virtue of their species and habitats, we were ‘missing a trick’ because the arts inform almost everything we humans do... We had this enormously attractive (asset) – nature reserves – everything was there, and we controlled them to a large extent and in that context we could engage with the arts in order to promote the value of the nature reserves and nature conservation – which is what they were for. And that was my premise for the book.”

The twenty-one featured NNRs include historical art work, texts and maps, aerial photographs and colour photographs of current habitats and species, and set the NNR in both an historical and cultural landscape.

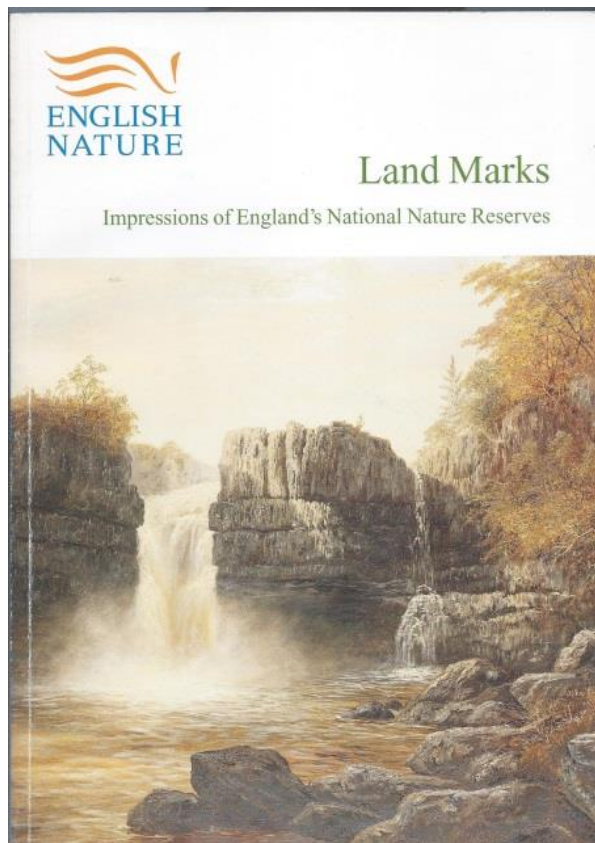


Fig.5.15 Cover '*Land Marks*' (Rollins 2003)

Anna Gundrey of the Thames and Chilterns Team, said in the book review section of the '*English Nature Magazine*' in January 2004:15: "this book is a bit of a departure for English Nature." After criticising the publication style in that it looked like a research report, she concluded "this is a refreshing new approach to the interpretation of NNRs. I look forward to volume two..." More volumes did not appear.

Duff said:

"I was very impressed with it... it made you start to think about things in a very different way.....It was actually one of the best things we ever did - one of the most interesting and novel things we ever published – it was so different to the way we covered anything else".

Lincoln explained that the

"big step was to move away from the science which was always fundamental to everything we did...and bring on board the support of the wider audience (through) the arty side of things."

In the following year EN, working with the 'Nature in Art' Gallery, near Gloucester, published '*English Nature and the art of conservation*' (Lincoln 2004) (see Fig.5.16). This initiative by Lincoln, brought pictures and sculptures by a range of current wildlife artists together for a national exhibition and a natural history series shown in the autumn of 2004 on BBC television, accompanied by the illustrated booklet. Andy Clements, an EN Director, stated in the foreword (Lincoln 2004:1) that:

"The support and understanding of people is fundamental to the work of English Nature. Our dedicated aim is to reconnect and provide people with many different opportunities for experiencing and enjoying nature..."

Lincoln wrote (2004:3) that:

“This relationship between us and the nature aesthetic is what this exhibition is all about. The many different works on show exemplify the continuing contribution art makes in reminding us of the fundamental role of the natural environment, to all our lives and the need to conserve it’.

Thirty-three artists were featured explaining examples of their work. Some of them described how nature motivated them, how they were concerned for its conservation and what they hoped to achieve. Sheila Mounter wrote:

“The motivating factor behind my work is the relationship between man and nature. Man is part of nature, yet often he does not respect it...we rarely have time to stop and look at the colours, textures and structures which nature provides. Through my work I hope to communicate my sense of awe when discovering these ... and perhaps may encourage some to observe nature at close quarters for themselves.” (Lincoln 2004:12).

Jill Confavreux wrote (Lincoln 2004:7) that painting enables: “to touch and be in touch with nature” and Bruce Pearson hoped:

“that a good day out in the field might result... (in) what Tennessee Williams best describes as, “Snatching the eternal out of the desperately fleeting”.” (Lincoln 2004:7)



Fig.5.16 Front and back covers '*English nature and the art of conservation*' (Lincoln, J. ed. (2004))

The EN People & Nature Unit, set up in about 2001/2002, was involved with these publications, and for the '*...art of conservation*' helped present a major exhibition at the 'Nature in Art' Gallery near Gloucester, which later went on tour to four other venues. Other projects that the Unit was involved with were the BBC's '*Autumn Watch*' and '*Gardeners' World*' programmes, taking colouring books to the Mela Asian festival in Peterborough, and, as Pugsley-Hill recalled, at one event "an artist built a giant bird's nest for people to sit in and pretend to be a bird". She said the aim was:

"To just get people using a different part of the brain to the scientist – trying to tap into the emotional side and, for most people, if you tap into the emotions you are more likely to do something, than if you just go on the cold hard facts." (Pugsley-Hill interview)

She continued: "being out in the countryside makes you feel better...and if you look at a beautiful scene it is almost as good as going out in it – that's visual access".

5.1.5 Interpretation of NNRs

The remaining issue for EN to address was that of public use of the 141 NNRs inherited from NCC. By 2002, there were over 200 NNRs across the UK, of which approximately half of these NNRs (Marren 2002) were on the 1915 original Rothschild list of 284 'best spots' in Britain and Ireland (Sheail 1998). Initially the mind-set of many reserve wardens was the same as in NCC days. For example, when Alan Bowley moved to the Woodwalton Fen suite of reserves in 1991, he said there was barbed wire along the entrance gate to prevent unauthorised entry, a policy reinforced by the local influential Rothschild family. It was said that "if Miriam Rothschild's husband... (an army commando)...could pole vault over the gate, he would give the wardens hell". All of Bowley's reserves operated a permit system, but he remembered that the 1992 Audit Commission complained to EN "that we weren't being friendly enough to people, so we took the permit system off at Holme Fen, and then it became a dog-walking paradise".

As Marren described (2002:42-44), EN wanted to "present a more business-like face to the world" than its predecessor body (the NCC), and adopted a number of strategies to put this changed approach into effect, such as: considering those with whom it worked as 'customers'; and trying to work in consensus with others. This is reflected in the enhanced quality and presentation of publications and its approach to the management of NNRs. EN instituted the Public Appreciation of Nature Reserves Programme (PAN) intended "to create a series of reserves where we could improve visitor access, visitor enjoyment" but with a limited budget, Wray remembered (2).

The policy document (EN 2000:4) states:

"The suite of NNRs in England needs to meet the high standards of NNR management expected by Government and the public. It must also contribute to Government's international and national priorities for nature conservation, maintain and develop practical experience of land management for nature conservation, and provide access for the enjoyment of England's wildlife and Earth heritage."

The public were welcome to enjoy nature, and their enjoyment became one of the three over-arching aims of the NNR suite. The document continued by emphasising the use of NNRs in education and research, and their role for public access:

“National Nature Reserves are key places for public access, to raise understanding and appreciation of England’s wildlife heritage, including for those with a disability. To help achieve this we use our Website to raise the profile of NNRs, have initiated a ‘Spotlight NNR’ project to improve visitor satisfaction and understanding at selected NNRs and, where possible, are providing improved access for the disabled. There is much to celebrate about the benefits of NNRs to the nation, and the fiftieth anniversary of the declarations of the first NNRs in England will provide an opportunity for public recognition and reinforcement.” (EN 2004:5)

These ‘Spotlight’ NNRs were used for large public events offering a range of activities, such as at a Monks Wood Open Day (which I attended as a staff member) where guided walks, activities for children, arts and crafts demonstrations and so on were advertised as a ‘*Wild Day Out*’. Staff wore specially designed t-shirts for the event – a very visual indication of the welcome offered to visitors.

Another ‘Spotlight Reserve’, Ingleborough NNR, with over 100,000 visitors per year, reported that for ‘key projects’ concerned with access and interpretation’ the site was “promoted for public enjoyment and education whilst being sensitive to the wildlife importance of the site”. The NNR staff wanted “to increase people’s experience of the NNR’s wildlife and geology by the creation of a number of circular trails.” These were seen “to be a huge success” evidenced by the fact that “over 20,000 walks leaflets... disappeared from the shelves of the tourist information centres and local B&Bs.” (Evans 2005:1). Another partnership project focussing on and round the Ingleborough NNR, tried to address the additional “challenge to involve individuals and groups who did not currently visit the area for financial, physical or cultural reasons” (Evans 2005:1).

On discussing the difference between 'interpretation' and 'education', drawing on a working life centred on NNRs of 42 years, Bowley mused: "Are they different?" and then decided:

"Yes I think they are – if you get a bunch of students doing quadrats and so forth, and learning the names of plants and learning the ecology, that's education. If you take a group out and you are talking about stuff – is that education or interpretation? I'm not sure you can split the two actually.... There's a sort of nuance".

Herbert's view was: "I don't necessarily think there is much difference actually, other than one of emphasis and your audience". He continued:

"Education in those days (the 1960s and '70s) had a more formal element to it – it was about schools and colleges – education in an organised sense. Whereas interpretation was for the family, the ordinary visitor, not within a formal educational framework, but what you were getting across was very similar in both cases, so I wouldn't make that big a distinction". (Herbert interview)

Wray's view (1) was that: "the purpose of environmental education is to raise interest in the topic, get people involved and therefore get support for the concept". It would seem that the intention of interpretation is to increase understanding and knowledge of an area, and may well have the same ultimate goal as more formal 'education'.

According to Wray (1), when interpreting a site, the challenge is to consider "several standard questions on which to frame your thinking: why, what, to who, where, when and how? These are Kipling's Serving Men" (from Kipling's *Serving Men* (1902) Just So Stories 'The Elephant's Child'). He recited:

"I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew):
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who"

Explaining this in terms of nature reserve interpretation, Wray said:

“Why – what is the purpose of the message/information

What – what are you going to say

Who – who are you targeting

When – when are you going to tell them (season, timing, deadline)

Where – on site and if so where, or offsite?

How – what is the mechanism, leaflets, guided walks, information centre”

He described the decisions to be made: “Whatever the messages are that you want to givethose are by definition some of the many stories that could be told....any site has a whole range of stories”. How many stories to be told, at one or more places, using leaflets or information boards or staff, and variations due to time of year or land management techniques underway must all be considered. Wray offered what he felt the conservation organisations want to tell the visitor. By contrast, a member of the communications team offered the visitor perspective. This person felt the “key bits of information that people want are: where am I, who runs this place, what time does it shut, how do I get out, and how long can I stay in.”

Illustrating the difference between the NCC’s approach, such as the use of the crown and a simple but polite message on brown material called Darvick as described by Herbert (see 5.17); with that of English Nature, such as from Parsonage Down NNR (see Fig.5.17), demonstrates the latter’s customer-service approach employing colourful and detailed signage:



Fig.5.17 Comparing the approaches to visitors from two NNR signs: above, standard NCC NNR sign and below, EN information board at Parsonage Down NNR photographed in 2008, Author's photographs



The EN sign was angled towards the reader so that the same view shown could be seen by looking up from the board. Coloured illustrations depict the species that occur on the reserve, with further information provided. The image is a mixture of illustration, design and a landscape painting.

Prior to 2002, English Nature produced a variety of NNR leaflets, containing maps, coloured illustrations, line drawings, as well as photographs. The examples shown in Fig.5.18 illustrate this variety with NNR leaflets: cover colour photographs with black-and-white line drawings inside at Benacre and Brettenham Heath (both 1998); cover black-and-white photograph with green line drawings inside for Holme Fen; and cover coloured hand-drawn illustrations with no illustrations inside for two leaflets on 'Management' and 'Scientific' information for Woodwalton Fen. The Holme Fen and Woodwalton Fen leaflets were undated, but as no mention was made of the Great Fen project started in 2002, these pre-date this initiative. Artists were not acknowledged and the illustrations could be described as functional rather than inspirational.

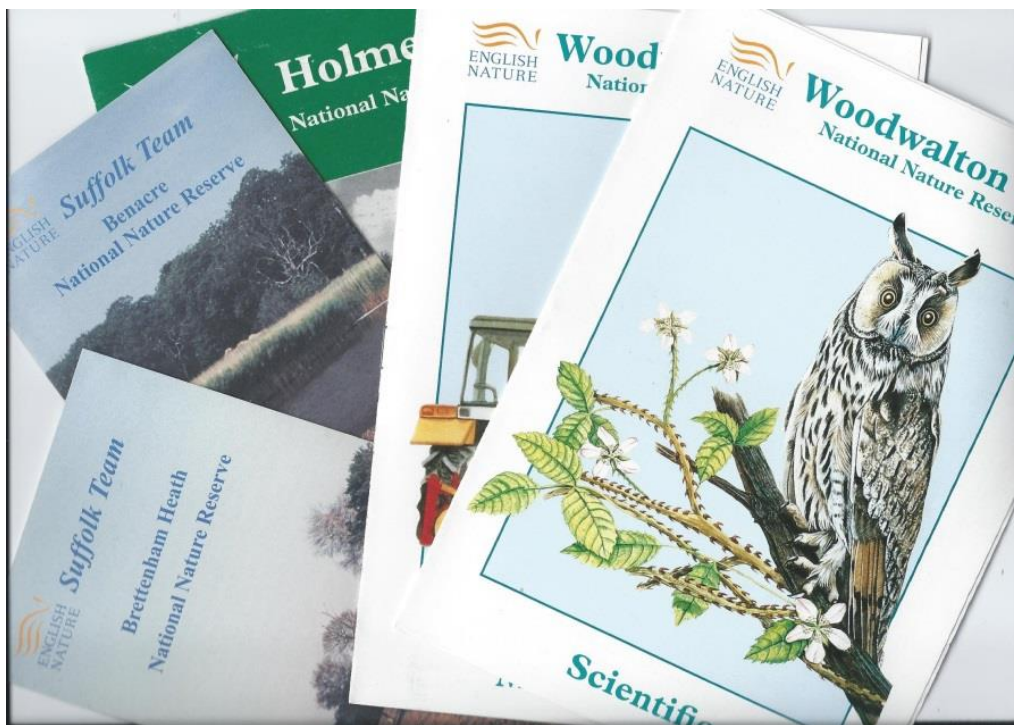


Fig.5.18 Covers of EN NNR leaflets predating 2002

Before the Great Fen Project, it seemed that leaflet production was ad hoc: Bowley explained:

“In the middle of English Nature...when I couldn’t get any money to do anything...I used to have three leaflets: we had the general leaflet, a little green one with a fold-

out map, and we then had a scientific leaflet - quite a cheap job which we self-published for students and research workers, and which we tried to put on the internet, but we weren't allowed ...because it didn't follow their format... and we had a management one. So there were different levels of complexity." (Bowley interview)

After 2002, the appearance of the NNR leaflets was standardised with colour photographs of key species, and coloured maps, as shown in Fig.5.19 for the NNRs at North Meadow (2003), Stodmarsh (undated), Brettenham Heath (2002) and Woodwalton Fen (2003) (see Fig.5.19).



Fig.5.19 Standardised front covers of EN NNR leaflets produced at or after 2002

In answer to the question about art on NNRs, Bowley replied: "There's always been such resistance to engaging with artists: 'That's not how we do this'". However, Woodwalton and Holme Fens, both NNRs, were at the centre of a visit by the Artists for Nature Foundation (ANF) which resulted in exhibitions of artwork and a book '*The Great Fen*' (Gerrard 2006). Bowley said:

“Certainly in my experience it was the first time we (EN on an NNR) started to cross-over from the scientific approach to nature conservation to the aesthetic side. Other people’s interpretation, other people’s view, other people’s way of experiencing Holme Fen, for example, the different ways that people painted the trees – wow! And also the visionary – like the picture of the cranes flying over.” (Bowley interview)

Prior to the ANF visit, Bowley said:

“The Nature Conservancy and NCC, they were straight down the middle scientific organisations with people with baggy trousers and pipes and sweep nets and stuff, and we’ve crossed over into recognising that the first question is ‘what are these sites designated for?’”.

He explained that the ANF project looked at the landscape in a “holistic way”. He recalled that NCC had decided to demolish the Rothschild’s bungalow located in Woodwalton Fen, disregarding its heritage value, but now it has been recognised as an “iconic building” and “quintessential heritage” being connected, through Charles Rothschild, to the start of the conservation movement.

5.2 Natural England (NE) (2006-to date)

NE was formed by the bringing together of EN, the landscape, access and recreation elements of the Countryside Agency and the environmental land management functions of the Rural Development Service. Along with concern for biodiversity, landscapes, habitats, and the management of natural resources, NE also promoted public access, recreation and public well-being. There was to be a much greater emphasis on engaging with people reflected in all aspects of its work.

A member of the communications team explained that NE has a statutory duty “to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the natural environment”. This includes maintaining a healthy environment, conducting a designation

programme and protecting existing designated areas. NE also had other objectives, particularly to “connect people with nature”. It wanted to “make nature real – not just something on the television”, to “get people out there – coastal access, walking around England, the right to roam, and so on”, and recognised that “unless it’s real, people won’t support it”. This person continued “people are interested in the micro-level....but don’t get the connection to the wider environment”.

5.2.1 Re-Branding and Outreach

Initially, Natural England leaflets, such as those for NNRs, were given stickers as shown in Fig.5.20, to cover the EN logo and thus become NE material.

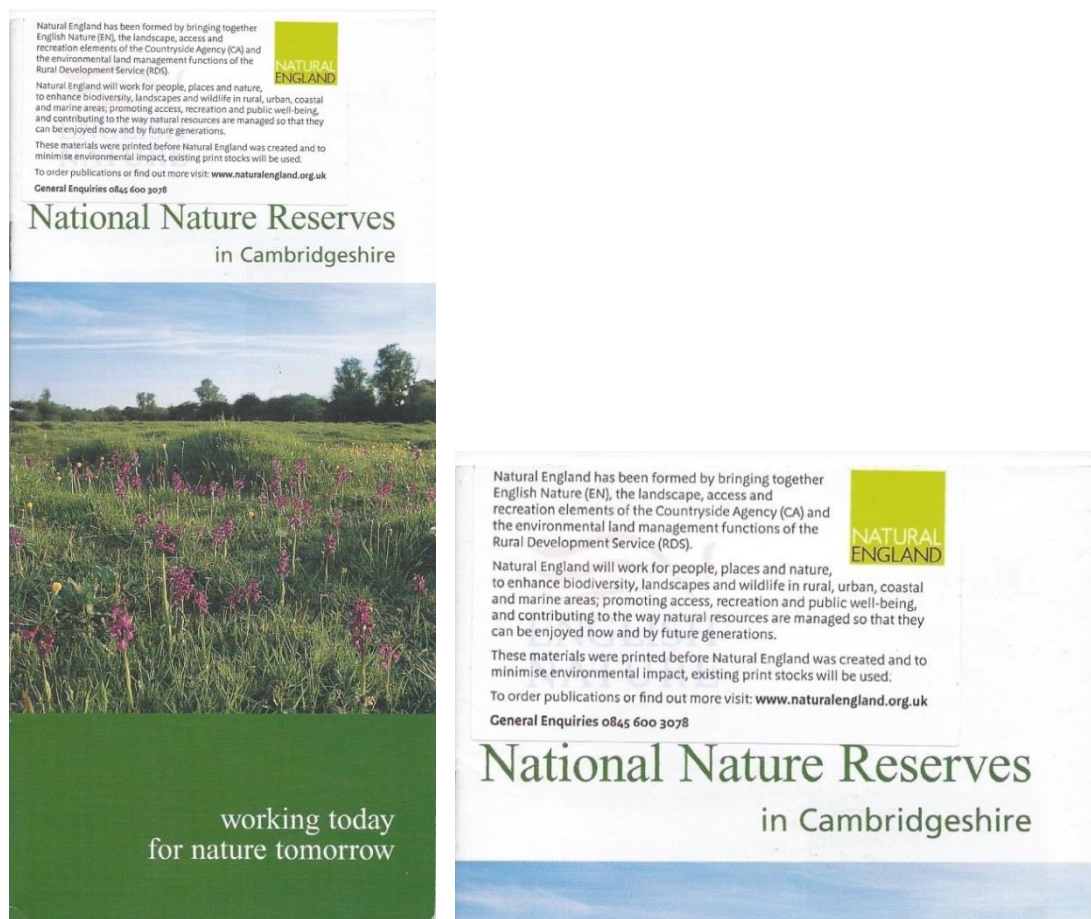


Fig.5.20 Left: NNR leaflet stickered from previous English Nature version to Natural England (2006/7); right: close-up of sticker used on this leaflet

A member of the communications team reported that this treatment applied not only to NNR leaflets but also to:

“the very extensive publications catalogue of wildlife friendly-gardening – from English Nature days – and they were re-branded as Natural England so they were...on our books, and were still available on the website, but they weren’t available in print because there was no money to pay for that kind of thing”.

The reader was directed to the Natural England website, which subsequently moved to the ‘gov.uk’ web site. Print runs of documents were limited, and interested parties directed to the website for accessible pdfs for user download, in a drive towards the ‘paperless office’. Seamons (2) reported that “people were bitterly upset” when leaflets were no longer produced or issued. Some “people did not have computers, and for group activities, they felt it easier to hand out leaflets than suggest to people that they needed to check on the internet for best advice.”

Shortly after the start of NE, according to a member of the communications team, there was:

“a refresh – a change of branding from English Nature to Natural England, so we went through the process of re-writing our leaflets, bring them up to date, getting new photography and there was a definite move towards having people (depicted).”

All the NE publications had small print runs, and a standard appearance, with the colour of the front cover related to subject matter, such as deep red for reports and blue for proposal documents (see Fig.5.21).

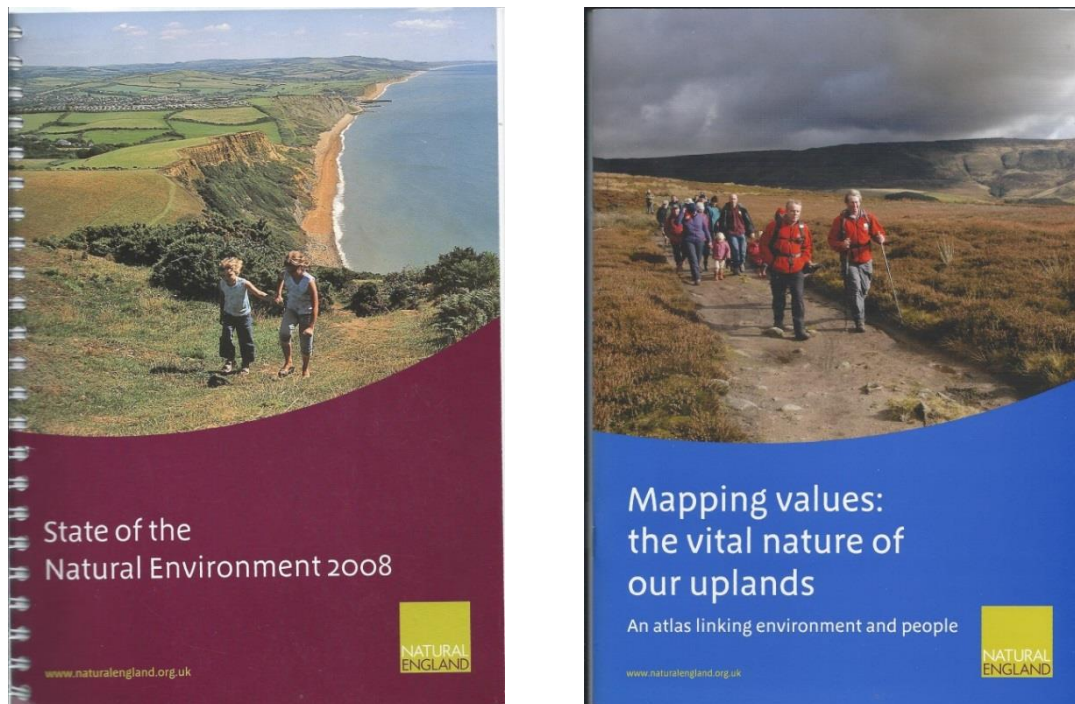


Fig.5.21 Covers of two NE documents (left 2008, right 2009)

The illustrations were all full colour photographs, graphs, tables or maps. Even the 2060 vision in '*Vital Uplands*' (NE 2009) was a digitally-managed photomontage. Many of the photographs included people of all ages, abilities and gender, but often being active in the countryside, such as walking, cycling, climbing or undertaking some form of active land management. G Radley felt that

"it was a very effective method of communication...showed the benefits of all sorts of things, with arrows explaining things like areas of pure water...It was really good stuff. Chris Reid had been involved in the Campaign for the Living Coast and she re-used a lot of the same and really imaginative ideas in her upland vision work. She commissioned a film and interviewed lots of people including Chris Brasher (the mountaineer)...And she did this very good video with people saying what they thought about the upland landscape."

NNR signage changed in line with the new branding and corporate style – see Fig.5.22. The NE reserve sign is now vertical, with more than half the sign taken up by the logo and site name, and although it does include a map,

there are no illustrations. Wray (2) said that when he was interpreting reserves for EN, he wanted visitors to leave a reserve with three questions answered: 1) the name of the reserve; 2) who managed it; and 3) at least one fact about why the area was a NNR. These three questions are simply answered in Fig.5.22.



Fig.5.22 NE 'Welcome' sign at Parsonage Down, Wiltshire, Author's photo

The main 'welcome' signs provide minimal information, and supplementary 'information points' are required (see Fig.5.23). Once again only half the sign contains information including photographs and text, but no map.



Fig.5.23 NE 'Information Point' Flintergill Outrake, Yorkshire, Author's photograph 2010

Prior to 2010, a member of the communications team explained that:

“There was a massive push to go from leaflets which only had species photographs in them to having people and species, because we were really trying to encourage people out onto NNRs, and we had a lot of staff recruited on to NNRs who ran a programme of events. They were no longer involved with fencing, conservation and land management: we had people whose job was to outreach and get people on our NNRs. So we highlighted 20 Spotlight NNRs out of the network, and they had the investment, they had an Outreach Officer and they ran a programme of walks, activities for children, craft activities, beach clean-ups, going into schools”.

However, there is a down-side to encouraging visitors to nature reserves. A member of the communication team explained that news stories about NNRs or their wildlife can lead to almost over-whelming numbers of visitors. As a result:

“Vehicles block rural lanes and upset locals, such as around Dersingham Bog, Norfolk; there is disturbance to breeding animals, such as seals at Winterton dunes or Donna Nook; and vandalism and cruelty to grazing animals occurs, such as water buffalo at Chippenham Fen. Holkham NNR has been described in the press as the “top beach in Britain”.

It now receives a “million (person) visits a year” this person reported. As a consequence, there is erosion to the dunes, disturbance to beach nesting birds such as Little Terns by visitors and their dogs, and problems of parking and insufficient visitor facilities. Attempts are made to only advertise events locally and feature wildlife news at less-sensitive times of the year. NNRs are over-stretched and understaffed.

Outreach work was undertaken not only on NNRs. A member of the communications team recalled that the marine campaign by NE “was the most people-focussed thing we ever did”. This person said that the campaign had a “lot of funding”, and that included for research, such as Rose et al. (2008). One finding was that:

“People retain information, and change their views, if they have an emotional experience.....particularly if combined with a physical experience...And that talking about issues and problems can be counter-productive.” (A member of the communications team interview)

The communications team member described how the campaign staff went to coastal locations and invited children to make representations of crabs, fish or seahorses. At an event in Great Yarmouth they helped children and their families make ‘a sea-bed in a shoe-box’ using plasticine, sand and little models of seabed creatures. The communications team member reported that:

“The feedback from parents and grandparents” provided comments such as: “I’ve lived at the coast for 75 years and I didn’t know any of this ever, and I’ve learnt more

in the last 45 minutes about what's one mile off the coast that I've known in my whole life."

The member of the communications team described another experiential campaign to introduce young children to the countryside was run by the Fairyland Trust, whose report indicated that:

"Adult concern for, and behaviour related to, the environment derives directly from participating in such wild nature activities as playing independently in the woods, hiking, fishing and hunting before the age of eleven" (Rose 2014).

A member of the communications team explained that "photography is the default setting" with artwork only used where a photograph is not available, such as, a depiction of mediaeval farming or an extinct species. However, a problem with photographs of people is trying to be representational, as the "vast majority of people who go out in the countryside are white, middle-aged and middle-class", but avoiding a contrived photograph if different ages, ethnicity, disability or people in a deprived area are depicted.

Telling a news story or conveying science is moving on from art work and photographs to using infographics which can depict a lot of information shown in pictorial form. A member of the communications team explained it is thought that, for understanding and retaining information, "images are better than text and graphics and drawings are better than loads of numbers". Two example of this are shown in Fig.5.24:

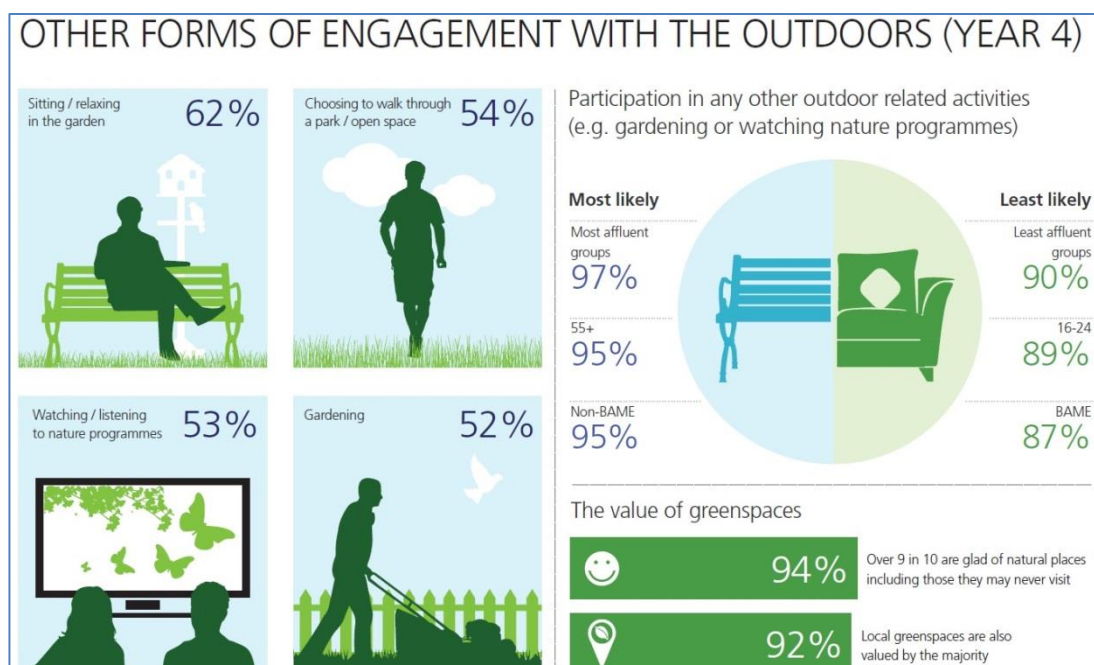
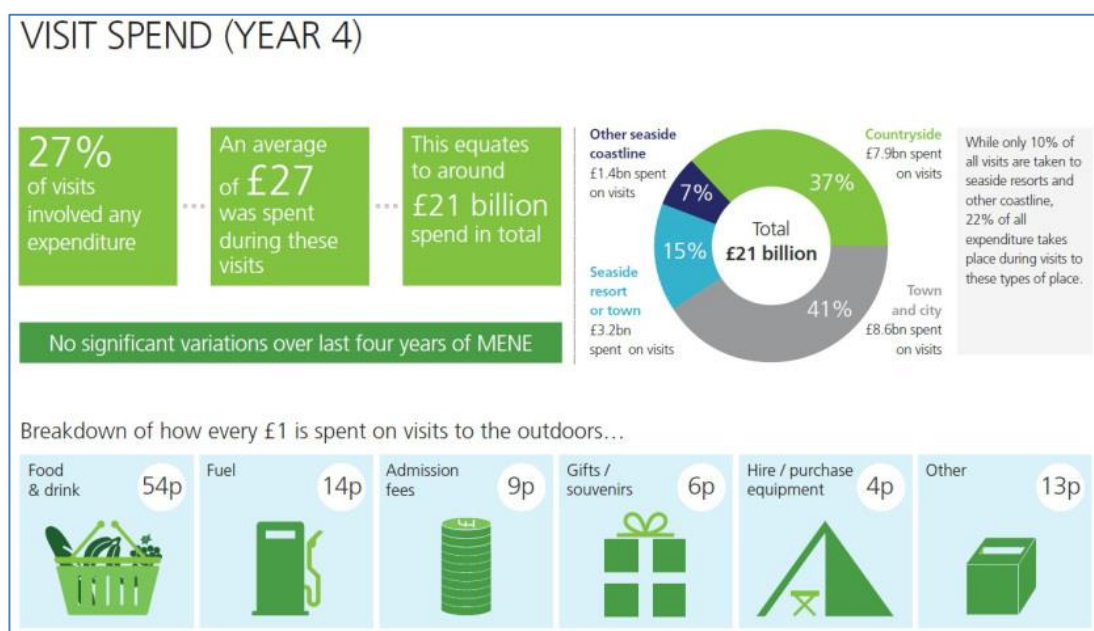


Fig.5.24 Above and below: Examples of infographics (Natural England 2014 MENE report)



5.2.2 Marketing Moratorium

A member of the communications team explained that in 2010, the Conservative Government:

“suspended all spending on all PR and marketing, and anything that was spent had to go for approval to the Cabinet Office...The only exceptions were the Annual Reports and agri-environment guidance documents”.

The impact on NNRs was that “when the cuts came, they (the Outreach staff) were on Fixed Term contracts, and their contracts were not renewed. Most of them have gone: there’s a handful still in existence.” This person continued:

“There’s no money to buy photography, so we’ve got photography that our colleagues take...and contribute to our flicker account.....We are now working to a defined template. Everything looks the same – there is no room for individual variation. So it’s lacking in creativity... (and)...we don’t do anything that is public-facing. In fact, we hardly have any electronic newsletters anymore. We used to do SSSI newsletter that went out to owner/occupiers – ‘*Sitelines*’ – no longer and none of the urban material. The only marketing material that is going out is for agri-environment schemes”.

There seemed to be a turning against the use of imagery. G Radley described how in reports for Government, he: “used a lot of data, facts and figures, in graphs and tables.” Furthermore, NE Senior Managers “always wanted ‘killer facts’, not diagrams, just a ‘soundbite statistic’” such as figures for the declines in farmland birds.

G Radley explained what happened:

“Natural England is an organisation of two halves in many ways. Up to 2010 it was going all out to campaign to encourage public access, public enjoyment, trying very hard to get people to reconnect to nature, and actively campaigning for things thought to be right. After 2010, everything changed: no campaigning, retreat back to almost a NCC approach, or rather an FRCA approach or RDS approach – you are

an arm of Government, do what we say. Huge reductions in the amount of proactive publicity, loss of confidence as an organisation, no campaigning – campaigning was a dirty word.”

G Radley continued:

“Under the Labour Government, NE, given their freedom, badly upset the farming and land-owning establishment – which you could argue was its job – but to some extent due to the somewhat abrasive management style of the early NE... and there was probably a certain amount of personal animosity as well...”

After the change of Government, G. Radley continued, “because the new ministerial team was very close to the farming establishment, there was a concerted campaign to get its own back on NE and ‘cut it down to size’, which was very effective”. G Radley suggested that “NE... over-reached itself, and was told to get back in its box.”

5.2.3 Artists-in-Residence

However, more recently, there have been changes regarding public use of NNRs. At Kingley Vale, NE’s first artist-in-residence on an NNR was appointed in 2015 (see: <https://www.a-n.co.uk/blogs/kingley-vale-the-road-to-the-interior>) with the intention of increasing public participation on the reserve through art, and exhibiting artwork. Other projects too have employed Artists-in-Residence such as the NE Thanet Coast Project in 2008 (www.publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/62080), and artists are involved in the Northern Heartlands project (<https://northernheartlands.org>) and at Hoveton Broad NNR nature trail, Norfolk. More recently, although engagement through the arts is declining due to budget cuts and funding priorities elsewhere, art is featuring more in externally-funded projects as a way of engaging with target audiences, such as the ‘*Bank from the Brink*’ lottery-funded project where NE is the lead partner. Example events in August 2019 featured drawing, wire-sculpture and porcelain led by community artists Sarah Jane Richards and Sian Hughes (<https://naturebftb.co.uk/events/colour-in-the-margin-discover-create-value/>).

Although the Great Fen project is centred on Woodwalton and Holme Fens NNRs, the project is largely managed by the Cambridgeshire Wildlife Trust. They employ outreach staff, including an Interpretation and Community Officer, enabling other creative artwork associated with the Great Fen, such as an animated film made by the local Youth Group using 'plasticine' figures to tell the story of the history of the area, and a film of local schoolchildren interviewing local people and re-enacting historical episodes. In February 2017, the staff from the associated 'Outdoor Classroom' worked with local youngsters to create a 10m (32ft) x 5m (16.5ft) map of the future Great Fen area using 500,000 LEGO® bricks(see Fig.5.25).

(<http://www.greatfen.org.uk/great-fen-lego%C2%AE-build>)



Fig.5.25 Model of future Great Fen, Cambridgeshire, constructed by local youngsters using LEGO® bricks, © WTBCN (Wildlife Trust, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire)

5.3 Case Study: The Nature Art of Barnack Hills and Holes NNR

A case study is useful in exploring in detail how a site's imagery has developed and can interweave the various strands that have been discussed so far. The NNR at Barnack is small and has a manageable range of artwork connected with it.

The NNR, located in the north-west corner of Cambridgeshire (Grid Reference TF 075 045), has few historical works of art associated with it, but more recently it has inspired several artists. It is based on a disused quarry, the origins of which date from Roman times when hardwearing limestone, known as Barnack Rag, was extracted for construction. Later it provided stone for the building of an Abbey, parts of which later became Peterborough Cathedral, as well as other churches in the area. By the 1500s, most of the quarrying had ceased and by the mid-17th century, the area was well known for its wildflowers. These include the Pasque flower and various orchids, as well as uncommon invertebrates such as Marbled White Butterfly and the Glow-worm.

The 22 hectares were scheduled as a National Nature Reserve in 1976 and as a Special Area for Conservation for orchid-rich grassland in 2002 (EN 2004). The site is annually grazed, with a programme of rabbit control, and of scrub and tree removal to address the problems that arose after the 1920s when grazing and burning ceased for several years. Other conservation issues of eutrophication and erosion arise from the reserve being heavily used for dog-walking, and by visitors running off the paths and onto the flower-rich slopes.

“The art cupboard is fairly bare as far as Barnack is concerned”, so said Chris Gardiner, the NE Senior Reserve Manager (pers. comm. October 2015). No old paintings of the Hills and Holes have been found, and no evidence that renowned local artist Wilfred Wood (1888-1976) depicted any part of the reserve. Gardiner went on to say that the art work at the NNR is largely confined to a few sketches, such as are seen on the interpretive

signs, and either stock pictures or line drawings of plants that have been used for leaflets. There are several historic aerial photos. NE also holds old 35mm transparencies and many digital images. The NNR is featured in '*Landmarks*' (Rollins 2003:18-23).

Early art work with links to Barnack include stone carving, such as the Hedda Stone dating from about 800AD (Rollins 2003:22) and a watercolour by Thomas Girtin, dated about 1794, of the West Front of Peterborough Cathedral (Rollins 2003:21). The 'peasant poet' John Clare (1793-1864) knew the area, recording what he saw there in notes (Rollins 2003:23) as it lay only about 3 miles from his home village of Helpston and *en route* to the market town of Stamford (Bate 2003:41-45). Clare wrote of the countryside, the plants and animals and their loss and decline, and of a rural way of life that was passing because of enclosure of the open fields (Bate 2003:280, Summerfield 1990).

For images or artwork, other than poetry or sculpture, three nature reserve leaflets produced by EN and NE are considered. The first one, although undated, is almost certainly the oldest of the three, because it does not include a website address: both the 2004 EN leaflet and the more recent NE information sheet include a website address. Also, it does not depict the EN logo in the corporate manual colours of blue and yellow (EN 2002) (see Fig.5.26). The A5 leaflet is printed in black-and-white with a single dark green colour around the text on the front and back covers, and illustrated by a location map of the reserve and an aerial photograph of the reserve from 1948. There are three green line drawings: Pasque Flower, Chalkhill Blues and a Jay. This single A4 sheet would have been cheaper to produce than a full colour one, and may have been produced on a limited budget by the local area team.

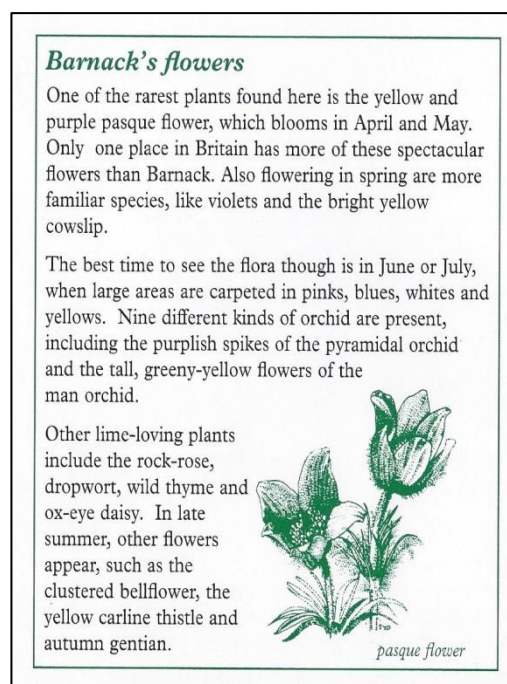
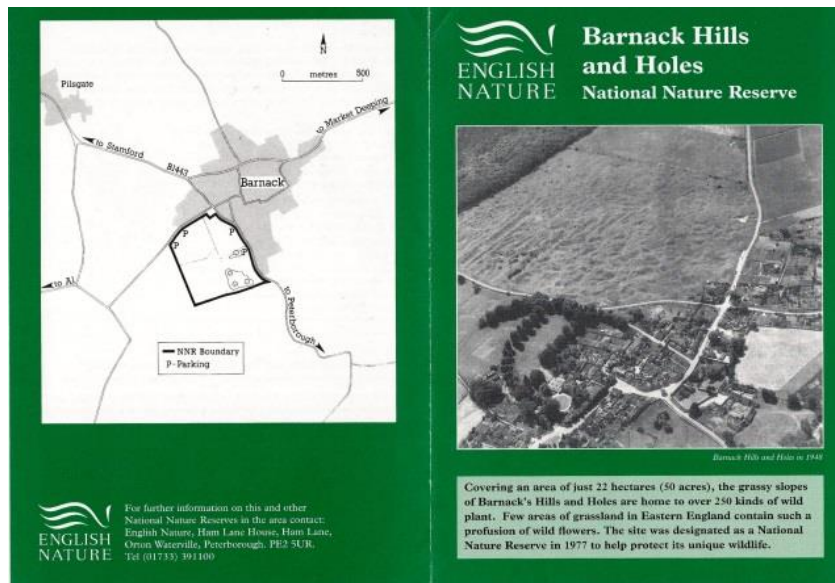


Fig.5.26 EN Barnack Hills & Holes NNR leaflet, cover illustrations and detailed line-drawing of Pasque flowers (pre-2002)

The 2004 EN Barnack Hills and Holes NNR leaflet is a handy pocket-size and contains information on history, wildlife, wild flowers and management, plus contact details. It is a single A4 sheet folded three times, containing 15 full colour illustrations all of which are coloured photographs plus an OS coloured location map. They include 11 species: glow-worm; chalkhill blue; nine ground-flora images including four orchids plus Pasque flower and one

sedge; and four habitat views: rock exposure and grasslands; plus a photograph of Peterborough Cathedral (see Fig.5.27).

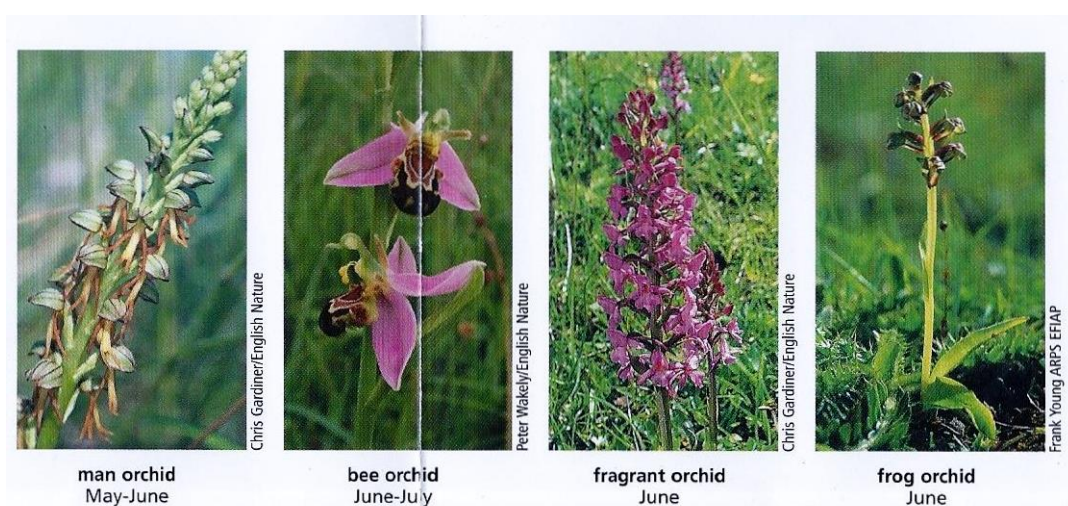
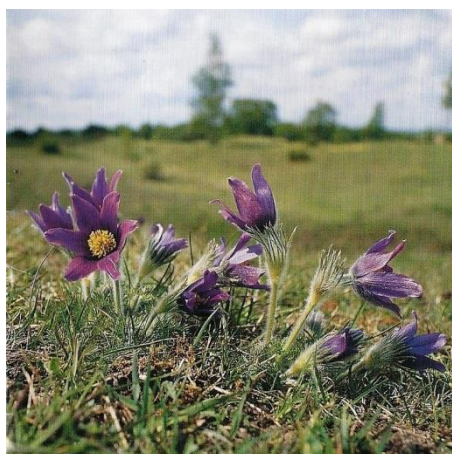


Fig.5.27 EN (2004) photographs of Pasque flower (above) and orchids (below)

Although of good quality, the photographs of the plants are small (a little over 5cm tall) and could perhaps be used for identification of species. However, together with several of the larger photographs in the leaflet, including views of several hundred cowslips and a bank of over 50 pyramidal orchids, they could be considered to have the 'awe' or 'wow' factor (see Fig.5.28).

