



Scottish
Environment
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Still Delivering the Goods

Case Study 9



ONGOING



PLANNED

Scotland's B-lines Buglife Scotland



Photo: Claire Pumfrey/Buglife

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<https://www.scotlink.org/publication/still-delivering-the-goods/>

9

Scotland's B-lines Buglife Scotland



Background

The Scottish Government's '**Pollinator Strategy for Scotland**', published in July 2017, set out a 10-year plan to address the declines in our pollinator species. Buglife's B-Lines initiative is working with partners across the country to demonstrate how a collaborative approach can create a strong network of good quality pollinator habitat to help conserve our native insect pollinators. After local consultations and a lot of GIS mapping, Buglife launched their Scotland **B-Lines map** at the end of 2020. This national map builds on work already completed in the central belt, where Buglife has successfully delivered B-Lines projects such as the **John Muir Pollinator Way**.



Project aims

This project aims to:

- Identify and map priority B-Lines across Scotland – forming a coherent insect pollinator dispersal network
- Promote and raise awareness of B-Lines to ensure wide ownership of the network – enabling others to develop and deliver sections of B-Lines
- Encourage decision makers to support the development of a national B-Lines network
- Work with statutory agencies to ensure agri-environment schemes play a full role in delivering B-Lines, through improved targeting of appropriate management options
- Work with partners, including conservation charities, landowners and managers, local communities, and businesses to support and fund the creation of B-Lines
- Initiate programmes of work to restore and create new wildflower-rich habitats
- Seek funding to enable B-Lines to be created and extended around Scotland.



Project Timescale

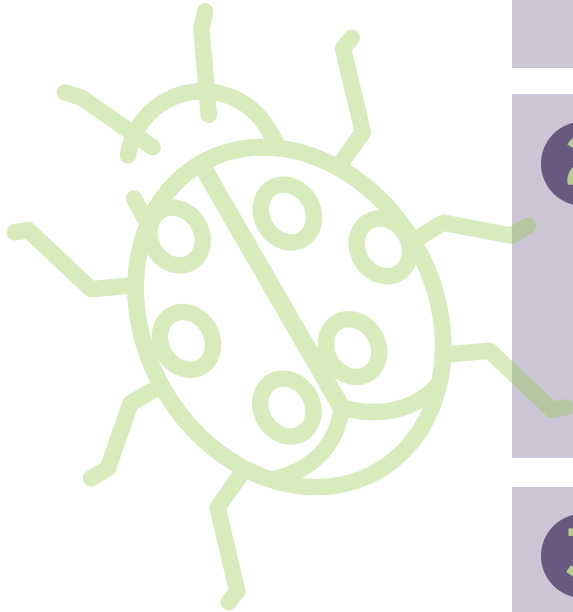
The national Scotland B-Lines map was launched in December 2020; and is now seeking funding to create and restore pollinator habitat along the B-Lines over the next 5 to 10 years.



Photo: Claire Puntfrey/Buglife



SBS Objectives



The aims from the *2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity*:

1 To protect and restore biodiversity on land and in our seas, and to support healthier ecosystems.

B-Lines will protect and restore biodiversity on land and support healthier ecosystems of which pollinators are a critical part.

2 To connect people with the natural world, for their health and wellbeing and to involve them more in decisions about their environment.

B-Lines will connect people with the natural world, for their health and wellbeing and to involve them more in decisions about their environment. B-Lines projects involve local communities and encourage people to take part in pollinator monitoring and work to restore and create pollinator habitats.

3 To maximise the benefits for Scotland of a diverse natural environment and the services it provides, contributing to sustainable economic growth.

Pollinators provide a critical ecosystem service for Scotland. B-Lines will maximise the benefits for Scotland of a diverse natural environment and the services it provides, contributing to sustainable economic growth.



Project Summary

The Scotland B-Lines map was launched in December 2020. B-Lines had previously been mapped across the CSGN area which covers over 10,000 hectares and 19 local authorities. It used the same methodologies with GIS mapping and community consultations to deliver a B-Lines map for all remaining local authority areas on mainland Scotland and the Scottish Islands.

The project has delivered, and is delivering, many successful projects which are turning B-Lines into a reality on the ground. These have included the **John Muir Pollinator Way** which runs 134 miles from Helensburgh in the west to Dunbar in the east of Scotland. On the ground habitat creation and enhancement has occurred at sites along the entire route of the John Muir Way, including through the **Falkirk's Pollinator Way** project. So far, it has created over 50 pollinator hotspots and further hotspots are planned for along the route. It has also delivered Central Scotland B-Lines with almost all the local authorities in the central belt and is contributing to B-Line projects, for example, in the **Garnock Valley** and along the River Tweed.



Climate Impacts

Unimproved and species rich grasslands have carbon and biodiversity benefits over amenity grasslands. The less intensive cutting regime also saves energy and money. Some of the big climate change benefits arising from B-Lines are, however, linked to ensuring pollinators have a functioning network of routes that will enable them to move through the landscape as climate change impacts where they will find suitable habitats to live and forage. Pollinators provide an essential ecosystem service, without which we cannot survive.



People Information

Direct employment: To support the roll out of B-Lines in Scotland will require a national coordinator, a fundraiser and 7 regional officers to liaise with land managers and develop and deliver habitat restoration and creation across the country. B-Lines also provide employment opportunities for local contractors who help with habitat creation and management.

Training: The B-Lines initiative provides plenty of opportunities for training others in how to manage their land for pollinators and how to monitor pollinator species. There will also be opportunities for skills-based training and placements. Project partners will benefit from bespoke training for staff teams and there will be numerous opportunities to involve volunteers.

Buglife provides training about how to manage land for pollinators, how to identify pollinators and how to monitor pollinator species.



Photo: Claire Pumfrey/Buglife



Successes and achievements

On the back of the launch of Scotland's B-Lines, Buglife is currently working with partners to ensure there are B-Lines projects across all of Scotland. The aim is to have regional B-Lines officers across Scotland, each delivering habitat restoration and creation to benefit pollinators.

It is anticipated that, over five years, the project could deliver 1,750ha of new or restored habitat together with up to 40 training placements.



Issues and challenges

Ensuring that enough habitat is in a good condition for pollinators will always be a challenge. Sites of over 2ha are preferred, but these can be hard to find particularly in urban areas. As more grassland is managed for pollinators, there is increased need for specialist equipment to maintain and manage areas which is not always available to land managers.



Funding

This is not yet fully in place, but a five-year project, delivering 1,750ha of habitat across Scotland and employing a national coordinator, fundraiser, and 7 regional officers, amounts to an anticipated five-year budget of £4.9m.



Further information

<https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines/b-lines-scotland/>