

the
species
recovery
trust

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Trustees Annual Report
Year ending 31 Dec 2020

Registered Charity 1146387



SUMMARY INFORMATION

In 2020

- We delivered projects on 10 species
- Despite a period of enforced 'hibernation' ended the year in a strong financial position
- Moved a proportion of our training to an online platform, both for 2020 and future years

Reference and administrative information

Charity Name: The Species Recovery Trust

Charity Number: 1146387

Address: 37 Albany Road, Salisbury, SP1 3YQ

Trustees: Jed Hamblin-Boone, Nicholas Berry, Fiona Jones-Perrott, Catherine Hadler.

Structure Governance and Management

Type of governing document: Charity Constitution, registered with the Charity Commission on the 1st March 2012. There shall be no fewer than three trustees. New trustees must be members of the charity and are elected by the members in general meeting. The trustees may also appoint any person who is willing to act as a trustee.

Trustees are recruited to give the trust a diverse skill base, and represent the fields of business, law, education and environment. They are invited to sit in on one meeting before deciding whether to put themselves forward for election.



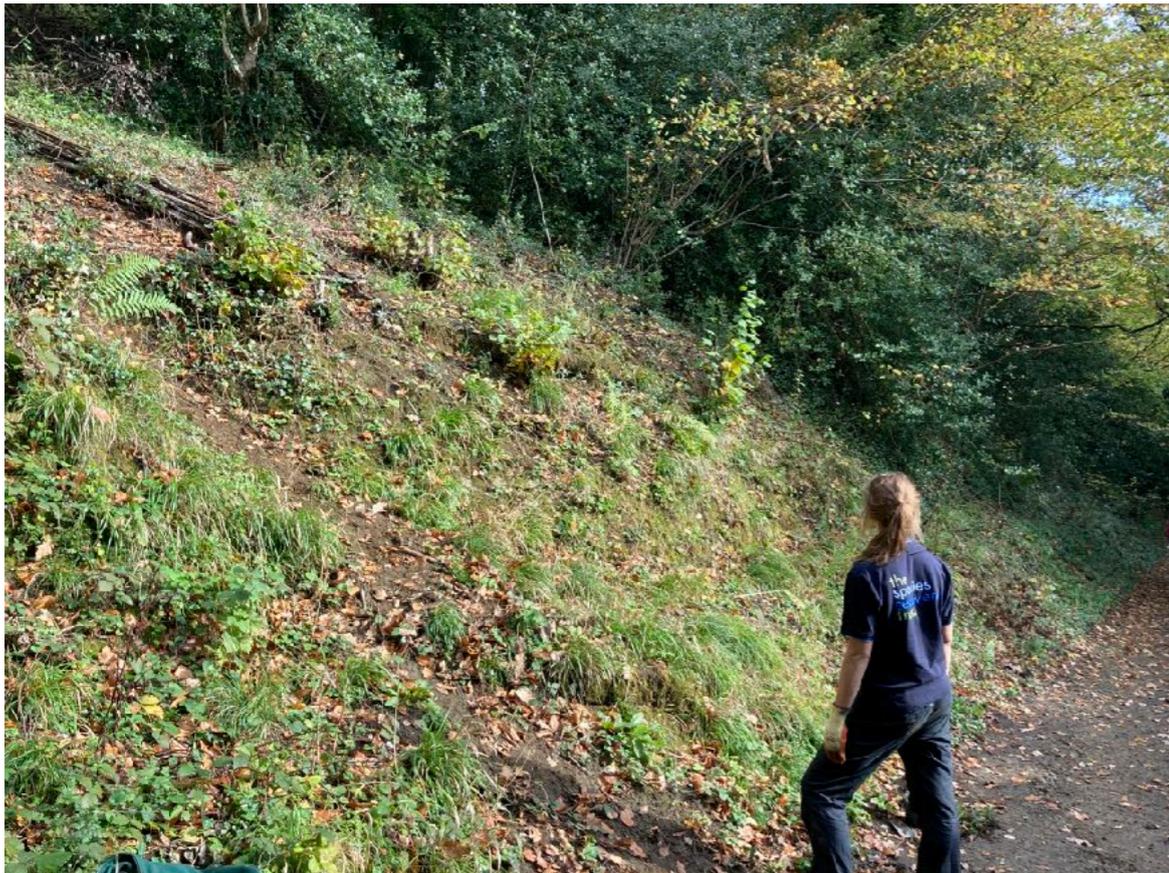
OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

Matching our goals

Our stated aims are as follows:

'To promote the conservation and protection of species on the edge of extinction in the UK for the public benefit and to advance the education of the public on issues concerning the conservation and protection of such species.'