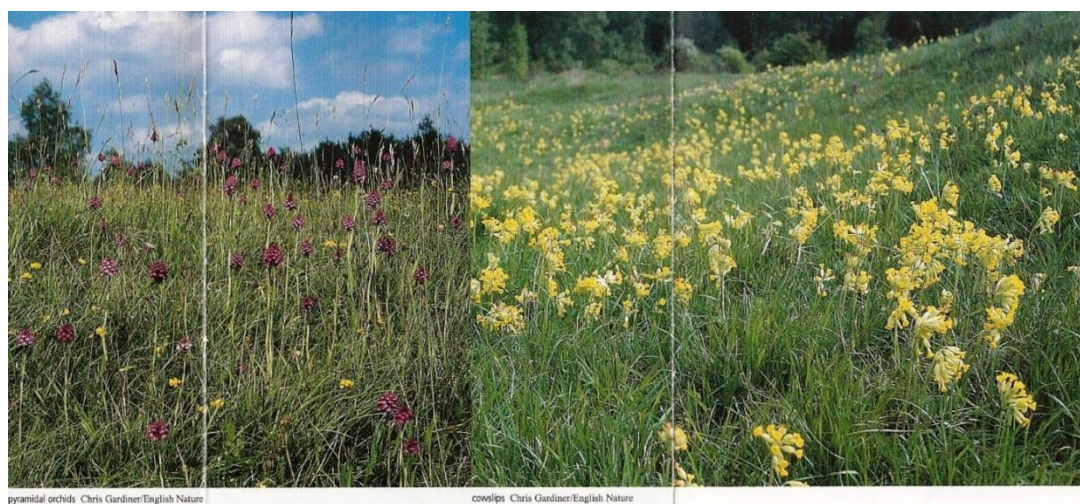


Fig.5.28 EN (2004) photographs of Pyramidal orchids and cowslips

Although this leaflet is produced by EN, it contains a NE sticker over the front cover EN logo, referring to the coming together of EN, the Countryside Agency and the Rural Development Service to form NE, and presumably dates from the transition period, around 2006. The third reserve leaflet, an undated, coloured A4 sheet, was produced by NE, post-2006 (see Fig.5.29). One third of one side gives the reserve name plus a welcome, and NE's logo and a NNR symbol. This part of the leaflet is printed in the corporate colours of green and magenta. The 4 illustrations of Pasque flower, marbled white butterfly, pyramidal orchid and knapweed broomrape, are all small but good quality, full colour photographs. There is no map or aerial photograph. Reference is made to 'The Limestone Trail' – a waymarked walk around the reserve.



Fig.5.29 NE NNR leaflet

In these leaflets, photographs are used to illustrate the flora and fauna for which the reserve is noted. The views and close-ups are intended to inform and provide pleasure. As Walker & Chaplin explained (1997:152):

“Photography...is capable of transmitting much of the natural beauty of flowers seen from one point of view. Colours that ravish us in reality can also ravish us in art. Thus the aesthetic pleasure of nature and art overlap”,

The word ‘aesthetic’ dating from the eighteenth century means ‘pertaining to the sense of beautiful’. Howells (2003:166) reported that: “Susan Sontag...wrote in ‘*On Photography*’ (1989) that “photographs are as much an interpretation of the world as paintings are””, and that Andre Bazin said in 1967:

“the photograph is like a ‘fingerprint’. It is not the finger itself, but a record of the thing itself made by the thing itself’...and he claimed that: ‘Photography can even surpass art in creative power’”. (Howells 2003:166)

Howells (2003:29) considered: "...a photograph can be indicative of a wider, cultural way of seeing the world than the photographer imagined", and "...the literal meaning of a photograph may not be its complete and total meaning".

The photographs and text together inform the reader about the importance of the reserve and depict the beauty of some of the species found there. Using Panofsky's iconology (see Chapter 2, page 5) these photographs would appear to be best understood by placing them at the first or natural level of meaning that is, the subject matter depicted by the photographs are plants growing in the grass. Aesthetically pleasing, no cultural knowledge is required to understand the photographs, although more knowledge is required to identify the orchids, and that information is provided in the text.

At the site entrances, previous EN cairn structures with a reserve sign have been replaced with either a NE sign or information point (see Fig.5.30 and Fig.5.31). This information point condenses much of the information provided on the leaflet, and includes a map and some illustrations of some of the features of the reserve. The illustrations are uncredited.



Fig.5.30 NE reserve sign at the entrance to the main Quarry Car Park off the Wittering Road, depicts NE's logo and a symbol for a grassland NNR, Author's photograph (Oct 2015)

Referencing semiology, the reserve board (above) includes two signs: the NE logo on the right, and an illustration on the left. Focussing on the left-hand one, the symbols within the purple-edged square of spikes and a coloured arc are the signifiers representing the types of habitat which in this case are grassland and slopes (the signified) and the sign created by NE informs the visitor that this is a grassland nature reserve with some uneven or sloping ground.



Fig.5.31 NE reserve sign at entrance to the Stamford Road lay-by, Barnack Hills & Holes NNR, provides basic information, Author's photograph (Oct 2015)

Overall, the images used in all the statutory agency's leaflets, guides and interpretation boards are mostly clear illustrations, for information and to aid identification of particular species. They tend to concentrate on the iconic Pasque flower, orchids and butterflies.

However, other images have been produced. The reserve inspires local photographers and the Flickr Group for 'Friends of Barnack Hills & Holes'

(<https://www.flickr.com/groups/2651188@N20/>) includes good quality photographs. This Group states on its website that:

“The Barnack Hills + Holes group has been constructed to allow photographers to share their experience and images of Barnack Hills + Holes with anyone who loves nature.....Only photos taken within the boundaries of Barnack Hills + Holes are acceptable.”

The impression is that this group of photographers are conveying their love of nature, particularly found at this reserve, and wishing to share this with others.

Jonathan P Tyler, an artist who, although has increasingly turned to photography, painted a picture of the Pasque Flower at Barnack (<http://www.jonathan-tyler.co.uk/artwork>) (see Fig.5.32). This image of three vibrant flowering Pasque flowers has a background of the slopes of the former quarry and a glimpse of Barnack church (itself constructed from Barnack Rag). This view is contrived as there are too many buildings and trees between the reserve and church for this connection to be made in reality.

Copyright permission applied for

Fig.5.32 Pasque Flower at Barnack ©by Jonathan Tyler (2016)
<http://www.jonathan-tyler.co.uk/artwork/> (Copyright permission applied for)

The Pasque flower is a national rarity and Barnack Hills & Holes is the best place to see it (Walker & Pinches 2012). It is a striking image, and local artist, Jane Leycester Paige, a founder member of the Society of Botanical Artists and one of the Artists for Nature group, has produced a number of watercolour paintings of Pasque flowers at Barnack (see Fig.5.33).

Both Jonathan Tyler and Jane Leycester Paige depict the striking colour contrast of the purple and yellow of the flowers, and both hint at part of the Barnack story in their paintings: Jane Leycester Paige included Barnack rag and showed the stony nature of the soil, whilst Jonathan Tyler referenced the final product of the site, that is, the construction of the church building, and also suggested the topography of the site. His style is more photographic compared to Jane Leycester Paige, who in her paintings conveys sunlight and all stages of the flower from buds to full-blown seed heads. Jane also

included on the reverse of a card, depicting this painting, a conservation message that this beautiful plant is rare and only found in a few places in central England.



Fig.5.33 Watercolour paintings: (right) “Pasqueflower” © Jane Leycester-Paige ; and (left) “Pasque flowers at Barnack Hills and Holes” © Jane Leycester-Paige used on the front cover, *British Wildlife* Vol 9, No. 3, February 1998

These two pieces of artwork require more knowledge about local literature, history and culture in order to fully understand them, equivalent to Panofsky’s secondary level of analysis. In addition, in depicting light and shade, and her use of colour, Jane Leycester Paige, is representing an emotional element in her illustration.

Another conservation message artwork is provided by the children of the local primary school, addressing the issue of dog walking, and which is used on the reserve information board (see Fig.5.34). Cultural knowledge is needed to both create the image and symbols in terms of design and colours used, and is also required to interpret the meaning.



Fig.5.34 Artwork by the local school on the NNR sign, Author's photograph

Charron Pugsley-Hill, local artist (<http://www.charronpugsleyhill.com>) indicated the species-richness of the reserve and its uneven topography in her painting inspired by visits to the site (see Fig.5.35). Although the plants depicted are recognisable, for example, the Pasque Flowers and Pyramidal Orchids, the illustrations could not be used to identify the plants in the field. To fully understand her picture, one needs not only cultural knowledge, but also, at the third level of Panofsky's iconology, there is the intrinsic meaning that this place is unusual: there is an almost over-whelming variety and profusion of plants. In addition, the artist's emotion of joy at seeing this profusion of colour, shape and abundance can be perceived. I was told by the artist that whilst she was undertaking preparatory work, a visitor to the reserve wanted to buy the finished painting as the work so chimed with *her* emotional response to the place. Pugsley-Hill's 'joie-de-vivre' and the context of her flower and nature work are indicated on her website name: 'happy-art' (happyart@charronpugsleyhill.com) and on this site she talks of "stirring emotions", encouraging a different perspective of the world such as thinking of wildlife in terms of "colour...energy and passion" and "connecting

with the beauty of nature and our world through an experience of art and an artist”.



Fig.5.35 '*Barnack Hills and Holes*' © Charron Pugsley-Hill

Many of the images shown above illustrate one of the ideas developed by Barthes: the concept of 'what goes without saying' (Howells 2003:104-5). Howells reported (2003:107): "His (Barthes') aim in *Mythologies* is to expose these assumptions and to ask us to look againand to reconsider that which we had previously taken for granted." In the case of Barnack Hills and Holes, the assumption here is that the site is and should be a NNR, because of its profusion of plants, some of which are very rare. Within the nature conservation visual culture, this assumption is indeed the case, almost 'taken

as read'. However, those outside this arena may think otherwise, and there are, at Barnack, two examples that illustrate this point.

The logo for the 'Friends of the Hill and Holes' uses a design based on the Barnack village sign (Alyson Freeman, Chairperson for the Friends, 2015 pers. comm.), and neither make reference to the rare species of plant and butterfly found at the reserve, although they both indicate the topography of the Hills and Holes, and both include a tree (see Fig.5.36). In addition, neither image refers to the status of the reserve as a nationally-important and protected area.

It is ironic that the 'Friends', supposedly supporting the nature reserve, have used an image of a tree, which in number together form a threat to the species-richness of the grassland by the shade they cast, and the removal of which has been a constant target for reserve management over the years. However, this single tree may reflect local disquiet about the mass clearance of trees, and possibly resentment about a national organisation telling local people what to do and what to appreciate on their local 'patch'.

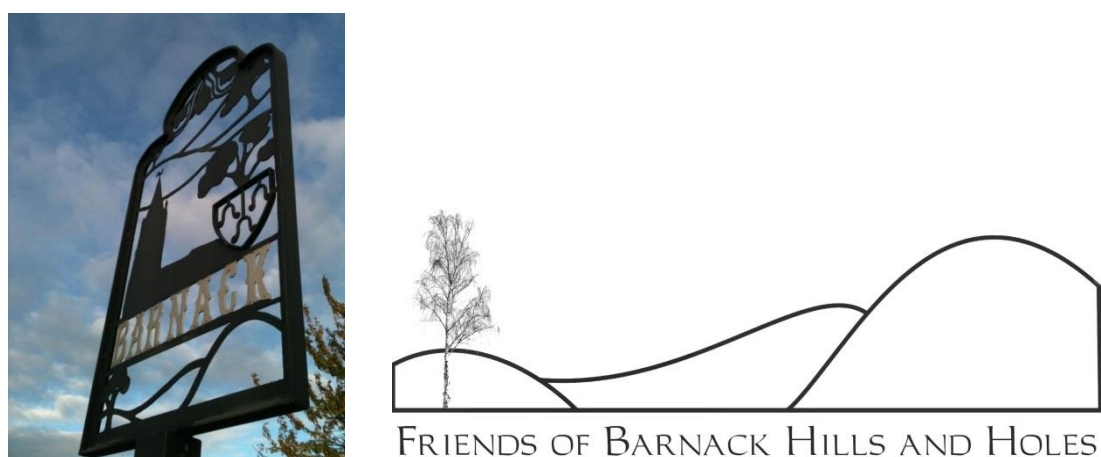


Fig.5.36 Barnack village sign, and logo of the 'Friends', neither of which feature the iconic Pasqueflower

5.4 Summary of Imagery used by EN and NE

This chapter explores the development of the statutory nature conservation agency following its establishment in 1949, as set out in the previous chapter 4, evolving from the Nature Conservancy and the Nature Conservancy

Council into English Nature and then Natural England. My original research draws on examination of publications and other material produced by the statutory nature conservation agencies and interviews with former staff.

EN gave a much stronger emphasis to imagery promoting the conservation of nature than its predecessor bodies, and its literature was colourful, largely using good quality photographs, with a high proportion of the illustrations depicting species. Initially various designs were used, but after corporate standards were introduced in 2002, the majority of publications followed these guidelines, though there were some regional variations. There were also several initiatives, '*Wild Day Out*' and '*Campaign for the Living Coast*', that used new and eye-catching material, such as printed tee-shirts and tactile exhibits. Standardised and professionally-produced leaflets and topical magazines were much used. Referring back to the work of Tilden (1957) the use of NNRs for public education and enjoyment was promoted and associated interpretation and signage developed. In the last few years of EN, there were moves towards aesthetic and cultural imagery, with links being made to both current and historical artists, very much in line with the work of Wilson (1992) and Reynolds (2016).

The story, so far, of NE's use of imagery in promoting nature conservation is complicated. Initially, the agency undertook a rebranding exercise, and encouraged public engagement with its work particularly public access into the countryside and onto NNRs. A high proportion of illustrations depicted people of all ages, colour, gender and abilities visiting the countryside and undertaking a range of activities. The images used were full colour photographs, with graphs, charts and maps where appropriate. There was a reduced availability of publications and an increase in the provision of web-based information. The use of infographics to impart facts and figures developed.

After 2010, following a General Election and recession, there was a dramatic retrenchment in outreach activities, and reduced resources (both funding and staff). By 2019, NE operated official blog, twitter, Facebook and Instagram

accounts with an emphasis on the use of 'inspirational' films on these social media sites. The appointment of artists-in-residence promoted the profile of NNRs and, although funding was increasingly scarce, art featured strongly in externally-funded partnership projects.

The work of authorities on visual culture, particularly Panofsky (1939) and Barthes (1957), was used to analyse the imagery associated with Barnack's NNR, a number of conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, the generally clear images used by the statutory agencies appear to have been intended for illustration and species identification. Photographs have largely been used for leaflets and guides, and line drawings for reserve signs and interpretation boards. The reserve is well photographed, with images available via the internet. Some local artists have been inspired by the reserve and its special interest, and their resulting art work can reveal an historical narrative and reflect the artists' emotional response to the site. Several plant species are repeatedly used in artwork, and photographs, and could be considered iconic motifs. Although both art work and photographs can depict the beauty of the reserve and its plants and animals, artwork can carry other conservation messages too. However, opportunities have been missed by the statutory agencies to convey the special nature of the area in public artwork, and perhaps more could be done to 'sell' the reserve, as well as explain and promote its conservation.

Chapter 6 Wildlife Artists and Illustrators

The artists considered in this chapter are those whose work depicts wildlife or wild places in a nature conservation context, and two particular artist groups are considered: the Artists for Nature Foundation (ANF) and the Society of Wildlife Artists (SWLA). A survey of the artists' views was undertaken in spring 2017. Such a survey had not been undertaken before.

In 2015, I interviewed Ian Langford, owner/manager of Langford Press, publisher of several books of works by SWLA members and donor of the Langford Press Award at the SWLA Annual Exhibition, for his assessment of wildlife artists. Having worked for EN and NE, he had a unique view of conservation art. In 2015, I also interviewed Charron Pugsley-Hill, artist and former EN Conservation Officer, for her perspective on conservation art. Views and experiences of both Langford and Pugsley-Hill contribute to understanding this visual culture. The chapter concludes with the BTO '*Flight Lines*' project: an example of artists and conservationists working together.

6.1 Artists for Nature Foundation and the Society of Wildlife Artists

The ANF aims to persuade decision-makers of the natural and cultural importance of threatened environments by:

“drawing attention...to the natural world by enabling groups of influential and talented artists to capture the spirit of endangered landscapes and species in their natural habitat” (ANF 2017).

The Foundation can demonstrate successes and has attempted a number of international awareness-raising projects, and claims that:

“No one is better able than artists to create a positive approach to the environment. Through their work they can share their experience of beautiful landscapes and bring them to life” (Hammond in ANF 2012).

The ANF was founded in 1990, shortly after the completion of an art project in the Netherlands initiated by Ysbrand Brouwers, a Dutch art collector keen on wildlife. He invited local and international artists to the island of Schiermonnikoog, and asked them to capture the beauty of the area. The resulting book, '*Wind, Wad en Waterverf*', with associated exhibitions, demonstrated the special qualities of the area, to such an extent that the area was designated a National Park (ANF 2017).

Since 1990, the ANF has organised at least fourteen other projects on four continents involving over 130 artists, presenting exhibitions and publishing books and DVDs. The artists, mostly of international renown, use a variety of media to inform decision- and policy-makers about the fragility, rarity and importance of wildlife-rich areas and endangered species, and the need for their conservation. The art-work is publicised through articles, television programmes and exhibitions with items for sale to raise funds for projects. Other projects were: Bebrza and Narew Marshes in Poland (1992); Extremadura, Spain (1993/94), the Loire estuary, France (1994); Wexford wetlands in Eire (1995); Copper River Delta, Alaska (1996/97); tigers in India (1998); mature forests in Catalonia, Spain (2001); the Algarve, Portugal (2002); the Tumbesian forests in Ecuador/Peru (2003); Utrecht Province in Holland (2005-07); Hula Valley, Israel (2009-10); and Sark (2011).

ANF sees itself as a “catalyst for nature conservation but not itself a formal nature conservation organisation” (ANF 2017). It works with internationally recognised organisations and NGOs, such as the WWF, Crossbill Foundation, the Wildlife Trusts in the UK, Birdlife International and others. The head office is located in the Netherlands with representatives in India, France, Germany, UK and the USA. Bruce Pearson (a renowned British artist and writer) is the Vice Chairman on the Board of Trustees, and also one of the two UK representatives.

The only UK project to date, 'The Great Fen', is a wetland habitat restoration project in Cambridgeshire, based around the NNRs of Woodwalton and Holme Fens. The project, started in 2002, aims to restore and create 3,700

hectares of traditional fenland and associated habitats, much of it traditionally-managed, creating jobs and improving quality of life for visitors and local people. The artistic project ran in 2004-05, exploring the history of the area, the reserves and wildlife. The work of the thirty artists and the 'vision' for the area resulted in a book (Gerrard 2006) and exhibitions and sales of paintings in, for example, Peterborough Museum & Art Gallery and at the Bird Fair, Rutland Water.

For the project, the artists, from Britain, the United States, Russia and other parts of Europe, use a variety of media including oil, watercolour, acrylic, charcoal and pencil. Several of the artists created screen prints, for example, Carry Akroyd's '*Towards the birchwood*' and '*From the birchwood*', woodcuts, for example, Andrea Rich's '*Fens sketch V*', and found-metal sculptures, for example, Harriet Mead's '*Dragonfly*'. The subject matter ranges from botanical illustrations, such as those by Jane Leycester Paige, bird and other animal paintings, including those by Chris Rose, Michael Warren and Darren Woodhead, to portraits and sketches of fenland farming activity, for example, by Denis Clavreul and Jonathan Yule. One of the artworks, Vadim Gorbатов's '*Cranes*', is an imagined aerial view of the project area after it has been restored. This vision, much used for promotion work, is the inspiration for other artwork, such as the creation of a model using 500,000 LEGO® bricks by local youngsters (see Chapter 5, Fig.5.25).

A number of the artists involved with the ANF are also members of the SWLA, which is a UK-based charity. This Society (www.swla.co.uk) has:

"Three main aims to:

1. Generate an appreciation of and delight in the natural world through all forms of fine art based on or representing the world's wildlife;
2. Further an awareness of the importance of conservation in order to maintain the variety of the world's ecosystems and its wildlife, through exhibitions and publications of fine art;
3. Support and promote arts based objectives of other conservation and wildlife charities".

The main event in the Society's calendar is the members' annual exhibition held in the Mall Galleries, London, during September/October (see section 3.3.2). The inaugural exhibition was held in August 1964 in Suffolk Street, London, and followed the first showing in 1960 in Reading of an exhibition of work by contemporary bird painters. The 1960 exhibition was organised by Robert Gillmor and Eric Ennion, and supported by Peter Scott and Keith Shackleton. Maurice Bradshaw, the then director of the Arts Exhibition Bureau, joined these four and, as a result, the Bureau arranged a tour around the UK's provincial art galleries. It was so successful that the tour was extended to two years. Sometime during these two years, R.B. Talbot Kelly and Maurice Wilson joined the organisers. From this group developed the idea of a Society as they realised that the number of people with an interest in natural history was increasing, and yet original work of wildlife artists was not readily available (Gillmor in SWLA 2013).

In the 1964 event, there were 149 works of art exhibited, and these were by 35 Society members. The number of exhibits has increased over the years and now can exceed 400, for example in 2004, 482 artworks by 102 artists were listed in the exhibition catalogue (SWLA 2004). The exhibition covers a wide range of media from oil, acrylic and watercolour, to metal, bronze, stone and wood sculptures and carvings, ceramics, linocuts and woodcuts, screen prints, collage and batik. Prices range from around £100 to over £10,000, and more for bronze works. During the exhibition, a number of artists demonstrate skills and techniques, and are able to answer questions and offer advice.

The first exhibition was opened by James Fisher, and since then, the Gallery holds an invitation-only event the evening before the exhibition opens to the public. During this, there are presentations to prize winners, including '*Birdwatch*' 'Artist of the Year Award' (sponsored by Swarovski Optik), the RSPB 'Fine Art Award' and various other sponsorship awards including the Langford Press award. The evening is also an opportunity for conservation professionals to informally meet with influential decision-makers and potential

fundings where the paintings of wildlife and wild places provide a useful focus for discussion.

The exhibition catalogues, depicting images both on the front covers and in the middle pages, provide information about other wildlife art galleries and exhibitions, thus further promoting nature art. These include the Wildlife Art Gallery in Lavenham, Suffolk, The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust galleries in Slimbridge, London and Arundel, the Nature in Art gallery at Twigworth, Gloucester, the Wildside Gallery in Great Malvern and the World Land Trust's gallery in Halesworth, Suffolk. The catalogues also list all the Society's artist members and include their addresses and websites, where available.

The Society operates a bursary scheme for young artists with a maximum age recently raised to 30 years old, towards costs incurred for travel, education and materials. The scheme, started in 1993, has awarded over 50 grants. Sponsors have included Lloyds Private Banking and Capmark Europe, a European mortgage company. The Society also runs a SWLA Friends membership scheme with members receiving a twice-yearly newsletter which includes articles about SWLA artists, their activities, and offering free or reduced admission to SWLA events, lectures and exhibitions.

The Society has undertaken a number of projects to help raise awareness of conservation issues. An early example occurred when several member artists met for a week at the RSPB's Minsmere Reserve with their work resulting in an illustrated, limited edition book on the different habitats within the reserve. In 1999, 30 artists from the SWLA started work on a project with the Forestry Commission in the New Forest, to create "a body of work (presenting) both an interpretative and a descriptive portrait of the wildlife and landscape, and of the individuals and communities in whose lives the Forest has a place" (Pearson in SWLA 2000:11). The work formed part of the Forestry Commission's Wild Art project, and the book, shortlisted for the Natural World Book Prize, exhibitions and demonstration days gave the artists opportunities to talk to visitors to the Forest about how they had been inspired. Visitors were encouraged to be creative, expressing themselves in a

range of activities from face painting to contributing to murals. A 12-month local schools artwork project produced a variety of materials including detailed leaf studies and large-scale wooden sculptures (Donald Thompson in Burton 2000).

A SWLA collaborative project with Forest Enterprise Scotland and HI-Arts (Highland and Islands Arts Ltd) running for just over a year from April 2004, saw 34 artists meeting and working in small groups or individually to record and reflect the habitat, plants and wildlife in the rare and declining Atlantic oak woodlands around West Argyll, Ardnamurchan and Skye. The resulting work, presented in an exhibition at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, was shown in the SWLA annual exhibition in 2004 and published as '*Aig an Oir*' (SWLA 2005).

The conservation work by individual artists is promoted by the SWLA. The website includes details of publications, such as Carry Akroyd's work in response to the poetry of John Clare, bewailing the loss of open common land following enclosure (Akroyd 2009). Like Clare, who celebrated the countryside and mourned the loss of wild places, some of Akroyd's work is described as a "lament" and also an "expression of joy derived from the natural world" (Langford in Akroyd 2009: flyleaf).

The 2011 annual exhibition promoted the artwork of two of the Society's artists who were working on seabird campaigns. Chris Rose, working with John Gale, spent five weeks in 2011, drawing and painting wildlife and landscapes in the south Atlantic, particularly around South Georgia. Sponsored by Hurtigruten Cruises, the project '*Artists for Albatrosses*', aimed to raise awareness about and funds for Birdlife International's campaign '*Save the Albatross*', through exhibitions and sales of the paintings, raising a minimum of £15,000 with fund-raising continuing (Rose website accessed 2017). Bruce Pearson has worked in the South Atlantic, contributing to this campaign through his project '*Troubled Waters – art and conservation in a creative partnership*' (Pearson 2012).

The first four decades of the SWLA were neatly summarised by Bruce Pearson (SWLA 2003:3). The first decade saw the Society becoming established with its own identity “moving away from the long shadows cast by Lodge, Thorburn, Wolf and others”. In the second decade, the Society gained strength and benefitted from greater exposure on television and in the press and increasing interest in wildlife and wild places. In the third decade, the Society became a charity and took on a wider role, and in the fourth it became more financially secure. The last few years have seen it raising awareness about conservation issues and increasing the profile of nature art.

Hammond described how artists and conservationists started working together in the late 19th century: “the newly formed conservation groups were quick to see the potential of the work of wildlife artists” (Hammond 1998:21). He explained that initially their primary concern was “to end the plumage trade and much of the artwork they commissioned...featured the species that were its victims” (Hammond 1998:22). For example, in 1898, the RSPB commissioned Archibald Thorburn to illustrate their first Christmas card on which he painted Roseate Terns, seabirds vulnerable for their feathers. Hammond discussed the emerging problems that conservationists faced in their efforts to protect the environment, such as habitat destruction, trapping and pollution, and the increasing interest of the countryside and the ‘rural idyll’ described in wartime and post-war literature often illustrated by artists, such as Tunnicliffe and Ennion (Hammond 1998).

That conservation organisations and wildlife artists continue to work together would indicate a strong mutual benefit, as evidenced by the increasing number of artists involved in these societies and by the lengthening number of international artistic-conservation projects. The use of art for the conservation message is clearly described by the ANF on its website (ANF 2017), where it states that it:

“...uses the creative output of artists inspired on location by renowned and talented artists from all over the world as a medium to draw attention to the need for nature to be appreciated as an essential element of sustainable development.”

The Foundation also states that the negative publicity associated with environmental problems makes it difficult for the public to respond positively and sympathetically to the environment, and that art can overcome this negativity and can encourage a constructive and positive response.

Hammond, when Director for the Wildlife Trust for Cambridgeshire, summarised how funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund was influenced by the work of the ANF:

"The fact of the Artists for Nature Foundation having decided to make the Great Fen one of their subjects has been really effective in the development of the Great Fen....The ANF contribution was certainly an important factor that led to the Heritage Lottery Fund awarding its largest grant for an ecological project in England, because it demonstrated how outward-looking the project is." (Hammond in ANF 2017)

Not only has the work of artists levered in funding to conservation projects, but the awareness-raising can improve understanding and public support where scientific arguments appear to have failed. Ian Edwards, Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, for example, described how he was met with scepticism and disbelief when he explained to audiences that the Atlantic oakwoods in Scotland are rainforest (part of the fragmented and threatened Temperate Rainforest Biome which spreads from New Zealand to Chile). In '*Aig an Oir*' (SWLA 2005:9), he gave an account of the success of a similar project in Canada:

"In the eighties, in a parallel project to *Aig an Or*, a group of Canadian artists, under the auspices of the Western Canada Wilderness Society, produced an exhibition and book on the Carmanah temperate rainforest of Vancouver Island that changed the hearts and minds of the local population and eventually led to the creation of a new Provincial Park. In the same area, scientists had been struggling for years to get the authorities to listen to their arguments for protecting biodiversity". (Edwards in SWLA 2005:9)

In another example, the Dorset Wildlife Trust sponsored a new prize at the SWLA annual exhibition in 2007 – the Undersea Wildlife Art Award. This award was part of a campaign to raise awareness of marine conservation issues, and timed to coincide with the UK Government's white paper on marine conservation.

A further example of nature art helping to raise awareness is through the use of posters, designed by Robert Gillmor, advertising the *Birdfair* organised by the RSPB and the Wildlife Trusts based at Rutland Water, East Midlands. The *BirdFair*, originally the *British Birdwatching Fair*, was intended to “bring the birdwatching community together to celebrate birds” (Tim Appleton, Reserve Manager at Rutland Water, in Gillmor et al 2013:6). Appleton described the event, the increase in visitor numbers, the projects supported and the money raised to support these projects. The posters are used to entice visitors to the Fair and raise awareness from the outset of the ‘good cause’ that proceeds from the Fair will support.

Robert Gillmor, often mentioned when considering contemporary conservation artists and a founder member of the SWLA and President from 1984-1994, was 11 years old when he joined the Reading Ornithological Club. He started to learn about lino cutting as an art form at school, and two years later provided the illustration of a Canada Goose for the front cover of the Club's Annual Report, and has continued to do so for over 60 years (Gillmor 2013 Foreword). From the age of 15, Gillmor provided illustrations for ‘*British Birds*’ magazine, and, whilst an art student at Reading University, started to illustrate books. By 2014, these numbered over 150 (Andrews 2014 Frontispiece). Gillmor has also been a member of the RSPB, the BTO and the British Ornithologists' Union, and (co)-author of several books, including Gillmor (2006), (2013), with Marren (2009) and with Andrews (2014). For an interview of Gillmor in his studio by a representative of the Mall Galleries, see <http://www.mallgalleries.org.uk/about-us/blog/robert-gillmor-mbe>.

It may well be that nature conservation has increased its support base, its political clout and indeed its coffers by the increasing interest and profile of nature art. The artists, many of whom have great knowledge of nature as well as great skill in portraying it, will feel that they have played a role in the conservation of the animals, plants, habitats and landscapes by which they are so inspired. Two examples of what artists feel about their art and nature, and how they are trying to elicit a response from the viewer, are from the 'Aig an Oir' project, as Peter McDermott, an artist based on the Isle of Skye wrote:

"The landscape became a demonstration of God's magnificent presence in creation, especially with the ever-changing light and dramatic weather patterns found particularly in the Western Isles. Because of this, my work is unashamedly representational, enabling everyone to recognise and react emotionally to the location and the elements portrayed" (SWLA 2005:160).

Greg Poole, encapsulating ecology, conservation and his art, wrote:

"I'm making pictures about nature, above all trying to celebrate appreciation of nature – to hear, smell, touch and see it, marvel at how it all fits together. I am upset about how a lot of it is getting ripped apart, but I don't feel inclined to express unhappiness in my art. It seems better to point out how great things are and try to show the way I see things." (SWLA 2005:162)

6.2 SWLA Survey

The aims and achievements of nature artists are evident from the above, but I wanted to discover the views of nature artists themselves. I undertook a postal survey in 2017 of those SWLA artists listed with a UK address in the exhibition catalogue of 2016, the methodology of which is in Chapter 3. See Appendix 4 for the questions.

All those who responded provided their name. Two of the artists, Basil Ede and John Eveleigh, had died since the catalogue was published. Both

widows replied, Mrs Eveleigh with some information about her husband's work. I thus received informative replies from or about 21 of the artists, representing a 32% return rate. The responses varied from short answers to several sheets of hand-written replies. Several artists sent me postcards or greetings cards of their work or referred me to websites. Darren Rees sent me four examples of his work that he felt provided strong conservation messages.

6.2.1 Use of Art to Convey Nature Conservation Messages

In response to the first question of the artists survey (see Appendix 4), 19 of the 22 artists replied in the affirmative, and two replied 'don't know'. Mrs John Eveleigh said that her husband would have responded 'yes' and she cited examples of his work. Five replies named particular artists, other than themselves, who had achieved this goal most effectively, including: Carry Akroyd; Bruce Pearson; Peter Scott; and David Shepherd. Thelma Sykes observed:

"Clearly large conservation organisations, such as RSPB, BTO and the regional Wildlife Trusts think so too, since more science/arts partnerships are being forged, especially to engage the public through exhibitions and fine art publications". (Sykes in artists' survey)

Eight replies said that art can raise awareness of problems and threats. Examples included: Chris Rose who had "been involved in SWLA 'conservation' projects, artist for Nature (ANF) projects and my own '*Artists for Albatrosses*' project, all of which have helped present a conservation message and raised public awareness of the issues"; Simon Turvey wrote: "wildlife artists, such as David Shepherd have helped bring the plight of elephants to the fore, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s", and Robert Gillmor wrote of Bruce Pearson's book '*Troubled Waters*' (2012): "which dramatically describes the slaughter of sea birds by long-line fishing. His superb artwork rams home the message".

Respondents also referred to their own work. Bruce Pearson described his “project completed over a five year period working with BirdLife focusing on an urgent species issue (seabirds in the southern Ocean)”. John Foker described his series of ‘*yellowhammers in a hedge*’ paintings: “the hedge gets clipped severely - and parts get taken out - but it provides a lifeline for one of these once common species.....” Carry Akroyd used symbols of human impacts as incidental to the wildlife, for example, “fighter jets in landscape” and “boat traffic on the Thames” in order to provide context and to portray the circumstances in which they live. A similar point was made by Jane Smith as “without the habitat the species can't exist”, and Antonia Phillips hoped her work had highlighted: “Dwindling puffin numbers along Dorset Coast”.

Robert Greenhalf described the power of multiple images. He stated that:

“Since 1992, I have been involved in several Artists for Nature Foundation projects which have the expressed aim of highlighting the threats to specific important areas and natural habitats, through the use of art and the written word. Whilst many of the images created for ANF projects do not alone aim to convey a specific message, when combined with other images and text in a book or exhibition, they will help to present a powerful case for conservation”. (Greenhalf in artists’ survey)

By implication these images of threat affect humans too. John Eveleigh (decd.) wrote (1989):

“Clearly, industry and technology underpin and shape contemporary societies. Equally life on earth is dependent on a fertile earth, forests, unpolluted air and water. The problem is to balance the equation. In many areas of the world we have failed to do so and the effects are increasingly catastrophic”.

Artwork can depict management practices on nature reserves to aid understanding of the why and how. For example, Richard Allen replied:

“I have done many illustrations/artwork for conservation bodies (RSPB, Wildlife Trusts) that show the wildlife (both obvious and hidden), of particular habitats, and

showing conservation management practises, such as coppicing, and also murals at nature reserves to show the variety of wildlife to be found there.” (Allen in artists’ survey)

Two of the respondents showed the hidden beauty of species usually unseen. John Foker’s paintings “make the 'ordinary' seem extra-ordinary, or at least as worthy as the 'big hitters' and iconic symbols of conservation”. In her stone carving of wildlife Madeline Goold said:

“Everything I do, from field drawing, through working up drawings and carvings is inspired by wildlife, by respect and love for its fragility. I try to show things that would otherwise go unnoticed - in my exhibitions and website”. (Goold in artists’ survey)

In addition, the artwork allows repeat viewings of the experience seen by the artist, as expressed by Max Angus: “Art records a moment in time, then, when that moment is exhibited in a gallery it is viewed repeatedly”.

Art can lead to interest in the subject. For example, Carry Akroyd wrote

“Most people are just ignorant about wildlife because they are unaware of it. So a picture of a dormouse means nothing. But, if they like an artwork first and later find out it is about dormice.”

Thelma Sykes provided an example that encapsulated several of these messages of threat and decline, the need to protect wildlife-rich areas and manage them in them sympathetically, raising awareness in the general public, naturalists and landowners, and working in partnership with others. She said:

“In late '70s and '80s, I was involved on the committee of a small local natural history society that through its efforts managed to secure an agreement to set up and manage a Reserve on land surrounding a power station on the Dee estuary - one of the top ten estuaries in Europe for numbers of wildfowl & waders. It is now a RAMSAR site with the RSPB a significant landowner now with its own nature

reserve....The Society remit was both conservation and education & I tutored courses based in the Society's Field Studies Centre, often using my artwork to promote understanding. The courses were instrumental in increasing membership of the Society and it therefore grew in stature in its negotiations with industry for the benefit of the Reserve and the Estuary as a whole. The Reserve became positive publicity for Powergen and the station bought six of my works that represented birds of the Reserve for the reception rooms: one way of showing visitors their commitment to conservation and the local environment". (Sykes in artists' survey)

The SWLA and ANF is often a facilitator in these projects and was mentioned by five artists. Describing one particular project, Bruce Pearson referred to an article by Meidad Goren (2010) of BirdLife South Africa's Albatross Task Force, in which it is described how Bruce sketched and painted the fishermen and their boats prior to long-line fishing at sea. Meidad Goren wrote:

"(Bruce) was happy to spend some time at sea on a fishing boat with thousands of birds around (who wouldn't?)....By the end of the trip Bruce was happy with the results. Together with his Richards Bay work in the harbour and the sea trip he had enough material to go back to the studio and start working towards the main objective; the production of a book and an exhibit which will raise funds for albatross conservation." (Meidad Goren 2010)

Darren Rees provided examples and explanations where his paintings encapsulate complex ecological issues with a conservation theme. These paintings do not reflect particular British issues, but the conservation principles apply world-wide. He said: "I have made a concerted effort with my more recent works to include wildlife subjects and landscapes with an ecological narrative". He gave four examples: "*Revealed*", "*Restoration*", "*In God We Trust*" and "*Lost Glory*" respectively about: climate change; rebalancing the ecology of a landscape (through the reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park, USA); cutting down of the Amazon rainforest; and species extinction (the Carolina Parakeet, America's only native parrot). These paintings are shown in Fig.6.1, Fig.6.2, Fig.6.3 and Fig.6.4 accompanied by Rees' explanations.

(Darren Rees' links to his website and/or social media are:

www.darrenrees.com, Instagram: @darrenreesartist,

Facebook: Darren Rees Artist, twitter: @DarrenReesArt)

“Revealed” (Winner Arts Club Award) - acrylic on canvas 1.2 x 1 m

“In this large-scale canvas I depicted a fractured, surging glacier in retreat, now commonplace in Svalbard. New slabs of rock are uncovered as the ice cover diminishes – all uncharted as well as yet un-vegetated and they ironically echo the shapes of bowhead whales that were once plentiful in the far north. In the foreground an Ivory Gull reveals a Polar Bear in a fast changing ice world”. (Rees artists' survey)

(The Polar Bear can be seen on the rock in the bottom right-hand corner of the painting and the Ivory Gull is flying to the right a short distance above it.)



Fig.6.1 “Revealed” © Darren Rees

“Restoration” (Highly Commended Wildlife Artist of the Year) – acrylic on canvas 1 x 0.75 m

“Wolves were re-introduced to Yellowstone in 1996 and their presence has had a far reaching effect. Previously unchecked populations of American Elk had overgrazed deciduous forest but the restoration of a keystone apex predator has resulted in the regeneration of willows, cottonwoods and aspens, to the benefit of beavers, butterflies and songbirds. Central to the painting composition is the autumn colour from the stand of yellow quaking aspens. Harmony can be thought of being restored in all ways.” (Rees in artists’ survey)

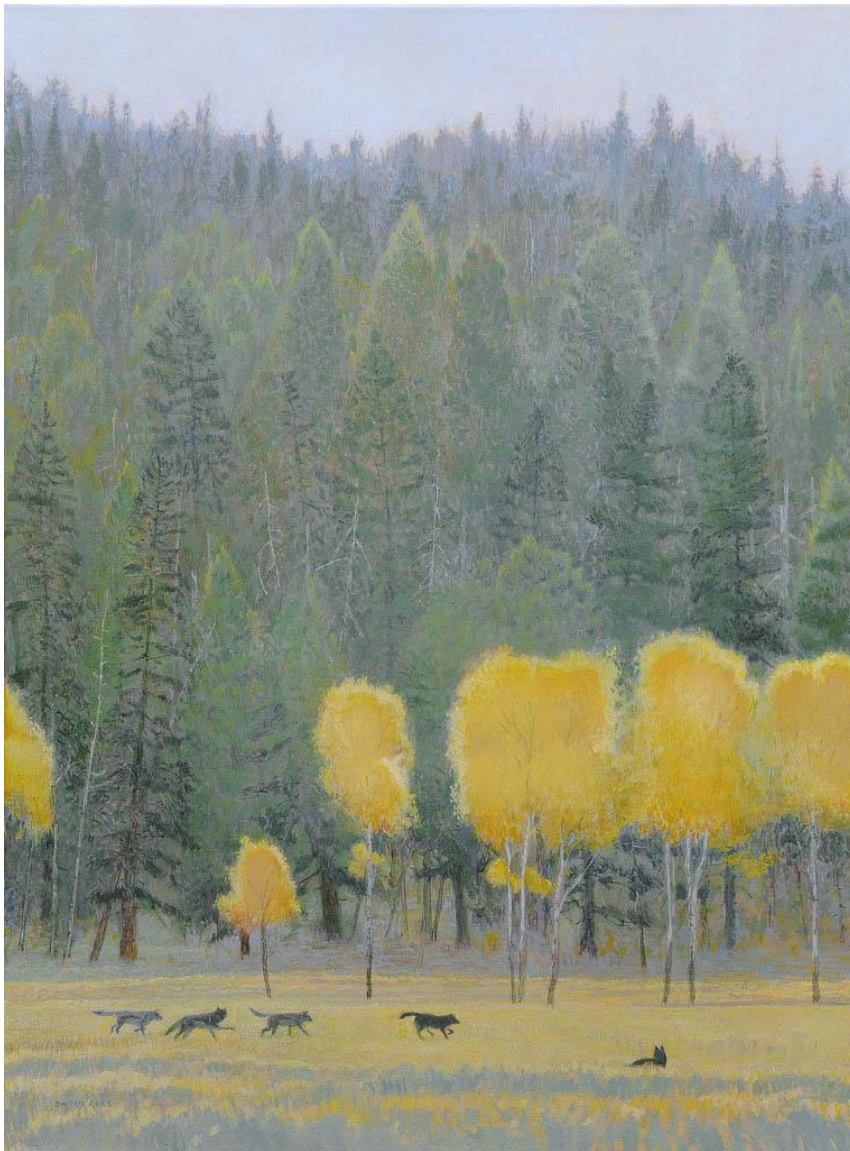


Fig.6.2 *“Restoration”* © Darren Rees

“Lost Glory” (From *“Ghosts of Gone Birds”*)

“I was asked to contribute to the innovative project Ghosts of Gone Birds organised by filmmaker Ceri Levy. I had chosen the species Carolina Parakeet, America’s only native parrot. These were once commonplace across the continent but were slaughtered in their millions and last individual died in Cincinnati zoo in 1918. I have seen gatherings of different species of parrots and parakeets in South America and wanted to extrapolate from those scenes and show what it might have looked like. I’ve transposed the markings of Carolina Parakeets and even used one individual shape from the earlier painting from Audubon.” (Rees in artists’ survey)



Fig.6.3 *“Lost Glory”* © Darren Rees

“In God We Trust” (A category winner in the Wildlife Artist of the Year) – mixed media 1.2 x 1 m

“Leafcutter ants march across a field of textured red. A response to the dozen or so trips to the Amazon where I’ve seen increasingly more tens of thousands of acres of pristine rainforest clear-felled. The pace is not being sustained by local indigenous peoples but fuelled by international corporations and banks for profit.” (Rees in artists’ survey)

“In my artwork each of the ants carries sections of leaves – little laminas of green made from real bank notes. On one dollar bill shows the wording In God We Trust. It might not be enough to put our trust in a god.” (Rees in artists’ survey)



Fig.6.4 *“In God We Trust”* ©Darren Rees - paintings above and next page



Of the two artists who replied ‘don’t know’ to this question about whether wildlife art can convey nature conservation messages, one appeared to not understand the question, and the other, Barry Sutton, by contrast to the examples provided above, said: “It can but seldom does. Galleries only show cute stuff and aren’t interested in gutsy messages or imagery”.

