



27 September 2023

BIOBLITZ SPECIES MONITORING AT ST ABB'S HEAD NATURE RESERVE SETS NEW RECORD

- **The National Trust for Scotland team at St Abb's Head, in partnership with Berwickshire Marine Reserve, recorded 349 species at their recent species monitoring events, beating the previous record of 298 from 2018.**
- **Findings from the events used to develop an accurate snapshot of the species that call the National Nature Reserve home**
- **Events helped engage members of the public about both charities important conservation work**

The National Trust for Scotland team at St Abb's Head is celebrating a record-breaking number of different species recorded at the National Nature Reserve, that will help them build an accurate account of the biodiversity at this special coastal landscape.

The Bioblitz events in August were delivered by the conservation charity's team of rangers at the nature reserve, near Eyemouth, in the Scottish Borders, in partnership with the Berwickshire Marine Reserve. The team engaged with 53 members of the public to assist with species monitoring and carry out land-based surveys where they helped record more varieties of different flora and fauna than ever before, with 326 species documented in one day, 2 August, improving upon the previous record of 298 from 2018.

A dive of the coastal marine environment near St Abb's Head harbour at two sites, Anemone Gullies and Peanut Wreck Boilers, was rescheduled to 23 August due to bad weather conditions on the day of the Bioblitz event. Data gathered during the dives by staff from the Berwickshire Marine Reserve, the Trust and a visiting scientist from Traversing European Coastlines (TREC) project, complemented the previous land-based surveys, helping to boost the total number of species recorded to 349.

The public were able to record their findings using a specialist app to photograph the different species of plants, insects, mammals and seabirds that reside at the coastal headland and marine reserves. The event was designed to get members of the public excited about their local wildlife and the important work of both charities. The National Trust for Scotland, the country's largest conservation charity, cares for and shares St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve, providing access to its nature, beauty and heritage for everyone.

Jordanna Kitching, National Trust for Scotland engagement ranger at St Abb's Head, said: "We're delighted with the outcome from our Bioblitz event in August and subsequent dives of the coastal environment around the reserve. The bumper number of species recorded including minke whale, Atlantic wolffish, peregrine falcon and great skua, shows the diversity and scale of the wildlife that call this special landscape home and demonstrates the importance of our work here. This information will help us to compile a comprehensive set of data on the various species, informing how we best care for and protect their habitats. It will also help us to create a baseline set of data to allow us to compare future data to potentially identify indicators of change to the species found here."

Jordanna, whose role is made possible thanks to the Love Our Nature project, supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery, expressed her gratitude to visitors and members who contributed to the success of the species monitoring event. The Love our Nature project is supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery, who have now raised more than £1 billion for thousands of charities and local good causes. This includes a total of over £2.5m for the National Trust for Scotland to support its work to enrich and protect Scotland's landscapes and wildlife, since 2014.

"We're incredibly thankful to the members of the public who joined our species monitoring efforts, who, despite the wet weather conditions, helped us to beat the last count carried out in 2018. We're also grateful for the continued generosity of our members and supporters, who help us to continue our vital work to protect Scotland's nature and heritage, now and for future generations to enjoy."

Alongside the species monitoring, there was a host of events taking place throughout the day at the Bioblitz event including a guided bird and wildlife walk, whale and dolphin watching using telescopes from the area by the lighthouse, a guided bug hunt, and a rock-pooling session in St Abb's Harbour.

Berwickshire Marine Reserve who worked in partnership with the Trust to deliver the Bioblitz events, is Scotland's only voluntary marine reserve and was set up in 1984 by the local community to care for this unique ocean environment.

Lauren Nieuwenhuys, Berwickshire Marine Reserve Project Officer, said: "We had a fantastic day working with NTS on the Bioblitz event - it's really highlighted how special this part of the world is and how important the work of both reserves is. It's great to see so many members of the public getting involved and showing an interest too. We're thankful to Simpsons McCreath Trust for their support in funding the boat for the marine survey activity and we're already looking forward to Bioblitz 2024."

Events like St Abb's Head's Bioblitz supports the National Trust for Scotland's mission to provide access to nature, beauty and heritage for everyone, outlined in its 10-year strategy, launched in 2022. This work supports its conservation and engagement goals to enrich Scotland's protected heritage, enable nature to flourish and provide inspiring heritage visitor experiences.

Further information about St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve can be found on the National Trust for Scotland [website](#).

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Notes to Editors:

Images - <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/9gFp9Jvj20>

About the National Trust for Scotland

Established in 1931, the National Trust for Scotland is Scotland's largest conservation charity and cares for, shares and speaks up for Scotland's magnificent heritage.

Over the last 90 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most magnificent buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It cares for more than 100 sites, from ancient houses to battlefields, castles, mills, gardens, coastlines, islands, mountain ranges and the plants and animals which depend upon them.

In March 2022 the National Trust for Scotland launched *Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone*, its ten-year strategy which sets out the ambitions of the charity over the coming decade. From speaking up for Scotland's heritage which doesn't have a voice, to improving the lives and wellbeing of people across the country, and responding to the climate and biodiversity crisis, the Trust will build on its work in recent years to grow its impact and conserve and restore more of Scotland's heritage, as it moves towards its centenary in 2031.

Scotland's largest membership organisation, the National Trust for Scotland relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work.

For more information on the National Trust for Scotland visit www.nts.org.uk.

The National Trust for Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410.