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the charity commission on public benefit.



THE YEAR IN SPECIES

By necessity we had to scale down our work considerably in 2020, with four members of staff away having families or on furlough, and at various times of the year access to our sites severely curtailed by the lockdown.

We did however manage to carry out extensive surveys for Field Gentian and Marsh Clubmoss in Cornwall and Cumbria, and in the Lake District were lucky to discover the largest clubmoss population that has yet been recorded anywhere!

During the second lockdown we re-surveyed all the New Forest sites for Marsh Clubmoss, and will be processing that data into 2021.

We were also very active in the southeast of England, carrying out surveys and habitat management work across a range of heathland sites and hopefully giving a lifeline to some failing Clubmoss populations.

Both native sites for Starved Wood-sedge are now supporting over 100 plants, which is a huge victory after years of habitat management.





Heath Tiger Beetle

Winter scrub clearance was undertaken at Brentmoor Heath, following the exciting discovery of a female beetle the previous summer. The summer of 2020 again found a single female, showing the site is suitable to support this species. In collaboration with Natural England, Surrey Wildlife Trust and the Ministry of Defence, a single male beetle was translocated to Brentmoor from Thursley National Nature Reserve, a stronghold for this species. Further monitoring in 2021 will unveil the success of this work.



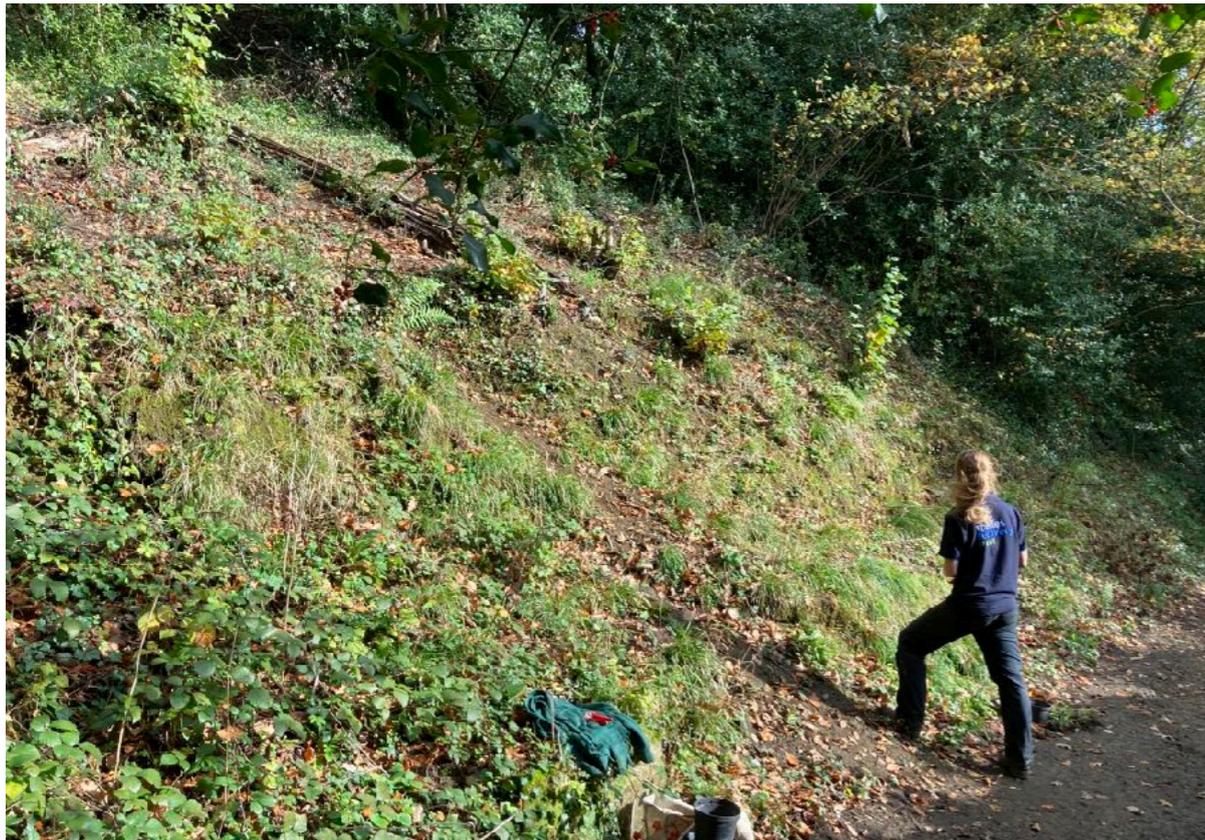
Green Tiger Beetles

We had a fantastic start to our project to captive breed Green Tiger Beetles, with the first pair mating. The larvae have been identified within the enclosure, and although this species is not rare in the UK, we are aiming to develop an understanding of how to breed and rear tiger beetles in captivity so that in the future we can apply these lessons to the incredibly rare Heath Tiger Beetle. Our long term aim is to be able to breed Heath Tiger Beetles in captivity so that they can be released on suitable sites in Surrey, Hampshire and Dorset.



Field Cow-wheat

Monitoring was undertaken at the trial release site for Field Cow-wheat on Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's Coombe Bissett reserve. Early in the year, we were delighted to find seedlings across the range of habitats that they were sown in. During the summer, many plants flowered and a large amount of data was gathered allowing analysis to be conducted on effects of grazing, aspect and ground preparation for the survival of this plant. This has provided vital information for future reintroduction projects.