6.2.2 Emotional Responses to Wildlife Art

Eighteen of the 21 who replied on this question felt that wildlife/wild places art can convey a nature conservation message, and three replied ‘don’t know’. Seven said they had no direct evidence, but the general hope was expressed that their art did make a difference. For example, Robert Gillmor said: “I certainly hope so! I hope (my art) has contributed to arousing concerns and interest, but really have little idea how much it has worked or influenced thinking.”

Fifteen artists replied that wildlife art can raise awareness. Several replied with examples: through art workshops supplied by three separate responses); by seeing work in an art gallery (supplied by three separate responses); or as part of a wider campaign, such as Artists’ for Nature Foundation projects or through the work of wildlife charities or documentaries (supplied by two separate responses). John Foker explained:

“Getting people through the doors to an exhibition or taking part in a workshop (wildlife-related) can in itself be a positive - making people appreciate what's out there just by bringing it to attention”. (Foker in artists’ survey)

Darren Rees highlighted awareness-raising through education:

“With the SWLA and AFN projects we are keen to involve local schools and communities and the art fulfils an education role for children and locals. It’s all an awareness-raising exercise”.

However, Carry Akroyd cautioned: “But very indirectly - first they have to recognise it, then be interested, then be enthusiastic, then concerned”.

Five responded that paintings can help people see wildlife in new light and so increase appreciation and concern – a step on from general awareness-raising. Thelma Sykes gave examples of how conversations in art workshops often lead to discussions about species biology and conservation:

“My own experience of doing residencies (Nature in Art, Wallsworth Hall, Gloucester) demonstrations and exhibitions (Mall Galleries & for National Exhibition of Wildlife Art) and in tutoring a field sketching course for Liverpool University, has been that discussions always veer from the art to the subject and its lifestyle/biology/conservation issues. I have no doubt that initial enjoyment of an artistic work fuels thought of, and more regard for, the subject.” (Sykes in artist’ interview)

Four said that art can help the viewer to have a personal connection to the subject of a painting. Jane Smith wrote:

“People say ‘I saw this bird/animal and I thought of your picture’. Because you have given them another perspective on that species, they engage with it more strongly. And because you have spent time making the picture of that species that gives importance to it”.

Similarly, Richard Allen talked of the nostalgic memory of how things once were and the desire to see these things again as well as appreciation of what wildlife there still is: “no direct evidence, just people talking to me. It can make people feel nostalgic and want to bring back wildlife, or it can make people realise just what they have”.

Thelma Sykes’ example from Question 1, provided evidence of how art can make a difference to how people feel about nature as people attending painting workshops became members of a natural history society that lobbied for protection to part of the Dee Estuary.

Several artists cited fund-raising through the sale of artwork for wildlife charities as evidence. For example, Barry Sutton said: “Yes, for fundraising for the likes of David Shepherd Wildlife Fund who do a lot of good” and Darren Rees said “certainly anybody buying art from a fund raising auction will be aware of the conservation message”.

Robert Greenhalf described how an ANF project changed the perception of local people to their special wildlife places resulting in positive conservation action. He wrote:

“Art can help people to see places and wildlife familiar to them in a new light, through the eyes of the artists and could bring about a renewed appreciation of what they have and what they could stand to lose. The ANF project to the Biebrza Marshes in the remote N.E. corner of Poland was a good example. The inhabitants of the small farming village where we camped in an orchard were at first bemused at all the interest shown in their lives and environment. Towards the end of our stay we put on an exhibition of our work for the villagers. Many came and perhaps were aware for the first time of what a special place they lived in. There is now a thriving guest house in the village, catering for eco-tourists eager to see the local wildlife. It helps to bring much needed income to the village and helps support the low intensity agriculture on which the wildlife depends”. (Greenhalf in artists’ survey)

Thelma Sykes also referred to the ‘artistic eye’ behind a camera lens:

“Certainly images are very powerful and in the past 40 years the progress of technology in photography and film has fuelled a national enthusiasm for wildlife documentaries and exhibitions/competitions of still nature photography - do not overlook the art of the team and eye behind the lens.” (Sykes in artists’ survey)

Contrary to this view, Chris Sinden observed:

“I have no evidence but I believe that society is being constantly bombarded with photographic imagery from advertisements to social media, that it is becoming immune to its effects. Art/illustration is much more emotive and can convey things better than ever before”.

6.2.3 Use of Artists’ Work by Nature Conservation Organisations

Eighteen of the 20 artists replied in the affirmative. One replied ‘don’t know’, and Chris Sinden said ‘no’ as: “I am still new to linocut art”. Collectively, the artists had provided artwork for a wide variety of nature conservation charities including the RSPB, the BTO, Wildlife Trusts, WWT, and “Conservation stamps for National Audubon Society in USA” (Michael Warren). One mentioned working for Scottish Natural Heritage, but no-one mentioned English Nature or Natural England.

Ten respondents mentioned the RSPB, including: recording the Wallasea Project, for example, by John Foker “spending time in the field documenting and responding to the development and construction of largest wetland creation project in W Europe”. Other examples included: Christmas cards; covers for magazines; art works for sale to raise funds; Bill Neill “illustrated information on the Wader Recovery Project”; and Jane Smith reported:

“I wrote and illustrated the book ‘*Wild Island*’ about the RSPB reserve on Oronsay and give talks based on the artwork. The artwork gets people to engage on an emotional level, and then text gives the context and information”.

Similar work, including Christmas cards, reserve material, cover illustrations, was provided for the other wildlife organisations. For example, Antonia

Phillips replied: “I have worked with Dorset Wildlife Trust for 30 years, illustrating leaflets, interpretation panels and painting wildlife panels depicting rare species found in certain habitats”.

Artwork illustrates reports and broadens the appeal of campaigns and projects. For example, Thelma Sykes wrote:

“Yes, my artwork has enlivened many books for conservation organisations - especially the BTO and exhibitions for Wildfowl & Wetland Trust at 4 centres have raised awareness and, through commission on sales, funds. I've designed logos, nature trail leaflets, illustrated Reserve & County Reports and the greatest part of this has been given with no fee, since that's just one way in which I can give something back to the organisations that care for & protect that which gives me the greatest enjoyment & the bedrock of my creative impulse.”

This reply indicates a two-way flow of benefit between artist and organisation.

Carry Akroyd replied that her artwork for the Wildlife Trust and Great Fen Project helps to explain the issues and potential of the proposals: “Yes - mostly Great Fen in helping to explain the landscape – for example, a diverse reserve surrounded by arable desert”.

6.2.4 Opportunities for Nature Conservation Organisations to Make Greater Use of Art to Promote Their Messages

Fourteen artists replied in the affirmative, but six replied “don’t know”.

Thelma Sykes recalled the impact of war artists, and she felt the relationship would be especially effective if artist and organisation experienced similar emotional responses:

“If the artist is fuelled by the same passion as the organisation then there is no limit to the messages that can be made public. Fine art will reflect the honesty of the response. We have used artists for reportage through several wars and the experience has generated fine works of art & of literature. Conservation organisations are sending out their fieldworkers and scientists and we should grow that link”. (Sykes in artists’ interview)

Michael Warren said: “Visual images raise awareness more easily than the written word”. Several respondents referred to the power of art: Max Angus said “Art makes people 'look'”; and Robert Greenhalf “Artists can offer an alternative way of looking at wildlife, or the message may simply be: ‘Look how beautiful this is’”. Chris Rose replied that:

“The message that wildlife and wild places are amazing, often beautiful, fragile and inextricably linked to every one of us and that they are worth protecting. Art brings the spirit and soul of the subject to the viewer, and we need to protect these for the benefit of all mankind”.

Art can achieve an emotional engagement with the viewer as explained by Jane Smith: “Art is another way of engaging with people emotionally about wildlife. And if people buy a picture, they feel a personal connection with the subject matter”.

In comparison with photographs, the artists said: “Photographs are often used for economy and simplicity when artwork would reach differently” (Carry Akroyd); “Photography has taken over a lot in conservation publications (magazines etc). There are a lot of good photographers, but I think wildlife art can have a bigger impact and effect” (Richard Allen); and “I think artwork brings/shows a deeper & stronger sense of awareness & can generate a better response than a photo” (Antonia Phillips).

John Foker countered the suggestion that artists would feel antipathy to photography, when he wrote:

“In an age of digital photography and availability of 'wildlife creative capture' to so many - visual art tends to get a bit overlooked. I think this is really positive (except where bird hides/reserves get dominated by noisy lens-obsessed hunter-gatherers)...” (Foker in artists' survey)

John Foker continued:

“A photograph can be stunning and give that 'wow' thing. It can take hours to achieve as well in terms of waiting/anticipating the action/correct lighting - but there's a different outcome with the image created at 1/250th or 1/500th sec”.

Two artists mentioned the RSPB '*Birds*' magazine that formerly used artworks on the front covers. John Foker wrote:

“I used to love the covers of '*Birds*' when illustrated by bird art - I remember a survey concluded that the majority favoured photographs over art, but I think a visual artist brings a very different approach and can engender a new way of looking - Robert Gillmor long-tailed tits in winter trees, Lars Johnsson whinchat on Umbellifers (Autumn 78?) - Rooks collage (similar time) capture movement, energy, sense of place - the making of these works involves time, consideration over time, gathering of information, organisation of forms within space”.

Jane Smith replied:

“In the past '*Birds*' magazine had wonderful innovative artwork, but now the photographs, the only approach (apart from neat illustrations), gives it a more clinical, impersonal feel. However, they must have done some market research to make this change I suppose”.

Peter Partington felt that art projects and Artists in Residence could counter the decline in art: “Photography has overtaken illustration but (art) projects for children - and adults - may encourage Artists in Residence etc”. Other examples of where art is being used were provided by Madeline Goold “Wildlife art drawing/workshop sessions for young people - they love it. I've done several”, and Robert Gillmor said:

“The work of organisations, such as Artist for Nature, is dedicated to drawing attention to wildlife and places under threat through the work of talented artists - resulting in books and exhibitions. The RSPB encourages artists to document their

work in the creation of new reserves - again resulting in exhibitions etc". (Gillmor in artists' survey)

Bruce Pearson described a recent project for the SWLA working with a wildlife conservation NGO in Turkey which included an educational element in the proposals:

"The key element in the Sweetgum project was education, something missing from many previous art and conservation projects. I think it is essential in the future to promote education in the proposals as they go forward for possible funding". (Pearson in artists' survey)

Two of the less-positive responses were: "I think that people are bombarded with images these days, and wildlife art is a tiny proportion, and not important in most people's lives" (Simon Turvey); and art would be more effective: "if they showed the more shocking work – for example, snared animals - destructive images" (Barry Sutton).

6.2.5 Innovative Ways Art Could be Used to Raise Awareness of Wildlife and Wild Places and Their Conservation

Twelve of the 15 who replied on this question offered mostly different ideas, some of which were contradictory to other replies.

Carry Akroyd emphasised the need for a variety of methods:

"Variety. One wouldn't group all kinds of music together: a protest song, a pop song, an opera, etc ditto art: cartoons about state of nature; strip narrative-graphic novel form; identification - detailed illustration; plein air fieldwork of wildlife; studio painting from fieldwork; studio work from emotion".

Similarly, Chris Rose replied:

"Art covers a huge spectrum that it is hard to pinpoint a specific method, but community involvement in 'wildlife art' has potential: we look at something completely differently when we want to portray it through the medium of art so to

encourage that way of looking is to bring a new admiration and respect for nature in the aspiring artist". (Rose in artists' survey)

Encouraging people, and particularly children, to create their own artwork through workshops was expressed by several artists: Jane Smith said:

"Nowadays we have fewer ways to engage with nature. We don't hunt it for food. We can't even pick wild flowers. So it becomes less valuable. By running art workshops I hope to give people new ways to interact with, and value, nature".

Thelma Sykes replied:

"Not innovative ways really - but a reminder that children seem to have an innate curiosity in and attraction to the natural world – let's get them out in the wild - however small the patch - with hands on experience and with pencils, crayons, rubber stamps, paper for rubbings of bark, plaster for moulding animal tracks - anything with which to express a response".

Michael Warren wrote: "Start with children and enthuse them, then involve communities more"; and Bruce Pearson referred again to the Turkish Sweetgum Project where education is seen as an important element of the Project.

Several artists referred to the impact of artists recording wildlife and painting 'as it happens', for example, Peter Partington said it provided: "The personal witness somehow - interface of artist and the environment". Richard Allen wrote: "More use of 'artists in residence' on a nature reserve to record wildlife/landscape as it happens".

Although Carry Akroyd was definitely not in favour of artwork on nature reserves: "Exhibitions NOT in wildlife reserves", other artists were more in favour of using nature and/or local reserves for artwork. These included: Michael Warren who said: "...involve communities more, particularly with local nature reserves"; Richard Allen: "Sculpture trails (unobtrusive) on nature

reserves”; and Antonia Phillips: “I’m a great believer in how artwork can bring a much bigger audience to understand the need to conserve and preserve. Murals ideal!”

An interesting angle was expressed by John Foker in targeting two particular groups: those who, if persuaded, could make a difference but currently do not, and secondly, influencing those who currently undertake damage or harm. He explained:

“I’m afraid I haven’t a suggestion but I often think of working on the polar extremes of society - the very powerful (who have influence but don’t always use it as a force for good) and those with very little power/influence...I think whoever ‘trashed’ the nest boxes I put up in the local wood must belong to the latter group”. (Foker in artists’ survey)

A cautionary note was expressed by several artists. For example, Max Angus said: “art comes from seeing and looking. If ideas are manufactured, then it’s not art, it’s more like graphic design”. Bill Neill said:

“I don’t believe that overt political messages in art succeed. If my work has ever successfully aided conservation then I am delighted but it probably happened more by accident than intention. Most adults it seems to me are already on one side or the other, perhaps with youngsters it’s different. Did I love the picture of wildlife that I looked at as a child because of the inspirational beauty of the paintings or because I was already hooked? I’m not sure; I certainly remember some of them”.

Simon Turvey expressed his thought that: “I would say that it’s more a question of conservation organisations to come up with ideas. Artists paint pictures and make sculptures”.

Fourteen of the artists provided additional comments, of which the most positive came from Madeline Goold who said:

“Nothing is better than a day out drawing wildlife in a group that disperses and re-joins to swap experiences, look at each other’s drawings etc, then take them on to a

further medium - paint, stone, etc. I teach this in my studio.” (Madeline Goold in artists’ survey)

The artists seem hopeful, rather than certain, that their art makes a difference. For example, Robert Gillmor wrote:

“Your letter and questionnaire are of great interest, although I find it very difficult to answer a bold 'yes' or 'no', when the real answer is perhaps 'I do hope so' or 'I wish that it was', but how do I know? I have been a full time wildlife artist for 60 years and done much work over those years with, and for, organisations, such as the RSPB, BTO and local Trusts etc. I hope it has contributed to arousing concerns and interest, but really have little idea how much it has worked or influence thinking. I hope that people seeing wildlife art may take a second look at the real thing and then be more concerned and aware if they learn that such creatures are vulnerable”.

Rachel Lockwood said: “I wish that art could promote conservation. I think that getting people out into nature is the thing. A nature day-off each year would be good”.

Some recognised the struggle in the face of habitat and species destruction, such as Peter Partington: “Unfortunately we are attempting to catch up with what is rapidly disappearing”. Michael Warren replied: “Nature conservation will always be a struggle in the modern world. However wildlife art will continue to be a useful tool in promoting the cause”.

Several make additional comments about photography: Michael Hampton wrote: “photos and film probably have more impact?” Simon Turvey replied: “Wildlife artists are often willing for their work to be used in helping nature conservation, but these days, the main visual medium is photography (and film)”; though Antonia Phillips was more positive: “I think artwork, particularly, but not exclusively 2D artwork, can send a bigger message than photography. Especially drawn from observation”.

Barry Sutton explained that even within their own profession, persuasive work needs to be done: “Artists are their own worst enemies - the art police - deciding what their peers should be doing and galleries collude - all rather sad”.

Darren Rees referred to the Cape Farewell Climate Change project which poses the question “What does Culture have to do with Climate Change?” Its arts programme “works with visual artists, sound artists, musicians, comedians, writers, film-makers, performance artists, journalists, sculptors, novelists, painters, cartoonists, ceramicists and comedians” leading expeditions, presenting exhibitions and encouraging debate on the subject of climate change (Cape Farewell 2017). David Buckland, Director Cape Farewell, explained that he wanted good communicators to explain the science of climate change:

“I felt there was a need to find a different way of communicating their important message as the scientific delivery was being ignored....I would ask artists, because they are our most creative communicators” (Cape Farewell 2006:5).

A final comment was made by Chris Rose who supplied a copy of the Birdfair 2016 programme which included an article “*Why wild art?*” (Rose 2016:20-21), which explains the power of art and that it is an essential tool for successful nature conservation. After describing the work of the ANF and SWLA, the article stated:

“Exactly how and why does wildlife art play such an important role? Perhaps it is because art, in all its manifestations, has the power to evoke powerful emotions in those who view it.... Art makes us look at the world afresh by showing it through the eyes of the artist, who will often see the environment and the wildlife around them in an entirely different way....The hard work of scientists and conservationists is essential to the survival of much of our natural world, but without the emotive power of art and its ability to connect to a wider audience, far fewer people would actually care.” (Rose 2016:20-21)

6.3 Assessment of Wildlife Artists by Ian Langford, Langford Press 1956-2017)

In July 2015, I interviewed Ian Langford, a former colleague at English Nature and Natural England, a publisher of a series of wildlife art books by SWLA artists (Langford Press - <http://langford-press.co.uk/>) and a National Exhibition of Wildlife Art judge, for his views on wildlife art and artists, and his hopes and objectives for Langford Press art books. His views offered a unique perspective on the visual culture of nature conservation, and had not been recorded before. It is unlikely that he gave another such interview, as Ian was unwell at the time of interview and died in December 2017.

We started by discussing the popularity of art and artists. Langford explained that:

“It’s a widely-held view – there’s a tier of artistic merit, wildlife is at the bottom – it’s always struggled for recognition in the art world. So it goes from classical scenes, religious scenes, architecture, still-life, all the way down to wildlife art, and the very bottom of that art is print making, because they’re not originals”.

Langford explained that prints are currently popular as they are cheaper to buy than originals, and “a lot of people (artists) who weren’t print makers before are now having a go at print making to find new customers”. He continued:

“Those who are incredibly popular are those doing portraits of big cats, foxes and wolves. And it doesn’t matter who the artist is, they’re selling incredibly well... because people want big – what they call original art work”.

Langford gave an example of the very successful wildlife artist producing such work: Carl Benders. He said: “I’ve never seen anyone that has sold unlimited edition prints at high value and originals with such frenzy.” At the other end of the skill scale, Langford said:

“I’ve seen people at exhibitions and galleries place paper on an easel, blocking it off into squares, and copying square by square using pastels or paint, and selling them at very good rates...But if you gave them something in the wild, they couldn’t do it.”
(Langford interview)

Langford explained the difference between these “new people” with that of David Shepherd, who “put a dramatic pose and behaviour in a natural setting...The one is David Shepherd who actually went out, saw, sketched and painted in the field and is a good all-round artist”. The other difference is that “he (David Shepherd, like Carl Benders) is raising awareness and funds for practical conservation”. Langford felt that the portrait copyists and conservation artists “are almost entirely mutually exclusive. Lots of wildlife artists wouldn’t want be associated with or touch things like that, because it is seen as the bottom end of the artistic ability range – they are just copiers”.

Langford described the work of a number of nature artists, including members of the SWLA. Starting with the “classic painters”, he included “Tunnickliffe, Peter Scott, Ennion, Constable....also Peter Partington...Bruce Pearson and Robert Gillmor, and a few of the newer ones like Frederico, the Italian, who I gave the award to for his sketchbook”.

The next group was those who’s “current artwork is slightly abstract, like Esther Tyson and sometimes Harriet Mead”. In this group would be

“John Busby (who has) got that ...accuracy and the abstract... down to a fine art. His ultimate is three squiggles: one is a heron on the waterline in the winter; the other one is the shoreline; and the other is a couple of rocks! That’s three squiggles and you instantly know it’s a heron, in the winter and it’s on an estuary”.

Of Tyson’s work, Langford said: “Esther can do the same, but she does it with broad oil strokes, but you know that it’s a male house sparrow fluffing his feathers up, or a goldfinch sitting on a line.”

The next groups Ian described were:

“The photorealism group like Chris Rose and a lot of other people, and then there’s the quick field painters like James MacCallum, Darren Woodhead and John Walters....They are all ex-Royal Academy students”. (Langford interview)

He continued:

“Darren Woodhead is becoming incredibly popular, partly because of his coverage on ‘*Spring Watch*’ and ‘*Autumn Watch*’ – he’s like their artist-in-residence – and also because of his loose style which tends to appeal to people”.

Two other individuals Langford described were:

“Richard Tratt...out on his own, and he is butterflies in a big landscape, and he is just about unique – he is the only one doing that...a very, very competent all-round artist. He’s a member of the SWLA and he’s also a Botanical Society artist. He’s also a very good abstract artist, a good technician and an artist with a very wide remit. I think people appreciate him – he is quite a master of the paintbrush. Surprising really – nearly 40 years as a professional artist, he had his best ever year in 2014, which was bucking the trend for most other artists”.

About John Threlfall’s bird paintings, Langford said: “a lot of people like his approach – it’s very fresh, it’s not photorealism but not quite abstract: very realistic and becoming pretty popular because they are ones that people could live within the house”.

The final group of artists described were: “all sorts of intellectual print makers – off-the-wall printmakers, if you can have such a phrase. Bright colours, slightly Picasso-style artwork and yes they’ve got a following as well”. In this group, Ian included Greg Poole: “has an intellectual following in terms of academics, and a lot of people like his thought processes”; Tim Wootton: “gone up the league since doing his book on drawing birds... which has been well received”; Kim Atkinson: “has a big following”; and Matt Underwood.

Regarding sculptors like Harriet Mead and Jill Moger, Langford felt they would not struggle to sell their work “because they do produce things very differently” in spite of “money getting tight in the economy”. Langford felt that the problem with photographic images is that it is difficult to tell which photographs are original and which have been ‘photo-shopped’: “all you are doing is comparing one image with another, and one has cheated and the other hasn’t, but when you are looking at it you don’t know”.

The most successful books that Langford has published have been those by printmakers:

“Robert Gillmor’s has been reprinted twice. Andrew Haslam printed and then reprinted and enlarged. Carry Akroyd’s ‘Natures Powers & Spells’ has been reprinted, and ‘Wildlife in Printmaking’ has sold pretty well....even though printmaking is quite varied, it has become incredibly popular.” (Langford interview)

On Robert Gillmor, Langford “was the first publisher to ask him to do a book of his own work, as opposed to illustrating other people’s books, and now several publishers have done books of his work”. He explained that Clifford and Rosemary Ellis (the first artists to illustrate the covers of the New Naturalist book series) and now Gillmor (who has succeeded them) have very similar styles: “both very graphic” the only difference being “whereas they (the Ellises) were very muted with 40s, 50s, 60s style colours, and Robert has now added more brighter colours... and more species especially in the later editions”.

Langford felt that the primary aim of art is: “to entertain, enthrall, excite, put over a message, but an illustration is to show the important bits”. Of the artists he has published, Langford said:

“Some of them have got dual personalities. Some of them are very well known illustrators and have illustrated some of the most important identification books over the last 40 years. But that’s not what gets into the book – it’s when they put their art hat on and not the illustrator hat on”.

Langford felt that an illustration has to perform better than a photograph in “showing all the features at the same time which a photo may not be able to do”, and art will differ from, say, botanical illustration “when it (the subject) is shown actually interacting with its environment or when its shown in its natural habitat”.

When asked about his motivation for publishing wildlife artists, Langford said:

“Originally - and I don’t know if I’ve been the slightest bit successful in this - was to widen the percentage of the population that was interested in conservation, and used art as a means of trying to bring other people in to important conservation messages”.

He felt art was a good way of doing that because

“some of the people who like art have got power to make changes, for example, politicians, deciders, solicitors, people high up in any organisation - they are more likely, or a good percentage of them, can actually make some impact... it’s a good way of bringing in extra people”. (Langford interview)

Books, such as ‘*The Great Fen*’ (Gerrard 2006) and ‘*There and Back*’ (Brown & Warren 2011), about migration “were both done deliberately because I wanted to give a message”, Langford said, “but the other nice feature is, it gave a really good opportunity for artists that I wouldn’t have done a single book on, to actually bring forward and let people know a wider range of artists.”

On observing that the Government nature conservation agencies were science-based, Langford felt that art and science are not “mutually exclusive”. He continued:

“A lot of people who like science also quite appreciate art as well. They could have pieces on their office wall to brighten them up or to give them pleasure. They can also interpret and critique the art, so it is not as far separate as it sounds. So yes, in

some ways, I think they are quite complementary, and it could be something that somebody does, who is doing a very rigorous scientific job, who wants a bit of escapism...I know quite a few scientists who love drawing or playing musical instruments!" (Langford interview)

On considering whether he had been successful in his original aims, Langford replied that:

"I think the more I go along, its preaching to the converted, but at the same time, I have brought in extra people, but now I'm wondering if there is a better way of bringing in more people than the percentages I'm bringing in. In a way I'm nourishing those who have already got the appetite and I'm thinking of ways of bringing in new people who didn't realise they were hungry." (Langford interview)

Where Langford felt he had made a difference to the way people feel about nature conservation was

"in the ones where the title and the whole essence of the book has been giving a message, for example, the '*Great Fen*', '*There and Back*', '*Aig in Oir*', and to some extent '*Troubled Waters*'. I think I've also made those who were a little committed have perhaps become a bit more committed or influenced those who've gone slightly out of their comfort level (for example, people who) always bought the bird books, but have bought one on, for example, '*Reptile to Reef*'."

Langford said:

"I've certainly had a lot of feedback from people who may not have been interested in a certain element and said 'I didn't realise', or 'I've never thought of...such as...I didn't realise we've got so many species of fish', or just the realisation that there are actually fish in our rivers, silly things like that, or 'I didn't realise that's the way we managed things, and what I'm seeing is a managed environment' in the grassland one" (referencing Jefferson 2012).

Furthermore, Langford was convinced that greater knowledge and awareness can lead to greater concern and care for the environment:

“Yes I think I would be banging my head against a brick wall if I didn’t think there was an element of that. I also hope that conservation books get people to think...instead of accepting this is the way it is, sometimes things need to be challenged”. (Langford interview)

Regarding better promotion of nature conservation through nature art, Langford ‘strongly agreed’ with the following statements: there is a need for greater public awareness; more wildlife art is needed in public places; there should be an annual art festival; artists should feature on ‘*Spring*’ and ‘*Autumn Watch*’ - as Darren Woodhead had, and he recalled Chris Rose had appeared on ‘*Countryfile*’; there should be a wildlife equivalent of ‘*Watercolour Challenge*’; a public wildlife art competition and more hands-on activities for children and adults; more art in or near nature reserves; art should depict endangered or rare habitats and species; that powerful and shocking imagery should be used but also recognised that negative imagery can be depressing and off-putting. On negative imagery, he felt that, even though those images do not sell, graphic posters were very effective: “I think there is scope for powerful images that we don’t feel comfortable with”, recalling the poster of a woman pulling a fur coat with blood coming from the fur. He felt that only using positive imagery would be a mistake in that it encourages the philosophy that: “if you make a mess you can go and sort it out – and I don’t think that’s true”. He believed that initially you “fight the losses” but “there is a place for positive management after”.

6.4 Observations by Charron Pugsley-Hill, Artist and Nature Conservationist

I interviewed Charron Pugsley-Hill, contemporary artist and former Conservation Officer with EN, in October 2015, for her particular perspective on art and nature conservation. She too had not been interviewed on this subject before.

Pugsley-Hill is interested in depicting the “essence” of her subject “in the moment”, and conveying a sense of happiness. Pugsley-Hill’s work is

“strongly inspired” by her “direct experiences with nature and the outdoor world – pieces, such as flowers, wild meadows and landscapes” (<http://www.charronpugsleyhill.com/about-me>).

An example of Pugsley-Hill's work is shown in Fig.6.5, and '*Barnack Hills and Holes*' is shown in Chapter 5, Fig.5.35.



Fig.6.5 “Heal the World” © Charron Pugsley-Hill, Author’s photograph

Pugsley-Hill joined EN as an Urban Officer which was “quite different to mainstream conservation, and I think we could be a bit more experimental in what we did”. A number of projects with Peterborough City Council involved art, particularly performance art. She considered that:

“It was really interesting in how they (the projects) brought in different audiences that were happy with art, but weren’t happy with conservation, and then they went on to do more conservation……They were participating in an art project on a conservation site. They were happy with the art, and it was about hand-holding and bringing that confidence with them from the art into conservation”.

Pugsley-Hill continued:

“...we were using a lot of different forms of art – not just images – we were quite experimental in what we were doing. At that time for urban conservation, it was quite acceptable to take those risks. But I think a lot of the more traditional conservationists thought I was crazy!”

After several years working in the more traditional role of a Conservation Officer in Cambridgeshire, Pugsley-Hill moved into EN's new 'People and Nature Unit', a team that she believed was brought about after a conversation by her with Andy Clements, then EN Director around 2001/2002 about the need for “a unit to look at how people connect with conservation, because that's how we are going to change people's views and engage with a different audience”. She said there was

“a lot research....on Environmental Capital, and Health & Well-being, and how being out in the countryside makes you feel better...evidence that hospital stays are reduced if you've got a nice view... and research about art – if you passionately connect with a painting you'll get all those endorphins going: it is very much a good thing for the body if you get a piece of art that makes you say 'Wow! That's amazing - I love it'”. (Pugsley-Hill interview)

The Unit tried to put over:

“All sorts of messages; protecting local places – 'look around you' – there are lots of beautiful places even in the city but they don't exist in isolation, and you have to look after them, and protect them, helping the wildlife, about feeding them and gardening. Conservation was always seen as very serious, very science-y, very manly stuff. But we were trying to get a different side of people to think and feel more about what they experience in their everyday lives, I suppose. And I think people on an emotional level are more likely to get engaged and connected and be involved with something if they feel something for it, rather than just being cold and dispassionate”. (Pugsley-Hill interview)

An example of the Unit's effectiveness was:

"We commissioned a series of murals, and by involving people in making those mosaics, we talked about environmental messages, and I know for a fact that some of the people doing those mosaics went on to get involved in environmental volunteering." (Pugsley-Hill interview)

Pugsley-Hill left NE in 2009, and found that she enjoyed painting. Her love of "wildlife and the outdoors" and a "genuine love for people" have brought her to being a contemporary artist engaging on a number of community projects. She recognised that people react differently to art and "you will only draw in a certain group of people by whatever you do". However, "if you want to get people to feel something about a particular place it's about getting them to do stuff (artwork)", and she gave an example of her work at Lyveden New Bield (National Trust property). As Artist-in-Residence at both FC Fineshade Woods in 2014 with woodland habitats and a release site for Red Kite, and in 2017 at Ferry Meadows Country Park for Nene Park Trust, she has developed visitor engagement techniques using nature-based activities, installations and workshops. The wetlands, meadows and woodlands are inspiration, and at Ferry Meadows she intended to "creatively capture the beauty of the Park" (<http://www.charronpugsleyhill.com/artist-in-residence-nene-park-trust-peterborough/>).

For art to make a difference, Pugsley-Hill felt that "if you make people feel uncomfortable, that's when you start churning their emotions, and get them thinking about things" and a role for conservation organisations is to sponsor artists to produce "challenging art – the brutal stuff" and "enable artists to really express themselves". She continued "if you can tell a story around your artwork you will have people listening to you more" and citing David Attenborough's

"Television documentaries (which) could arguably be the most influential piece of work that has persuaded people that conservation is a good thing. You know that image of him sitting in the rainforest with gorillas – everybody has seen that image –

and to think that forest is gradually reducing and the numbers of gorillas are going down, you can't help but be passionate about it, can you?" (Pugsley-Hill interview)

However, for Pugsley-Hill, positive imagery seems most effective:

"I think for me a lot of the messages that come out of the flower paintings I do are when people look at them and say 'wow, isn't nature amazing!' And I think we often forget that the simplest things we look at can be beautiful and amazing, and make us feel incredible. If I'm there I go and talk about how we need to protect this.... But overwhelmingly I want people to feel a positive, happy emotion when they look at the paintings I do, and I want to tweak something in them so that they just go 'wow! – that's just so beautiful!' And I don't think we do enough of that. We get bogged down in the day-to-day stuff, and we forget 'we live in an amazing place'. And this planet is incredible." (Pugsley-Hill interview)

Pugsley-Hill felt that "the statutory agencies haven't used art in a very clever way, and there is a huge area of opportunity". The reason why the opportunity has not been taken is because of lack of confidence by the scientific staff: "they're used to measuring and counting, and not using art and the emotional side".

Having worked in both roles, Pugsley-Hill felt that:

"As an artist you are treated incredibly differently to a wildlife conservationist. As a wildlife conservationist people get quite defensive – they say 'oh I do my green stuff... I do this, I do that', but as an artist, people will come into your studio and give you their most intimate life details within minutes of you meeting them...and an artist is someone you can talk to, who goes all over the place, is someone who is different".

She continued:

"I have seen a huge difference in the way people treat me – I'm not a different person, but I'm doing something different... I think people sometimes feel quite defensive about conservation, because negative messages make people feel quite

guilty. You know all the environment stuff makes people think they should do more, 'you should do this', 'you should do that'. I think people have got over-loaded with it all, and they don't feel good about themselves. But as an artist, you don't have all those negative messages...so my messages are all about positivity – about my passion, my emotions". (Pugsley-Hill interview)

6.5 The BTO '*Flightlines*' project: an example of artists and conservationists working together

During the 2014 SWLA exhibition at the Mall Galleries, London, one of the galleries exhibited artwork and information about the BTO's migration studies and, in particular, about their '*Flight Lines*' project. Made possible through a legacy by the executors of the estate of Penny Hollow, former member of the BTO, the project described how four SWLA artists, Robert Greenhalf, Bruce Pearson, Greg Poole and Esther Tyson, had been painting in Senegal in January 2014, particularly in the tidal wetlands of the north-west important for migrant waders, and in the Parc National des Oiseaux du Djoudi where significant populations of UK summer migrants over-winter. Initial sketches and studies by these four artists were displayed. It was explained that during 2015, SWLA member artists would depict and document the summer migrants in Britain. It was intended that the project would bring together scientific studies and monitoring and the artwork, as the BTO explained:

"While science can provide the all-important evidence upon which conservation decisions and policy can be made, it is our emotional attachment to wildlife that will ultimately drive forward conservation action. Art and science are key players in delivering effective action for migrants and other wildlife". (BTO '*Flight Lines*' project exhibition, Mall Galleries 2014)

Andy Clements, Chief Executive of the BTO, described to me in interview in January 2015, how the project came about. The BTO had approached the SWLA and Harriet Mead (President of the SWLA) and then emailed a range of artists to explain the project. From those artists who expressed an interest, four were selected based on those with some experience of working

abroad and under such conditions, and who would and could produce work in two weeks. Clements was very pleased to include Bruce Pearson and also said:

“We’ve got a phenomenal body of work from them, and the mixed approaches were a kind of tertiary thing – and it worked well. So Robert Greenhalf quite traditional, Esther very much at the abstract end, and Greg Poole really interested in people and the environment as well as the birds - vibrant colours.” (Clements interview)

Clements explained the aims of the project without answering the question how they would measure success. He said: “...everybody who knows the BTO knows that our science is excellent – we have a reputation for high quality science, but hardly anybody knows about us.” He continued:

“But I don’t believe we will survive or do the best job for our wildlife, our birds, (unless we can) raise the profile of the organisation and a broader constituency of people understand what we’re about, but much more importantly, what birds are about. So over the last five years, we have changed the nature of the organisation substantially so it looks and feels accessible to a whole range of different people, and we’re still on a journey to do that. The migration project fits very nicely into that plan because we’ve got some stories around migration.” (Clements interview)

Clements went on:

“I hate the phrase – because it is used so often – that I picture’s worth a thousand words, but it is very important to be able to illustrate science in a much more accessible way. And what I would like the BTO to do is to talk about science so that many more people can understand what we are talking about and what’s important. And this ‘*Artists to Africa*’ project is really going to help us do that.”

Not only that, Clements said:

“I have a strong belief that art is a helpful resource in raising funds and in making a direct difference to nature conservation.... David Shepherd pictures, for example, have raised money for specific projects, and our own ‘*Artist to Africa*’ thing will

eventually end up with products that will ensure that kind of migration work can continue through sponsorship and people wanting to be part of it.”

During interview, Mike Toms, BTO’s Associate Director: Science & Communications, in January 2015, provided further detail on the ‘*Flight Lines*’ project. He expanded on the old image of the BTO: “being kind of stuffy, very academic, lots of beards” and currently “making the science more accessible, making it reflect the work we do and more applicable to people”. He explained that, although the BTO is not a campaigning organisation, it still “needs to communicate the science effectively”, whilst “competing with other people who have more emotive media campaigns”. He continued:

“We have a number of different audiences... (members, customers, Country Agencies, academics) ...and that is one of the tricky things we need to manage internally when we are developing the organisation”. (Toms interview)

Toms said: “the ultimate goal of that project (‘Artists for Africa’) is a book that will come out in 2016, and alongside that will be exhibitions like at the Mall Galleries last year”. The book has three aims:

“First of all, fundraising...reaching a new audience ... the visitors to the art gallery are people that we might not be able to communicate about migration in any other way, so getting them to think about migration and support us in that work; second...is getting the wider public engaged in the research itself... what work is being done on migrants, what are the issues affecting migrants...and thirdly, we have ...the ringers and nest recorders of migrant birds, andwe are looking to get artists alongside them to actually put a broader context on the work...and be engaging for people”.(Toms interview)

Toms continued to explain the purpose of the book:

“The key of the book is about bringing together things that are exciting – visually exciting like the artwork, bringing the research in - photographs of the birds at locations – and also the narrative that enables us to take the science (which can be very dry when we publish in academic journals) and put that into something that

people will read as a narrative and engage with, and that should give us more support across the whole breadth of the work we do”.

The book will be “aimed at adults”, with “a careful balance between pictures and narrative...some maps, and maybe graphs...presented in a way that is appealing and accessible”. He continued: “It’s got to look really fantastic, it’s got to be on really good paper, really strong images of work, but those images are part of the package.”

The book was published (Toms 2017) with illustrations that are a mixture of photographs and artwork, without graphs or diagrams. Nineteen artists have contributed work to the book, 18 of whom are SWLA members. Nine contributors, including some of the artists, have provided a ‘personal narrative’ describing their experiences. The book describes the autumn departures to the wintering grounds and the return to breed, inter-mingling the stories of the birds, peoples and local culture. Scientific principles and evidence, problems and issues faced by the migrating birds, and cultural issues, such as land-use changes are all covered in detail. Toms (2017:7) wrote: “Together, science and art make a stronger case for the conservation of migrant birds, engaging new voices in support of conservation action.”

During the interview in 2015, Toms acknowledged that it would be difficult to measure success: measurements could include the number of people re-tweeting, the number of Facebook visits, the number of books sold, and the number of people coming through the doors. However, what they

“Really want is the longer-term legacy. So we want people to engage with the science over the longer term, we want more people hearing about the BTO, understanding the science and retaining that interest, and being accessible to other stories we want to talk about, and those things are harder to measure...you have to take a certain amount of faith, if you are doing the right communications, broadening your audiences and bring them the right messages that will have unmeasurable longer term benefits”. (Toms interview)

Time will tell what the impact of the book will be.

Two of the artists involved in the project responded to the artists' survey. Robert Greenhalf described the project and said: "The artworks will broaden the appeal of what otherwise could have been a rather dry scientific paper". Bruce Pearson also referred to this project, which the BTO describe as:

"An opportunity to learn the context behind what they were seeing and sketching. Why did the landscape look the way it did? What were the birds doing and how were changes in these African habitats influencing their populations?" (BTO 2015)

The project needed to address community engagement and education. The importance of these aspects was highlighted by several artists in the artists' survey. For example, Robert Greenhalf described how an ANF project changed the perception of local people to their special wildlife places resulting in positive conservation action. He wrote:

"Art can help people to see places and wildlife familiar to them in a new light, through the eyes of the artists and could bring about a renewed appreciation of what they have and what they could stand to lose. The ANF project to the Biebrza Marshes in the remote N.E. corner of Poland was a good example..." (Greenhalf in artists' survey)

Pugsley-Hill felt involving people in art provides the essential emotional link. Langford also remarked:

"A lot of the Artists for Nature Foundation projects have an element – sometimes quite a small one – of teaching local artists and having open days and an exhibition at the end of it. I think there needs to be more than just a book at the end".

6.6 Summary

My original research in Chapter 6 builds on the work of particularly Hammond (1986) and (1998), as well as Allen, Watkins & Matless (2016), in sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3. In this chapter, the origins, aims and work of two wildlife art societies are discussed: the Artists for Nature Foundation and the Society of Wildlife Artists. Both are supported by artists specialising in depicting wildlife, and both can provide examples of projects where the wildlife art has supported nature conservation of habitats and species through raising awareness, exciting interest and expressing concern for fragile and vulnerable environments, and rare and declining species.

A questionnaire was sent to 65 member artists of the SWLA and nearly a third of these replied. The majority of responses felt that wildlife art can convey a conservation message, and four artists were named as examples where this aim has been achieved: Carry Ackroyd, Bruce Pearson, Peter Scott and David Shepherd. Akroyd and Pearson offered examples of their work which they felt were successful in conveying conservation messages. Other specific examples were given, such as: raising awareness of threatened habitats, of human's inter-dependence with the rest of life on earth, and of land management practices. A specific example of inspiring interest and then concern for species and habitats was given by Thelma Sykes. She described how her art group, through increasing awareness of wildlife and of the issues affecting them, developed to become a significant player in the establishment and protection of the Dee estuary nature reserve.

Darren Rees provided examples of artwork depicting complex conservation messages, together with background explanation about: climate change and its impact on Polar Bears in the Arctic; restoration management in Yellowstone National Park; the extermination of the Carolina Parakeet as his contribution of the '*Ghosts of Gone Birds*' project; and the clear-felling of the Amazonian rainforest.

The majority of the artists who replied felt that wildlife/wild places art could convey a nature conservation message but many could offer no direct

evidence, apart from evidence of awareness-raising through art workshops, seeing art in galleries and through the wider work of the ANF projects. Several suggested that art can help people see wildlife in a new light, which is especially useful if the viewer has a personal connection with a painting or when the value of wildlife and wild places to local people becomes apparent through, for example, ecotourism.

The selling of art for conservation purposes was cited as evidence that people can change their view in favour of wildlife and wildlife habitats and the David Shepherd Wildlife Fund was offered as an example where artwork has been sold to raise funds for wildlife charities. Collectively, the artists had provided artwork for a wide variety of nature conservation charities including the RSPB, the BTO, Wildlife Trusts and WWT. A number of the artists felt that nature conservation organisations could make greater use of art to promote their messages, especially if the artist and organisation had aligned views. It was also felt that art can make people *look*, can emphasise the beauty and fragility of wildlife, and help engage people with wildlife. In addition, Artists in Residence and an educational element in art and conservation projects were also mentioned. It was also felt that encouraging people to be creative and to try a variety of approaches were most useful.

Ian Langford, publisher of wildlife art books, described the main types of wildlife artist as: simple copyists, classic painters, abstract artists, photo-realists, print-makers and sculptors. He had published books on all these genres, and felt that these art books were an attempt to engage more people in nature conservation, and he offered some evidence to demonstrate this. He also felt that graphic imagery can be effective and make a lasting impression. This opinion, echoed one of the views expressed by several of the artists that graphic imagery, such as depicting habitat destruction or dead animals, although making an impression does not sell, and galleries prefer not to display such pictures.

Charron Pugsley-Hill, artist and conservationist, described how in discussion with the public, they can become defensive when talking about conservation

and 'green' issues, but art can engage them with nature in a different, emotional and more positive way. Through her art, she wanted to convey the beauty of wildlife, and felt that the statutory agencies had not used art effectively, and that most staff members were trained to measure and record rather than use art and emotion to convey conservation messages.

The BTO's '*Flight Lines*' project is an attempt to bring together artists and conservationists, using art, data and evidence, and engaging both local people and wider audiences. Science and art are combined in a narrative about a current nature conservation project that is hoped will be accessible, informative and inspiring.

The consistent theme expressed during these conversations with artists was the importance of engaging the viewer emotionally through their own art or viewing art in order to raise their interest, concern and desire to help conservation work

Chapter 7 Surveys of Public Views of Wildlife Art

This chapter examines how nature conservation imagery is viewed, and considers its potential to assist in nature conservation aims. Two groups of people were identified and invited to respond to a survey about art and nature conservation. The two groups were: firstly, members of the public visiting the Mall Galleries during a wildlife art exhibition, and secondly, BTO members in receipt of the BTO's on-line news. The surveys asked for their opinion on: nature imagery in general; on images with an intended nature conservation message; and how nature conservation might be promoted more effectively. None of these images have been examined before with respect to how effective or otherwise they were in conveying their intended conservation message, nor have the views of these two groups on nature imagery been sought before. The methodology for both surveys is contained in Chapter 3. The 2014 survey of visitors to the Mall Galleries is contained in Appendix 2 and the 2015 e-survey of BTO members in Appendix 3.

7.1 The SWLA Mall Galleries Visitor Survey

In October 2014, visitors to the SWLA annual exhibition at the Mall Galleries, London, were surveyed about wildlife and nature conservation imagery. The visitors were offered a paper questionnaire to be completed on the day or returned using a provided SAE. A total of 192 responses were completed and returned from the 288 questionnaires handed out (a 67% return). Of these, 128 questionnaires were handed back on the day of issue, with 64 returned by post with the last one being received on Monday 21st December 2014. Five people accepted the questionnaire and returned it blank.

