

# The Edinburgh Nature Network

## Wetland and Wet Woodland Opportunities



An otter in Dunsapie Loch, Holyrood Park – photo by Jamie McDermaid

There are nearly 50 incredible opportunities to improve wetland and wet woodland habitats in Edinburgh that were identified through the ENN.

These opportunities include:

- Restoring wetlands that have historically been present in the city.
- Protecting habitats across the city which are home to key protected species.
- Adding ponds and habitat diversity to golf courses to attract diverse wildlife.

Using the location, action description, and species in the accompanying table, we hope you can find an opportunity that is right for the aims of your organisation.

## Species Spotlight

These are just some of the incredible, local species covered in the opportunities in this area. Please check the accompanying table or the [ENN story map](#) to get more details on the actions connected to each species.



Water Vole



Great Crested Newt



Moonwort



Kingfisher



Otter

**Edinburgh Nature Network** is a long-term strategic approach to manage, restore and enhance the urban landscape of Edinburgh, highlighting opportunities to take action across the city.

## Get Involved

If your organisation has an ongoing or completed project relating to one of these actions, please log it in [our survey](#).

Get in touch with us at [thrivinggreenspaces@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:thrivinggreenspaces@edinburgh.gov.uk)



ENN Action Number	Area	Action	Category	Species
CR003	Airport	<p><b>Create wet woodland to provide habitat for wildlife and aid flood mitigation.</b> Nature-based solutions will tackle flooding. To avoid wintering thrushes (<i>Turdidae</i> sp.) and other high-risk bird strike species, wet woodland creation will help with flooding whilst providing habitat that does not conflict with health and safety regulations for the airport.</p>	Create	Thrushes
EN003	Airport	<p><b>Enhance the River Almond by improving the native in-stream diversity and riparian woodland.</b> Invasive non-native species (INNS) are prevalent. Removing these will help native species to recolonise the area. Invasive plants have colonised the riverbank, which reduces the ability of bankside burrowing species, such as water vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>) and kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>), to use the watercourse.</p>	Enhance	Water Vole Kingfisher
RE003	Airport	<p><b>Restore wetland habitats.</b> Fields surrounding the airport used to be wetlands but were drained. Wetlands and ponds can be designed to minimise risk of bird strikes to accommodate airport safety regulations. Small, shallow ponds with tall marginal vegetation in sheltered locations are unlikely to attract species at risk of bird strike.</p>	Restore	Birds
RE004	Airport	<p><b>Restore the Gogar Burn.</b> The Gogar Burn should be redirected around the runway and naturalised to enable fish passage (the culvert is currently a barrier). This would also create areas of riparian wet woodland. Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) and kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>) are found on the burn so this would improve habitat connectivity for these species. This will be the biggest and best water diversion ever completed in the UK and will open approximately 40 km of river for Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) and sea trout (<i>Salmo trutta</i>).</p>	Restore	Otter Kingfisher Salmon Sea trout

CR024	Braid Hills	<b>Create additional wetland habitat within Braid Burn corridor.</b> More wetland along Braid Burn would provide habitat for wildlife, help with erosion and improve water quality. There is mixed land use along the watercourse and management regimes on land will impact water quality. Solutions could include using willow hurdles along the embankment, replanting with wetland species and creating native wet woodland.	Create	
CR025	Braid Hills	<b>Create wetland and pond habitat throughout the four large golf courses.</b> Create micro-ponds to provide additional pond and wetland habitat between Blackford Hill and Braid Hill. There are historic records of great crested newt ( <i>Triturus cristatus</i> ) at Elf Loch in Mortonhall Golf Course and recent records of other newt species. Improving habitat connectivity for these species will bring great crested newts back, improving biodiversity. Hermitage Golf Course is disused so could provide an opportunity to start this work.	Create	Great Crested Newt
CR022	Burdiehouse	<b>Create wetland habitat within Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park.</b> There are naturally boggy areas that should be targeted for wetland enhancements. This will create more habitat for wildlife and alleviate flooding.	Create	
PR025	Burdiehouse	<b>Protect existing priority habitats within Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park including riparian woodland, wet woodland and species-rich grassland.</b> The park provides habitat for species including otter ( <i>Lutra lutra</i> ), kingfisher ( <i>Alcedo atthis</i> ) and kestrel ( <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> ). It has common hemp-nettle ( <i>Galeopsis tetrahit</i> ), which is locally rare.	Protect	Otter Kingfisher Kestrel Hemp-nettle
RE017	Central	<b>Restore wetland habitat in The Meadows.</b> This was drained during the early 20th century.	Restore	