Starved Wood-sedge

Large scale management works have been undertaken at one of the native sites for Starved Wood-sedge, and the reintroduction site at Charterhouse. Over four days we supervised the felling of two large lime trees which had been increasingly shading the former site for the last decade, and then teams of volunteers helped to clear the banks of invasive competitors.

During Autumn 2020, the native population was supplemented with additional plants grown by volunteers and our officers.



Archaeophytes

Due to the lockdown measures in 2020, our in-crop and natural regeneration trials at test sites have not been possible this year. Instead, we've been experimentally growing Upright Goosefoot and Darnel at home. New trials have found that the viability of Darnel seed does not drop off dramatically after three years, and Upright Goosefoot is slow to germinate and intolerant of dry conditions, as recorded in previous years. Seed was taken from all plants grown to expand the investigations next year.

Spiked Rampion

A reintroduction of Spiked Rampion was completed at Wilderness Woods in Kent in 2019. Rabbit grazing was thought to have decimated the plants, however monitoring visits in 2020 found around half of the plants alive but severely damaged. Fencing was installed to allow the plants to grow, the results of which will hopefully be evident in 2021.

In the last few days pre-lockdown, a trial planting was carried out on a protected road verge site where Spiked Rampion went extinct in the last century. The plants have been identified to grow and flower in summer 2020.



Kentish Milkwort

Unfortunately this year, we have been unable to complete reintroductions with plants grown at Kew. However, we have successfully identified the plant at one of the three extant sites in an area unprotected by stockproof fencing. We have removed the fence in an attempt to open up this area for grazing to create the short sward habitat that this plant requires.

Field Gentian

The population of Field Gentian in the New Forest fluctuates over the years. In 2019, Wilverley Plain supported over 2800 plants, but 2020 found all but a few plants in peripheral areas adjacent to the main population. Future monitoring will help establish if this pattern is a response to weather conditions (strong heatwaves) or the plant operating on a biennial lifecycle. Monitoring at other sites has seen different patterns, with plants shrinking back under the taller vegetation in hot years. This may be the first signs of the populations responding to climate change, by favouring shaded niches. It's early days, but this research shows the value of continuous annual monitoring.