Using an Excel spreadsheet, I recorded all the results and comments from all 192 respondents for all the questions and part questions, using one sheet for each (part) question with a separate column for each new response. Thus the first 'sheet' of my results spreadsheet had 139 columns for each of the different artists named. Working through each respondent's questionnaire I scored '1' in the appropriate column to enable 'summing' of the scores. For

some questions, I used word and phrase answers in the column headings, and added new columns as a new meaning or phrase or word appeared, again scoring '1' if a respondent mentioned this word or phrase. Where several answers were given, for example, in naming a favourite artist, a score of '1' was given for each name.

7.1.1 Favourite Nature Artists

The first two open questions were intended to engage the respondent on a topic about which they would be expected to have a view, bearing in mind that the survey was being undertaken in a gallery exhibiting wildlife art. The survey introduction also explained the purpose of the questionnaire.

The two parts of the first question asked about favourite nature artists. The responses revealed that 136 replies named one or more artists, and 139 different artists were named. Seven other replies said there were too many to pick one and/or there were many artists they liked. Forty-nine gave no name, or did not have a favourite artist. Examples of the artwork of the top seven artists chosen in this survey are shown in Table 7.1. These images were used in the later web-based survey of BTO members.

Table 7.1 Visitors' favourite artists scoring 3 or more responses:

No. of mentions	Artist name
25	Harriet Mead
21	David Shepherd
17	Robert Gillmor
13	Carry Akroyd
11	Bruce Pearson
10	Robert Greenhalf
9	Darren Woodhead
8	Andrew Haslen; Chris Rose; Peter Scott; Charles Tunnicliffe
7	Brin Edwards
6	Frederico Gemma; Matt Underwood; Michael Warren
5	Eric Ennion; Peter Partington
4	Adam Binder; John Constable
3	John Busby; Kim Atkinson; Julia Manning; Antonia Philips; Greg Poole; John Threlfall; JMW Turner; Richard Tratt; Tim Wooten

Harriet Mead, current President of the SWLA, from 2004 on SWLA's Council, and a member of the ANF, is a sculptor, whose work utilises complete or parts of found-metal items to suggest the shape and features of the creatures depicted. In the case of the Green Woodpecker parts of scissors and shears are used to form the sharp beak and shape of the closed wings (see Fig.7.1)



Fig.7.1 *"Scissor Green Woodpecker"* © Harriet Mead (www.harrietmead.co.uk/)

David Shepherd (1923-2017), artist and conservationist, was a noted artist of African birds and animals, especially elephants, as well as steam engines, landscapes and aeroplanes. His work, mostly in oil, is meticulously detailed. He was so motivated by poaching and other problems for wildlife in Africa that he established his own conservation foundation. (See section 2.1). The example of David Shepherd's work is shown in Fig.7.2.



Fig.7.2 “Elephants and Egrets” © David Shepherd (www.davidshepherd.org)

Robert Gillmor’s work (see chapter 6) produces detailed illustrations, prints, lino cuts and designs which appear on cards, books and book covers, postage stamps, posters and so on. He was co-founder and President of the SWLA, and well-known for encouraging and training other artists. The example of his work is shown in Fig.7.3.



Fig 7.3 “Bull o’ the Bog” © Robert Gillmor (www.swla.co.uk)

Carry Akroyd has lived most of her life in rural Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire, painting and recording the struggle between wildlife and agriculture often producing prints that capture both the beauty of the countryside and the context in which it exists. She was elected as a member of the SWLA in 2002 (Gerrard 2006). See Akroyd (2009) and (2011). The example of her work is shown in Fig.7.4.

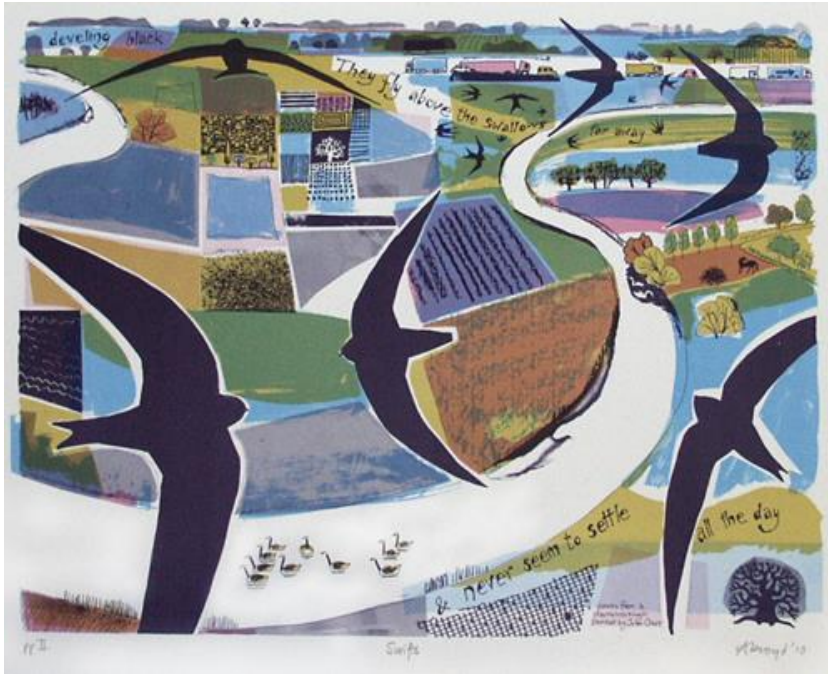


Fig.7.4 "Swifts" © Carry Akroyd (www.carryakroyd.co.uk)

Robert Greenhalf, a painter and printmaker, depicts mainly wildlife and landscapes. A member of the SWLA since the 1980s, he has contributed to the SWLA New Forest project, and the ANF projects in Poland, Extremadura, the Fens and the Netherlands (Burton 2005). The example of his work is shown in Fig.7.5.



Fig.7.5 *"Spoonbills and Avocets"* © Robert Greenhalf (www.robertgreenhalf.co.uk)

An artist of over 30 years, Bruce Pearson is widely travelled having sketched and painted wildlife in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and both the Arctic and Antarctic (Pearson 2012). He has been involved in a number of SWLA projects, and has received a number of commissions from the RSPB, and others (Gerrard 2006:160). The example of his work is shown in Fig.7.6.



Fig.7.6 *"Wanderer and Mollymauks off South Georgia"* © Bruce Pearson (www.brucepearson.net)

Darren Woodhead, a keen naturalist from an early age, was elected to the SWLA in 2001, having received the SWLA travel bursary in 1994 and 1996, plus the ANF Award in 2000. His work has featured in books (see Woodhead 2005) and shows (Gerard 2006), and he appeared on BBC 'Countryfile'. The example of his work is shown in Fig.7.7.

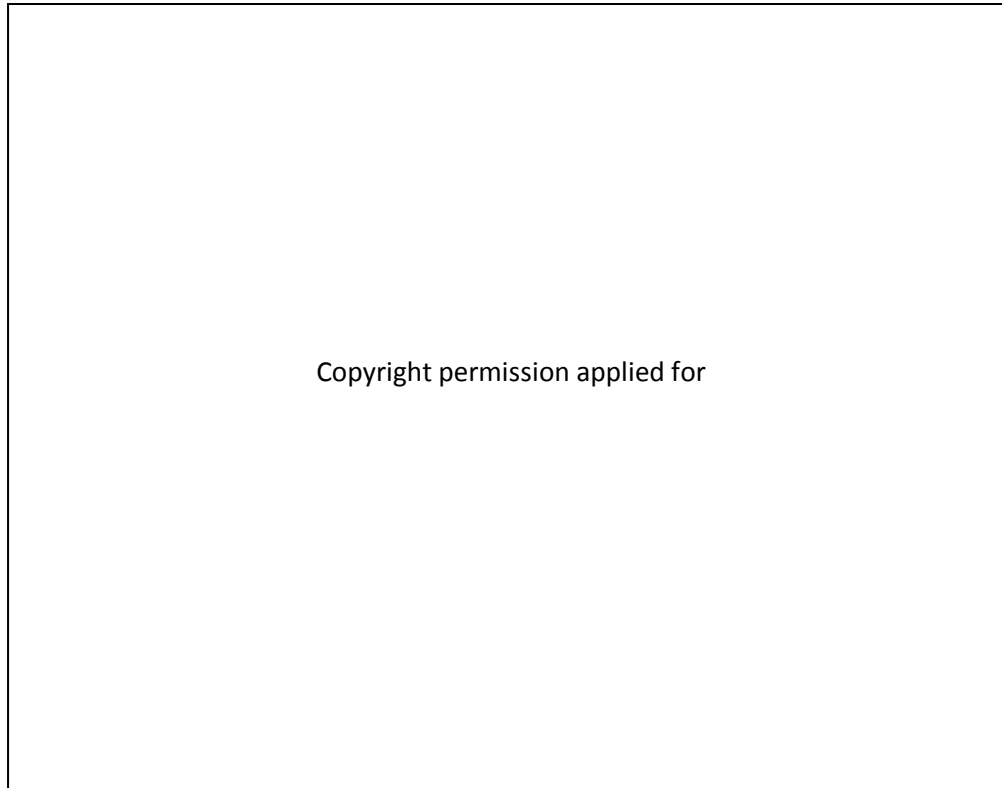


Fig.7.7 "Autumn Pied Flycatcher" © Darren Woodhead
(www.darrenwoodheadartist.co.uk) (Copyright permission applied for)

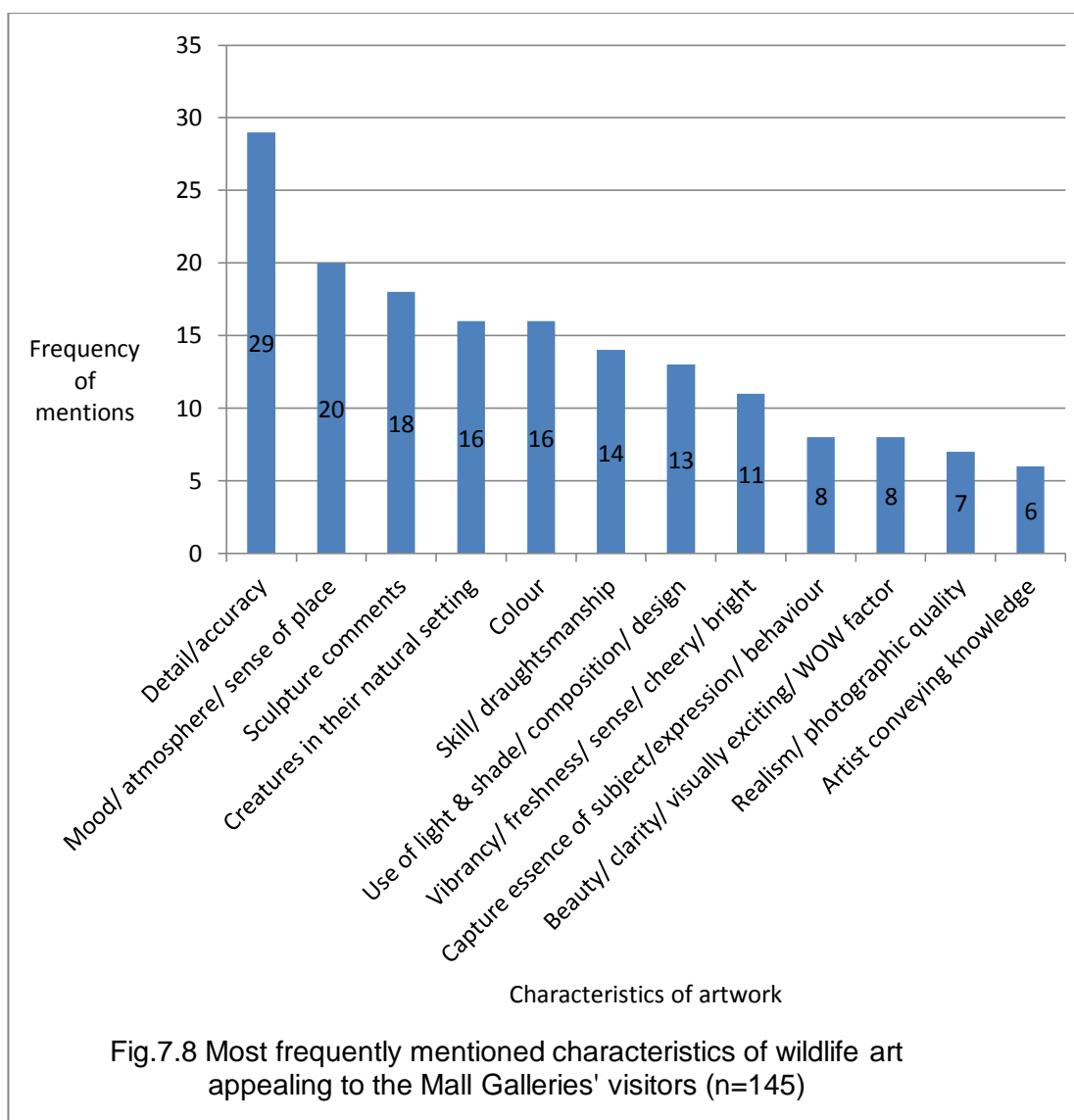
In the 2014 exhibition, all but Shepherd exhibited items. Mead exhibited 8 found-metal steel sculptures; Gillmor 3 linocut prints; Akroyd 8 prints, Greenhalf 6 woodcut prints and 2 original oils; Pearson 4 watercolours, 2 watercolour and mixed media, and 2 prints; and Woodhead 5 watercolours (SWLA 2014). These numbers of exhibits were consistent with all the exhibiting artists at the exhibition.

Mead's work was much admired, but her name may also have been in the fore-front of visitors' minds as a number of her sculptures were situated very close to the café seating area where many of the questionnaires were

completed. If Mead, a sculptor, is excluded from this list – all the others being painters – then Shepherd clearly tops the list, despite not exhibiting and out of the public eye for several years. Although six of the top seven artists exhibited in this exhibition, respondents chose a wide range of artists, living and dead, long-established and contemporary.

Artists who had been painting for many years, and well-known for depicting wildlife in a realistic style, such as Shepherd, Scott, Tunnicliffe and Tratt (see Chapter 2) were as popular as those with a more contemporary style, such as Akroyd, Underwood, Busby and Poole. The landscape artists Constable and Turner received a number of mentions: their artwork is ubiquitous; appears in national art galleries and are the subjects of national appeals for funds in order to be purchased for the nation; feature in books, exhibitions and in television programmes; and depict scenes, such as Salisbury Cathedral and a countryside that has largely disappeared. Their popularity appears to remain.

The second part of the first question was about what made the work of their favourite artists so appealing. The most frequently mentioned characteristics scoring 6 or more responses of are shown in Fig.7.8. Detail and accuracy appealed most, mentioned by nearly 30% of respondents. However, ‘accuracy’ was not equated to ‘photographic quality’: this characteristic scored much lower at only 7%. ‘Photographic quality’ in a picture may need an ‘artistic’ element: perhaps conveying mood, atmosphere, a sense of place, or creatures in their natural setting.



7.1.2 Favourite Wildlife or Nature Image

The next questions attempted to identify what the exhibition visitors found most appealing in terms of subject matter and methods of presentation. In similar phraseology to the first questions, visitors were asked about their favourite wildlife image, and why. The results are shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2 Number of responses to question about a favourite wildlife image

Number of responses	Detail	% (of 192 returned questionnaires)
90	Favourite image named or described	47%
19	No particular favourite or had many	10%
81	Blank	42%

Although nearly 50% of the respondents named or described a favourite wildlife image, over 40% did not, nor was any explanation given. The most frequently mentioned favourite images (scoring 4 or more responses) are shown in Table 7.3. Birds, in their natural habitat or active in some way were the most popular. Landscapes and general habitats together totalled 30, and as a number of bird favourites mentioned habitats, these would seem a particularly popular choice of favourite image. Images that engendered feelings of nostalgia and of places visited were also popular, but no details were given. The other images of habitats and wildlife may also have evoked memories or may reflect a desire to see these creatures. The results would indicate that bird pictures and landscapes (and/or natural habitats) were liked the most.

Table 7.3 Visitors' most popular nature images

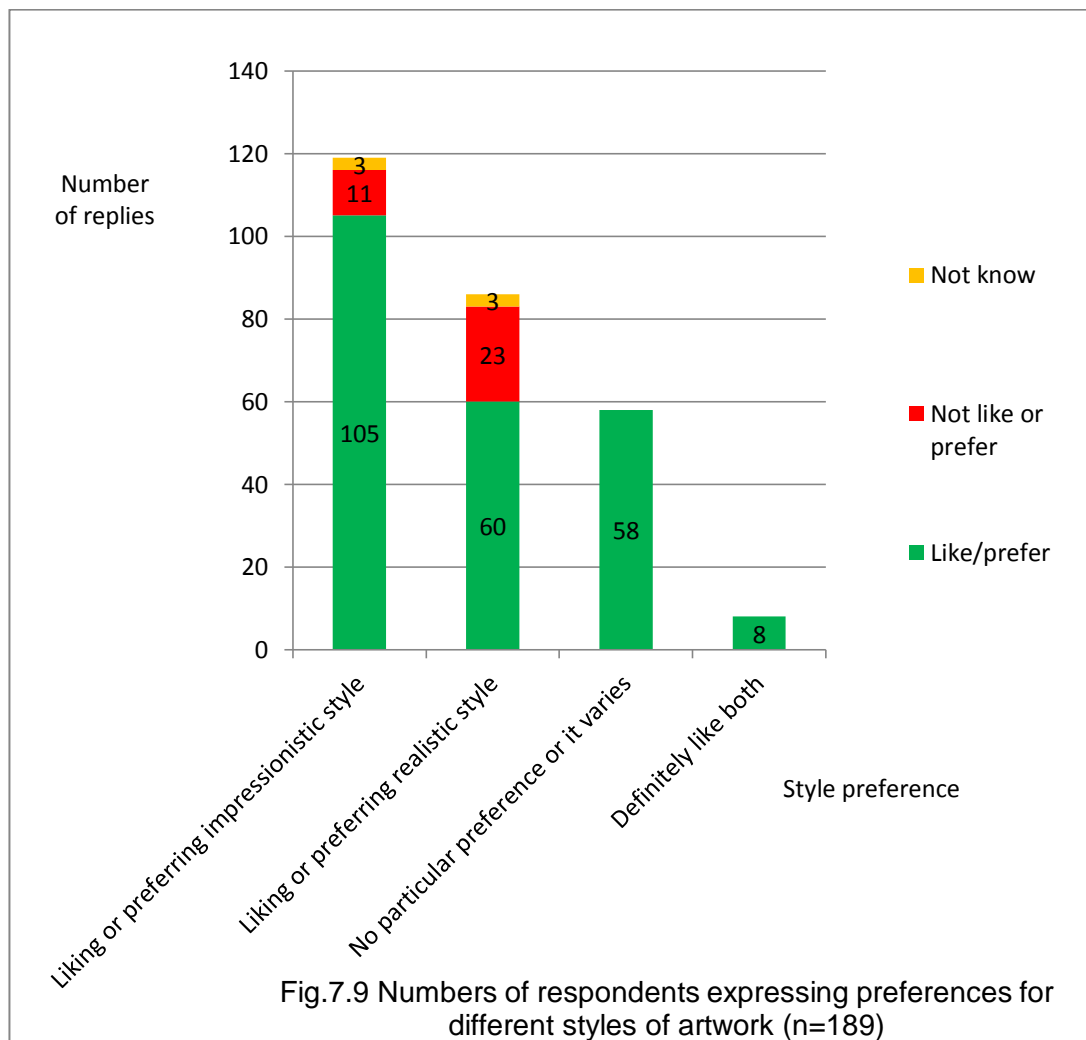
Popular nature or wildlife images	No. of mentions
Birds in their habitats	40
Memory of places visited/nostalgia	9
Woodland habitats	8
African wildlife/big exotic animals	8
Farmland wildlife particularly hares	8
Named places, such as, Dartmoor, North Norfolk	6
Marine/Arctic/Antarctic scenes	4
Other habitats, such as, meadows, gardens	4

7.1.3 Preferred Style of Nature Art

The third and fourth questions in the Mall Galleries' visitors' survey attempted to identify a preferred style for wildlife art, using the contrasting illustrations of the same subject to explain, or visualise, what I meant by the terms 'impressionistic' or 'realistic'. The species used was Pasque Flower which appeared on the cover of two editions of '*British Wildlife*': a watercolour by Jane Leycester Paige; and a photograph by Bob Gibbons.

Mall Gallery visitors were asked whether they preferred visual representations of wildlife and wild habitat in an art gallery or on a wall in

their home to be impressionistic or realistic or whether they had no particular preference/their preference varied. Just under half of the visitors liked or preferred the impressionistic style, just over a quarter preferred a realistic style, with a similar number saying they had no preference or the preference varied with subject or situation (see Fig.7.9).



The fourth question asked if the preference was different when the nature art appeared in identification books or guides. Just over two fifths said their preferred different styles, just over one quarter said their preferences were the same, and just under a third gave unclear answers, did not know or left the question blank (see Fig.7.10).

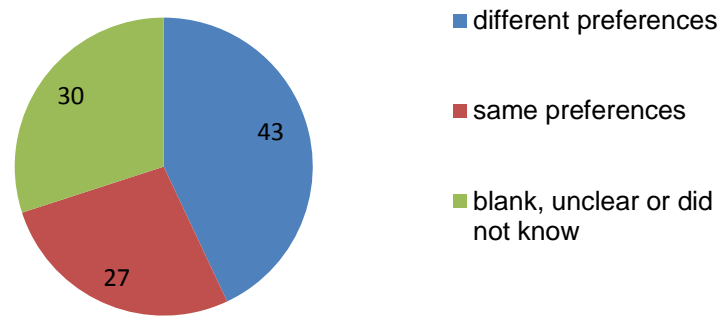


Fig.7.10 Preferences for artistic work for identification guides (expressed as a percentage of all respondents (n=192))

This was a complicated question to answer and to analyse, as it referred back to preferences in the previous question, and Q3 used descriptions, such as impressionistic and photographic. Whilst some answers to Q4 referred to drawn or painted illustrations and comparing these to photographs, one result was clear: 60% of the replies mentioned the need for realism, accuracy, clarity or detail in such guides and books. It would seem that illustrations and photographs can both be useful in guides, as long as they provide clear pointers for accurate identification (see Table 8.4).

Table 7.4 Visitors' preferred artwork for identification books

No of respondents' mentions	Opinions expressed about the style of artwork in identification books and guides
115	replies mentioning the need for realism, accuracy, clarity or detail
36	replies said there is a place for both paintings/ drawings as well as photographs
31	said that good drawings or paintings can be clearer, or that photographs do not always pick out the defining features, or they definitely did not like photographs in these guides
18	felt that photographs are better

7.1.4 Nature Reserve Information

Preferences for conveying information by visual means on nature reserves, where boards, leaflets and trail guides offer information about wildlife and wild habitats to be seen, their management and their conservation were asked about in the fifth question. For the viewer – casual passer-by or intentional visitor – the signage and information may be a repeat visit or the

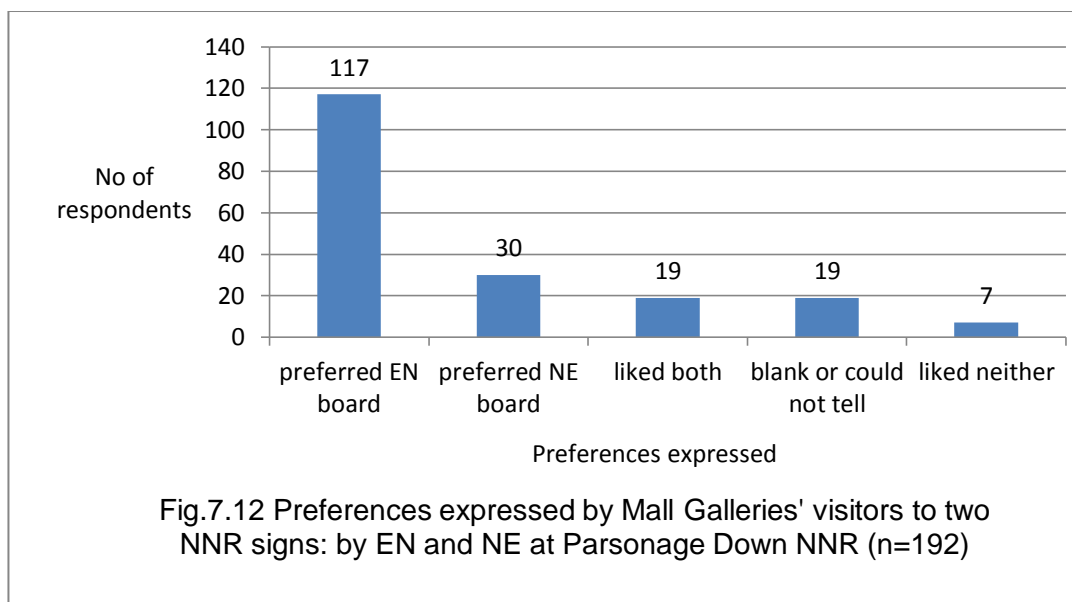
first time the viewer has come across the nature reserve. The boards and guides need to convey essential information about the reserve, reward the viewer the effort and time to stop and consider the information, and provide the viewer with what they want to know.

Photographs of two information boards from the same NNR (Parsonage Down in Wiltshire) were presented together to allow comparison. The EN one had coloured illustrations of some of the special features of the reserve, together with explanatory text, a website address, logos and a strapline “working today for nature tomorrow”. The other by NE was simpler, had a map, logos and the word ‘welcome’, but no illustrations and less text (see Fig.7.11).

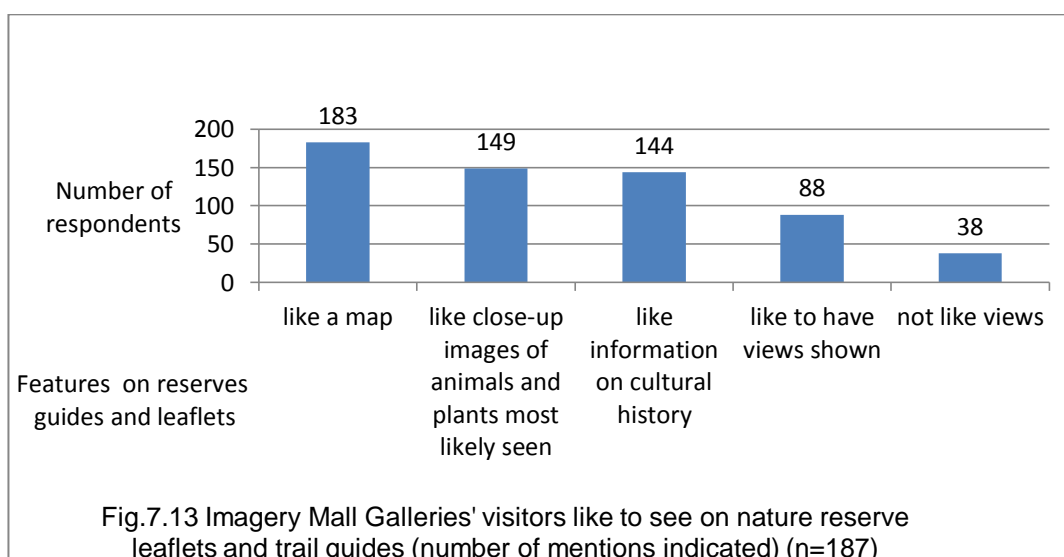


Fig.7.11 EN and NE NNR signs Parsonage Down, Wiltshire. Author's photographs 2008

The results indicated that over 60% of the visitors preferred the EN board which suggests it is more attractive, interesting and user-friendly, compared to the NE one (see Fig.7.12). However, 21 replies (nearly 11%) said that a map would improve the EN board, or that the map makes the NE board better. The EN board offers much information, whilst the NE board serves simply to identify the site and further information is needed to be fully informed about the reserve. At Barnack Hills & Holes NNR, Cambridgeshire (see Chapter 5), at least two boards are needed to inform the visitor about the reserve's wildlife and so on.



Preferences for images depicted on nature reserve leaflets and trail guides showed that a majority, 95%, of the respondents prefer to have a map on a reserve guide. Approximately three quarters of these respondents, 78%, like to have close-up images of plants or animals that the visitor is most likely to see, and to have some information on the cultural history of the area (75%). About the depiction of views nearly half (46%) were in favour and a fifth (20%) averse to this suggestion. It appeared from the comments that more information improved the visitor experience, although there was caution over the disappointment felt when the visitor did not see the plants and animals described. Some did not want the information – particularly views depicted – as they wished to discover these themselves (see Fig.7.13).



7.1.5 Nature Logos

Without lengthy explanations, logos can provide an instant visual message about an organisation and its work. The respondents were asked how effective the logos were in reflecting particular conservation organisations and their work. Despite some critical comments, the logos for the National Trust, the RSPB and the Wildlife Trust, and, to a lesser extent, the Marine Conservation Society were well recognised and their work understood. The common characteristic of these four logos was the use of a natural image, namely, oak leaves, avocet head, a dolphin and human diving together, and a badger's head. By contrast, respondents were critical of Natural England's logo, in that it does not employ a natural image.

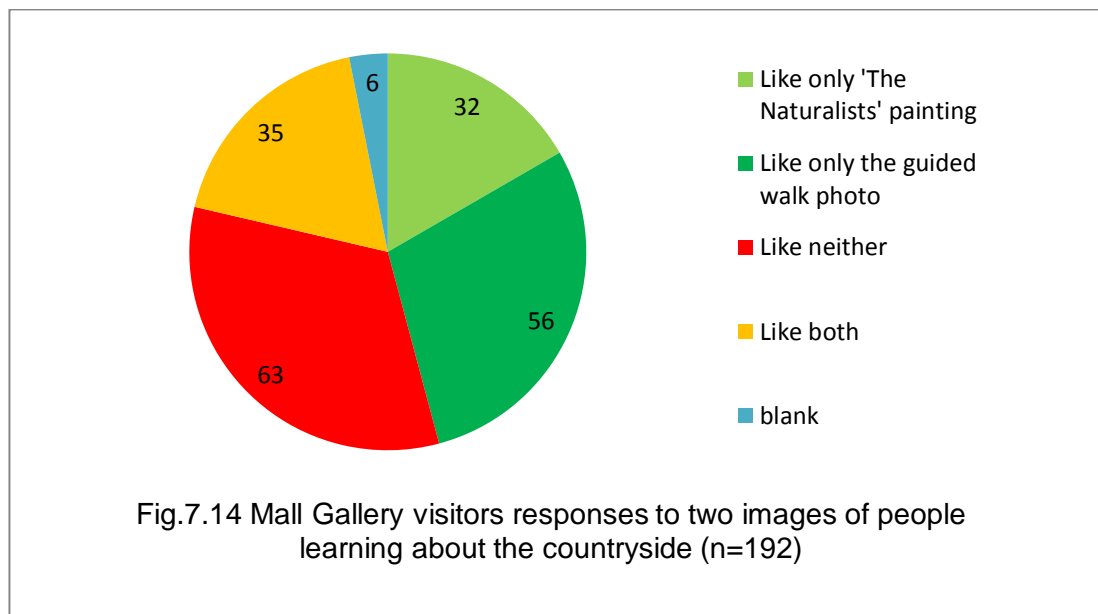
7.1.6 Conveying information

The next four questions (separate parts of the seventh question) were concerned with conveying information by visual means on three topics. These were: learning about nature; encouraging support for conservation projects; and understanding sustainability and our role in the future of wildlife and wild places. A fourth topic about loss and damage was not successful as the images used were out of context, difficult to understand and confusing.

In helping people to learn about nature, many nature conservation organisations wish to show the species and habitats for which they are working, and there is the hope that if people learn or know more, this will encourage their interest, concern and involvement. The first pair of images was intended to depict people learning about wildlife and natural habitats. Image 1 was a painting of four men in concentrated study on a grass heath in the Breckland, "*The Naturalists*" (see Chapter 4, Fig.4.17) and the second, a photograph of a mixed group of different ages on a guided walk on Martin Down NNR. This image was used to illustrate the section on 'Public Responses' in EN's '*State of nature: lowlands*' report (2004).

The results indicated a fairly even distribution of opinion, with slightly more people feeling that neither image encouraged others to learn about wildlife (63 people or 33% of total respondents), with preference for the guided walk

photograph a close second (56 people or 29% of all respondents) (see Fig.7.14).



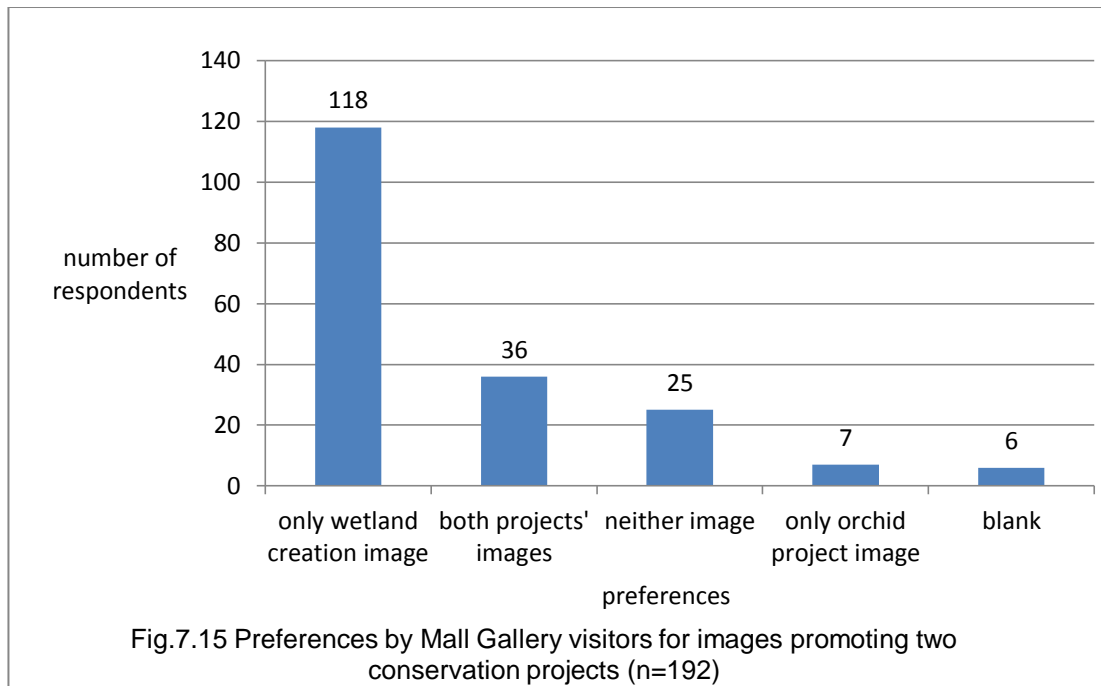
In hindsight, these two images were difficult to compare: they were different media (one a painting, one a photograph); the participants depicted were different (one group of older men, one of mixed gender and age); the habitats were different (one a grass heath, the other grass, scrub and trees); and different activities (studying or walking). Any or all of these factors could have affected the appeal of the images, and made the conclusions difficult to determine.

Comments and reasons given for the preferences included people observing that the participants in the first image were older men, that the image was dated and seen as exclusive. A number of respondents said they did not enjoy guided walks, nor the company of others when in the countryside as other people were likely to be noisy, although nearly a third did enjoy guided walks in the company of others.

From learning about wildlife, conservation organisations wish to encourage members to support conservation projects they undertake. Members' support can take many forms, and include donations, membership fees, response to appeals, legacies, for political 'clout' in terms of numbers of members and in responding to campaigns, and for volunteers to record, to assist paid staff in a range of activities, and to undertake as volunteers tasks

that form part of the core work of the organisation. Conservation projects are examples of their work that are often explained and promoted by written material. This material can be in the form of members' magazines, newspaper articles and other promotional literature with accompanying illustrations, all intended to invite and encourage support.

Two contrasting images of conservation projects were selected for the third question in the set. Some background to both pieces was provided. The first, an artistic representation of a conservation project for the very rare Lady's Slipper Orchid, orchids being a popular group of plants, was about a metre square in bright colours of purple, green and yellow, designed and created in embroidery by the project officer for that conservation project. The second was an artist's impression of a wetland creation project in Cambridgeshire which would particularly benefit a range of rare birds. The painting by Pearson was used to help illustrate the section 'habitat creation' in EN's *'State of nature: lowlands'* report (2004). Respondents were asked whether the images would encourage them to support the project, but the 'support' was not defined and allowed for respondents' interpretation. It was clear from the results that only the wetland creation painting was most favourably received with 118 of the respondents (over 60%) finding this the more persuasive image. The lady's slipper orchid image was preferred by only 7 respondents (just over 3%) with 36 people, nearly 20%, deciding both images were support-worthy. 25 people, 13%, felt neither image would receive their support (see Fig.7.15).

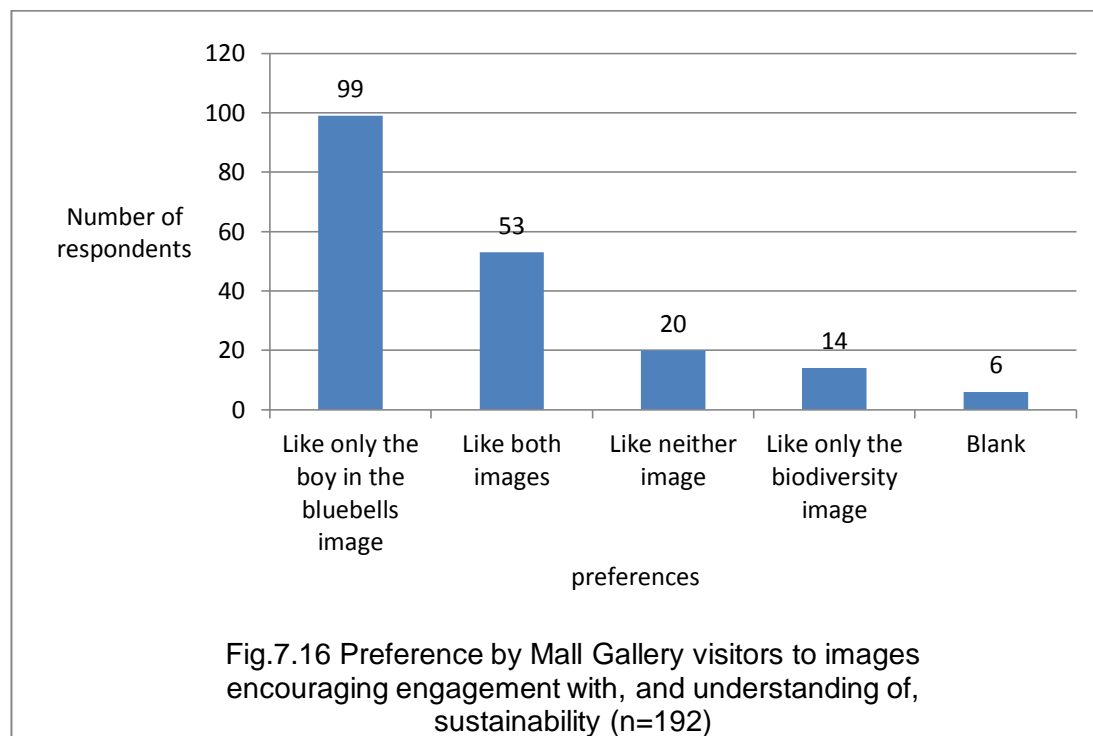


From the detailed comments, at least 64 respondents (33% of the respondents) felt that the orchid picture was too abstract, unclear and they preferred more realism. Comments about the wetland creation picture were that it was convincing, effective, interesting, and a hopeful visionary message.

Another key message from conservation organisations is to help the public's understanding of sustainability and our role in the future of wildlife and wild places. The term 'sustainability' is a complex term derived from the UN's Brundtland Commission (1987), which considers that human-kind should meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. Sustainability means that life on earth and the ecosystems currently supporting life should be maintained. A sustainable future is a goal for environmentalists, and images can encourage people to consider the future of biodiversity, and how they can help.

Two images that attempt to suggest this concept of life on a shared planet now and in the future were selected. The first, produced by the EU in 2010, consisted of a person's silhouette composed of a variety of species with the strapline "Biodiversity: we are all in this together". The second, was a

photograph of a small child walking in a bluebell wood with the quote from William Cobbett (*'Political Register 22 December 1832'*): "From a very early age, I had imbibed the opinion that it was every man's duty to do all that lay in his power to leave his country as good as he had found it" which was used in EN's *'State of nature: lowlands'* report (Townshend 2004 inside back cover). Instead of using the term 'sustainability' and providing an explanation, I gave an approximation of its definition: "we all have a role to play in the future of wildlife and wild habitats".



Over half of the respondents (99 or 52%) only liked the boy in the bluebells image. Together with the 53 (28%) who liked both images, nearly 80% of the respondents liked this image. In contrast only 14 respondents (7%) only liked the biodiversity image, and with those who liked both images, 67 (35%) in total liked the biodiversity image (see Fig.7.16).

28 respondents found the 'biodiversity' image "clever", "memorable" or "original". Others said the image "makes you think", "speaks to the head", would "appeal to more politicised demographic" and "emphasises the connectedness of man and the environment". However, approximately the same number (26) felt that this image was abstract or they did not know what

it meant. At least 14 found the image “cold”, “weird” or “awful”. Others said it “looks like a soldier in camouflage” and “confrontational”.

In comments about the boy amongst the bluebells, at least 39 felt the image of the boy made “links to the next generation”, giving “hope for the future” and referring to “our responsibility to future generations”. Other comments mentioned the emotional response to this image, its “poignancy”, “attractiveness” and how it expressed a sense of “joy”, “magic” and “sensory delight”, and that the image was “simple and to the point”. However, others said that the image was rather “too sentimental”, and “chocolate-box”. For some the image showed “damage to the environment by trampling”, “not powerful” and “advertising a walk in the woods”.

7.1.7 Childhood Nature Imagery

Visitors were asked whether there were any particular pictures, images or books that ‘fired’ their imagination or influenced their wildlife interests when children. There were 134 replies which said that there had been such images in their childhood, and 32 replies said ‘no’. There were 26 blank.

In the detailed replies (see Table 7.5), 40 respondents said that general books, magazines or guides were influential, and 13 offered examples related to the BBC, such as David Attenborough films and books, BBC ‘*Wildlife*’ Magazine, and nature study notes accompanying school radio programmes. Several mentioned a jigsaw, British Transport posters, and collecting tea cards. Over half of those who responded in the affirmative (70) named particular authors, publications or series. The three most popular books or series were: ‘*Ladybird*’ books (see Chapter 2), ‘*Observer*’ books, pocket-sized books published by Frederick Warne from 1937-2003, and ‘*I-spy*’ books spotters guides for children, particularly popular in the 1950s and 1960s, with nearly half (62) of those who said these had been influential to their childhood interest. Collins publishers have updated the ‘*i-spy*’ series, with “*In the countryside*” and “*At the seaside*” in 2016 adding other titles, plus a Facebook page and Twitter account.

Table 7.5 Childhood books mentioned by visitors:

Book title or type	Number of mentions by respondents
' <i>Ladybird</i> ' books	26
' <i>Observer</i> ' books	20
' <i>I-Spy</i> ' books	16
Kenneth Grahame " <i>Wind in the Willows</i> "	14
Beatrix Potter	9
Enid Blyton	6
Richard Adams " <i>Watership Down</i> "	5
Gerald Durrell	5
Rudyard Kipling's " <i>Just So Stories</i> " / " <i>Jungle Book</i> "	4
' <i>Shell Guides to the Countryside</i> ' & posters	4
Henry Williamson " <i>Tarka the Otter</i> "	4
Ernest Neal ' <i>The Badger</i> ' (New Naturalists)	3
" <i>Fantastic Mr Fox</i> "	3
' <i>Flower Fairies</i> ' stories	3
Gavin Maxwell " <i>Ring of Bright Water</i> "	3
Peter Scott paintings	3
Denys Watkins-Pitchford " <i>Little Grey Men</i> " & " <i>Brendan Chase</i> "	3

In the comments box, without being prompted, 17 (nearly 10%) said they were more motivated by being out-and-about in the countryside, or by living in or near the countryside. I explored this option further in the BTO members' survey.

7.1.8 Conservation Motivation

The power of art to motivate support for conservation indicated an almost even split between the choices with 86 respondents (45%) replying that they thought wildlife art had motivated them to support nature conservation and 81 (42%) saying that it had made no difference to their support for conservation. Five were ambiguous on this question, and 19 were blank.

From the replies, I collated words and phrases into groups of similar sentiment and summed all those respondents who made these comments.

Of those 86 people who felt that nature art had made a positive contribution to their motivation to support nature conservation, the more frequently made groups of comments are shown in Table 7.6. Some respondents made more than one comment. The results suggest that art can help people see the world slightly differently, either through their own or others' perspectives, perhaps emphasising the rare, the beautiful, or its potential.

Table 7.6 Visitor comments about art positively motivating support for conservation

Numbers	Positive comments
45	Nature art 'reminds/shows what wildlife there is to see'; 'shows what is important'; 'what can be lost and emphasises the fragility of the rare and near-extinct'. It 'strengthens motivation'; 'heightened awareness'; 'wildlife art can capture magical moments'; and 'wildlife art brings wildlife into places lacking it, for example, big cities'
12	'wildlife art had contributed to a lifelong interest in conservation'; 'encouraged to visit reserves by pictorial signs'; paintings can show what can be achieved; 'donate to particular cause'
12	examples of notable nature art including former covers of the RSPB ' <i>Birds</i> ' magazine, and 'Peter Scott paintings – informative/fascinating/encouraging'
14	other forms of art that had influenced the including 'wildlife photography', 'David Attenborough television documentaries', and newspaper and magazines; 'children's picture books'; 'brilliant colour slides of British flowers'; 'Brooke Bond tea cards'; and 'Observer' books'
5	'enjoyment from own wildlife art' and 'notice & appreciate natural world more through own art'

Of those 81 people who felt that nature art had made no difference to their support for nature conservation, the more frequently-mentioned comments are shown in Table 7.7. It would appear that wildlife art is incidental to their interest, or as an add-on, rather than a motivation.

