

## **Peatland Species - Sarah Boyack MSP**

Hello, I am Sarah Boyack, Member of the Scottish Parliament for the Lothian region, and I am the Nature Champion for Scotland's Large Heath Butterflies.

Large Heath butterflies are true peatland specialists, thriving in both Scottish upland blanket bogs and lowland raised bogs.

Their caterpillars feed on hare's-tail cotton grass, a wetland plant which form cotton-ball-like heads in the summer, while the adults seek out the nectar of cross-leaved heath, a type of heather.

Scotland's peatlands are teeming with a wide variety of plant and animal life. Healthy peatlands contain a rich tapestry of plants, including heather, cotton grass, and sphagnum mosses – the key plants of bogs, which can hold up to twenty times their weight in water!

Some blanket bogs and raised bogs also support specialist invertebrates, like beetles, dragonflies, flies, moths and butterflies, including the Azure hawker dragonfly, the Bog Sun-jumper spider and the Bog dance-fly.

And we can't overlook reptiles such as common lizards, adders, and slow-worms, as well as the amphibians, like common frogs and palmate newts who also make peatlands their home.

Peatlands are bustling with life, and it's of the utmost importance that we protect and restore these habitats so that they can continue to be a haven for so many species.