Deptford Pink

Monitoring visits have been conducted at some of our Deptford Pink sites this year, and these have found to be fairly stable in Kent. Management works have been undertaken by Sevenoaks District Council at one of the largest populations to remove over-shading and allow the population to expand. Excitingly, a new sub-population has been identified in Chobham, and through collaborative work with Surrey Wildlife Trust, we hope to secure this population into the future management works have been conducted to aid establishment of the few plants found.

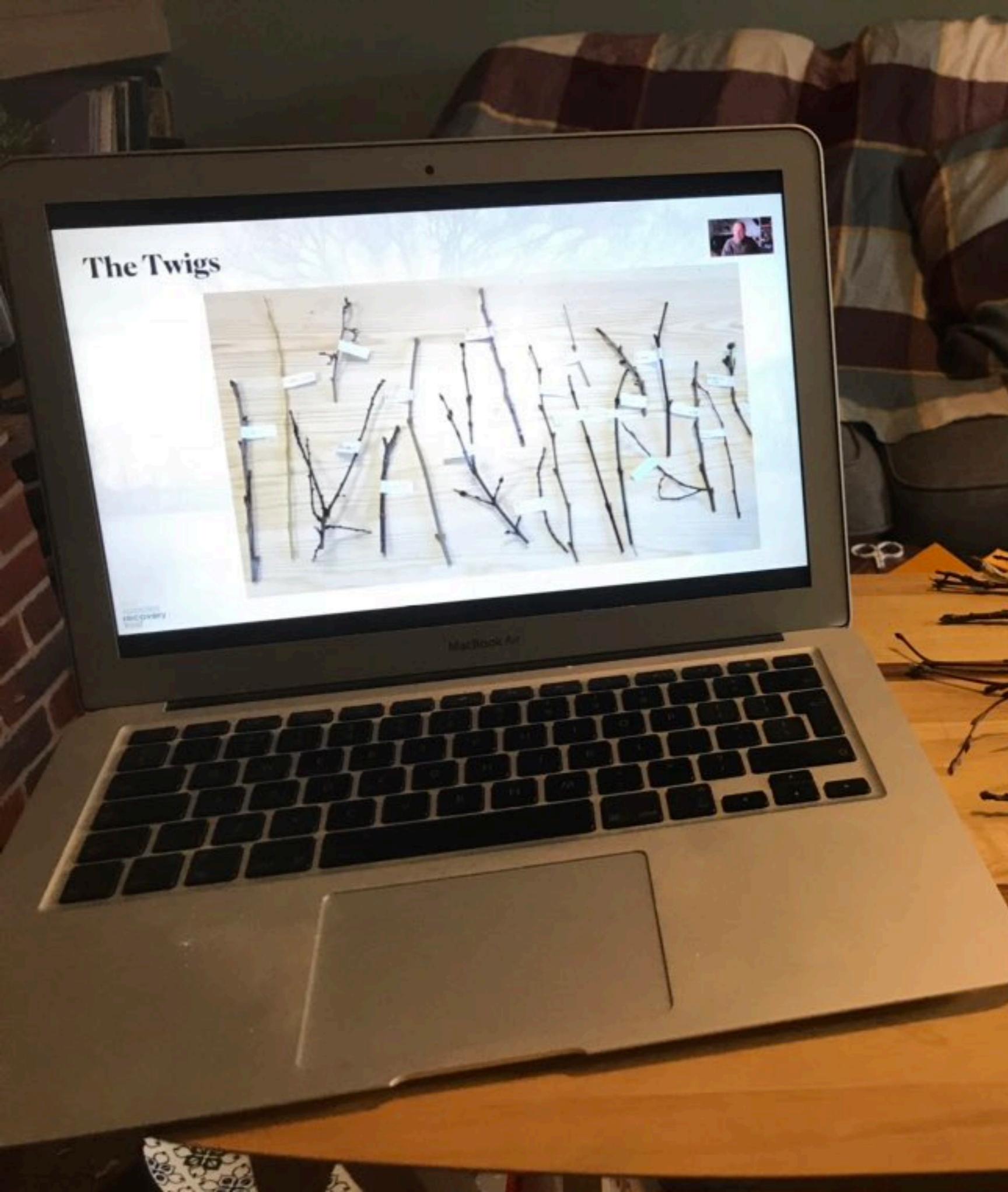


Marsh Clubmoss

In August a successful visit to Cumbria discovered the largest population of Marsh Clubmoss in England and Wales. The surveys also re-found plants near Wastwater where it was believed to be lost.