Table 7.7 Visitor comments about art making no difference to motivating support for conservation

Numbers	'No difference' comments
32	'already supported'; 'support conservation with or without art'
22	'wildlife art was just an extension of my interest in wildlife'
10	'more informed through reading, poetry or television'
7	'The reverse - my interest in conservation had led to an interest in wildlife art'
6	more motivated by being in the natural environment
5	'just like looking at the pictures from a painters perspective'; 'art is a very personal experience unrelated to response to conservation'
2	'negative images are depressing and off-putting'

One respondent said: 'photographs of the destruction of nature are more affecting' and on additional observation by a Gallery visitor was rather jaundiced in that "even among bird watchers there is little appreciation of art and beauty - they are just 'listers.'"

7.1.9 Better Use of Wildlife Art to Promote Nature Conservation

I wanted to discover participants' views on how to better use wildlife art to promote the conservation of wildlife and natural habitats. A clear majority (138 replies - 72%) said more could be done, with 9 saying 'no', and 15 were undecided or blank.

Of the positive suggestions given 45 (nearly a quarter) suggested a need for greater public awareness of wildlife and its conservation, and of these 25 people suggested that more wildlife art in public places was needed, such as: "public transport"; "packaging"; and "destination ads". Suggested methods included using a "poster campaign", "television programmes to promote nature conservation", "more articles and photos in newspapers and magazines", use of wildlife art in wide range of goods, for example, "stamps", "school teaching materials", and "educational toys". Another respondent said a "worldwide campaign needed" and another "personify major habitats, for

example, oceans as sculpture for public venues and conventions, for example, the UN”.

In addition, 19 suggestions were given for higher wildlife art profile, such as: a “wildlife art festival – countrywide”; “artists painting live on *Spring/Autumn Watch*”; a “wildlife equivalent of ‘*Watercolour Challenge*’”; a public wildlife art competition and more hands-on activities for adults and children; the SWLA exhibition going on tour, open for longer, with better-marketing; and the Artist for Nature projects were “excellent” and “effective”. Eight people suggested “exhibit art on/near nature reserves (to encourage looking, and sell with % of proceeds for the reserves)” and “more scenes of nature reserves”. Ten people made the similar observation that “wildlife art grabs attention”, “wildlife art can promote causes more imaginatively and with more impact”, and “shows the importance of the natural world”.

Nearly 15% (27 people) suggested nature art should show conservation need: “show rare and extinct species”; “show through art how habitats are being damaged and species are facing problems”; “remind people what is at stake – what we can lose”; “art can make you think about looking after nature”; “encourage continued support”; and “art should record and project the importance of conservation”. Thirteen people (7%) said that nature art must emphasise the positive with comments, such as: “go for the WOW factor”; “lend an emotional context, capture a fleeting moment”; “happy memory/ reminder”; “wildlife art needs to highlight the essence, behaviour, singularity of nature”; “be fun & fascinating”; “art should portray nature as beautiful”; “use positive conservation stories & successes”; “use really good quality images”; and “image needs to be clear, real and not too emotive / easy to grasp”.

Ten percent (19 people) suggested that more should be done to encourage and engage children, such as: “ask children how they feel about nature and to imagine a world without it”; “encourage children with stickers for spotting things”; “encourage parents and schools to take children to nature art exhibitions”; and “get artists to explain to children why they love nature”.

Five people suggested that before-and-after comparisons can be very effective, five suggested using more powerful, perhaps even shocking, imagery, such as WWII propaganda posters but three people warned that negative images can be depressing and off-putting.

Other views expressed were: “need a love of nature to appreciate wildlife art”; “art may draw people in to read the message but may not result in the desired action”; and “nothing will help – people are basically selfish”. Eight respondents felt that the use of wildlife art was currently sufficient, providing comments, such as: “wildlife art is being used effectively”; “avoid over-doing it - the balance is ok now”; and “interpretation has improved a lot”.

7.1.10 Additional Comments

The opportunity was provided at the end of the Mall Galleries’ visitor survey for additional comments, and 76 participants contributed here. Of these 15 (8%) said the questionnaire was “fun to do”, “interesting” and “thought-provoking”. There were several comments about: using infographics; “need conservation champion”; “conservation needs have changed over the last 70 years”; and “don’t forget plants and fungi”.

Other information not asked for, but offered by participants included age data: 40 (one fifth) gave their age, majority of these (31 people - 16%) being 50 or over; 22 were volunteers, members, staff or wardens of conservation organisations; and 15 said they were amateur or professional artists.

7.1.11 Main Findings from the Mall Galleries’ Visitor Survey

On nature imagery in general, visitors equally liked the work of artists who had been painting for many years, and well-known for depicting wildlife in a realistic style, such as Shepherd, Scott, Tunnicliffe and Tratt, and those with a more contemporary style, such as Akroyd, Underwood, Busby and Poole. Turner and Constable were included in the list of most popular landscape and/or wildlife artists.

Birds, in their natural habitat or active in some way, were the most popular subject. Images of various habitats, and big, exotic wildlife were well liked, and images that engendered feelings of nostalgia and of places visited were also favoured.

Detail and accuracy were favoured characteristics of wildlife painting, and for illustrations for guides and identification books, realism, accuracy, clarity and detail were strongly felt to be needed. For the Galleries' visitors '*Ladybird*' books, '*Observer*' books and '*I-spy*' books were the most popular children's wildlife books, with nearly a third of the respondents reporting these books had been influential to their childhood interest in wildlife and nature.

For nature reserve information boards and leaflets, the Galleries' visitors preferred material that they considered attractive, interesting and user-friendly. Maps on reserve guides appear essential, and there was a good majority of opinion in favour of close-up images of plants or animals the visitor is most likely to see, and to have some information on the cultural history of the area. There was more ambivalence about the depiction of views. More information improved the visitor experience, although there was caution over the disappointment felt when the visitor did not see the plants and animals described. Some did not want the information – particularly views depicted – as they wished to discover these themselves.

Conservation messages need to be carefully targeted. Images used should be mindful of the depiction of gender and age of the target audience, and of the need for quiet and solitude as well as the enjoyment and reassurance of group activity. Images should be realistic, convincing, and if possible offer hope, vision and achievability.

In order to promote conservation more effectively, the Gallery visitors suggested there is a need for greater public awareness of wildlife and its conservation, with more wildlife art in public places, such as on public transport, and packaging. Other ideas included a poster campaign, television programmes to promote nature conservation, more articles and photos in

newspapers and magazines, use wildlife art in wide range of goods, for example, stamps, and school teaching materials. Other ideas included creating a higher wildlife art profile, such as a countrywide wildlife art festival, artists painting live on '*Spring/Autumn Watch*', a wildlife equivalent of the television programme '*Watercolour Challenge*', a public wildlife art competition and more hands-on activities for adults and children.

7.2 The BTO Members' Survey

The survey of BTO members' views about nature conservation imagery employed a web-based programme known as 'Survey Monkey', and members were invited through the BTO 'e-news' to complete the survey on-line. The BTO questionnaire explored further, or sought to clarify, the responses provided in the Mall Galleries' visitor survey. The survey form is shown in full in Appendix 3. Some questions were the same as in the Mall Galleries' visitor survey or rephrased and some asked in greater depth. Some questions were not repeated as the responses on the first survey indicated they would have been difficult to compare. Age and gender questions were only asked in the BTO survey and, in some cases, this information helped identify which groups of people might respond better to particular visual messages. There were fewer open questions, with respondents asked to indicate their preferences from a range of possible answers. For more detail on how the opportunity for the BTO survey came about and how the questions were derived, see Chapter 3 Methodology.

The survey opened on the 17 June 2015 and closed on the 7th July 2015. There were 223 responders with 6 blanks, that is, no response at all. Seven respondents stopped at the end of the artists' questions, and one respondent stopped immediately after Q17.

Mike Toms, managing the on-line aspect of the survey for the BTO, emailed me on 22nd June: "We've had 205 responses to the questionnaire, with 261 unique clicks through on the link within the e-news that we sent out. Most of these responses came on 17th June (125), with 47 the next day and roughly

10 a day coming through at the moment”. He had hoped for “closer to 500 responses but given the other 'calls to action' in the e-news I guess it is about right.” The survey was closed on 7th July at my request. By the end, there were 223 completed responses, with 387 unique clicks through the e-news link, equating to a 57.8% response rate. A minimum of 213 completed the whole questionnaire. There were 12 follow-up emails from respondents to whom a reply was sent.

The Survey Monkey programme collated the information, in a large Excel spreadsheet, and as most of the questions were tick-box answers, the programme provided me with all the ‘scores’. The word or phrase answers were provided in full.

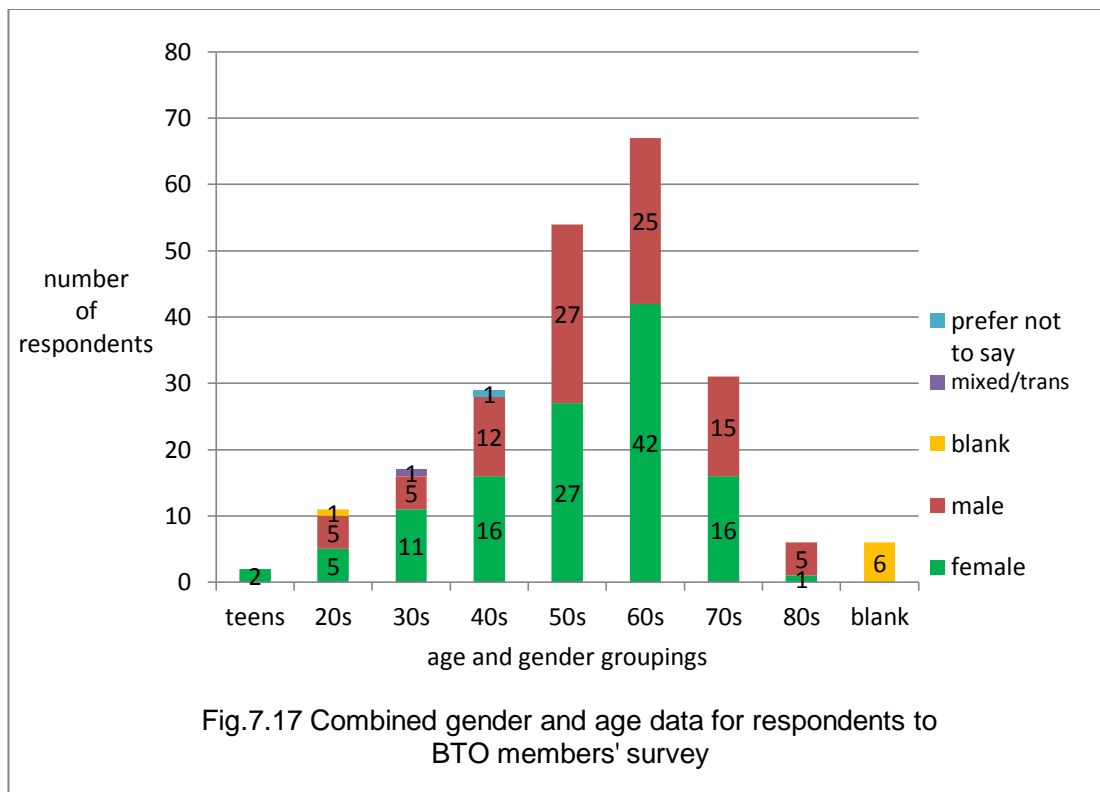
7.2.1 BTO Respondents’ Gender and Age Data

The first two questions asked about age and gender. Gender data is shown in Table 7.8.

Table 7.8 BTO respondents gender data

Gender category	numbers
female	123
male	95
other (mixed, transgender)	1
preferred not to say	2
blank	2

Gender data was combined with age data, where available. Of those who supplied this information a quarter (59 people/26%) were in their 40s or under, and those in the 50s and over numbered 158 (71%) as shown in Fig.7.17.



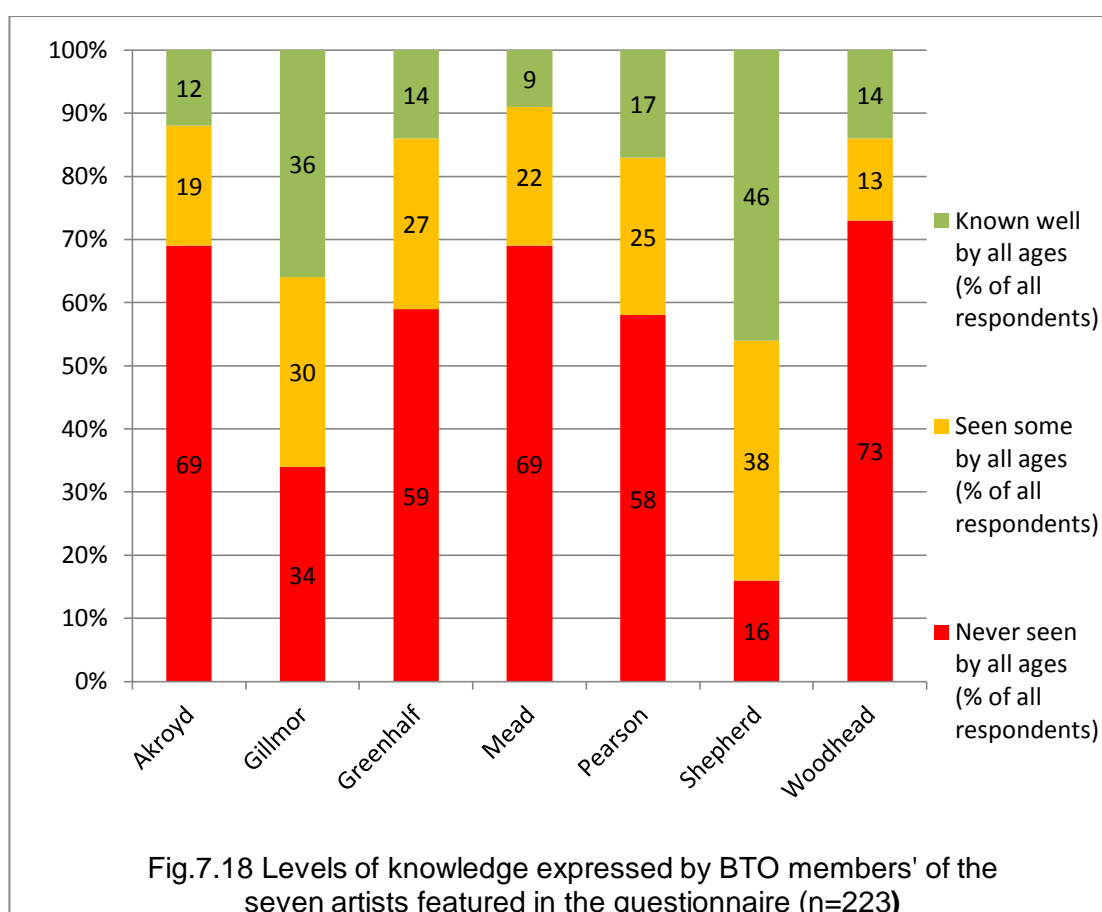
7.2.2 Nature Artists

As in the Mall Galleries visitor survey, the first questions in the BTO members' survey asked which wildlife artists' work most appealed and why. Repeating these questions enabled comparison of the results of the two surveys and to assessment of the possible impact on conservation messaging in using particular styles of art.

For seven named wildlife artists, compiled from the list of the most popular provided from the Mall Galleries visitors' survey, respondents were asked to indicate how much they knew of the artists' work (see Table 7.9 and Fig.7.18). In considering an art piece shown as a typical example, the members were asked how much they liked the work of the artists. Images, freely available from the internet or held by the BTO for their use, and which I considered typical of those artists' work were depicted. The results are shown in Table 7.11 and Fig.7.21. The artists were shown in alphabetical order, not in the preference list as indicated by the Mall Galleries' visitor survey. The seven 'typical' artworks all included images of birds (see Mall Galleries' survey above).

Table 7.9 BTO members' knowledge of seven artists' work

	Nature artist						
BTO Members' responses	Carry Ackroyd	Robert Gillmor	Robert Greenhalf	Harriet Mead	Bruce Pearson	David Shepherd	Darren Woodhead
Never seen the work	152	75	131	148	128	35	162
Seen some work before	42	68	58	49	56	87	30
Know work well	28	80	33	22	37	101	30
No response	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Never seen % of total	69	34	59	69	58	16	73
Seen some % of total	19	30	27	22	25	38	13
Know well % of total	12	36	14	9	17	46	14



Shepherd appears to be the most well-known by a clear margin (101 responses), Gillmor as the next most well-known (80), and the remainder at a similar known level. Both Shepherd and Gillmor also scored the lowest in people who had never seen their work before (16 and 34 respectively). Woodhead appears to be the least well-known reflected in the number of people who had never seen his work before (73), and also in the low number of people who were aware of seeing some of his work before (13).

On examining the data in more detail and separating out the responses using age of respondent, the following charts depict the responses to the artists from the 'Under 50s' and the '50s plus'.

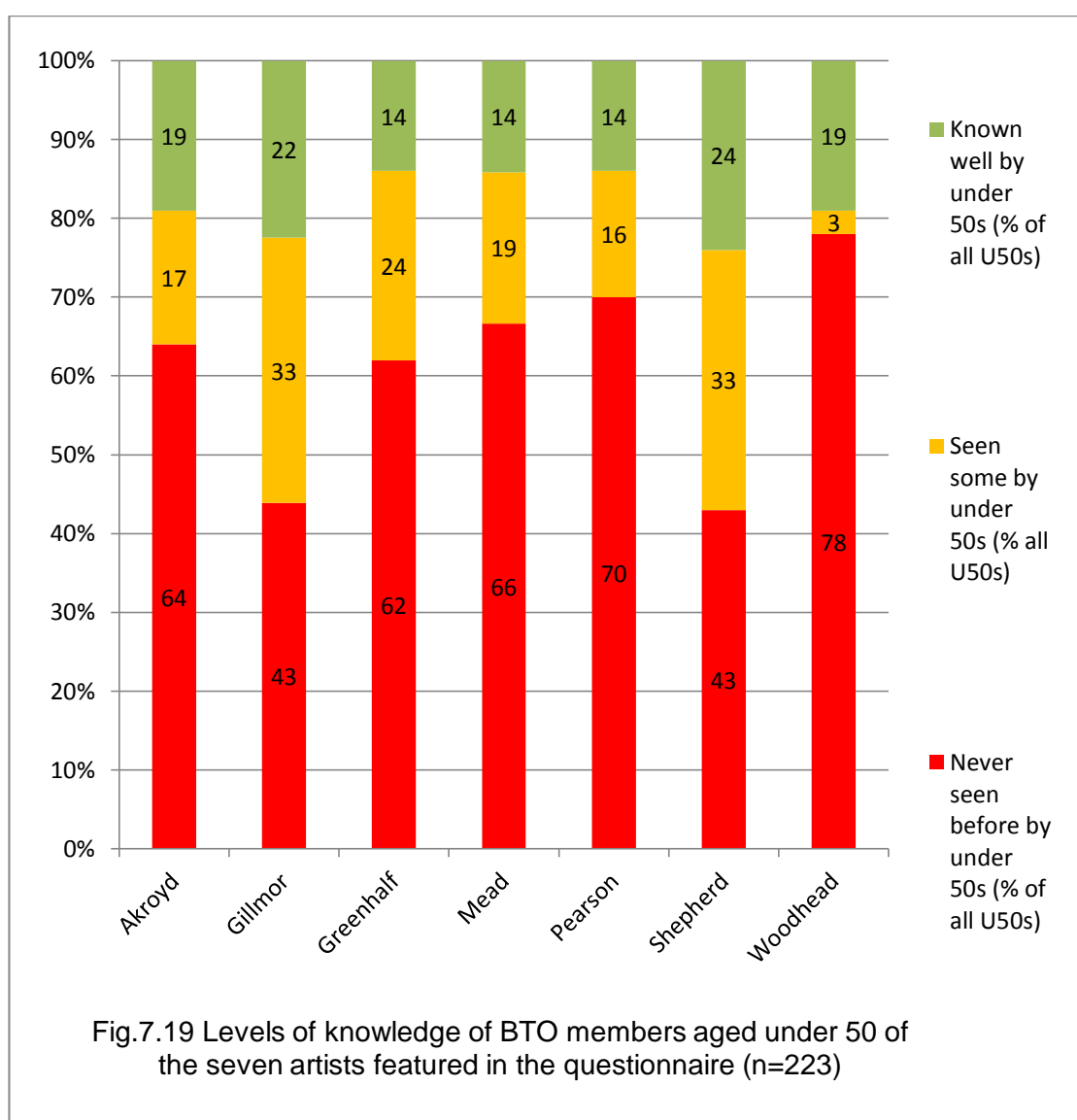
Table 7.10 Levels of knowledge expressed by BTO members of the seven featured artists separated by age into under 50 year olds and 50 and over (as percentages of the respective groups)

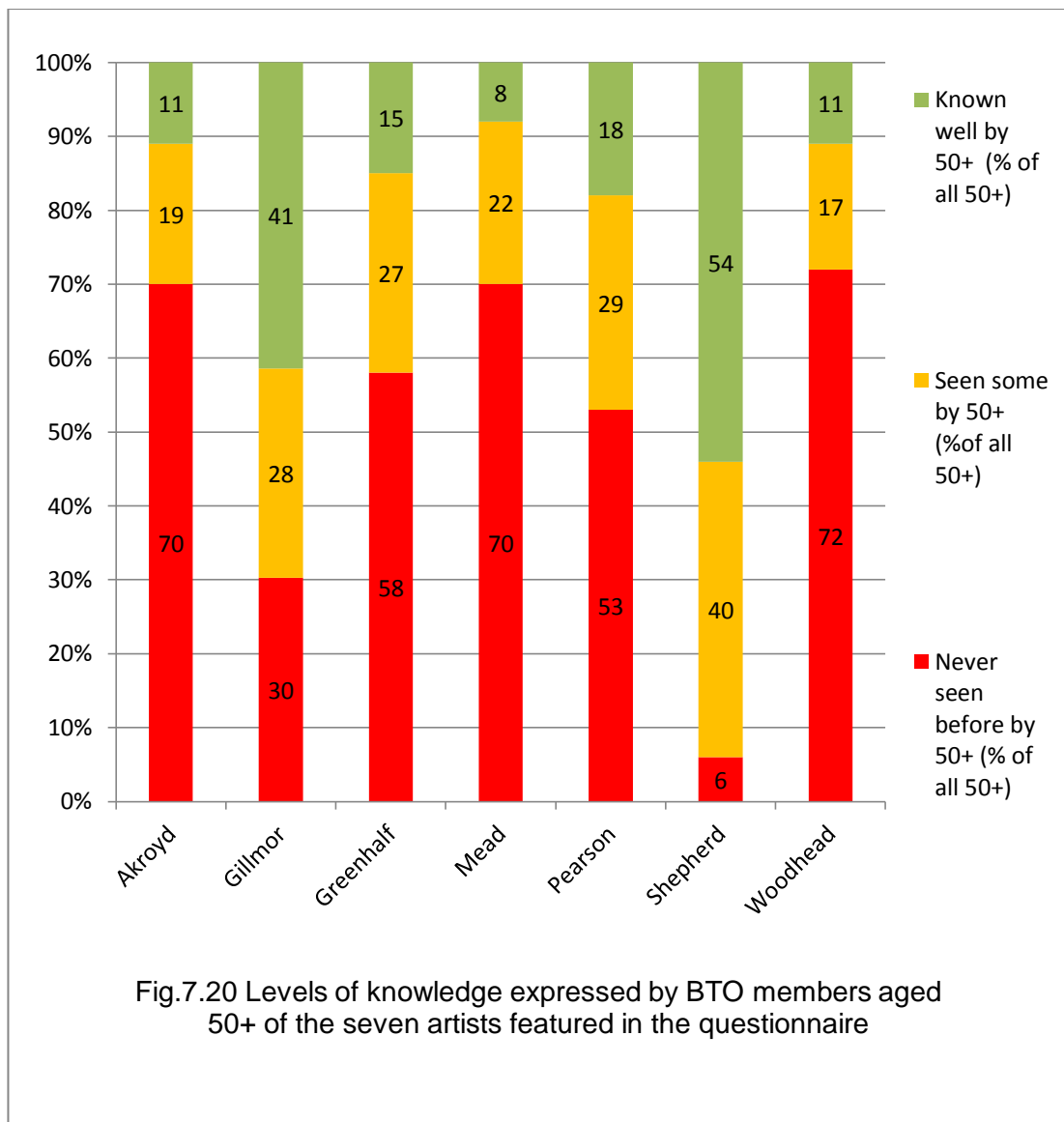
	Artist						
Level of knowledge by age group	Carry Akroyd	Robert Gillmor	Robert Greenhalf	Harriet Mead	Bruce Pearson	David Shepherd	Darren Woodhead
Not known by Under 50s (% of all U50)	64	43	62	66	70	43	78
Not known by 50 and over (% of all 50+)	70	30	58	70	53	6	72
Some knowledge by Under 50s (% of all U50)	17	33	24	19	16	33	3
Some knowledge by 50s and over (% of all 50+)	19	28	27	22	29	40	17
Known well by Under 50s (% of all U50)	19	22	14	14	14	24	19
Known well by 50s and over (% of all 50+)	11	41	15	8	18	54	11

Comparing Table 7.10 and Fig.7.19 and Fig.7.20, it would seem that the under 50s have a similar knowledge level to the over 50s of all the artists,

with slightly more knowing about Shepherd and Gillmor's work than the others. In addition, Woodhead is largely either well known or not at all by these under 50s members. The greater knowledge level of Shepherd and Gillmor's work by those BTO members aged 50 and over (compared to those aged under 50) of is clear.

The knowledge levels of the other five artists (Akroyd, Greenhalf, Mead, Pearson and Woodhead) appear similar in both age groups (with the exception of the observation about Woodhead above).

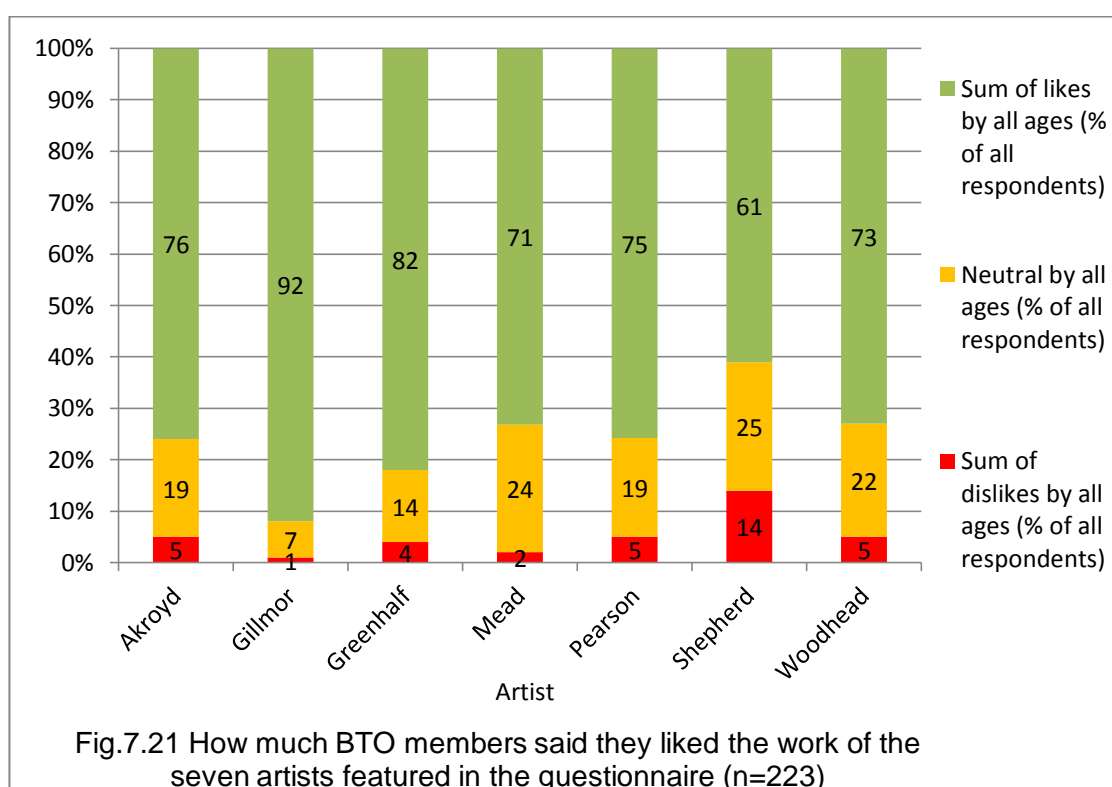




A similar exercise was undertaken for likes and dislikes of the artworks shown as typical examples of the artists' work, separating the responses from those under 50 years old from those members 50 years old and over. The data is shown in Table 7.11 and Fig.7.21.

Table 7.11 Liking or otherwise of artists' work by BTO members

	Artist						
BTO Members' responses	Carry Ackroyd	Robert Gillmor	Robert Greenhalf	Harriet Mead	Bruce Pearson	David Shepherd	Darren Woodhead
Not like work at all	2	0	0	3	0	4	0
Not like work	10	2	9	9	12	30	11
Sum of not liking the work	12	2	9	12	12	34	11
Neutral	41	16	28	53	44	54	51
Like work	108	98	98	82	76	70	91
Like work very much	62	106	86	76	91	65	68
Sum of liking & liking very much	170	204	184	158	167	135	159
No response	0	1	0	0	0	0	2



Very few people expressed complete dislike of the artists' work: the exceptions being Shepherd (4), Mead (3) and Akroyd (2). The least liked artist, found by adding together the numbers of people 'not liking at all' or 'not liking the work', was Shepherd (34). In addition, Shepherd scored the lowest percentages for people who liked and very much liked his work (135), regardless of whether they had never seen it before, seen some or were familiar with his work.

Scoring of a 'neutral' reaction to the work was fairly even, except for Gillmor at 16, much lower than the other artists, and he also appeared to be the most liked artist, from both the 'like the work' and like very much' responses. In addition, Gillmor scored consistently well, with those who had never seen his work before (91%), as well as those who were very familiar with his work (98%) and those who had seen some before (85%). With the exception of Shepherd, the artists retained their popularity with those who knew their work well. Robert Gillmor would appear to have the greatest appeal of those who had never seen the artists' work before, followed by Greenhalf and then Akroyd.

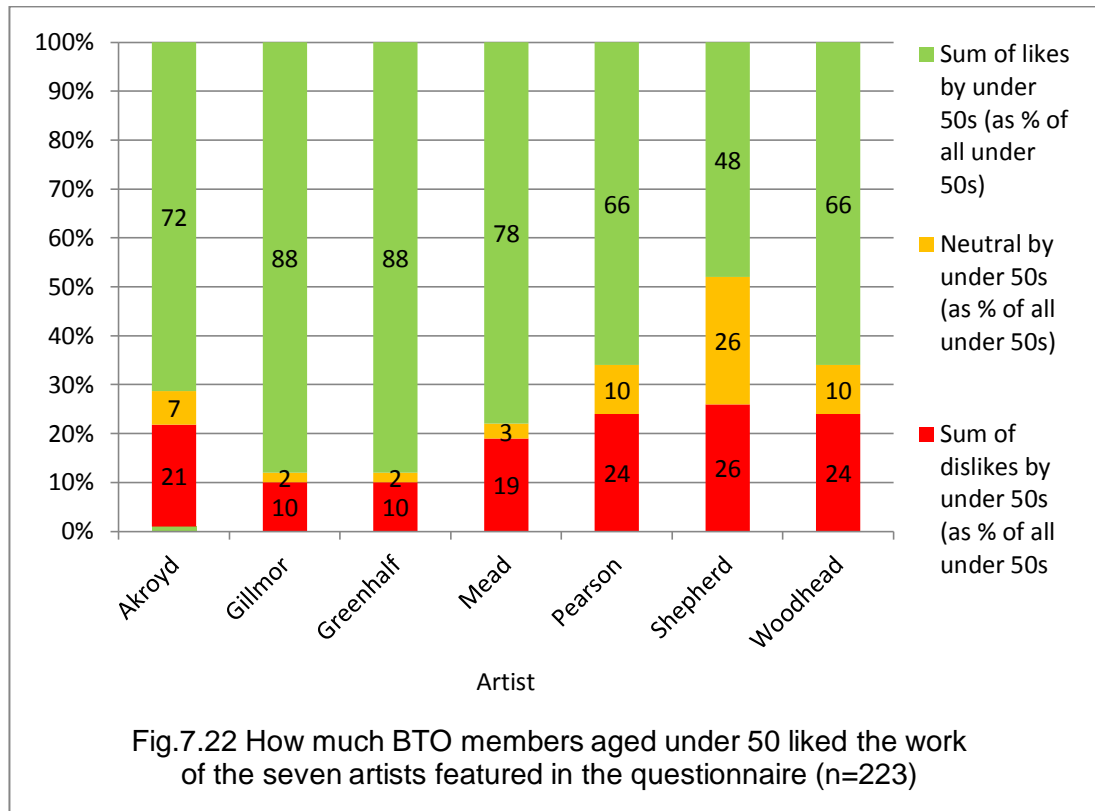
A closer evaluation of the data separating the responses from those under 50 years old from those members 50 years old and over is shown in Table 7.12 and Fig.7.22 and Fig.7.23.

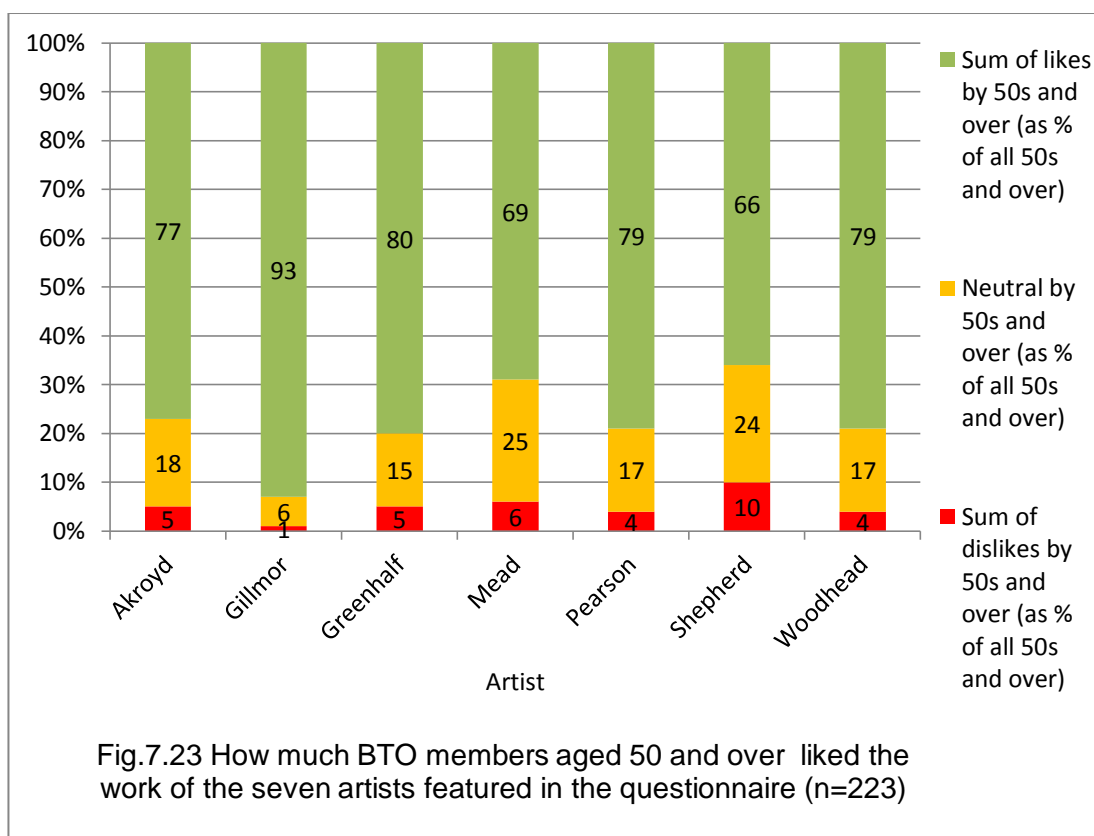
Table 7.12 How much BTO members said they liked the work of the seven artists featured in the questionnaire by age group

	Artist						
	Carry Akroyd	Robert Gillmor	Robert Greenhalf	Harriet Mead	Bruce Pearson	David Shepherd	Darren Woodhead
Sum of likes by under 50s (% of all under 50s)	72	88	88	78	66	48	66
Sum of likes by 50s and over (% of all 50s and over)	77	93	80	69	79	66	79
Sum of neutral responses by under 50s (% of all under 50s)	21	10	10	19	24	26	24
Sum of neutral responses by 50s and over (% of all 50s and over)	18	6	15	25	17	24	17
Sum of dislikes by under 50s (% of all under 50s)	7	2	2	3	10	26	10
Sum of dislikes by 50s and over (% of all 50s and over)	5	1	5	6	4	10	4

This breakdown of responses reveals that the under 50s least like Shepherd's work and are more ambivalent about his work than that of any of the other artists. For Shepherd, the low numbers of likes by the whole group would seem to be explained by his low popularity with the under 50s group. The under 50s most liked Gillmor and Greenhalf's work. The older group feel roughly the same about all the artists, except for Gillmor who appears to be

the most popular artist overall and with both groups. Comparing with the responses from the 50s and over group, the younger group seem to be more decisive in their likes and dislikes than the older group, the latter being more neutral about all the artists except for Gillmor.





The responses were also considered according to gender. However, there were no clear conclusions from the gender analysis, with the exception of three responses:

1. More men than women appear to 'know the artists' work well' for six of the seven artists (see Table 7.13):

Table 7.13 BTO members' responses about 'knowing the artists' work well' grouped by women and men

Artist's name	Female	% of all females	Male	% of all males
Carry Akroyd	9	7	18	19
Robert Gillmor	36	29	43	45
Robert Greenhalf	14	11	18	19
Harriet Mead	9	7	12	13
Bruce Pearson	11	9	25	26
Darren Woodhead	10	8	19	20

2. For Shepherd, the opposite was the case with more men who had ‘never seen his work’: Female 10 to Male 23;
3. For Mead, more men ‘liked’ Mead’s work (Female 35 to Male 44), and this reflected the difference between the women and men’s scores in the 50s and 60s age groups where Female to Male in the 50s age group was 9 to 14, and in the 60s group 11 to 15. However, in the category ‘liked very much’ Mead’s work, the scores were reversed with women to men in the 50s group being 10 to 6, and in the 60s age group being 17 to 4, and overall 50 to 25 (see Table 7.14).

Table 7.14 Male and female responses to Harriet Mead’s work

Harriet Mead	Female ‘like’ work	Male ‘like’ work	Female ‘like very much’ work	Male ‘like very much’ work
overall	39	44	50	25
50s age group	9	14	10	6
60s age group	11	15	17	4

In summary, it appears that more people are familiar with the work of Shepherd and Gillmor, and the other wildlife artists are not well known. However, not being well known does not seem to be detrimental to whether viewers like their work. The more realistic style of work, for example, by Shepherd, and to a lesser extent, Pearson, appears to be least popular. However, art work that is slightly different (such as poster-style, a print or from an unusual or different perspective) appears to be attractive to most viewers. Never having seen the work of an artist before need not necessarily have a detrimental impact on whether people like it.

All the images offered included birds or a bird. The only painting where the bird image was difficult to see was in the Shepherd painting – an egret near the elephant – but most people said they knew his work so the difficulty in seeing the bird was not necessarily the reason for his work being less popular. It could be concluded that if art was to be used to depict a conservation message, the work may have a greater appeal and impact if

artists use a novel style, and not necessarily produce a painting that fills the frame, nor is in traditional perspective and style. Also it may be better to use images of relevant species if audiences are from a single interest group.

In order to compare with the list of artists named in the Mall Galleries visitor survey, the BTO Members' survey asked about any additional wildlife artists (living or dead) who they liked. There were 128 responses listing 198 other artists. These with the seven artists already named gave a total of 205 wildlife artists named in this survey and of these, 36 were SWLA members. These 36 plus the six used in the survey meant that 42 of the current 73 SWLA members were liked or mentioned by people in the BTO survey. The highest scoring artists are shown in Table 7.15.

Table 7.15 Popularity of other named artists

Number of mentions:	Artist name:
21	Peter Scott, Charles Tunnicliffe
14	Lars Johnson
11	J J Audubon, John Busby, Eric Ennion
10	Archibald Thorburn
9	Michael Warren
7	James MacCallum
6	Keith Brockie; Richard Lewington; Greg Poole and Keith Shackleton
5	Robert Bateman, Thomas Bewick, Raymond Harris Ching, Basil Ede, Darren Rees and Chris Rose
4	Kim Atkinson; John Gould; Bruno Liljefors; Thelma Sykes; Tim Wootton and Colin Woolf

All of these artists are notable bird artists, though a number paint landscapes and other subjects. For example, Lewington is noted for his insect illustrations. "Widely regarded as the greatest living bird artist, Lars Jonsson...(is)...a globally-renowned ornithologist, has been painting professionally for over thirty years, since his series of European bird guides in the 1970s established him both as an artist and a bird expert" (Gerald

Peters Gallery 2018). Johnsson (b.1952) is an SWLA member, and has contributed to ANF projects in Spain, Alaska and India (Hammond 1998) and (Hammond 1986).

Six of the top seven named artists are deceased, and in their lifetime were noted ornithologists and/or illustrators of bird books considered as 'classics' in their field. For biographical details for Scott, Tunnicliffe, Ennion and Thorburn see Chapter 2. Audubon (1785-1851) produced '*Birds of America*' (printed between 1827 and 1838) containing "435 life-sized watercolours of North American birds (Havell edition), all reproduced from hand-engraved plates, and is considered to be the archetype of wildlife illustration" (The National Audubon Society 2018). Busby (1928-2015) wrote: "My work is rooted in landscape and in the living birds and animals as they are part of it. I aim to show how creatures move and to express the visual delight they bring. I try to combine accuracy with artistry" (Moss 2015). Busby was a founder member of the SWLA and contributed to ANF projects from 1990 (Hammond 1998). These results suggest the work of these six artists is of such quality that it has stood the test of time, and has been open to view for many years. Despite no new material becoming available, their popularity remains. Most of these have been cited by other subsequent wildlife artists as being inspirational to their work.

Additional comments suggested a wider interpretation of the term 'artist', not confined to traditional paintings. Examples included: "Old Railway posters that encourage people into the country (several artists)...Eric Ravilious and his son, the photographer. Many of the artists illustrating Dimbleby's book on the British countryside"; "... whoever does the artwork for the Hampshire Wildlife Trust notice boards"; "...the prehistoric cave artists of Spain and France"; "Robert Campbell sculptor, Cumbria"; and "... Andy Goldsworthy" (a sculptor, photographer, and land artist). Not just bird artists were named, for example, "...Gordon Beningfield was good on butterflies but not birds..."; "Rev Keble Martin" artist of his own flora (*The Concise British Flora* 1965); "...Richard Lewington is unsurpassed for insects..."

Several responders were very knowledgeable listing many names. For example, one respondent named 16 artists, and another 44, including SWLA artists, and modern and more traditional artists. In total, 205 artists were named. They varied in style, were both historical and current, and of local, national or international fame. These numbers would suggest that this group of BTO members were knowledgeable about wildlife art.

7.2.3 Features and Characteristics of Wildlife Art

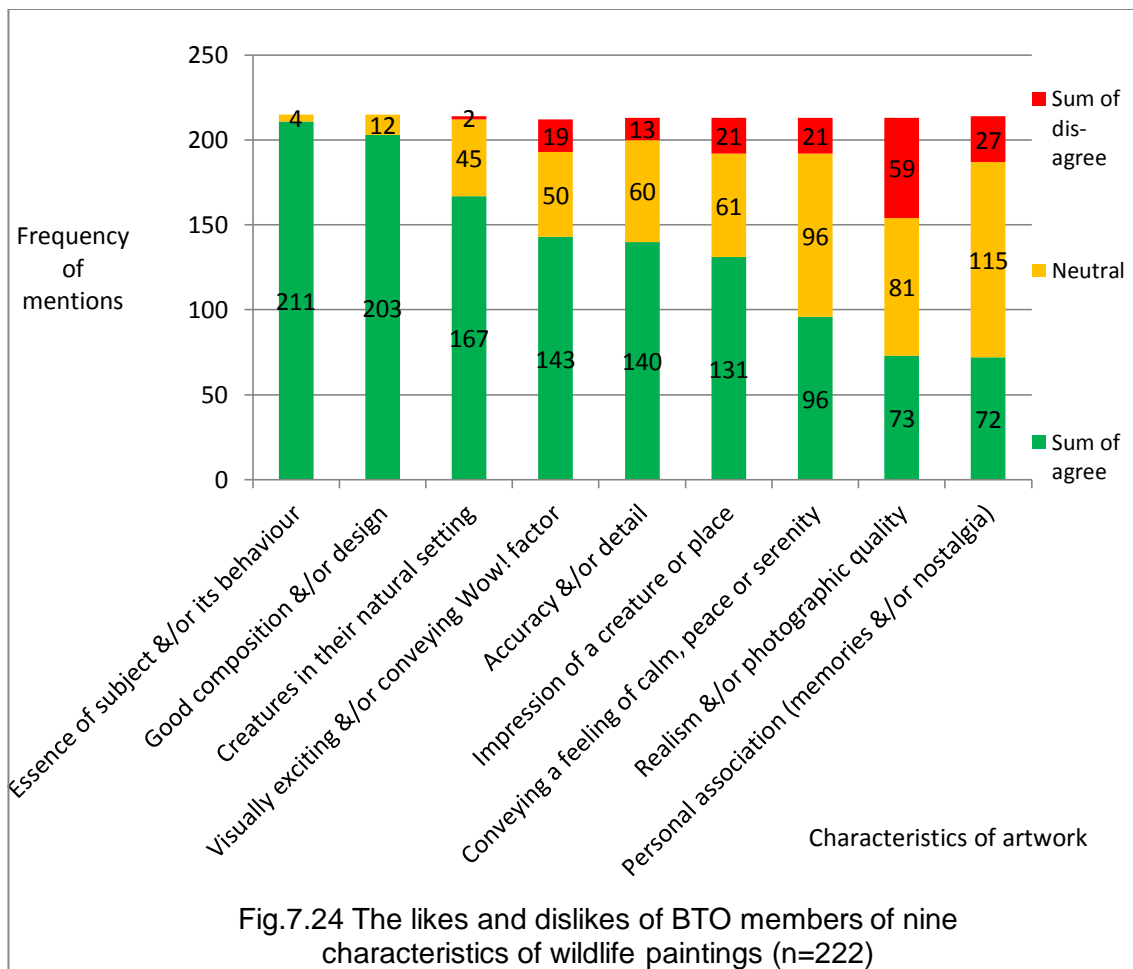
The 12 most popular features in wildlife artists' work listed from the Mall Galleries survey were reduced to 9, removing comments about sculpture as this question was asking specifically about 'paintings'. After being told "in the art gallery visitor survey, people were asked what they like to see in wildlife paintings, and the replies were grouped into categories", BTO members were asked to select their preference for each of the nine categories, listed alphabetically. See Table 7.16 for the results from the BTO Members' survey.

The results indicate that the category for 'capture the essence of the subject &/or its behaviour or expression' was the category most strongly agreed with (55), and had the highest score for the sum of respondents agreeing *and* agreeing strongly (211), closely followed by 'good composition &/or design'. The lowest scores for agree and strongly agree (separately and summed) were for 'personal association (places visited &/or happy memories &/or nostalgia)' and 'realism &/or photographic quality' at 72 and 73 respectively for the sum of the scores (see Fig.7.24). No-one agreed with or agreed strongly with all the statements (nor disagreed or disagreed strongly), though two people (a male in his 20s and a person who preferred not to provide information on gender or age) gave a 'neutral' response to all the categories.

Table 7.16 Popularity of features in wildlife paintings

People like to see in wildlife paintings the following:	agree strongly	agree	Sum of agree	neutral	Dis-agree	Dis-agree strongly	Sum of dis-agree	blank
Abstract &/or an impression of a creature or place	50	81	131	61	16	5	21	10
Accuracy &/or detail	66	74	140	60	12	1	13	10
Capture essence of the subject &/or its behaviour or expression	155	56	211	4	0	0	0	9
Conveying a feeling of calm, peace or serenity	31	65	96	96	14	7	21	10
Creatures in their natural setting	92	75	167	45	1	1	2	9
Good composition &/or design	128	75	203	12	0	0	0	8
Personal association (places visited &/or happy memories &/or nostalgia)	18	54	72	115	18	9	27	9
Realism &/or photographic quality	22	51	73	81	50	9	59	10
Visually exciting &/or conveying the Wow! factor	67	76	143	50	16	3	19	11

Every age group gave a variety of responses, the only exceptions being that all those in their 80s (six people) strongly agreed that they liked 'good composition &/or design', and both teenagers strongly agreed with liking paintings that 'capture the essence of the subject &/or its behaviour or expression'. Another interesting response by the two teenagers is that one strongly agreed and the other strongly disagreed with the category of liking paintings that convey a feeling of calm, peace or serenity.



Nine comments relating to this question about appealing characteristics of wildlife art (Q18) were provided in the open text box (Q19), possibly because no other place was made available to express a response. Five of the comments referred to accuracy and/or detail, such as: “Detail, it draws me in. Tells a story” (by a 30s male); and “I like accurate pictures and impressionist ones - not at the same time, obviously” (a 50s female). A 40s male responded:

“Highly detailed highly accurate illustrations, giving as true as possible rendering of the subject. In-accurate habitat settings are a dislike, and misleading, even more so in the days when we need to be connecting and communicating conservation and subjects accurately”.

A 50s female wrote:

“Scientific accuracy e.g. depicting the wildlife in an appropriate environmental setting, typical behaviours. Anything that tells the organism's story in an engaging way. Also anything inspired by micrography or use of scientific techniques to expand our own senses e.g. infrared photography, is an art form of itself or can inspire semi-abstract work in other media”.

A 60s female replied: “For field guides, accuracy. For paintings to hang I prefer a looser style in the modern artists”.

Several comments were made about capturing the essence of the subject: “Conveying a moment in time typical of that living creature in its every day existence” (a 60s male); “Conveys the 'jizz' really well - and this applies to other animals than birds” (a 60s female); and “It depends on the context - I love a plate of great, detailed bird illustrations from a book, but love an abstract landscape with the essence/suggestion of an animal in it” (by a 40s male).

An example of personal association or happy memories was provided by a 60s male:

“I sponsored the Egyptian Goose in ‘*The Birds of Berkshire*’. I was able to buy the artwork of the Egyptian Goose. It hangs on my wall and reminds me of doing WeBS surveys on the Thames”.

A free text box for respondents to the BTO Members’ survey offered an opportunity to describe any other characteristic of wildlife art (not included in the list for the previous question, Q18) that really appealed to them. The replies were placed into categories of similar responses. Seventy-two respondents made a comment: 41 by women; 28 by men; two preferred not to provide gender information; and one blank on gender. Eighteen other main characteristics that people liked were mentioned derived from 70 comments made by the 72 respondents (see Table 7.17).

Characteristics were grouped together. For example, comments about “human connectedness to and relationship with nature” included words and phrases, such as ‘relationship’, ‘connection’, being part of the natural world and so on. A 40s female wrote: “Showing the relationship between wildlife and environment whether rural/natural or human-made”. A 60s male wrote:

“Work that shows a holistic or integrated connection to the many levels of environment... from direction finding (coaching) through creativity, connection to the spirit of place, creatures, plants (aboriginal and shamanic connections). We have to overcome a desire to separate ourselves from the natural world. We are part of it and its destruction is our destruction, when it thrives we thrive”.

Another example was from a 30s female:

“I like art that represents hidden wildlife, for example in industrial landscapes, or that not usually celebrated, such as the tiny worlds of invertebrates. Such art, I feel, explores our modern relationship with the natural world”.

Table 7.17 Other characteristics of wildlife art that people liked

Characteristic	Mentions
colour	10
illustrate human connectedness to & relationship with nature	9
conservation message	8
novel approaches/originality/mystery/the unexpected	7
art reflecting an emotional response to wildlife/empathy	6
medium used	6
sense of place (eg wildness)/atmosphere	6
animal movement/action	4
audio work	2
humour	2
sculpture/tactile art	2
specific creatures (eg cats in Africa, owls & hawks)	2
reflect the joy of creation	1
effect of light	1
old lithographs	1
quality of framing &/or presentation	1
simplicity	1
telling a story	1

Comments about characteristics that depict a conservation message included: "Conveying a message about man's destruction of habitat and the consequent vital importance of conservation" (by a 60s female); "Works which show and emphasise reality, litter, damage, loss to show people the destruction to species and environment" (a 50s male); "Sense of vulnerability of nature, sense of humanity's place in nature, sense humanity's effects on nature, the feeling of a season or weather event" (50s male); and "Perhaps a reverence for the animal and respect for its continued survival" (50s female). A teens female replied:

"Honesty - not making it out to be happy when it isn't. I think it is extremely important to show people the truth about the impact, positive or negative, that humans are having on wild animals and their habitats".

For novel approaches, a 40 year old wrote "Originality, provocative, beautiful" and a 20s male responded:

"I like it when 'unconventional' techniques are used to render wildlife, resulting in artwork that is less 'realist' in the technical/scientific sense and more personal as the result of an utterly creative and original approach to the subject, one which incorporates materiality and space (sculpture, for instance), found objects (seabirds from driftwood) that connect subject to place/context, techniques that suggest other senses (i.e. texture). Linocuts reflect an interesting kind of 2D capture process..."

For art reflecting an emotional response to wildlife/ empathy, comments included: "Affection or empathy for the subject" (a 70s female); and "Needs to provoke an emotional response" (by a 50s male).

Regarding a sense of place, comments included: "Sense of wildness" (60s male); "Sense of place. Being there, whether or not it's a place I know" (a 50s female); and "Should create atmosphere - see Peter Scott's paintings" (70s male).

It would appear that people most like to see a wildlife painting capturing the essence of the subject and/or its behaviour or expression. This characteristic would appear to be the most appealing and make the greatest impact. This is a difficult concept to define, but respondents clearly had an understanding of what it meant for them. Amongst bird watchers this characteristic is also known as 'jizz'. People also like paintings of good composition or design, and it would appear that in a wildlife painting, the least preferred characteristic is realism or photographic quality. More than half of the people felt neither like or dislike for wildlife paintings with a personal association for them, and were ambivalent whether or not the art works have elements of nostalgia for them, or are of places visited, or have happy memories. The respondents broadly agreed with the suggested categories of appealing characteristics.

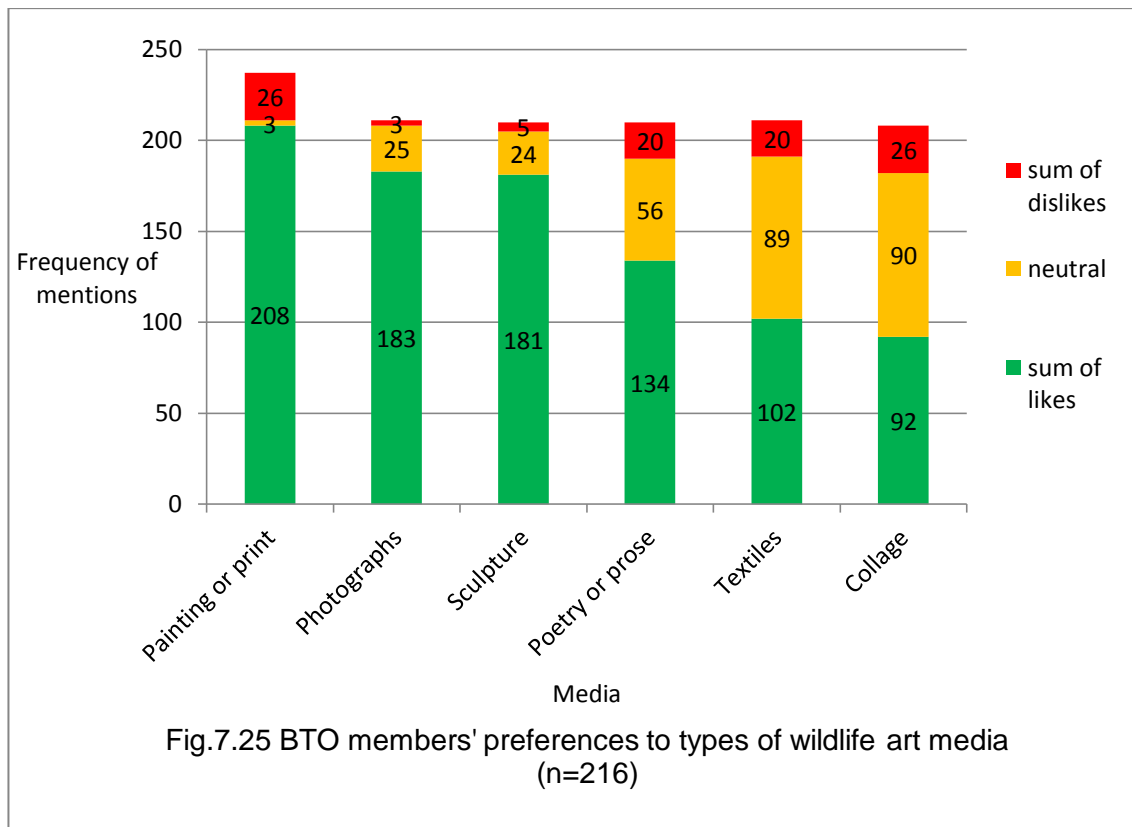
The top additional characteristics named were: colour; illustration of human connectedness to and relationship with nature; a conservation message; and art that has a novel approach, expresses originality, or has a sense of mystery or the unexpected. These features are, unfortunately, difficult to define, but are recognisable by the viewer.

7.2.4 Art Media and Subject Matter

The Mall Galleries visitor survey attempted to identify what the exhibition visitors found most appealing in terms of subject matter and methods of presentation. This investigation was repeated but amended in the BTO Members' survey. Drawing on replies and comments from the Galleries' visitors, respondents to the BTO Members' survey were asked (in Question 20) to indicate by a tick box their preferences towards ways of presenting wildlife art. The results are shown in Table 7.18, and presented graphically in Fig.7.25.

Table 7.18 BTO members' preferences for wildlife art media

	Like very much	Like	Total 'Like' and 'Like very much'	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike	Total 'Dislike' and 'Really dislike'	Blanks / no responses
Collage	35	57	92	90	23	3	26	15
Painting or print	156	52	208	3	0	0	0	12
Photographs	102	81	183	25	3	0	3	12
Poetry or prose	51	83	134	56	16	3	19	14
Sculpture	85	96	181	24	5	0	5	13
Textiles	32	70	102	89	19	1	20	12



The most popular art form was painting or prints, with a clear majority liking this very much. Photographs and sculpture were the second most popular ways of presenting nature art. Collage of materials was the least popular, with art works using textiles and poetry or prose slightly more popular.

Respondents were most ambivalent indicated by the 'neutral' preference box for collage and textiles.

From the gender analysis, women of whatever age were more likely than men to 'like very much' both collage and art using textiles, and there was an indication that men, particularly in the 50s and 60's age groups, were more ambivalent than women by indicating a 'neutral' preference as regards sculpture. Women and men were more likely to dislike and really dislike collage and textile art if they were in the 50s, 60s and 70s age groups, rather than the other age groups.

Responses to additional ways of presenting wildlife imagery not already listed (see Table 7.19), requested in question 20, included two comments about sculpture: "Subdividing sculpture into carved figures" (by a 50s male); and "Sculpture covers a huge area, from land sculpture at its largest scale down to the craftsmanship of the jeweller" (a 50s female). Regarding 'collage', a comment was made that: "I suppose by collage of materials you include using newspaper" (teens female). For photographs, a comment was: "I didn't include consideration of photographers in the previous list of people whose work I like - I would say photography is a different genre in its own right, rather than a sub-category of art" (a 50s female).

A female in 60s age group responded with 'like' to 'nature art as poetry or prose' and made the comment for this category that: "Books, such as '*H is for Hawk*' by Helen McDonald, and books by Richard Mabey, Robert McFarlane, Roger Deakin that evoke a sense of nature."

Three people suggested particular types of textile work as separate art forms: 'embroidery' (50s and 60s female in 60s); and 'needlework' (70s female). In addition, a number of other ways of presenting wildlife art were offered and the 51 replies were placed into categories of similar responses (see table 7.19) with some of the comments given below.

For ‘audio’ or ‘sound’ responses no further detail was provided. However, for ‘Natural sounds’ some respondents specifically mentioned: “A time line of dawn choruses in a location which shows the decline of song” (70s female); “sounds of animals/birds etc. and their way of life-nesting feeding etc” (60s female); and “Nature video, for example, BBC4’s ‘*Dawn Chorus*’ no narrative just bird song” (40s female). The responses ‘Music’ included the comments: “Consider musical representation, for example, Olivier Messiaen” (60s female); and “Classical music” (40s female).

The category ‘sketches and drawing’ included the following examples: “quick sketches done in the field, ie. pencil or charcoal sketches full of energetic observation” (by a 40s male); “Sketchings, dainty but neat drawings” (a teens female); “...Also I love to use black ink when I draw animals, but I use a sharp stick or quill, not a paintbrush” (teens female); and “Coloured pencil drawings” (a 50s female).

Table 7.19 BTO members’ suggestions for other media

Other wildlife art media	No. of mentions
Audio or sound	8
Music	8
Sketches & drawing	8
Performing arts	5
Ceramics & pottery	3
Natural sounds	3
Nature art	2
Dead wood sculpture	2
Taxidermy	2
Engraving & woodcuts	2
Advertising	1
Film/TV/video	1
Glasswork	1
Jewellery	1

Included within the 'performing arts' category were several different art forms, all mentioned only once, but contained broadly within a similar grouping, including: "aboriginal dance" (40s male); "Live story-telling on a nature theme" (40s male); and "Installation and performance, as in the work of Marcus Coates" (a 70s male).

'Nature art' and 'dead-wood sculpture' have been grouped separately although they may be the same. Nature art was supported by the following comments: "Nature art in public places, such as on walls/parks/urban spaces/unexpected places!" (40s female); and "Working with site specific materials in the landscape to express our connection to a sense of place" (60s male). 'Dead-wood sculpture' include the following comments: "There are some excellent artists using dead wood as a medium, which I see as different to sculpture" (70s male); and "sculpture growing out of natural materials, especially out of wood/dead trees" (60s female).

The advertising comment was (made by respondent unknown age or gender): "Good representational advertising". The jewellery comment was (made by female in 40s age group): "Jewellery based on natural forms e.g. acorn earrings". The film/TV/video comment was (made by female in 50s age group): "Some video/film is very arty - examples of this were shown on this year's '*Springwatch*' which were quite brilliant."

There were four items mentioned once only which were hard to classify as a distinct art form within the above list. These included: '*Tweet of the Day*' which could refer to the radio programme describing a bird and its behaviour, and providing a recording of its song, or to the supporting book of the featured birds providing the text of the radio programmes together with illustrations by the artist Carry Akroyd; "anything that expands our own senses e.g. microscope, IR or UV filters, in a creative way"; "Joy of creation" which could be a reference to a Creator being, or possibly to the process of making something in art form; and "In book form, particularly when featuring a single artist or medium" could encompass text (possibly including both

prose and poetry) as well as paintings, drawings and sketches in different media.

7.2.5 Nature Reserve Signs

As nature reserves are among the most important wildlife-rich areas, a key area to study is the understanding of and knowledge about them, derived from reserve signs or information boards. A selection of reserve boards was offered to the BTO Members'. The seven examples were from a range of organisations, areas of the country and of different visual styles from the very simple to the complex. Respondents were asked to express their preference both about the information provided and how it appealed to them.

Because Mike Toms of the BTO anticipated a large response to the BTO Members' survey, and because we wanted to limit the numbers of questions asked to thirty in total, he suggested randomly allocating an image to each respondent. Thus, each respondent viewed only one image rather than all seven. The information provided to them is shown below:

Nature Reserves - signs and maps

It is said that there are three essential pieces of information that a visitor to a nature reserve needs to be given: the reserve name; which organisation manages the reserve; and at least one reason for it being important for nature. Many organisations follow this basic guideline, but some information boards are very simple whilst others are much more detailed. Please indicate how you view the following information board, in terms of how it looks to you and the information it provides to you.

Photographs of the information boards, taken by me in the course of this research, are shown in Appendix 3 and described below:

1) Lardon Chase, Berkshire:

A 3-part sign, the rounded top bearing the words 'The National Trust', the National Trust oak leaves and acorn symbol and the name 'Lardon Chase'. Beneath this is a list of requests to visitors: not to drop litter or light fires; and the lowest sign states "animals grazing" and that "dogs must be kept on leads". The sign is simple, clear and in black and white, with only one image of the National Trust's logo with no map, and no information about species,

protection, history or management on the site. Local people have told me that the sign has been in situ for a number of years.

2) Parsonage Down National Nature Reserve, Wiltshire:

A large wooden structure, with a panel at least 1m off the ground rising to over 2m at the top, is a simple information board with a large NE logo at the top right, the site name, a small brown and white coloured map, and a short site description (3 paragraphs) including the words “welcome to...”. The sign post-dates the start of NE in 2006 (see also Fig.7.11).

3) High House Farm, High Peak Estate, Peak District

This sign is in 2 parts, the top being similar to that at Lardon Chase with the National Trust name and logo, and site name. Below this is a panel welcoming the visitor to the High Peak Estate, with coloured photographs of sheep, a shepherd/farmer, and the landscape, with five short paragraphs or single sentences entitled “Living on the Land”. There is no map. The colour in the images appears fresh and from the lack of weathering, this appears to be a recent board.

4) Parsonage Down (EN), Wiltshire

This EN sign predates 2006 (see Fig.7.11). At the top left of the panel is EN's name and logo, and on the right the name of the site. Beneath this, there is a large coloured painting of a view across the site, with cattle, flowering plants, birds, such as, Lapwing and Skylark, and butterflies. There is an adjacent black and white image depicting and identifying the silhouettes of the creatures depicted in the main painting. There are seven paragraphs of text, and a strap-line “working today for nature tomorrow”. There is no map.

5) Torpel Manor Field, Peterborough

This panel is no more than 1-5m high. The visitor is welcomed to the Field by the Langdyke Trust, which gives its name and logo. There is a location map, images of a butterfly and sheep, and what appears to be a reproduction from a manuscript of a medieval hunting scene. There are two long panels of

text, with other information elsewhere in seven long paragraphs. The colour in the images appears fresh and from the lack of weathering, this appears to be a recent board.

6) Wye Valley, Peaks

“Welcome to the Wye Valley” is in large lettering at the top of this panel, adjacent to one paragraph of description of the White Peak. Below this is a large, annotated map with numbered locations each with a short single paragraph together with small vignettes of the landscape and plants and animals to be found. Down the entire left hand side of the panel is a coloured image (in vertical format) of a close-up image of a Dipper on a tumbling stream, with rocks behind rising up to a grassy hill top. This image has the strapline in large, clear but visually interesting lettering “Gateway to a wild Peak Experience”. The colour in the images appears fresh and from the lack of weathering, this appears to be a recent board.

7) Great Fen, Cambridgeshire

This Information Point provided by the Wildlife Trust is covered by a thatched roof from reed grown on the Fen, and has coloured panels of drawings, paintings, photographs and text, a leaflet dispensers and maps. It is not clear from the photograph provided to respondents, but the three panels offer information on the past, the current situation and future plans for the site. The site name is not clear but the visitor will have already passed a NE Woodwalton Fen NNR sign before they arrive at this point. This information point and panels have been constructed in the few years.

Randomly allocated, the numbers of images were roughly evenly distributed amongst respondents in a range of between 10 – 17% of the respondents (see Table 7.20). There were 7 blanks

Table 7.20 Nature Reserve signage: number of random-allocations to BTO members

Image No. and Name	No of respondents
1) Lardon Chase, Berkshire	30
2) Parsonage Down, Wiltshire	22
3) High Peak Estate, Peak District	37
4) Parsonage Down, Wiltshire	36
5) Torpel Manor Field, Peterborough	24
6) Wye Valley, Peaks	30
7) Great Fen, Cambridgeshire	37

Because of the slightly uneven allocation of images, percentages within each sample were calculated to aid comparison between them (see Table 7.21 and Table 7.22).

Table 7.21 Preferences for the information provided on nature reserve signs

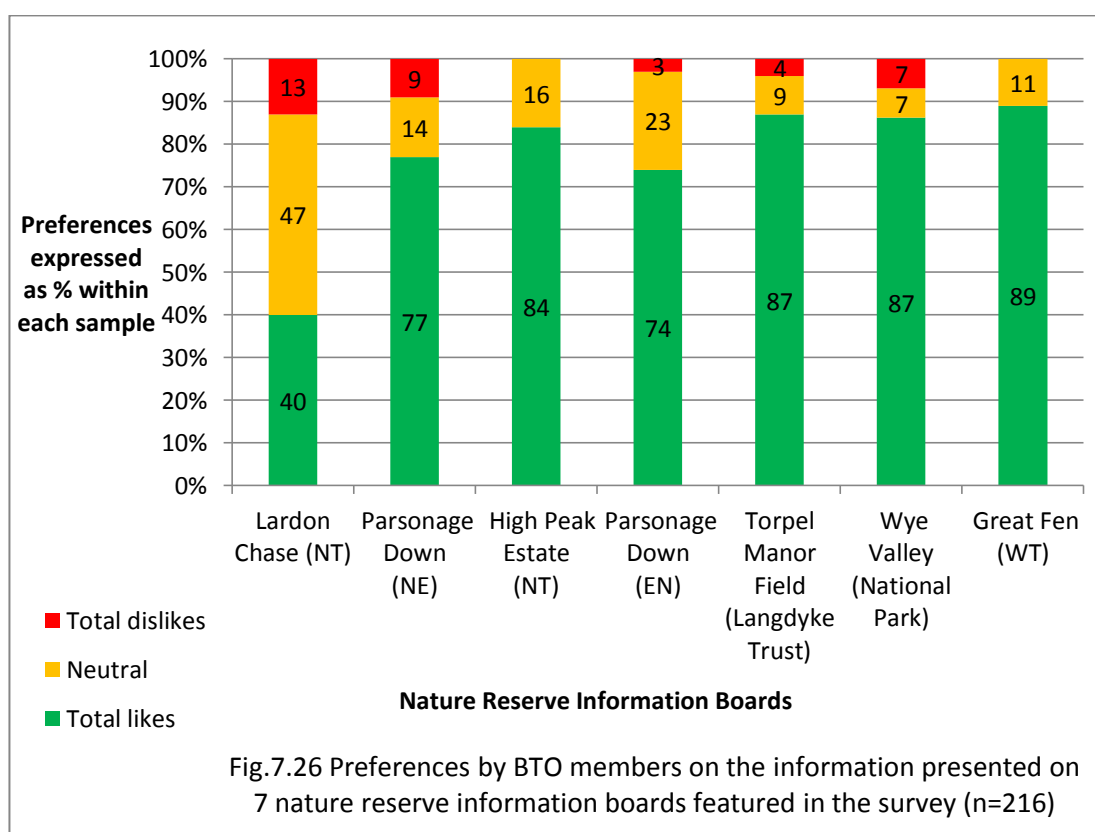
Preferences expressed as % within each sample	Like very much	Like	Total likes	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike	Total dislikes
1) Lardon Chase, Berkshire	13	27	40	47	13	0	13
2) Parsonage Down Wiltshire	18	59	77	14	9	0	9
3) High Peak Estate, Peak District	27	57	84	16	0	0	0
4) Parsonage Down Wiltshire	20	54	74	23	3	0	3
5) Torpel Manor Field, Peterborough	35	52	87	9	0	4	4
6) Wye Valley, Peaks	47	40	87	7	3	3	7
7) Great Fen, Cambridgeshire	28	61	89	11	0	0	0

Table 7.22 Preferences for the aesthetic quality of the nature reserve signs

Preferences expressed as % within each sample	Like very much	Like	Total likes	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike	Total dislikes
1) Lardon Chase, Berkshire	13	17	30	43	23	3	27
2) Parsonage Down Wiltshire (NE)	9	23	32	55	14	0	14
3) High Peak Estate, Peak District	19	46	65	30	5	0	5
4) Parsonage Down Wiltshire (EN)	14	44	58	31	11	0	11
5) Torpel Manor Field, Peterborough	17	35	52	30	17	0	17
6) Wye Valley, Peaks	37	33	70	20	7	3	10
7) Great Fen, Cambs.	27	42	67	14	17	0	17

The least liked board, by a wide margin, was that for Lardon Chase on both the presentation of the information and on aesthetic quality. This was also the board about which respondents were most ambivalent for the way the information was presented recorded by a 'neutral' preference. The other 'least liked' on aesthetic grounds was the NE version of the sign for Parsonage Down, and was the board about which respondents were most ambivalent.

All the boards, except for Lardon Chase's, were rated fairly similarly for the information presented, with Torpel Manor Field, the Wye Valley, Great Fen and High Peak Estate being most liked (see Fig.7.26). The board most 'very much liked' for its aesthetic qualities was that for the Wye Valley by a clear margin. It was also the most liked, as recorded by the sum of the 'likes' and 'very much liked, closely followed by the board at The Great Fen, and the one for the High Peak (see Fig.7.27). There were no trends or conclusions could be drawn from the age or gender information.



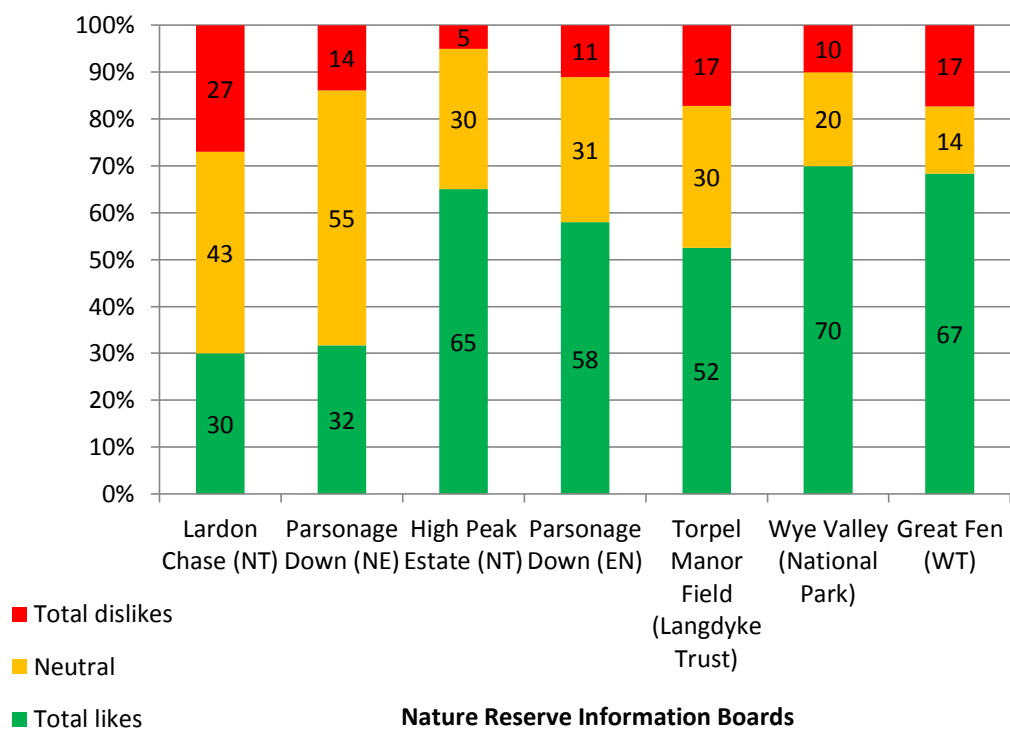


Fig.7.27 Preferences by BTO members on the aesthetic qualities of the seven nature reserve boards featured in the questionnaire (n=216)

The older boards were less favoured than the more recent boards. This may have been due to writing style, the limited information offered, the absence of graphics, or another reason. People seemed to respond positively to the word ‘welcome’, to coloured images, a short amount of text and a map. The two boards of greatest appeal were those for the Wye Valley and the Great Fen. They both provide a lot of colourful information and using lots of illustrations. The Wye Valley board may have the ‘edge’, because of the dramatic and eye-catching imagery down one side of the whole panel. In addition, the statement “Gateway to a wild Peak Experience” could be seen as exciting and emotive.

7.2.6 Conveying Information

In considering ‘learning about nature’, a similar approach was made to that used in the Mall Galleries visitor survey in that two images were offered to BTO members to express their preferences. However, the variable factors in

the corresponding question in the Mall Galleries Survey were reduced. Here both images were photographs, and both included grass and scrub habitats. The varying factors were then age/gender and activity, and people were included in the images.

Under the heading ‘Learning about nature & getting involved’, respondents were told that: “Nature organisations like to encourage learning about wildlife and the countryside, and also active involvement in nature conservation, by their members and the general public. Photographs and images are often used to show how this can be done. In both these illustrations below, people are depicted learning about wildlife and habitats.” This question (Q23) showed two contrasting images: ‘A’ depicted two men with binoculars around their necks, sitting on a hay bale in a meadow and looking intently at a record sheet or identification chart, taken from a BTO publication. Image (B) depicted a group (mixed gender and ages) on a guided walk in the countryside (a version of the image used in Q7a of the Mall Galleries’ survey). Respondents were requested to indicate their preference in the tick boxes. A clear majority preferred Image A, far fewer respondents preferred Image B, and those that either liked both images or liked neither image numbered about each one fifth of the sample (see Table 7.23).

Table 7.23 BTO members’ preferences between two images for ‘learning about nature’

Image	Numbers expressing a preference:	Percentage of sample (total of 215 respondents)
A (2 recorders in a field)	93	43%
B (guided walk)	33	15%
Both images	48	22%
Neither image	41	19%

An analysis of age and gender relating to preferences revealed two findings: 1) In the 30s-70s age groups, men were slightly more likely to prefer both images than women; and 2) women in the 60s age group were more likely to prefer neither image than men in their 60s (see Table 7.24).

Table 7.24 BTO members' gender preferences between two images for 'learning about nature'

Number of respondents	women	% of all women	men	% of all men
Total no. of respondents	120		94	
Preference for image A (30s-70s)	49	41%	42	45%
Preference for Image B (30s-70s)	15	13%	18	19%
Total no. of respondents in 60s	42		25	
Liking neither image in 60s group	13	31%	3	12%

Both images depict active participation, with perhaps more intense concentration required for the activity shown in Image A. This image was more appealing across nearly all groups. However, nearly one fifth of the respondents did not find either image inviting or encouraging their participation. This may be age related, though it could reflect different interests than those depicted, or a dislike of organised learning.

Under the heading 'Conservation Concerns' BTO Members were given the explanation that "Wildlife organisations sometimes campaign about a particular issue or problem, such as climate change, or loss of natural habitat to agriculture or to development or to roads, or damage to water courses from pollution, or illegal killing of birds of prey, or litter in the sea." I thought the images used in the Mall Galleries' visitor survey would demonstrate damage to the environment, but the responses demonstrated that they were confusing, perceived to offer a different message to that intended and were out of context. Consequently, for the BTO members' survey, I asked the two questions without illustrations (Questions 24&25) about their preferences for the use of hard-hitting imagery and those with a softer, more positive and co-operative tone (see Fig.7.28).

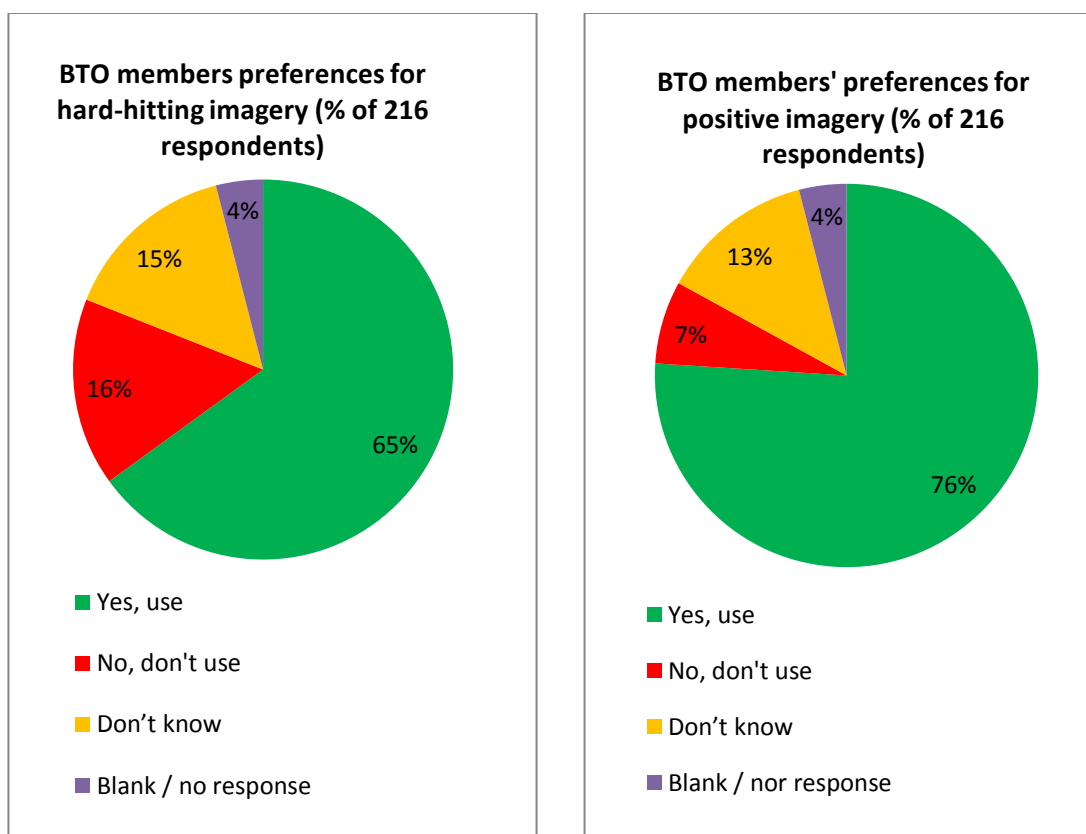


Fig.7.28 BTO members preferences for hard-hitting and positive imagery

There was a clear preference (two thirds of respondents) for the use of hard-hitting and explicit imagery (see Table 7.25).

Table 7.25 BTO members' preferences for hard-hitting imagery:

Responses from all 223 respondents (numbers of women to men are 120 : 94)	Total for each preference	% of total no of respondents	Responses by women compared to men
Yes	144	65%	70 : 70
No	36	16%	27 : 9
Don't know	34	15%	22 : 12
Blank / no response	9	4%	5 : 4

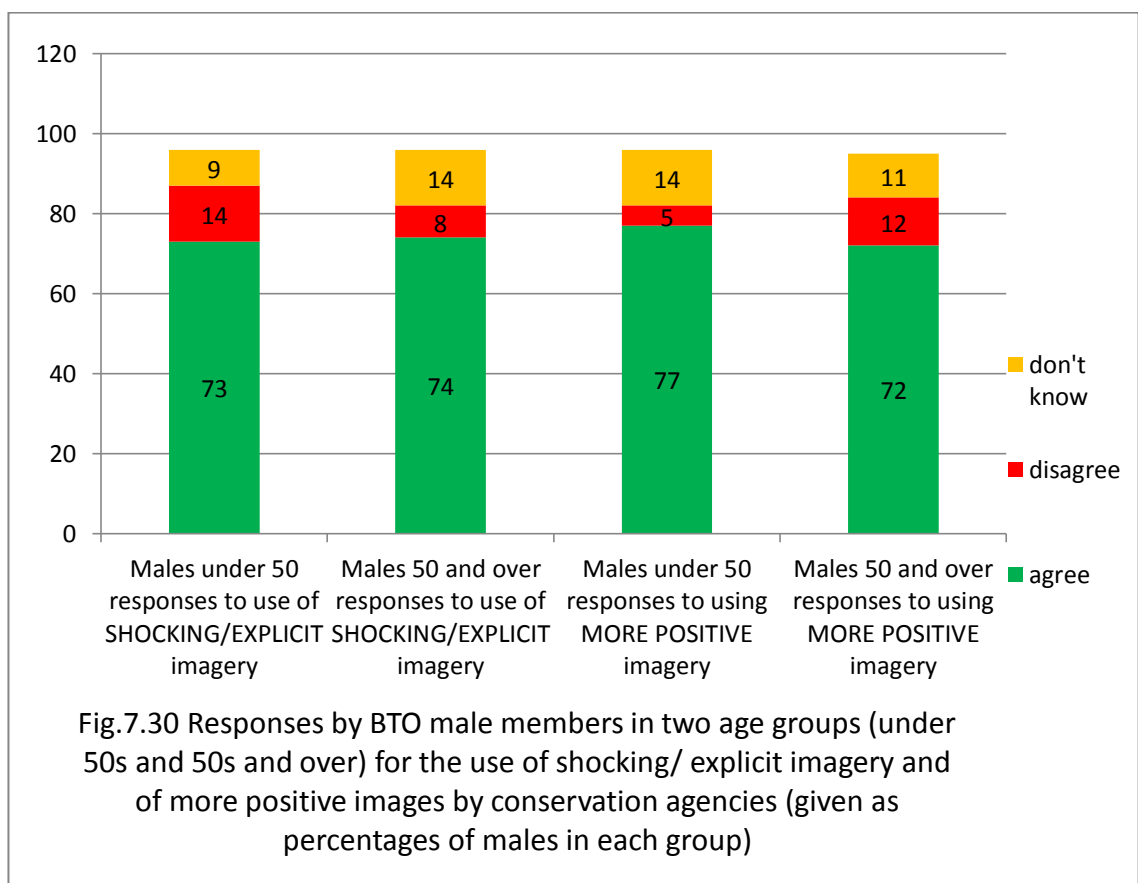
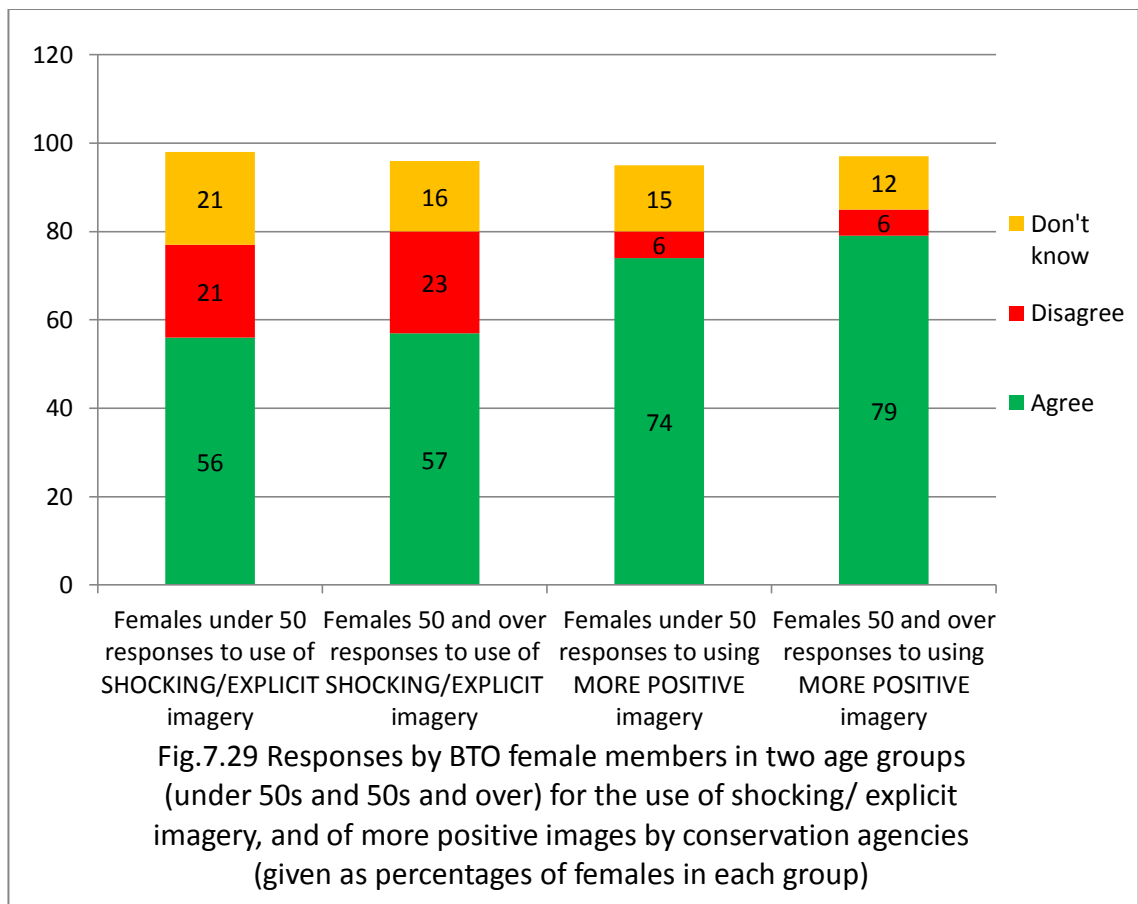
Gender analysis of these responses reveals that although equal numbers of men and women favoured hard-hitting imagery, proportionally more women than men did not favour hard-hitting imagery or were uncertain about its use.

Table 7.26 BTO members' preferences for positive imagery

Responses from all 223 respondents (numbers of women to men are 120 : 94)	Total for each preference	% of total no of respondents	Responses by women compared to men
Yes	169	76%	95 : 70
No	16	7%	6 : 10
Don't know	28	13%	16 : 11
Blank / nor response	10	4%	6: 4

There is also a clear preference (three quarters of respondents) for the use of positive imagery (see Table 7.26). 'Yes' responses by women and men roughly reflect that which would be expected based on numbers of women and men respondents. However, the 'no' responses had more men than women preferring this option, and 13 of the 16 'no's also responded 'yes' to the use of hard-hitting imagery. Presenting this data visually shows the similarity of responses of females and males of both age groups, with the clear difference that women (of all ages) prefer more positive imagery to shocking/explicit imagery to be used by conservation agencies than men (see Fig. 7.29 and Fig. 7.30).

The gender analysis of these responses reveals that, although equal numbers of men and women favoured hard-hitting imagery, proportionally more women (of any age) than men did not favour hard-hitting imagery or were uncertain about its use.



It would appear that positive images of conservation success resulting from co-operative projects are welcome and may reflect a hope for improving conditions for wildlife and to know that specific progress is being made. This finding accords with a number of conservation organisations for example in interview with Andy Clements CEO BTO in January 2015, and in output from Natural England in recent years, where there has been a move away from explicit and hard-hitting imagery.