Monitoring visits continued in Hampshire and Surrey, with declines found across most sites, which is believed to be a result of reduced air quality and unfavourable conditions locally. This prompted new management techniques to be implemented across three sites in an attempt to conserve these dwindling populations.

In the Autumn, with most of lockdown restrictions lifted we were able to survey every sites in the New Forest, giving us a complete dataset for 2020, which can now be compared with the last full dataset from 2017.



TRAINING

Due to Covid restrictions it soon became clear that we would be unable to run much in the way of group courses, and by March 2020 we took the decision to cancel all events, rather than keep re-evaluating this as the pandemic unfolded. Having initially decided against taking the courses online, in November we ran the first course on assessing Hedgerows, and due to the success of this then decided to take other courses online where we could. Our most successful course was Winter Tree ID, which involved the collecting and labelling of over 2000 twigs, before mailing them out to participants and making the course into a pre-recorded tutorial. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, especially for people in the north of England and with family commitments, who could never normally attend a course. Other courses are now in pre-production, and in the future we are likely to run these alongside field courses.

SALES AND MEDIA

One of the unseen consequences of the lockdown was a continuation of strong sales of the grasses field guide, which at one point meant we struggled to keep up with orders, especially through Amazon.

Our Facebook page has 2,332 (up from 1,943) followers and our most popular post reached 1,524 (3,081) people.

Our website had 7.84K sessions and 5.14K users (down from 9,87K/6,31K in 2019).

VOLUNTEERS

2020 was by necessity a difficult year for volunteers, and we had to issue official guidance to call off volunteer monitoring at the start of the year. Fortunately restrictions were lifted during the summer, and during this time we were heavily indebted to volunteers who continued to visit their local sites, enabling us to obtain data from a much wider area of the country than we could have safely visited.

FUNDRAISING

In total £75,355 was received as grants, (compared to £47,614 in 2019). We are hugely grateful to all these funders for supporting our work in 2020.

£4,930.59	Kong Limited	Enforcement Undertaking
£5,000.00	Henocq Law	Unrestricted Grant
£1,000.00	Cox Skuse	Unrestricted Grant
£1,200.00	Summerfield	Cosnards Beetle
£1,200.00	Walter Guinness	Field Cow-wheat
£4,470.00	NE	New Forest Gentian
£2,275.94	ESCC/Lund	Heath Lobelia
£3,550.00	Banister	Marsh Clubmoss
£3,000.00	Hammamelis	Heath Tiger Beetle
£4,410.00	Halpin Trust	Kentish Milkwort
£6,310.00	Halpin Trust	Heath Lobelia
£1,000.00	Cleary	Wartbiter Cricket
£3,000.00	Rushmoor Council	Clubmoss project
£4,000.00	Daniell Trust	Volunteer Project

SUMMARY RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DEC 2020

Summary

	£	£
Opening bank balance		111,214
Receipts	111,232	
Payments	-82,117	
Net income		29,115
Closing bank balance		140,329

Reserves Policy

Our current reserves policy is to hold at least two years' running costs in our account, which is currently £64,200.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

At the year end the total of the charity's assets, including cash at bank, was £158,604 (of which £54,218 were restricted fund assets) and the total of the charity's liabilities was £4,842.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees



JED HAMBLIN-BOONE , Chair

23/2/21

The Species Recovery Trust is a charity set up to tackle the loss of some of the rarest species in the UK.

There are over nine hundred native species in the UK that are classed as under threat, with several hundreds more currently widespread but known to be in significant decline.

The countryside is now bereft of many species that were a familiar sight a mere generation ago.

A small number of these species are on the absolute brink of existence, poised to become extinct in our lifetimes; our goal is to stop them vanishing.

Our aim is to remove 50 species from the edge of extinction in the UK by the year 2050. In addition we are reconnecting people with wildlife and the natural world through training programmes and awareness raising.



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Registered in England and Wales Charity 114387