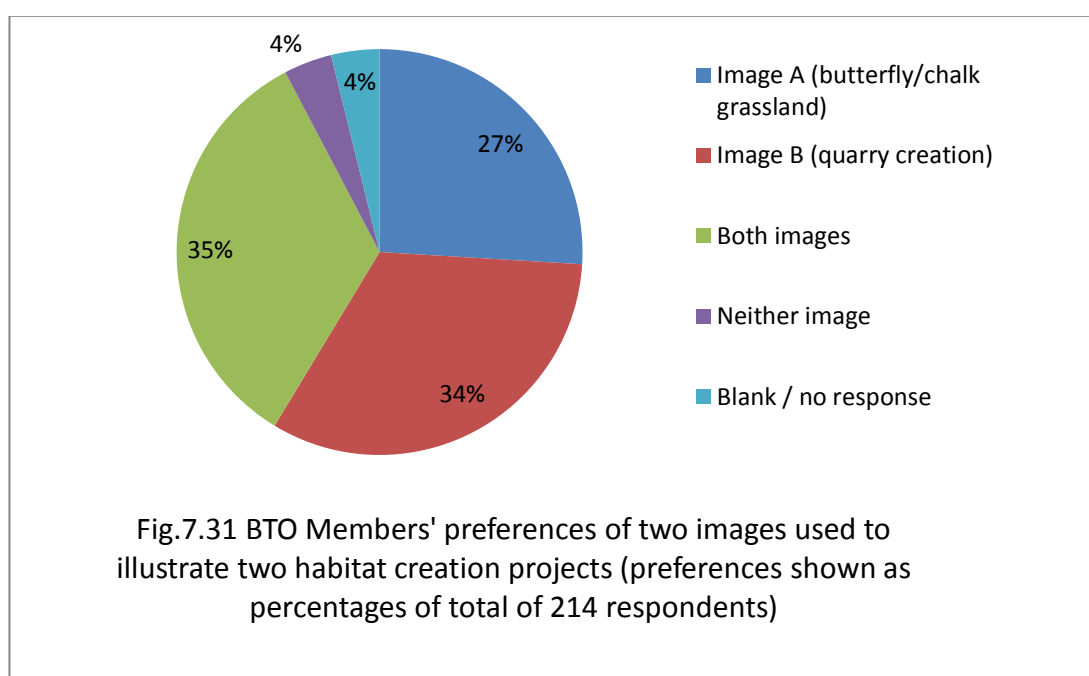
However, these findings would also suggest that hard-hitting and explicit imagery is not unwelcome and may reflect a more honest approach to environmental issues. In addition, the results may indicate that men may prefer a more confrontational approach, and women may be more cautious in the use of hard-hitting material. It may be that nature conservation organisations need to be honest and be explicit when there is a problem, but also promote good, positive news of co-operation and conservation success.

The questionnaire moved on to images about conservation projects. The Mall Galleries' visitor survey used an embroidered depiction of an orchid restoration project and compared with an artist's impression of a completed wetland creation project. The embroidered picture was not well received despite being about the very rare and iconic Lady's Slipper Orchid, so this image was changed for the BTO members' survey.

For the BTO Member's survey, the two habitat creation images used when seeking responses on what imagery could secure support for a conservation project were a wetland creation painting by Bruce Pearson featuring a number of rare bird species Bittern, Marsh Harrier and Bearded Tit, which would benefit from the proposed project, and I selected a photograph from a different habitat, chalk grassland restoration, and a different species, the Marbled White butterfly. Respondents were asked to indicate which of the image would hypothetically encourage them to support the projects. No comments were requested.

Table 7.27 BTO members' preferences for imagery about conservation projects

Responses from all 223 respondents (tot. no. of women respondents were 120, & tot. no. of men 94)	Preference	Percentage of sample (total of 214 respondents)	% of women's preferences of tot. no. of women respondents	% of men's preferences of tot. no. of men respondents
Image A (butterfly/chalk grassland)	57	27%	38 women (32%)	19 men (20%)
Image B (quarry creation)	73	34%	32 women (27%)	41 men (44%)
Both images	75	35%	43 women (36%)	29 men (31%)
Neither image	9	4%	6 women (5%)	1 man (1%)
Blank / no response	9	4%	-	-



There was a fairly even distribution between the two images, except for those who liked neither image which was very low (see Table 7.27 and Fig.7.7.31). Slightly more people preferred the painting of the habitat creation project. Despite there being no bird image in the chalk grassland project this was still a favoured image by the BTO Members, with over a quarter preferring this image to the one with three rare bird species depicted. The photograph was a clear close-up image of the butterfly, but with little drama or action. Gender

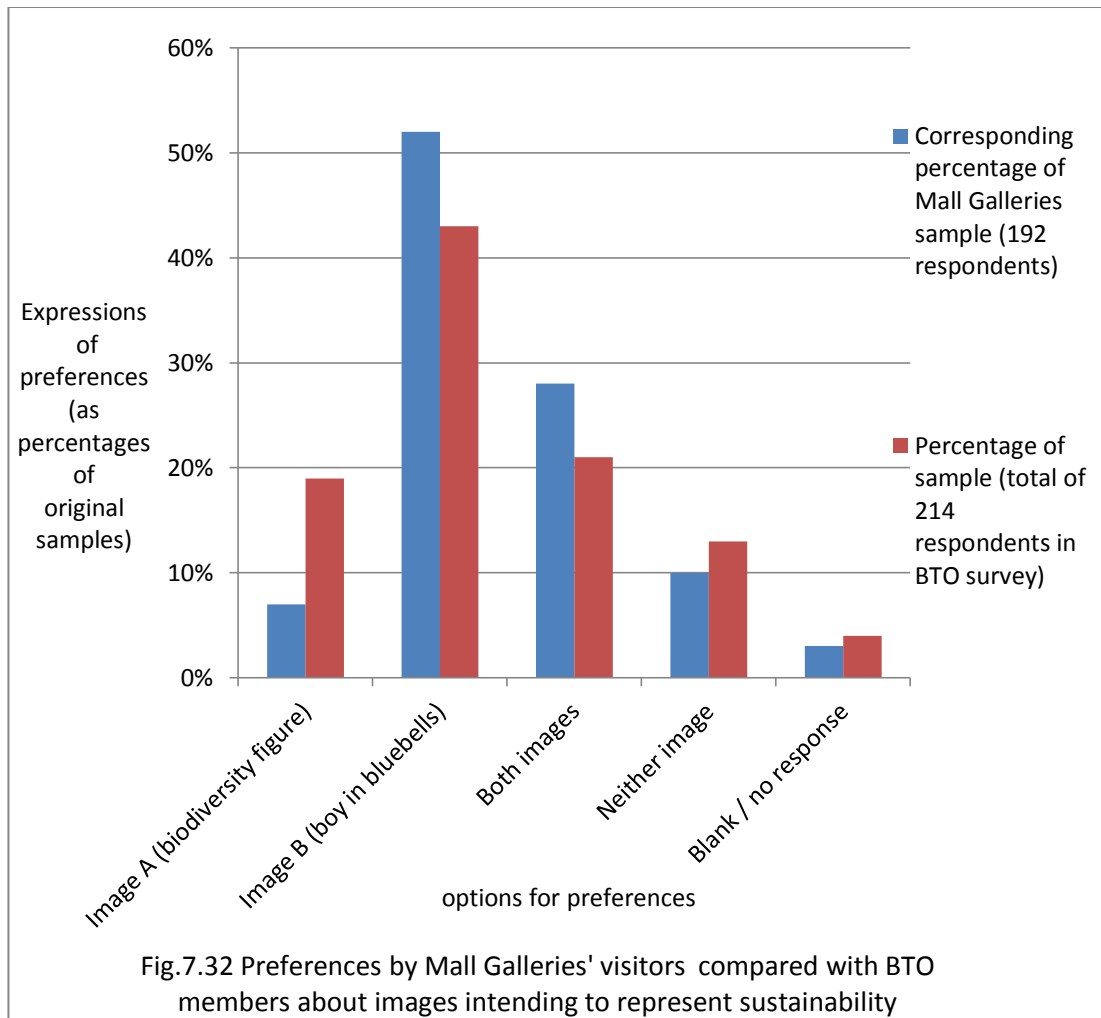
analysis of these responses reveals that a greater percentage of women than men favoured the butterfly chalk grassland image, and proportionately more men than women favoured the habitat creation quarry painting.

The last pair of images was concerned with conveying information by visual means to improve understanding of sustainability and our role in the future of wildlife and wild places. For the BTO Members' survey, the same two images used in the Mall Galleries' questionnaire were repeated, but this time the term 'a sustainable future' was added as the heading. The results are shown in Table 7.28.

Table 7.28 BTO members' preferences for sustainability images

Responses from all 223 respondents	Preference	Percentage of sample (total of 214 respondents in BTO survey)		Corresponding percentage of Mall Galleries sample
Image A (biodiversity figure)	42	19%		7%
Image B (boy in bluebells)	97	43%		52%
Both images	46	21%		28%
Neither image	29	13%		10%
Blank / no response	9	4%		3%

The image of the boy in the bluebells encouraged more BTO members to think about their role for the future of biodiversity than the other image, but 10% of the respondents did not like either image, and a fifth liked both. There was no discernible difference between genders and ages in terms of their responses to this question.



Comparing the two survey results (see Fig.7.32), there were similar numbers who liked both images and disliked both images, and who did not respond. However there was roughly 10% difference between them on preferences for the two images: more of the Mall Galleries' visitors preferred the image of the boy in the bluebells; and more of the BTO Members preferred the design-type image.

7.2.7 Childhood Nature Imagery

Using the list derived from the Mall Galleries' visitor survey, respondents in the BTO Members survey were asked (under the heading 'Q28 – childhood interest in nature') to indicate which book or author had influenced their early interest in wildlife from a choice of 'yes (influenced me)' or 'no (did not influence me)'. A number of respondents only ticked the 'yes' preference box so there were a higher number of blanks than elsewhere in the survey. A

'blank' may have indicated a 'don't know' or a negative response and because of this, only the 'yes' responses were studied in detail.

Table 7.29 Influence of childhood books/imagery on BTO members' nature interest

Book(s) (Date of first publication or start of range of publications shown in brackets)	Total 'yes' responses	% of women 'yes' replies of tot. no. of women respondents	% of men 'yes' replies of tot. no. of men respondents	No of blank/ other/prefer not to say 'yes' responses
'Observer' books (1937-)	146	62%	74%	2
'Ladybird' books (1915-to date)	136	62%	62%	4
'I-Spy' books (1948-2002 & relaunched in 2009)	119	56%	53%	2
Gerald Durrell books (1953- 1990)	116	58%	47%	3
Kenneth Grahame ' <i>Wind in the Willows</i> ' (1908)	115	60%	41%	4
Beatrix Potter books (1902-)	93	57%	23%	3
Henry Williamson ' <i>Tarka the Otter</i> ' (1927)	92	48%	34%	2
Gavin Maxwell ' <i>Ring of Bright Water</i> ' (1960)	91	43%	38%	3
Shell - Guides to the Countryside & posters (1934-)	85	38%	39%	3
Rudyard Kipling ' <i>Just So Stories</i> '/' <i>Jungle Book</i> ' (1902/1894)	84	42%	33%	3
Richard Adams ' <i>Watership Down</i> ' (1972)	77	43%	27%	1
' <i>New Naturalists</i> ' books and covers (1945-to date)	71	24%	43%	2
Enid Blyton books (1921-)	61	34%	19%	2
Cicely Mary Barker ' <i>Flower Fairy</i> ' stories (1923-)	43	32%	3%	2
Roald Dahl ' <i>Fantastic Mr Fox</i> ' (1970)	24	13%	9%	1

The most influential books across all age groups were 'Observer' books but with more men than women choosing this book. 'Ladybird' books and 'I-spy' books were the next most influential, at very nearly the same numbers of men and women. These books are essentially fact-based, knowledge-rich books that encourage skills of observation, identification and recording – all essential for specialist bird watchers involved in surveys, recording and monitoring, and essential skills for actively participating BTO members.

For all the remaining book titles offered, gender differences were found. For example, women found the following books more influential than men: Kenneth Grahame's '*Wind in the Willows*', Beatrix Potter books, Richard Adams' '*Watership Down*', Enid Blyton books and Flower Fairies stories all showing at least 15% difference between women and men. The New Naturalists' books and covers were viewed as more influential on childhood interest in wildlife by men than women. Stories based on real-life experiences, such as Gerald Durrell's '*My Family and Other Animals*' and Gavin Maxwell's '*Ring of Bright Water*', as well as fantasy novels, such as Kenneth Grahame's '*Wind in the Willows*', various stories by Beatrix Potter and Cicely Mary Barker's '*Flower Fairy*' stories were influential on some youngsters, though tending to be more influential on girls than boys. The different responses by women and men could suggest that different styles of book (fact or narrative for example) may be influential on how youngsters become interested in wildlife and nature conservation. All those saying that Roald Dahl's '*Fantastic Mr Fox*' had positively influenced their childhood interest in wildlife were all in the 50s age group and under. This is to be expected as this book was first published in 1970.

7.2.8 Motivation for Conservation

A number of responses in the Mall Galleries Survey commented on the motivational power of being in the natural environment. This observation became the penultimate question (Q29) of the BTO Members' survey asking whether as children, they had been more motivated to be interested in nature by being out-and-about in the countryside or living in or near the countryside, rather than by books or images. The results seemed to support this observation, with 70% of the respondents supporting the former rather than the latter option. Of these women and men responded similarly. However, 15% felt they had not been motivated this way, and of these there were slightly more women than men. Approximately 10% did not know, or could not remember, or could not decide one way or the other.

7.2.9 Better Promotion of Nature Conservation

For the last question in the BTO Members' survey, the ideas suggested in Q10 of the Mall Galleries, about using art to better promote nature conservation, were grouped together and Members asked to indicate their support or otherwise for the ideas proposed. These suggestions were not in alphabetical order, nor order of popularity, and I separated the negative imagery suggestion from the use of powerful, shocking imagery. The results are shown in Table 7.30 and Fig.7.33.

The figures indicate that a clear majority (172 participants/ 77%) agreed strongly with the statement that "There is a need for greater public awareness of nature conservation". Together with those that agreed with the statement, 207 (93%) of respondents were in agreement with this statement. Only four people were neutral and one strongly disagreed.

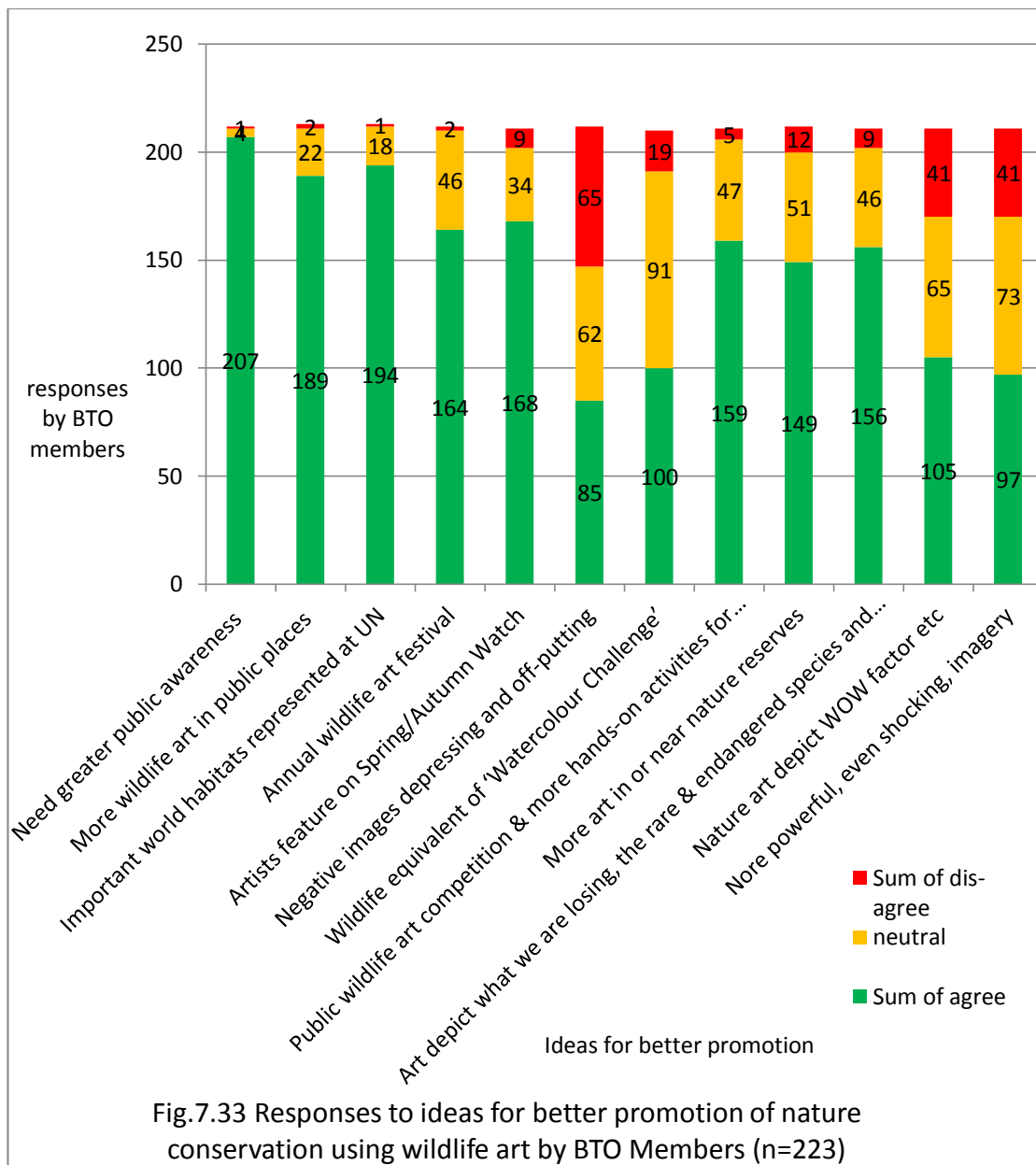
The second most strongly agreed with and the second highest total of those in agreement were for the statement "Important world habitats, such as the oceans, should be represented at the UN". This probably indicates the wide knowledge that is held about the state of world habitats, and reflects the amount of coverage of these issues in the conservation sector and in the press.

The statement 'More wildlife art in public places is needed, such as posters; television advertisements and programmes, newspaper and magazine articles, public sculptures' was the third most 'agreed with' and 'strongly agreed' with statement. The least favoured suggestion was to have a wildlife art equivalent to the 'Watercolour Challenge' television programme, and this idea also scored the most 'neutral' responses.

People indicated that they would rather that 'wildlife art should depict what we are losing, the rare & endangered species and habitats, and about looking after nature', rather than '...go for the WOW factor, the happy memory, the fleeting glimpse, the fascinating, and portraying nature as beautiful'.

Table 7.30 BTO members' preferences for better promotion of nature conservation

Better promotion of nature conservation:	agree strongly	agree	Sum of agree	neutral	Dis-agree	Dis-agree strongly	Sum of dis-agree	blank
Need for greater public awareness of nature conservation	172	35	207	4	0	1	1	11
More wildlife art in public places, such as posters; television advertisements and programmes, newspaper and magazine articles, public sculptures	113	76	189	22	1	1	2	10
Important world habitats, such as the oceans represented at the UN	141	53	194	18	1	0	1	10
Annual wildlife art festival	97	67	164	46	1	1	2	11
Artists should feature on Spring/Autumn Watch	95	73	168	34	9	0	9	12
Negative images can be depressing and off-putting	21	64	85	62	59	6	65	11
Wildlife equivalent of 'Watercolour Challenge'	42	58	100	91	13	6	19	13
Public wildlife art competition and more hands-on activities for adults & children	76	83	159	47	4	1	5	12
More art in or near nature reserves	60	89	149	51	8	4	12	11
Art should depict what we are losing, the rare & endangered species and habitats, and about looking after nature	76	80	156	46	9	0	9	12
Nature art must go for the WOW factor, the happy memory, the fleeting glimpse, the fascinating, portraying nature as beautiful	43	62	105	65	34	7	41	12
We should use more powerful, perhaps even shocking, imagery, such as the WWII propaganda posters	36	61	97	73	34	7	41	12



In addition, the 'WOW factor' statement received similar scoring to the use of 'more powerful, perhaps even shocking, imagery, such as the WWII propaganda posters', which reflected the even-handedness of answers to questions about 'Conservation Concerns' (Q.24 and 25). Members were asked about their preferences for the use of hard-hitting imagery and those with a softer, more positive and co-operative tone. Gender differences on questions about shocking imagery (in Q.24 and 25) were similar to those observed in the question about ideas for better promotion of nature conservation (Q.30). The statement that 'Negative images can be depressing and off-putting' revealed that 58 of the 85 people agreed or

strongly agreed were women (representing 48% of all the women) compared to the 25 men (representing 27% of all the men). Twenty-six women (representing 22% of all the women), and 37 men (representing 39% of all the men) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Similarly, 47 women agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'We should use more powerful, perhaps even shocking, imagery, such as the WWII propaganda posters' representing 39% of all the women) compared to 49 of the men (representing 52% of all the men). Thirty-one women (representing 26% of all the women), and 10 men (representing 11% of all the men) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

7.2.10 Main Findings from the BTO Members' Survey:

From this group's preferences about artists and their work, if art was to be used to depict a conservation message, the work may have a greater appeal and impact if artists use a novel style, and not necessarily produce a painting that fills the frame, nor is in traditionally realistic perspective and style. However, because of the number and variety of artists identified, it may be that the work of all artists could be used in nature conservation imagery to good effect.

The characteristics of a wildlife depiction that are most appealing to and make the greatest impact on these BTO members were: capturing the essence of the subject and/or its behaviour or expression (as one member described 'its jizz'); good composition or design; colour; illustration of human connectedness to and relationship with nature; a conservation message; and art that has a novel approach, expresses originality, or has a sense of mystery or the unexpected. The inclusion of these characteristics in art with a conservation message could improve the impact of its message. Conversely, least favoured characteristics were realism or photographic quality, and members were ambivalent about wildlife paintings having a personal association for them, elements of nostalgia or associations with places visited

or happy memories, and images featuring these characteristics might be less successful in terms of conveying a conservation message.

The depiction of nature in art as paintings or prints, photographs or sculpture appear to be the most appealing and these would probably be the most useful art form in which to have an impact and portray a conservation message. However, all art forms appear to appeal, though considering the target audience, for example age and gender, may be important to the success of the message.

Regarding nature reserve information boards, people seem to respond positively to: the word 'welcome'; coloured images; a short amount of text; and a map. Boards of greatest appeal provide a lot of information in a colourful, viewer-friendly way using lots of illustrations. Dramatic and eye-catching imagery and exciting and emotive text are also appealing.

For images that depict and encourage learning about nature, this group of people interested in birds favoured the quieter one-to-one activity to the guided walk which can be noisy and likely to drive birds away. Although guide walks are useful, for bird watchers a quieter approach may be preferable. Some bird watchers may not be interested in organised learning, or the activities depicted were not of interest to them.

Clear colourful imagery, particularly of species that would benefit from the work, appears to help encourage support for conservation projects. The lack of depiction of favourite or favoured species of a target single interest group is not necessarily a disincentive when seeking support for a wider conservation project. The use of a butterfly image may be slightly more appealing to women than men, and male (more than female) birdwatchers may slightly prefer landscapes with rare birds depicted.

Some images have the ability to encourage people to think about how they can help the future of wildlife and wild habitats, with the boy among the bluebells appealing to between 64% and 80% from the two samples. However, the two particular images used for the sustainability question were

not overwhelmingly appealing to respondents, as there were approximately 10% of respondents to whom neither image appealed.

The top most influential books for these BTO members when children, were essentially fact-based, knowledge-rich books (the 'Observer' series, the 'Ladybird' books, and 'I-Spy' books) that encouraged skills of observation, identification and recording – all essential for specialist bird watchers involved in surveys, recording and monitoring.

Stories based on real-life experiences, such as Gerald Durrell's '*My Family and Other Animals*' and Gavin Maxwell's '*Ring of Bright Water*', as well as fantasy novels, such as Kenneth Grahame's '*Wind in the Willows*', various stories by Beatrix Potter and Cicely Mary Barker's '*Flower Fairy*' stories were influential on some youngsters, though tending to be more influential on girls than boys. This may reflect that the content was more appealing to girls, or that girls were more likely to read stories about animals and the countryside.

A number of the Mall Galleries' visitors commented on the motivational power of being in the countryside. Using this as a basis for the penultimate question, it was revealed that this cohort of people, interested in the work of the BTO, its surveys and data gathering, and in the citizen-science that is part of the organisation's work, were as children living in or near to the countryside and/or visiting it. This finding supports the work of various organisations that encourage children's outdoor activities, such as the National Trust's children's campaign of '50 things to do before you are 11¾' (<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/families/50-things/>), the RSPB's activities for children (<http://www.rspb.org.uk/discoverandenjoynature/families/children/>) and the Wildlife Trusts' Wildlife WATCH (<http://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/>).

Respondents seemed acutely aware that more needs to be done to raise public awareness of nature conservation. They largely agreed that there should be more wildlife art in public places, including in the media (such as television and newspapers) and in using a range of artistic styles, including

sculptures. Most of the statements offered in the survey were about an art proposal itself and no individual suggestion seemed to indicate that it could help raise public awareness to the extent required. It would appear that some women prefer a softer, less confrontational approach to wildlife imagery than men. These results would indicate that some types of imagery will appeal differentially to men and women.

7.3 Summary Points of the Surveys

My original research in Chapter 7 is based on the observations by Hammond (1986) and (1998) on the work of nature artists, as set out in sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3, but goes on to explore the impact of the work of nature artists on two groups of the general public. The surveys are guided by the methodologies of other researchers, as set out in section 3.3.1, but adapted to my particular research requirements.

The results from these two surveys of public opinion on wildlife art and nature conservation reveal a number of similarities, but also differences. The BTO members' survey repeated some of the questions asked in the Mall Galleries visitors' survey and investigated some areas in more depth. These two samples suggest some general conclusions.

In terms of imagery useful for nature conservation, although most artists and media appealed to both groups, the essence of a subject, its 'jizz', or its accurate depiction, not necessarily highly detailed, would be essential. Credibility of the artwork seems fundamental to its popularity or acceptability.

Appealing characteristics in an artwork are those that illustrate human connectedness to and relationship with nature, provide a conservation message, have a novel approach, express originality, or have a sense of mystery or the unexpected. Together with colour and good design, these would appear to be features in conservation imagery that could assist in conveying a conservation message. These characteristics would apply to nature reserve signs and other material.

Tailoring the image to the audience would also seem essential: younger folk may be more ambivalent than older folk over nostalgic or sentimental images; sculpture may appeal to all ages and gender, but textiles and collage are more favoured by women; and bird enthusiasts may prefer illustrations of one-to-one quieter activities compared to families and groups enjoying joint activities, such as a guided walk. Images of confrontation or hard-hitting messages, although memorable, are less favoured by women. Despite the need for honest approaches to environmental issues, positive images of conservation success resulting from co-operative projects are welcome and may reflect a hope for improving conditions for wildlife and the knowledge that specific progress is being made.

Fact-based, knowledge-rich books, such as the '*Observer*' series, the '*Ladybird*' books, and '*I-Spy*' books, may encourage youngsters to develop skills of observation, identification and recording which are essential for naturalists and specialist bird watchers, particularly those involved in surveys, recording and monitoring. Stories based on real-life experiences as well as fantasy novels about wildlife can also contribute to a childhood interest in nature. However, for many people interested in wildlife, their interest starts by being in the countryside, enjoying and learning about it.

Both groups of people were acutely aware that more needs to be done to raise public awareness of nature conservation. They largely agreed that there should be more wildlife art in public places, including on television and in newspapers, and hands-on activities for adults and children.

Chapter 8 Conclusions

It seems so obvious - 'image matters' - but for nature conservation it really does. Plants and animals could be described with just words, but visual clues have been fundamentally important, whether it be for cave paintings, drawings accompanying herbarium specimens gathered on expeditions or images shown in books to help the observer identify what they see. The reasons for nature conservation could be described solely in words and numbers, but facts and figures, persuasive arguments, challenges and possibilities can all be more readily explained and understood through the use of visual imagery. Furthermore, images, and the desire to make art and to own art, seem to have the power to inspire an emotional response and change behaviour in the viewer. All these areas were explored in this original research, which is an initial exploration of the visual culture of nature conservation.

Addressing the aims of this research as set in Chapter 1, this chapter identifies the main findings of the research. Firstly, assessing how the visual messages produced, particularly by the statutory agencies, reveals that the imagery assisted species and habitat identification, provided information and factual material, and communicated authority and expertise (results for aims 1 and 2). Secondly, by contrast, examining nature art demonstrates the power of art to inspire an emotional response in the viewer (results for aim 3). Thirdly, ways to broaden the appeal of nature conservation art are offered (results for aim 4).

The exploration of what is meant by visual culture (see Chapter 2, section 2.1), although very broad (Walker & Chaplin 1997) helped define the scope of the research, identifying the main actors, namely artists and primary and secondary users (see Fig.2.1). A strong emphasis on communication (Gold & Revill 2004) was, for example, demonstrated by Adams (Turnage 2019) (see section 2.2.1) and on identity (Barnard 1998:9) with resonance for logos (Nicholls 2011) (see section 2.3.5), is characteristic of nature conservation art

(Chapters 4 and 5). Panofsky's introduction to iconology (1939, in Howells 2003) and Barthes ideas of 'going without saying' (1957, in Howells 2003) (for both see section 2.1), helped interpret the visual information provided at Barnack Hills and Holes NNR (Chapter 5, section 5.3) identifying the intended messages for the visitors to the reserve. Context (Barnard 1998) and 'ways of seeing' (Berger 1972:9-19) are critical in understanding the meaning of this art, for example, the concept of 'jizz', whereby an artist accurately portrays the essence of a subject which is understood and accepted by the viewer. The subject of realistic painting is explored in the light of Gombrich (1960) and Howells (2003) (see section 2.1), where the nearest nature art approaches reality is in work intended to help with identification of, or showing species in, their natural habitat, but even here elements of design and contrivance are apparent. The observation of nature through photography and film, described by Murie (Mitman 1997) (see section 2.2.1) as a 'way of seeing', helped the understanding of wild animal behaviour. However, film also allowed an anthropocentric view of nature, for example Disney films and Cousteau's underwater filming (Wilson 1992). More recently, some nature films and television programmes have taken on a role of environmental advocacy: for example, BBC nature documentaries (see section 2.2.1).

This original research examined: commissioners, or users, and producers of nature art with a conservation theme largely focussed on England; accessed new material through the examination of personal archives; interviewed both nature conservationists and wildlife artists; and undertook surveys of viewers of nature conservation artwork. None of this research has been undertaken before now.

As a result of this research, the relationship between the nature conservation agencies, nature artists and the public, as depicted in Fig.2.1, has been refined – see Fig.8.1

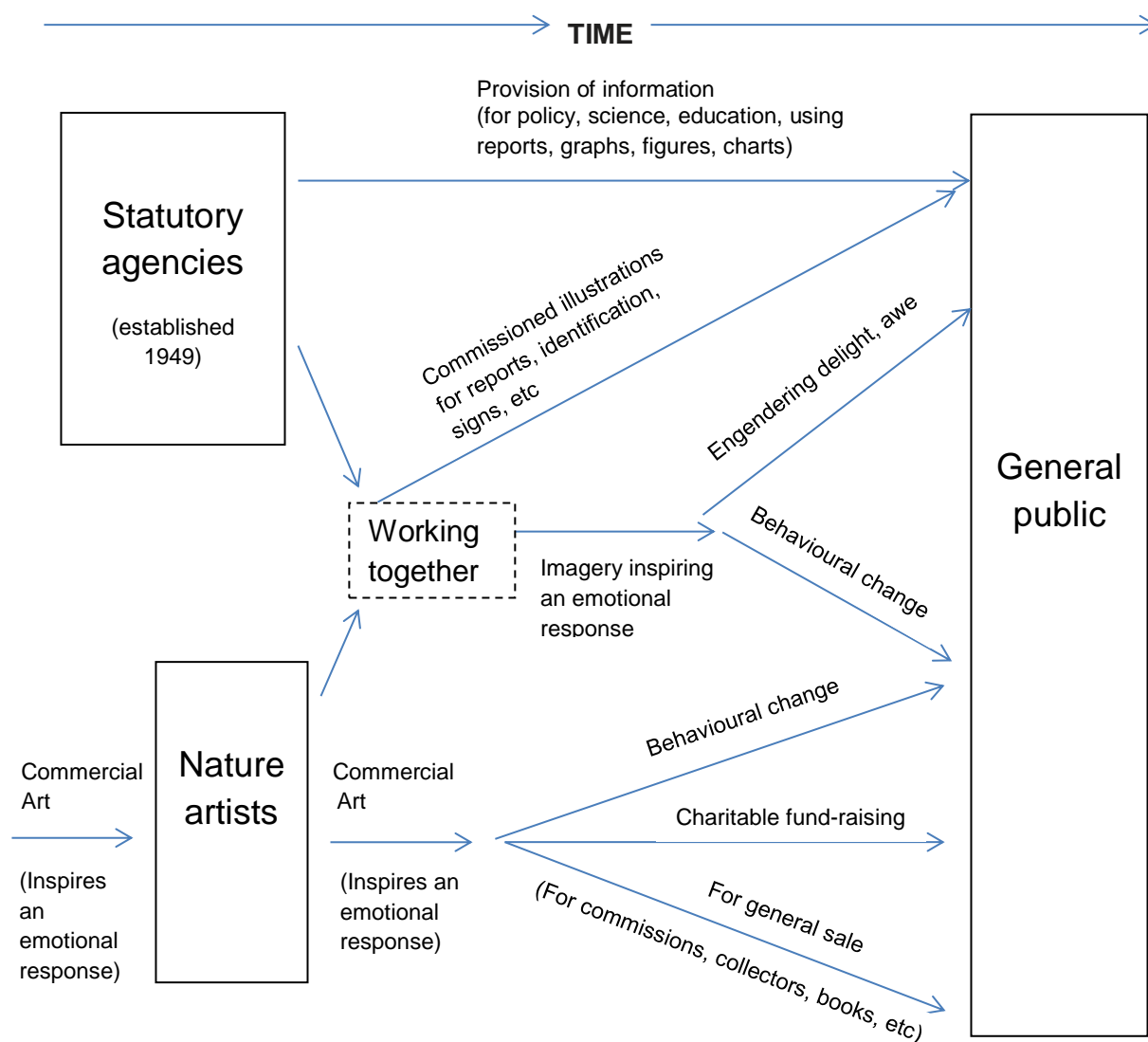


Fig.8.1 Summary of evidence from this research demonstrating how the three main stakeholders (the statutory nature conservation agencies, nature artists and the public) interact in the use of nature imagery in promoting nature conservation

The diagram in Fig.8.1, based on the findings of this research, reflects the results of the working together of the statutory nature conservation agencies with nature artists over time. The conservation agencies, established in 1949, drew on the experience and skill of nature artists initially to illustrate material for scientific and educational purposes, such as reports, and information boards and guides intended to inform the public. Some photographs, such as those included in the National Collection of Nature

Photographs, (see section 4.3.4), probably also encouraged feelings of awe and wonder. Although the quality of the art and its reproduction improved, deliberate attempts to have an aesthetic, inspirational approach to illustrations only started during the mid-1970s with the Nature Conservancy Council's contribution to Council of Europe posters (see Figs.4.6 and 4.7). The NCC also produced large, high quality poster-style photographs, such as those in 1982 (see Fig.4.6.9 '*Wildlife in the City*' series) and in 1990 (see Fig.4.70 '*Here today – here forever?*' series). English Nature (1991- 2006) embraced new technology to produce, for example, an on-line sensory experience of a National Nature Reserve, and engaged in a variety of initiatives to introduce the public to wildlife and the countryside through means other than purely provision of leaflets and information boards. The intention was to inspire an emotional response to the countryside, leading to behavioural change in terms of increased volunteering and interest in and concern for wildlife and the countryside. Art and creative activities were used in campaigns, such as the Campaign for the Living Coast (see section 5.1.2), 'Spotlight Reserves', the work of the People and Nature Unit (see section 6.4) culminating in the publications: '*Landmarks*' (2003), and '*English nature and the Art of conservation*' (2004) (see section 5.1.5). Natural England continued in public outreach, such as the 'Marine Campaign' (see section 5.2.1), until the marketing moratorium in 2010.

Meanwhile, nature artists had long recognised that for art to be sold (see Hammond in '*Modern Wildlife Painting*' 1998), the potential buyer would most likely have an emotional response to a work of art. This emotional response could also be used for the benefit of wildlife, with sales of work going to wildlife charities (such as the David Shepherd's Charitable Foundation and Peter Scott's Wildfowl and Wetland Trust (see section 2.1) and encouraging behavioural change, such as those described by artists Thelma Sykes on the Dee Estuary (see section 6.2.1) and Robert Greenhalf at the Biebrza Marshes (see section 6.2.2).

Nature artists working with both the statutory nature conservation agencies and wildlife charities have the potential to reach wider and different audiences than working separately. The result is greater understanding of

countryside matters, more wildlife art sales and increased nature conservation gain and more wildlife art sales.

8.1 Providing Information

The first step in nature conservation is to be able to identify the observed species or recognise habitat types, and much material produced by the nature conservation agencies was intended for this purpose. Also found in nature conservation non-governmental organisations' (NGOs) publications, they feature images of birds, other animals and also plants. Often depicted are the iconic (or charismatic), rare, attractive or high profile species, such as orchids, birds of prey, butterflies and mammals. The conservation of these species, although important in their own right, carries with them benefits for other species. For example, chalk grassland orchids or plants, such as the Pasque Flower, featured in the NNR case study of Barnack Hills and Holes in Chapter 5, require particular habitat management allowing the plants to grow and set seed in an open habitat. This management regime will benefit other associated plants, such as mosses and sedges, and invertebrates, that are less obvious, harder to find and identify, and with less of a public appeal. Some of the species featured in conservation work are the focus of a campaign or project, such as a garden bird survey or a habitat restoration project. The intention of using images of these species is to raise the profile of a campaign or indicate the special nature of a reserve or habitat, so that the public or viewer will be able to recognise the animal or plant, and have a connection or mental association with the project or place.

The findings of the public surveys in this research (Chapter 7) showed that images used for identification need to be accurate. For most animals and plants, detail is important, and the technique devised by Petersen (Petersen et al 1954 and Hammond 1986) (see section 2.2.2), in highlighting features useful for identification, was and is widely adopted in identification books for all sorts of species. Creative art and photographs can be used in identification books, as both types have their advantages: painted or drawn

images can allow particular characteristics to be featured and photographs depict actual specimens sometimes in situ. The one big exception, where detail is not a fundamental requirement, is in images, usually of birds, which show the 'jizz' of a bird, that is, the characteristic shape, feathers or behaviour of that bird which distinguish it from other bird species. The image of the bird depicted in just a few strokes can be immediately recognisable to an expert ornithologist without details of the plumage and so on, but such images are not useful for beginner birdwatchers. The artists in the SWLA include both experts in detail, such as Chris Rose (see Rose 2005) and Terance James Bond (see Bond 2006), and in depiction of the jizz, such as Esther Tyson and Greg Poole (examples in Toms 2017). Jizz, most often used by observers familiar with the species, can be used in other groups too, such as identifying a tree from a distance by its shape, or identifying a mammal crossing a road by the way it runs. The concept of 'jizz' is a commonly used tool enabling people to identify objects in their surroundings: anything from food to an oncoming car.

Conservation organisations convey information about nature reserves to visitors, and, developing the pioneering work of Lutz in the 1920s and Tilden (1957) (see section 4.3.5) is usually through reserve information boards and guides. These are usually on-site at entrance points, but they can also be shown on websites. The signs and boards need to convey essential information, such as opening times, access, features to look out for, the owner and manager of the area, and information on visitor facilities and parking. Much information might be required and site managers have varied in their approach in what and how to convey this information, but the essentials about the reserve must be included, the viewer needs to be rewarded for the effort and time to stop and consider the information, and they must provide the viewer with what they want to know. The views expressed from the public survey were that people liked attractive, welcoming, informative, and user-friendly material, and reserve maps were felt to be essential.

Referring to the work by Nicholls (2011), another aspect of identification is that of the nature conservation organisation itself. Is the organisation recognisable and associated with particular work? The public surveys suggested that a logo is helpful in understanding an organisation and its aims (see Chapter 7, section 7.1.5). For example, most of the NGOs have an outline of a species or image that suggests what they do, such as the RSPB's familiar avocet's head and the Woodland Trust's features a tree outline. The National Trust has a very broad remit of landscape and heritage, but the simple oak leaf symbol has remained unchanged since its start and is easily recognisable, even being included on road signs. It almost has its own jizz: the logo provides an expectation of what to expect. Similarly, the CPRE recognises the strength of its logo, which has remained unchanged since 1926, despite the change of name in 1969 from the Council for the Preservation of Rural England to Council for the Protection of Rural England, and later to Campaign to Protect Rural England.

By contrast, the statutory agencies' logos have changed several times and have not included a nature image, although it could be argued they use natural colours. This omission of a natural image could explain the lack of recognition of Natural England's logo in the public surveys. Associated with visual identity is the implication of authority either as a knowledge holder or with a legal power. For the RSPB and the National Trust, their long-establishment, their familiarity partly based on their recognisable logo and their high profile could be taken to indicate their authority to speak on a subject, and that they are experts in their particular fields. The lack of public recognition of the current statutory nature conservation agency may impact on the value placed by the public on its advice and expertise.

The images projected by NE and predecessors have changed over the last 70 years. The early Nature Conservancy was established immediately after Second World War organised on almost military principles: staff members were described as officers; they wore uniforms and arm bands; and the vehicles, logos and letter headings depicted the crown. The crown indicated leadership and Government. But the effectiveness of their work depended

on respect for their image of authority both being part of Government and as informed experts, rather than on powers underpinned by law. English Nature was once described as a “*toothless watchdog*” (Chapter 5 section 5.1.1) and the furore instigated by the NCC’s response to tree planting on Scottish bogs important for wildlife resulted in the break-up of the agency into smaller country organisations in 1991. Subsequent legislation and various International Directives have given NCC’s successors greater legal powers, although it is arguable that their image of authority and the respect for their authority have declined in the public view. The process of incorporating NE’s communication function within Defra and largely removing its ability to opine, promote and publicise nature conservation, has continued the agency’s decline in effectiveness. If this continues unabated, the Government’s nature conservation agency may no longer be participants in the nature conservation visual culture. The consequences are that the implementation of nature conservation law will be within Government, but the ability to inform, inspire and influence public opinion will be left to the NGOs and television companies.

As explained in chapters 4 and 5, the Government conservation agency was established by eminent scientists and politicians interested in science and research, with an earnest wish for the developing science of ecology to be used to help understand and manage the environment. Largely intended to achieve the best results for wildlife, sometimes the intention was for personal research interests (Peterken 2013 in Chapter 4). During and after the Second World War, science and the ‘white heat of technology’ were seen as the great hopes for the country’s future. For the Nature Conservancy in the early years, the emphasis was on research, and not aesthetics, an example of C. P. Snow’s separation of science and the arts in “*The Two Cultures*” (1956). The public were largely excluded, especially from NNRs where scientific research was undertaken (Chapter 4 and 5). This emphasis on science and research affected both the style and content of publications: illustrations had to be used for information provision or identification purposes. Attractive images were helpful but not essential.

Science and scientists underpinned the establishment of the Nature Conservancy and continued to be fundamental to successor bodies and influenced both the style and content of publications. It took the Nature Conservancy ten years to publish its first outward-facing publication (Nature Conservancy 1959) with some updates and material on nature trails following a few years later. The small unit of staff involved with outreach and interpretation in the Nature Conservancy and NCC created some innovative and useful outputs welcomed by staff particularly those with outward-facing roles and the public, but would seem to have been undervalued by the organisation as a whole and under-resourced, as recalled by Duff, Chief Scientist (Chapter 4).

As the public distrust of scientists developed – “mad men in white coats” – the research aspects needed to be managed differently, and nature conservation promoted (G Radley in Chapter 4). There were efforts by the Nature Conservancy to involve school children and university students in science and research on nature reserves (Tansley Club 1963 and Chapter 4) and some research stations, such as Monks Wood, held open days to explain their work to the visitors. But the general public were largely excluded from the research aspects of nature conservation.

As the need to engage with the public become more of a priority, publications and other material were more varied. Towards the end of NCC, although still based on ecological principles, there was a move towards aesthetically pleasing imagery encouraging an emotional response in viewers to engender support. EN in its move towards a more standardised approach to its work than its predecessors, discarded drawn and painted images in their publications and concentrated on the use of high quality photographs, particularly of species, such as the Dormouse, the Red Kite and displays of wild flowers. There were exceptions to this broad generalisation when, for example, depicting visions of an enhanced future landscape or scenes that pre-dated photographs, or using cartoons.

Although science still underpinned the agency's work, there was a recognition that nature could not be conserved only in nature reserves and that the wider countryside was important for wildlife too. As a result, there was more emphasis on outreach, for example, the People and Nature Unit tried innovative techniques with some high profile campaigns using original and creative ideas to reach out to existing and new audiences (Chapter 5). Towards the end of EN, there were attempts at engaging directly with the arts particularly with the production of attractive posters and the publication '*English Nature and the Art of Conservation*' (Lincoln 2004) (see section 5.1.4). The arrival of NE saw this work developed with a much stronger emphasis on outreach and public access to the countryside, with the use of new techniques, such as infographics presenting science in a more accessible and contemporary way (see section 5.2.1). However, from 2010 the moratorium on its publicity and educational work put an end to this public outreach, with material largely only available on a Government website and subject to strict controls on style and content (see section 5.2.2).

Meanwhile, organisations, such as the RSPB, with their Big Garden Birdwatch, the BTO, with bird ringing and recording projects, and Butterfly Conservation's 'Big Butterfly Count' have been keen to encourage people to join in with their research. The National Biological Network (NBN), local natural history societies and television programmes, such as the BBC's '*Spring*' and '*Autumn Watch*' have both promoted and used 'citizen science'. Television programmes and societies concerned with nature produce magazines often depicting people being active on various projects. The BTO has taken this aspect a step further on the '*Flight Lines*' project inviting artists to depict aspects of bird migration including the birds, the people, farming and habitats in West Africa and the UK. The artwork is intended to excite, inspire, include and inform members to understand and participate in the project effectively, thus bringing together scientists, artists and a much wider constituency of supporters (Toms 2017) (see section 6.5).

8.2 Inspiring an Emotional Response

The evidence suggests that imagery of threatened beauty of both wildlife and landscape was widely used in early campaigns to protect the countryside (Sheail 1976 and 1998, Marren 2002, Sands 2012, Matless 1998, Waine & Hilliam 2016), and even used in wartime propaganda (Mellor 1990 and Saunders 2011). Images of the countryside were also used to encourage visitors to the countryside, by the London Underground and the railways (Cole & Durack 1992, Levey 1976, Riddell 1998 and Matless 1998), motoring organisations, such as Shell and BP (Rosco 1996), the FC forest guides (Revill & Watkins 1996), the '*Festival of Britain*' (Grigson 1959 and Matless 1998) and books, such as Collins' '*New Naturalist*' series, guide books by the AA, and Ladybird and Observer books, all fostering a particular view of rural Britain and national identity (Roscoe 1996 and Jeremiah 2010) that still continues. The fact that the Ladybird books, with illustrations by Tunncliffe, are still considered a childhood favourite by both conservationists and the public harken back to a time of idealised countryside before intensive farming, development, habitat loss and climate change.

Independent wildlife artists were also moving in a different direction to the statutory nature conservation agencies. Rather than just providing information, they were inspiring viewers so much so that the sale of wildlife art was sufficient to allow the formation of conservation charities, such as the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust by Sir Peter Scott and the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (see section 2.1). Groups of wildlife artists, such as the ANF and SWLA raised awareness of and funds for conservation projects across the world (see examples in Chapter 6). There seemed to be no or very little integration or collaboration between the artists and the statutory nature conservation agencies. Possibly the first and best example to date was based on Woodwalton Fen NNR and called the Great Fen Project. It resulted in a book (Gerrard 2006), and, according to Alan Bowley the Site Manager, the whole project was innovative and transformative (see Chapter 5). Working together earlier in this way may have resulted in much better public outreach and promotion of nature conservation in other areas.

Even from the limited surveys of public opinion conducted for this research, it can be seen that there are a very large number of artists considered by the public to be nature artists: the Mall Gallery visitors listed 139 different artists and the BTO members 205 (Chapter 7). In addition, there were artist members of both the ANF and the SWLA who were not included in the names put forward in the questionnaires. These two particular societies were selected for their known conservation work, but there are probably thousands of amateur and professional artists that use or are inspired by nature and the environment for the expression of their creativity. Some of these will make a connection with the viewing public and some will have a conservation element in their work.

In the surveys, a variety of media, artistic expression and characteristics in the art work were described and favoured by viewers. Some were favoured by many viewers, others favoured by only a few (Chapter 7). This response would suggest that nature artists using any media or style have the potential to benefit nature conservation. However, targeting artwork regarding age group, gender, style and medium may be a key factor in its success to convey conservation messages. Examples from the surveys showed that ornithologists are more likely to be interested in bird images and images of projects that benefit birds, and that these images need to be accurate, but not necessarily detailed. As explained earlier, clear representation of the 'jizz' of the bird was a key favoured characteristic.

The results from the public surveys suggest that other targeting may be necessary for an image to be appealing and attractive. Examples include: textile artworks are more likely to appeal to women than men; contemporary artwork is more likely to appeal to a younger age-group than older ones, and that confrontational material will appeal less to women than men.

Much wildlife art is illustrative, depicting habitat, colours, and identifying features, and in the case of animals, its prey, its posture or some aspect of its behaviour (see Hammond 1986, and section 2.2.2). As described earlier, the nature conservation agencies largely used illustrations in their literature for

example, to help identification of species on nature reserves, but also to demonstrate land management techniques or how to construct habitats, such as ponds. Illustrations were useful in showing what could not be seen, for example, life beneath the surface of a pond or river, or how an area would look after restoration or habitat creation. The hoped-for response from the viewer of illustrations is greater awareness, knowledge, understanding and increasing interest.

Some nature art is about the aesthetic aspects of wildlife and wild habitats, and is a personal response by the artist to what they see, and a similar emotion may be felt by viewers of the work. Viewers of any nature or landscape artwork may be reminded of a happy time, perhaps on holiday in the countryside, or a favourite walk or viewpoint, or a favourite or interesting animal, bird or plant. Some artwork engenders feelings of awe from a particular land- or sea-scape or charismatic animals, such as whales, elephants or big cats. Some viewers are impressed with either the complexity of nature or the skill and technique of the artist in depicting this complexity.

Other responses to artwork could be a desire to learn more about the subject, such as described by Nick Baker, naturalist and broadcaster, of the illustration, in one of the Collins New Naturalist editions (see section 2.3.4), by C & R Ellis on the cover of *'The Sea Shore'* by C M Yonge (1949). He said he liked the image because it was “a little dark and disturbing” and that

“the jacket did the trick for me, as a proto-naturalist on a family holiday to the Isle of Wight, when finding the distinctive hind-leg of a Velvet Crab drew my eye to the spine of *'The Sea Shore'* in a second hand Bookshop in Ventnor” (Marren & Gillmor 2009:58).

Others may have wanted to become more involved on seeing how to construct a pond, or seeing a vision of a possible future wildlife-rich landscape, or wanted to learn more about a particular dragonfly, butterfly or bird. This aspect underpins much of conservation work: drawing people in;

winning hearts and minds. The trick is to turn interest and knowledge into involvement and passion – a difficult task, as Lincoln described (Chapter 5). A number of artists believe that, and provided anecdotal evidence for, the power of art to involve people. For example, Thelma Sykes with her art class on the Dee Estuary and Pugsley-Hill with her work in English Nature's People & Nature Unit (see Chapter 6 and 5 respectively) described how hands-on artwork can involve people in conservation work far more than just talking to them. The success of hands-on artwork possibly explains the spread of Artists in Residence in the conservation sector but also in other public-facing endeavours. Several artists described projects, that have raised awareness of local issues, such as Antonia Phillips about declining puffin numbers on the Dorset coast; Bruce Pearson's work on albatrosses that demonstrate the dangers of long-line fishing; and Carry Akroyd's highlighting the isolation and fragility of Woodwalton Fen NNR in an agricultural landscape. The potential importance of their local wildlife resource to villagers and townsfolk for jobs and tourist income was demonstrated through the artwork of the ANF project at Biebrza Marshes as described by Robert Greenhalf (Chapter 6).

The responses of viewers to artwork are varied. Often the best to hope for is charitable-giving, generally or to a specific cause, such as purchase of areas of countryside or towards a species protection project, or joining as a member of a particular wildlife charity. The responses of viewers of nature artwork can go further than just becoming members of a charity and can result in undertaking voluntary work on conservation projects and donating to particular causes. If the conviction is strong enough certain aspects of behaviour could change, for example: buying items that are sustainable or environmentally-friendly; undertaking reduced or zero travel by aeroplane; consumption of products not harmful to wildlife, such as seafood carrying the Marine Conservation Society approved logo; recycling and re-using; undertaking civil action, such as commenting on planning applications that have the potential to affect wildlife areas, and also joining public campaigns as recently witnessed in the climate change demonstrations; and voting for 'green' political parties or candidates standing at local elections on 'green issues'. Nature imagery has a potentially powerful role.

Several agency staff recommended a positive approach to wildlife: “isn’t this wonderful – how could we let this be lost?” They had used in their work images that reflected the ‘Wow! factor’. Charron Pugsley-Hill reinforces this message in her ‘happy art’ and other artists said that negative imagery does not sell and they would prefer to show the beauty and awe of wildlife (Chapter 6). Views from the public surveys reinforced this: images should be realistic, convincing, and if possible offer hope, vision and achievability. Strong positive emotions of happiness and feelings of well-being are powerful in generating action and reaction.

The view was expressed, however, in the survey of public opinion and in interview with Ian Langford (see section 6.3), and by several of the artists, that the more shocking images are the ones that people remember, and arguably have the greatest impact (Chapters 6 and 7). Examples given were: the image of a mother polar bear on one ice flow in the sea with its cubs on another showing the impact of climate change; the image used in the campaign against the use of real fur coats of a woman dragging a fur coat leaving a trail of blood; and photographs of doomed oiled seabirds after an oil tanker spill. The recent anti-plastic campaign (2019) has effectively used photographs of plastic litter in the oceans to highlight the problem. It is interesting to note that many wildlife programmes on television, including those by David Attenborough, depict wildlife and their habitats facing problems, such as climate change, sprawling cities close to pristine habitats, and practices, such as over-fishing. Any or all of these images could invoke feelings of disgust, shame, pity, anger and fear. So even if artists and conservation organisations are averse to creating and using them, they would seem to have a place in the arsenal of nature conservation imagery. Langford also pointed out that if a problem can be put right, for example through habitat restoration or species recovery, the wrong message can be given, that is, humans have the ability, knowledge and resources to address all conservation problems, and that permanent loss or damage does not appear to be an issue (Chapter 6).

Conversely, images of suffering and dying creatures and habitats being destroyed are said to be off-putting and depressing, engendering a feeling of 'why bother – it's hopeless' (see section 4.4.5 for views of conservation agency staff). People are unwilling to buy such work or put it on their walls. Maybe there is a role for institutions to commission and display these powerful images in public fora, or in an advertising campaign, to encourage debate and action? An example is shown below of a recent illustration used by the RSPB in a fund-raising campaign (June 2019) which refers to the 'Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse' accompanying stylised images of threats to birds and habitats:



Fig. 8.2 Negative imagery in RSPB Life Membership recruitment campaign
© RSPB (June 2019)

Strong emotions of anger, disgust and pity, are powerful in generating action and reaction. Behavioural changes could be seen as responses within this visual culture.

The view was also strongly expressed in both surveys of the public for inspirational images to be on public display, such as in airport lounges, railway stations, shopping centres as well as in art galleries and at or near nature reserves (Chapter 7). My local hospital, Stamford in Lincolnshire, thirty years ago displayed the series of posters produced by the Natural History Museum of wildlife habitats, and more recently a number of hospitals I have visited have attractive images and artwork of wildlife and countryside. An example is a textile collage 'The Beautiful Wye' by Anne Bradfield and Kate Lucas in Hereford County Hospital, sponsored by The River Wye Preservation Trust, The Wye Salmon Fishery Owners Association and The Wye Foundation (seen May 2019). Research has shown that such images are good for health and well-being (NE MENE 2014).

8.3 Widening the Appeal

The Nature Conservancy was established by white, middle or upper class, mostly middle-aged men. In the beginning, mostly men were employed as scientists, managers and reserve wardens, with women largely working in administrative roles, reflecting the culture of the time. Illustrations in the early literature revealed little ethnic, age or gender diversity. But how can imagery convey conservation messages and appeal to a wider audience? It was recognised early on that there was a need to encourage interest in children about wildlife and working with others on joint initiatives, such as the Shell Better Britain campaign and National Nature Weeks, and some innovative material was produced for children and schools, such as the cardboard pond (Chapter 4). Sadly, due to budget cuts, EN dropped its school grounds funding work in the mid-1990s. However, it was revealed in the public surveys that at least half of both groups began their interest in nature as children visiting and exploring the countryside, with their interest remaining into adulthood. Books about the countryside and nature had helped stimulate interest. The most popular books with these groups, and with many of the agency staff interviewed, were *Observer* books and *Ladybird* books about the countryside, and *I-spy* books encouraging spotting countryside features

including wildlife. It is interesting to note that the '*i-spy*' books have been redesigned and re-published (Collins 2016).

With little or no funding for working with schools and children, EN and latterly NE have lost the opportunity to teach, engage with and influence children at an early stage. This is a different approach from other conservation organisations: the National Trust, the Wildlife Trusts and the RSPB all run projects or societies encouraging children to enjoy and learn about the countryside.

A member of the communications team (Chapter 5) explained the difficulties of obtaining imagery of under-represented groups, such as disabled people and members of the BAME communities (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic). Photographs by NE of members of the latter group largely came from projects in London, Luton and Peterborough where much effort has been spent during the last twenty years or so in encouraging under-represented groups to visit the countryside. Traditionally these groups have tended not to visit the countryside, and photographs or illustrations of BAME community members or disabled people in the countryside endeavour to avoid being contrived but still feeling inclusive and welcoming (a member of the communications team 2014). Is the National Trust advertisement (BBC Radio Times 22-28 June 2019:13) shown in Fig.8.2, a sincere attempt at inclusivity, contrived or both?



Fig. 8.3 National Trust's advertisement © National Trust (in BBC Radio Times 22-28 June 2019:13) suggests inclusivity, Author's photograph

This National Trust image and its caption contrast with the work of the photographer Ingrid Pollard and of Julian Agyeman, co-founder of the Black Environment Network, explored in Kinsman (1996) where their feelings experienced over 20 years ago of alienation and exclusion from the British countryside are described. It would appear that at least some of their concerns are being successfully addressed and access to the countryside is changing.

The countryside is largely managed by white male farmers, and politicians are also mostly white males. However, the countryside and its wildlife are for

all, and nature conservation undertaken by Government agencies uses British tax-payers money on endeavours that may or may not be 'signed-up to' by all members of the community. Persuading, inspiring and involving all citizens are huge conservation challenges, and must include minority communities. Nature imagery will have a role to play.

8.4 Further Research

There are a number of research areas that could build on this thesis. These include comparing the visual history of the UK statutory agencies with each other, and seeing if devolution has resulted in different approaches by SNH and CCW. Comparing the use by NE and its predecessors of visual imagery with other statutory agencies, such as the Environment Agency and its predecessor the National Rivers Authority, the Forestry Commission and English Heritage, particularly focussing on presentation of science, engagement with the wider public on access, recreation and resource conservation could reveal interesting similarities and differences.

Comparing the use by NE and its predecessors of visual imagery with those used by the voluntary sector, such as the National Trust, the Wildlife Trusts, the RSPB, the World Wildlife Fund, and even overtly campaigning organisations, such as the Friends of the Earth, may reflect their need to serve a membership which the statutory agencies have not needed to consider. Exploring the use of environmental art by organisations as diverse as the National Farmers Union, Shell and BP may reveal interesting aspects of environmentalism, particularly when nature conservation and wildlife in general are not core business. Another area to explore would be the use of artists-in-residence, and how success or value is measured. What are the benefits, or disadvantages, for both artist and commissioner?

Further surveys of public opinion could be undertaken at different wildlife art galleries, with different artists or exhibition themes and with different wildlife charities, or at other venues, such as Nature Reserves, National Parks or country parks, particularly ones where visitor numbers are likely to be high,

such as visitor centres, the London Wetlands Centre, the WWT reserve at Slimbridge, Gloucestershire, and the RSPB reserve at Minsmere, Suffolk. Other surveys may support the findings of this research or discover differences according to viewers, location, species or habitat depicted.

This research has concentrated on the depiction of the visible and the tangible, but how are environmental subjects that are invisible, such as pollution, population growth and climate change, dealt with by both agencies and artists? What visual imagery is used to help explain the problems and engage with a broader constituency? Furthermore, do ideas of natural capital and ecosystem services lead to the depiction of the value of nature solely in terms of human benefits, or can imagery express the justification for the conservation of nature in its own right?

Finally, I would suggest that there is a need for a repository of materials and memorabilia associated with this cultural heritage, particularly as the National Archives appears to be only storing 'official' items, such as published reports and committee papers (see Chapter 3, section 3.1). As this research has shown, there is a rich resource about the early years of nature conservation in the UK held by current and former agency staff, particularly recollections and personal archives, which will likely be lost and discarded before too long.

Appendix 1 Questions for interview with statutory agency staff

My research is considering how art has been used to convey a nature conservation message in the UK over the last 70 years or so. A central theme of this research is to compare how the Government Agencies have used (or not, as the case maybe) hand-crafted illustrations and images with those illustrations used by the non-governmental organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts, The National Trust and the RSPB, and with a particular focus on specific geographical areas, including the Cambridgeshire fenland (such as Woodwalton Fen and Wicken Fen), the Derbyshire Dales, and possibly the Breckland, the South Downs or the Norfolk Coast.

Before we move onto the questionnaire itself, please could you tell me which statutory nature conservation agency you worked for and when, your job title and a brief description of what your work involved?

Moving on to the questionnaire: an initial analysis of a small sample of leaflets and literature would suggest that:

- The Nature Conservancy was especially concerned with research and the protection of NNRs, was largely male-focussed and wished for very controlled access of the public to nature-rich areas. Images are largely black and white of dramatic landscapes and also native species.
- The Nature Conservancy Council was similarly male biased, and wary of public access, but with an increasing use of coloured illustrations.
- English Nature was very focussed on promoting the conservation of nature and its literature was colourful, largely involving the use good quality photographs, with a high proportion of the illustrations depicting species.
- In Natural England literature the emphasis has shifted to encouraging public access with a high proportion of illustrations depicting people of all ages, male and female, visiting the countryside in a range of activities, and including maps with car-parking, paths and facilities. There also appear to be an increase in the number of hand-crafted illustrations and in the provision of web-based information.

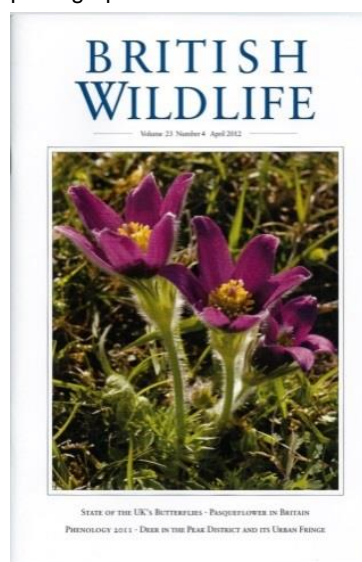
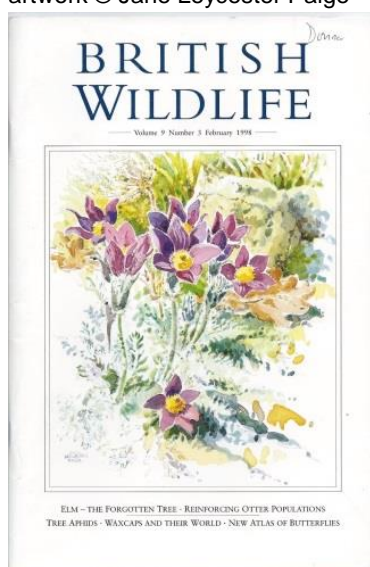
1. Based on this initial analysis, does this correspond to your recollection of the brochures and information produced by the agencies for which you worked? And if not, can you explain or describe what these agencies did/where they felt their emphasis lay?
2. When you were producing literature or advising on publications, with regard to illustrations, do you recall whether you had a free rein or whether publications were prescribed? And if you did have input can you recall whether, in general, you preferred photos or hand-crafted illustrations (and why)?
3. Do you recall whether there were discussions around how 'science' was conveyed to the reader/general public, or indeed if the public was seen as a target audience? Did artistic images feature in the design – was it felt that a good picture could tell a story better (ie a picture says a thousand words) or was it felt that text and graphs and diagrams were better?
4. Do you think the Government agencies employed shock tactic images or tended to steer more towards the aesthetically pleasing/interesting?
5. I know that there were staff employed on interpretation and publicity, and presumably they had a budget. Are you aware of any surveys, feedback or analysis of the effectiveness of material produced, or was it all just felt to be 'a good thing'?
6. Were there any examples of publications/ illustrations used that you felt were very good or very bad?
7. Do you think the gradual devolution of responsibilities to the other country agencies impacted on the style, content and message of publications?

8. How do you think the Government conservation agency material compared to that produced by the NGOs (such as the RSPB, the National Trust, the Wildlife Trusts) or other Government agencies (such as the FC or EH or the EA)?
9. Can I ask you a couple of more personal questions?
As a child, were there any particular pictures, images or books that 'fired' your imagination or that influenced your wildlife interests?
10. And as an adult, do you have a favourite wildlife artist/landscape painter or paintings, and how important are they to you in the interest and passion you have for your conservation work? It's the Desert Island Discs question, would there be a must-have wildlife/nature painting/view that you would cling on to on that sinking ship/desert island?!

Thank you

Appendix 2 Visitors Questionnaire, Mall Galleries, September 2014

1. a) If you have favourite artists of wildlife and/or wildlife habitats, please name them here:
.....
.....
.....
b) If possible, please state what it is about the artist(s) work that appeals to you.
.....
.....
.....
2. If you have a favourite image or visual representation of wildlife or wild habitat, please describe or name it and explain why you like it
.....
.....
.....
3. These two illustrations of Pasque Flowers appear on the covers of two editions of the *British Wildlife*:
Vol 9, No. 3, Feb 1998 – artwork © Jane Leycester Paige
Vol. 23, No. 4, April 2013 – photograph © Bob Gibbons



In an art gallery or in your home, how do you like visual representations of wildlife and wild habitat to appear? - please tick all that apply:

	yes	no	Don't know	Further comments if you wish
Impressionistic (similar to the image above left)				
Realistic (like a photograph and similar to image above right)				
No particular preference or it varies				

4. Is your view different when the nature art appears in identification books or guides? Please describe
-
-
-
5. Information boards, reserve leaflets and trail guides offer visitors to nature reserves information about wildlife and wild habitats, their management and their conservation.
- a) The illustrations below are of two information boards from the same National Nature Reserve (Parsonage Down in Wiltshire). (Author's photographs)



Do you prefer the information board on the left or the one on the right? Please explain your reasons

.....

.....

- b) Images are often depicted on nature reserve leaflets and trail guides. Which of the following do you like to see on these leaflets and guides? Please tick boxes that apply and/or provide comments

	yes	no	Don't know	comments
A map of paths and features of interest				
Close up images of animals or plants you are most likely to see				
Views you are most likely to see				
Cultural history of the reserve/local area				

Further comments if you wish:

.....

.....

.....

6.



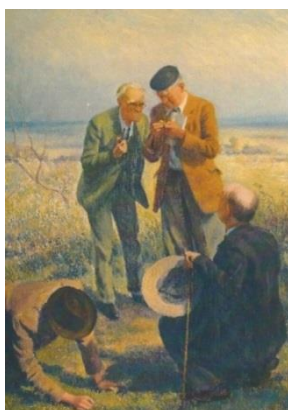
Logos can provide an instant visual image of an organisation and its work. From what you know of their work, how effective are the logos shown above in reflecting these particular conservation organisations and their work?

.....

.....

7. A single image can encapsulate a nature conservation message. The pairs of images below have a common theme. Please indicate your preference by ticking one of the boxes below each pair of images, and, if possible, explain your choice.

- a) In both these illustrations below, people are depicted learning about wildlife and habitats:



1) 'The Naturalists' by L J Watson
Scene set in East Anglian Heaths, summer 1949. From left to right in the painting: E.B.Ford, A.G. Tansley, A.S.Watt, C.Diver
© English Nature



2) Photograph of visitors to Martin Down National Nature Reserve
(Stephen Davis/© English Nature 2004)

Do both images encourage others to learn about wildlife?	Does only image 1) encourage others to learn about wildlife	Does only image 2) encourage others to learn about wildlife?	Does neither image encourage others to learn about wildlife?

Your reasons are:

.....

.....

- b) Both these illustrations below depict damaging impacts of agriculture on wildlife and natural habitats:

Copyright
permission
applied for



1) 'Silent Spring' by Rachel Carson (1962)
Cover illustration of ground-breaking book
about the effects of pesticides on wildlife
(Copyright permission applied for)

2) Photograph of loss of heathland to agriculture,
part of Purdis Heath SSSI, Ipswich, by Steve
Clarke, SWT (© English Nature 2004)

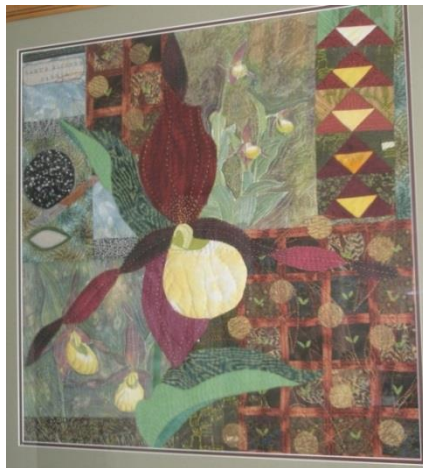
Do both images clearly convey the impacts of the damage?	Does only image 1) convey the impact of the damage?	Does only image 2) convey the impact of the damage?	Does neither image clearly convey the impacts of the damage?

Your reasons are:

.....

.....

- c) These illustrations below depict conservation projects: the first about the reintroduction of the very rare Lady's Slipper Orchid, and the second about wetland creation



1) 'Lady's Slipper Orchid' © Margaret Ramsey
Embroidered quilted picture of the Lady's Slipper
Orchid reintroduction project from collected seed
to adult plants back into the wild

2) Artist's impression of planned
habitat creation at Needingworth
Quarry, Cambridgeshire
© Bruce Pearson / © RSPB

Would both images encourage you to support these projects?	Would only image 1) encourage you to support this project?	Would only image 2) encourage you to support this project?	Does neither image encourage your support on these projects?

Your reasons are:

.....

.....

- d) These two images indicate that we all have a role to play in the future of wildlife and wild habitats:



'Child amongst bluebells' photograph
© Stephen Davis/
© English Nature (2004) with quote
from William Cobbett (1832)

Do you find both these images persuasive?	Is only image 1) persuasive?	Is only image 2) persuasive?	Do you find neither image persuasive?

Your reasons are:

.....

.....

.....

8. As a child, were there any particular pictures, images or books that 'fired' your imagination or influenced your wildlife interests?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

9. Do you think wildlife art (in whatever form) has:
- a) Motivated you to support the conservation of wildlife in some way - please expand on your answer

.....

.....

.....

.....

OR

- b) Made no difference to your opinion of conservation – please expand on your answer

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

10. Do you think wildlife art could be used better to help promote the conservation of wildlife and natural habitats – if so please describe

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Any other comments:

.....

.....

.....

Thank you very much for your help
Donna Radley

Please return the questionnaire to the desk, or send to the address below (a stamped addressed envelope is available at the desk), or for an electronic copy of the form please email me at the address shown below:

(Email and address supplied)

Appendix 3 BTO members' survey

Art and Nature Conservation

About this survey

A recent survey of visitors to a wildlife art exhibition in London provided some insights into how wildlife art can reveal conservation messages. The results of that visitor survey are contributing to research by Donna Radley (research student at University of Nottingham) into how art is used to convey messages about nature conservation, and whether it is an effective conservation tool.

We would be really interested to know how you respond to the findings of that visitor survey, how you feel about various aspects of wildlife art and whether there is a link between nature art and nature conservation. Your responses to this questionnaire will contribute to a better understanding of how art can be used to improve conservation messages and information.

This survey is completely anonymous and is not part of any market research. Your details will not be passed on to Donna Radley. However, Donna is very happy to reply to BTO members' questions, thoughts or observations on this topic, and if you wish to contact Donna please do so via her University of Nottingham email (supplied).

Please answer as many of the following questions as you can.

.....

Gender and Age

Answering this is completely optional, but earlier research has shown that there are differences in responses to some of the following questions, possibly reflecting gender and/or age. In nature conservation literature, such as explaining conservation management or providing nature reserve information, it would be interesting to know if some imagery is more accessible or user-friendly to particular groups of people, than other imagery.

1. If you feel able, please indicate your gender by ticking the relevant box:

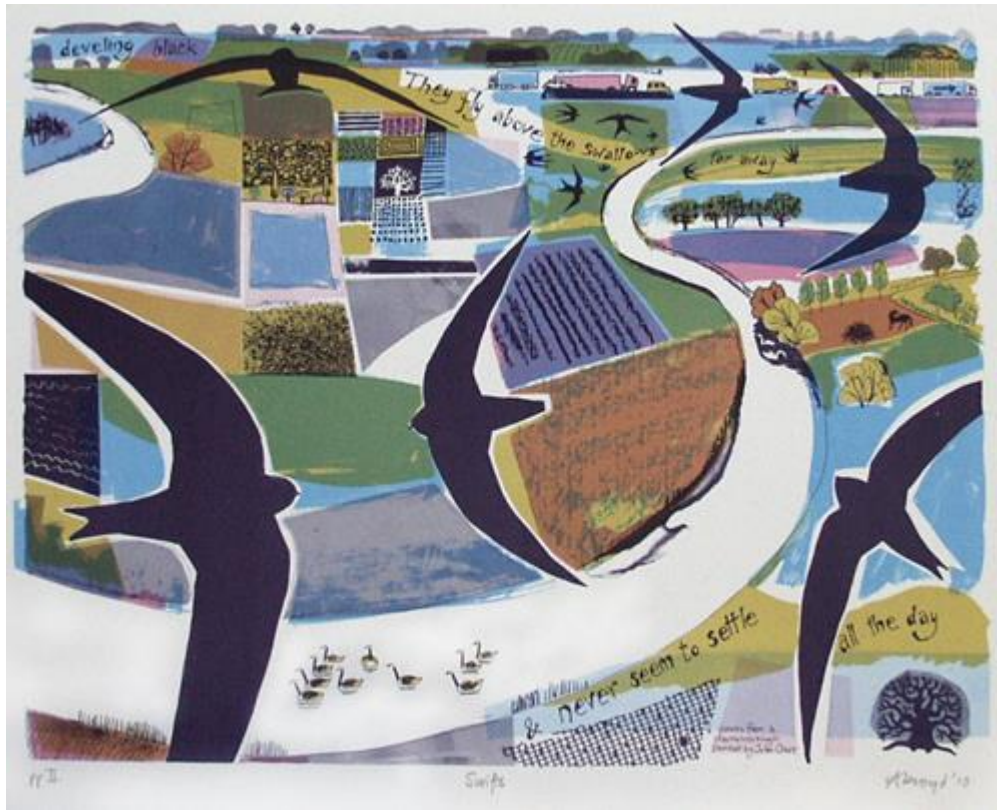
- ☐ If you feel able, please indicate your gender by ticking the relevant box: Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other (e.g. mixed or transgendered)
- ☐ Prefer not to say

2. If you feel able, please indicate your age in years:

Wildlife Artists

We are going to show you work from the seven top named wildlife & landscape artists from the art gallery visitor survey. For each artist named, please indicate how much you know of the artist's work and also how much you like it:

Artist 1: Carry Akroyd. Image © Carry Akroyd (www.carryakroyd.co.uk)



3. Knowledge of the Artist

- ☐ Never seen her work before ☐ Seen some of her work before ☐ Know her work well

4. Considering the art piece shown as a typical example, do you like the work of this artist?

- ☐ Like the work very much ☐ Like the work ☐ Neutral ☐ Don't like the work ☐ Don't like the work at all

Artist 2: Robert Gillmor. Image © Robert Gillmor (www.swla.co.uk)



5. Knowledge of the Artist

- ☐ Never seen his work before ☐ Seen some of his work before ☐ Know his work well

6. Considering the art piece shown as a typical example, do you like the work of this artist?

- ☐ Like the work very much ☐ Like the work ☐ Neutral ☐ Don't like the work ☐ Don't like the work at all

Artist 3: Robert Greenhalf. Image © Robert Greenhalf (www.robertgreenhalf.co.uk)



7. Knowledge of the Artist

- ☐ Never seen his work before ☐ Seen some of his work before ☐ Know his work well

8. Considering the art piece shown as a typical example, do you like the work of this artist?

- ☐ Like the work very much ☐ Like the work ☐ Neutral ☐ Don't like the work ☐ Don't like the work at all

Artist 4: Harriet Mead. Image © Harriet Mead (www.harrietmead.co.uk/)



9. Knowledge of the Artist

- ☐ Never seen her work before ☐ Seen some of her work before ☐ Know her work well

10. Considering the art piece shown as a typical example, do you like the work of this artist?

- ☐ Like the work very much ☐ Like the work ☐ Neutral ☐ Don't like the work ☐ Don't like the work at all

Artist 5: Bruce Pearson. Image © Bruce Pearson (www.brucepearson.net)



11. Knowledge of the Artist

- ☐ Never seen his work before ☐ Seen some of his work before ☐ Know his work well

12. Considering the art piece shown as a typical example, do you like the work of this artist?

- ☐ Like the work very much ☐ Like the work ☐ Neutral ☐ Don't like the work ☐ Don't like the work at all

Artist 6: David Shepherd. Image © David Shepherd (www.davidshepherd.org)



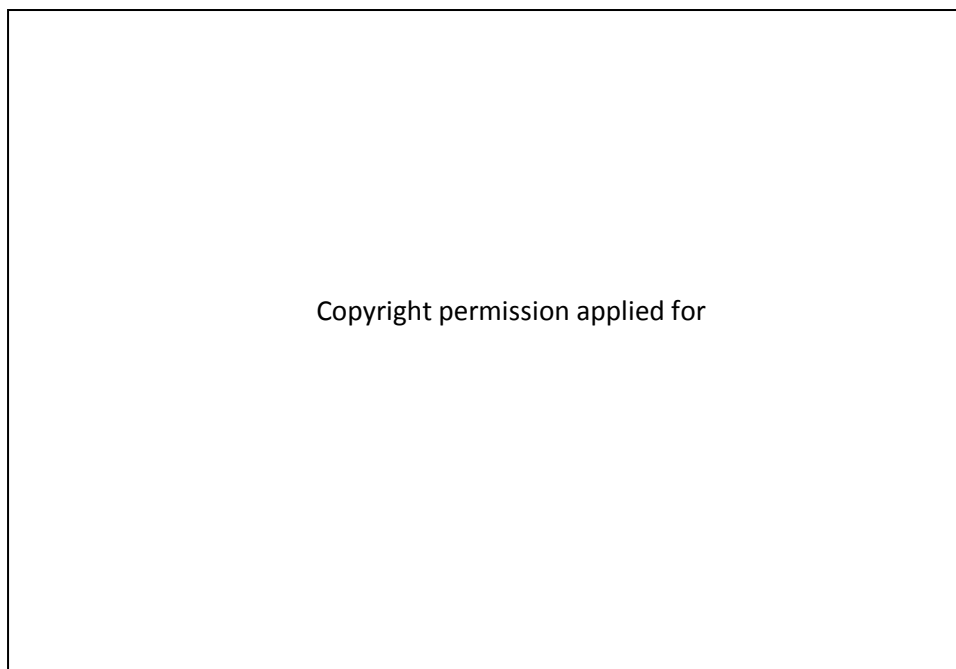
13. Knowledge of the Artist

- ☐ Never seen his work before ☐ Seen some of his work before ☐ Know his work well

14. Considering the art piece shown as a typical example, do you like the work of this artist?

- ☐ Like the work very much ☐ Like the work ☐ Neutral ☐ Don't like the work ☐ Don't like the work at all

Artist 7: Darren Woodhead. Image © Darren Woodhead
(www.darrenwoodheadartist.co.uk) (Copyright permission applied for)



15. Knowledge of the Artist

- ☐ Never seen his work before ☐ Seen some of his work before ☐ Know his work well

16. Considering the art piece shown as a typical example, do you like the work of this artist?

- ☐ Like the work very much ☐ Like the work ☐ Neutral ☐ Don't like the work ☐ Don't like the work at all

.....

Other wildlife artists

17. If there is another wildlife artist (living or dead) whose work you like but whose name is missing from those listed above, please write their name below:

A large rectangular text input area with a light gray background. On the right side, there is a vertical scroll bar. At the bottom, there is a small navigation bar with left and right arrow buttons.

What people like to see in wildlife paintings

18. In the art gallery visitor survey people were asked what they like to see in wildlife paintings. The replies were grouped into categories. Please select your preference for each category below:

	agree strongly	agree	neutral	disagree	disagree strongly
Abstract &/or an impression of a creature or place	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accuracy &/or detail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Capture essence of the subject and/or its behaviour or expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conveying a feeling of calm, peace or serenity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creatures in their natural setting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good composition &/or design	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal association (places visited &/or happy memories &/or nostalgia)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Realism &/or photographic quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visually exciting &/or conveying the Wow! Factor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. If there is another characteristic of wildlife art (not listed above) that really appeals to you?

Types of wildlife art

20. For each of the following ways of presenting wildlife as art, please record your preferences

	Like very much	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike
Nature art as a collage of materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature art as a painting or print	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature photographs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature poetry or prose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature sculpture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature art using textiles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. If there is another way of presenting wildlife as art (not listed above) that really appeals to you?

Nature Reserves - signs and maps

It is said that there are three essential pieces of information that a visitor to a nature reserve needs to be given: the reserve name; which organisation manages the reserve; and at least one reason for it being important for nature. Many organisations follow this basic guideline, but some information boards are very simple whilst others are much more detailed. Please indicate how you view the following information board, in terms of how it looks to you and the information it provides to you. (All photographs by the author)



22. Please score the information board above for (a) presentation of information and (b) whether it appeals to you (Aesthetic qualities).

	Like very much	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike
Information provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aesthetic qualities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Nature Reserves - signs and maps

It is said that there are three essential pieces of information that a visitor to a nature reserve needs to be given: the reserve name; which organisation manages the reserve; and at least one reason for it being important for nature. Many organisations follow this basic guideline, but some information boards are very simple whilst others are much more detailed. Please indicate how you view the following information board, in terms of how it looks to you and the information it provides to you.



22. Please score the information board above for (a) presentation of information and (b) whether it appeals to you (Aesthetic qualities).

	Like very much	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike
Information provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aesthetic qualities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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22. Please score the information board above for (a) presentation of information and (b) whether it appeals to you (Aesthetic qualities).

	Like very much	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike
Information provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Like very much	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike
Aesthetic qualities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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22. Please score the information board above for (a) presentation of information and (b) whether it appeals to you (Aesthetic qualities).

	Like very much	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike
Information provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aesthetic qualities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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	Like very much	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike
Information provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aesthetic qualities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Nature Reserves - signs and maps

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	Like very much	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike
Information provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aesthetic qualities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Nature Reserves - signs and maps

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22. Please score the information board above for (a) presentation of information and (b) whether it appeals to you (Aesthetic qualities).

	Like very much	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Really dislike
Information provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aesthetic qualities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Learning about nature & getting involved

Nature organisations like to encourage learning about wildlife and the countryside, and also active involvement in nature conservation, by their members and the general public. Photographs and images are often used to show how this can be done. In both these illustrations below, people are depicted learning about wildlife and habitats.



(© BTO)



(© English Nature 2004)

23. Which of the photos would you find most inviting or encouraging participation – please tick the appropriate box to indicate your preference:

- ☐ Which of the photos would you find most inviting or encouraging participation – please tick the appropriate box to indicate your preference: Image A
- ☐ Image B
- ☐ Both images
- ☐ Neither image

Conservation Concerns

Wildlife organisations sometimes campaign about a particular issue or problem, such as climate change, or loss of natural habitat to agriculture or to development or to roads, or damage to water courses from pollution, or illegal killing of birds of prey, or litter in the sea.

24. Do you think the images used should be hard hitting and explicit, for example, showing dead or doomed animals, or destroyed habitats?

Do you think the images used should be hard hitting and explicit, for example, showing dead or doomed animals, or destroyed habitats?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

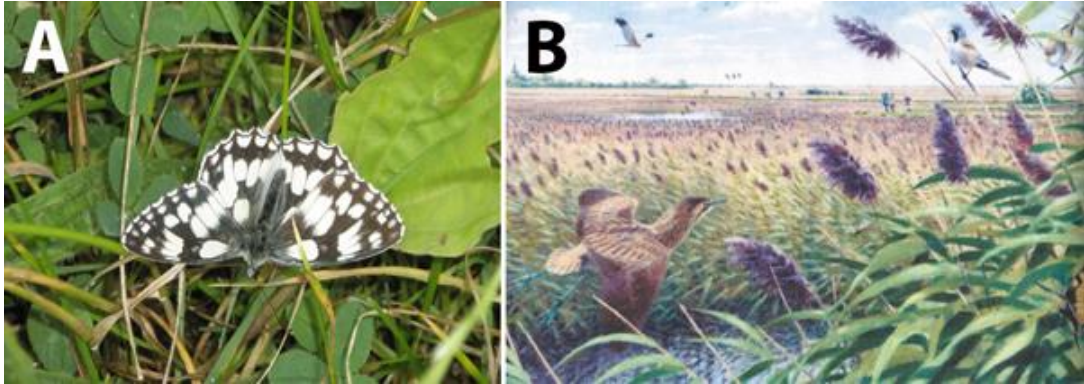
25. Should organisations concentrate on more positive messages, for example, images of conservation success resulting from cooperative projects?

Should organisations concentrate on more positive messages, for example, images of conservation success resulting from cooperative projects?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Conservation Projects

Conservation organisations often ask for support for conservation projects. Image a) was used for a project to protect and manage chalk grassland and image b) was an artist's impression of planned habitat creation at Needingworth Quarry, Cambridgeshire (Bruce Pearson/copyright RSPB)



(Author's photograph)

(© Bruce Pearson / © RSPB)

26. Which of the images would (hypothetically) encourage you to support these projects – please tick the appropriate box to indicate your preference:

Which of the images would (hypothetically) encourage you to support these projects – please tick the appropriate box to indicate your preference:

- ☐ Image A
- ☐ Image B
- ☐ Both images
- ☐ Neither image

A sustainable future

These two images indicate that we all have a role to play in the future of wildlife and wild habitats:



(© English Nature 2004)

27. Which of these images would encourage you to play a role in the future of wildlife and wild habitats – please tick the appropriate box to indicate your preference:

Which of these images would encourage you to play a role in the future of wildlife and wild habitats – please tick the appropriate box to indicate your preference:

- ☐ Image A
- ☐ Image B
- ☐ Both images
- ☐ Neither image

Childhood interest in nature

Visitors to the wildlife art gallery were asked if there had been a picture, image or book from their childhood that had 'fired' their wildlife interest. Some respondents said they had, and the most frequently mentioned were as follows. Please tick any that you feel were influential to your early interest in wildlife:

28. Please indicate which of these were influential to your early interest in wildlife:

	Yes (influenced me)	No (did not influence me)
Beatrix Potter books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enid Blyton books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flower Fairies stories	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I-Spy books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gavin Maxwell - Ring of Bright Water	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gerald Durrell books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Henry Williamson - Tarka the Otter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kenneth Grahame - Wind in the Willows	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ladybird books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Naturalists' books and covers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Observer books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Richard Adams - Watership Down	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Roald Dahl - Fantastic Mr Fox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rudyard Kipling - Just So Stories/Jungle Book	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shell - Guides to the Countryside and posters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29. Some of those surveyed said that, as children, they had been more motivated by being out-and-about in the countryside, or living in or near the countryside rather than by books or images. Does this statement apply to you as a child?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Better promotion of nature conservation

Can wildlife art be better used to help promote conservation of wildlife and natural habitats? The majority of visitors to the wildlife art exhibition said that more could be done with art to promote and encourage nature conservation, though a small number said that there were enough images everywhere, and some were undecided.

30. Please tick any of the statements below, which were suggested by visitors to the exhibition, to indicate how much you agree/disagree with them:

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree strongly
There is a need for greater public awareness of nature conservation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More wildlife art in public places is needed, such as posters; television advertisements and programmes, newspaper and magazine articles, public sculptures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important world habitats, such as the oceans, should be represented at the UN	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There should be an annual wildlife art festival	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Artists should feature on Spring/Autumn Watch	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Negative images can be depressing and off-putting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There should be a wildlife equivalent of 'Watercolour Challenge'	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There should be a public wildlife art competition and more hands-on activities for adults & children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There should be more art in or near nature reserves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art should depict what we are losing, the rare & endangered species and habitats, and about looking after nature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature art must go for the WOW factor, the happy memory, the fleeting glimpse, the fascinating, and portraying nature as beautiful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree strongly
We should use more powerful, perhaps even shocking, imagery, such as the WWII propaganda posters	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey and for contributing to my PhD research. Your responses will be analysed alongside those from other contributors and will help to identify how art can be used to support conservation efforts.

This survey is completely anonymous and is not part of any market research. Although your details will not be passed on to me, I would be very happy to reply to your questions, thoughts or observations on this topic, and if you wish to contact me please do so via my University of Nottingham email (supplied).

Donna Radley, University of Nottingham

Appendix 4 Questions for nature artists

PhD Research: 'Nature Conservation Imagery: the art of communication' Questions for artists of wildlife and wild places:

Your name please.....

Please tick YES or NO or DON'T KNOW where appropriate in the following questions.

Please continue overleaf if you need more space for your replies.

1. Do you think that wildlife/wild places art can convey a nature conservation message?
YES..... NO..... DON'T KNOW.....
If possible can you provide, or describe, examples from your own work, or that of other artists, that do this?
2. Do you think wildlife/wild places art can make a difference to how people feel about nature conservation?
YES..... NO..... DON'T KNOW.....
If yes, what evidence of this have you seen?
3. Do you have any examples of where nature conservation organisations have used your nature art to help them in their work, and if so please describe?
4. Are there ways that nature conservation organisations could make greater use of art to promote their messages?
YES..... NO..... DON'T KNOW.....
If yes, what messages?
5. Do you have any suggestions of innovative ways in which art could be used to raise awareness of wildlife and wild places and the need to conserve them?
Please describe
6. Do you have any other comments about this subject?

Please send me your reply using the SAE enclosed. I would be grateful if the questionnaire could be returned by the end of February 2017.

If you would prefer to reply by email, please contact me for an electronic copy of these questions (email supplied)

With many thanks for your time and for your replies, Donna Radley

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