RE018	Central	Restore wetland habitat in Princes Street Gardens and enhance amenity grassland for wildlife by making it more biologically diverse.	Restore	
PR032	Colinton, Wester Hailes and Bonaly	Protect Water of Leith and associated riparian habitat at Colinton and Craiglockhart Dells. They provide ecosystem services such as noise regulation, insect pollination and air purification, as well as habitat for a range of species including dippers ( <i>Cinclus cinclus</i> ).	Protect	Dipper
PR038	Craiglockhart and Morningside	Protect Craiglockhart pond and wetland habitat. The wetlands are priority fen and marsh habitat, and the pond has good water quality which should be maintained.	Protect	
EN015	Cramond	Enhance habitat at Bruntsfield golf course for wildlife. There is existing native woodland within the golf course, but more could be done to improve the site for wildlife. There is a pond that should be enhanced, and other habitat improvements will provide better connectivity between the golf course and the River Almond. It also neighbours Lauriston Farm, so additional pollinator habitat and amphibian ponds would complement the habitat found nearby.	Enhance	Pollinators Amphibians
EN016	Cramond	Enhance habitat at Royal Burgess golf course for wildlife. The freshwater habitat could be enhanced through the inclusion of ponds, whilst trees, hedges and wildflowers would provide also improve connectivity from Davidson's Main through to the River Almond.	Enhance	

PR006	Cramond	<b>Protect the River Almond and associated riparian woodland.</b> The Almond offers benefits for people and wildlife. It provides habitat for species including dipper ( <i>Cinclus cinclus</i> ) and kingfisher ( <i>Alcedo atthis</i> ), and ecosystem services including water purification, flood regulation, air purification and health and wellbeing. It is a green corridor, connecting Cramond foreshore to places such as Cammo Estate Local Nature Reserve.	Protect	Dipper Kingfisher
EN009	Dalmahoy and Balerno	<b>Enhance Heriot-Watt University Campus.</b> It is a Local Biodiversity Site and has a large pond with good habitat for many bat species, however it could be improved for biodiversity. The University has a Biodiversity Action Plan for the site which encourages collaborating with others to implement habitat enhancements.	Enhance	Bats
RE009	Dalmahoy and Balerno	<b>Restore the Gogar Burn.</b> The riparian zone of the Gogar Burn has some good quality patches of habitat, but it is over grazed and the soil is poached by livestock. It should be restored by preventing access for livestock to allow it to naturally regenerate and prevent further damage.	Restore	
PR011	Granton and Wardie	<b>Protect the reedbed and wetland habitat at Newhaven Harbour.</b> This habitat provides an important home to a range of wildlife, but the adjacent area is earmarked for development. Future development proposals should retain and enhance this habitat.	Protect	
EN048	Gyle, Hermiston and Sighthill	<b>Enhance wetland around Gogarburn House and Estate and connect it to the Gogar Burn to support a range of wildlife and provide more ecosystem services such as flood regulation.</b> This will help with flood attenuation at Gogar Park and reduce flooding further downstream.	Enhance	

RE022	Gyle, Hermiston and Sighthill	<b>Restore wetland habitat in the area that was formerly the Gogar Loch.</b> The loch was drained in the 19th century to create space for a new railway. This land is now covered predominantly in residential housing, but still regularly floods. Restoring wetlands in the residential area will mitigate flooding and reduce urban creep, working with communities to use nature-based solutions.	Restore	
EN025	Holyrood and Duddingston	<b>Enhance habitat for amphibians.</b> St Margaret's Loch is a breeding site for common toad ( <i>Bufo bufo</i> ). More work is needed acknowledging the importance of habitats for amphibians and improving the habitat.	Enhance	Toad
EN026	Holyrood and Duddingston	<b>Enhance water quality at St Margaret's Loch.</b> It has algal blooms that negatively affect native wildlife. Historic Environment Scotland welcome any proposals on how to tackle this.	Enhance	
EN027	Holyrood and Duddingston	<b>Enhance habitat at Duddingston Golf Course for wildlife.</b> There is existing native woodland within the golf course, but more could be done to improve the site for wildlife. There is a pond that should be enhanced, and other habitat improvements will provide better connectivity between Duddingston Loch and Figgate Burn Park.	Enhance	
EN028	Holyrood and Duddingston	<b>Enhance Prestonfield Golf Course for biodiversity and habitat connectivity.</b> The species-poor grassland can be improved, while tree planting will connect areas of woodland.	Enhance	
EN029	Holyrood and Duddingston	<b>Enhance Duddingston Recreation Grounds for biodiversity and habitat connectivity.</b> The species-poor grassland can be improved, while tree planting will connect areas of woodland.	Enhance	

PR020	Holyrood and Duddingston	<b>Protect Dunsapie Loch as it provides habitat for resident otters (<i>Lutra lutra</i>).</b> Creating more vegetation cover around the edges would provide more shelter for the otters and other wildlife.	Protect	Otter
PR021	Holyrood and Duddingston	<b>Protect the ponds in Wells o' Wearie.</b> They provide habitat for newts, dragonflies and pillwort ( <i>Pilularia globulifera</i> ). Pillwort is an Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan (EBAP) priority species and Wells o' Wearie is a reintroduction site. Citizen science can be used to monitor existing species to ensure protection.	Protect	Dragonfly Pillwort
PR022	Holyrood and Duddingston	<b>Protect Duddingston Loch and Bawsinch Scottish Wildlife Trust reserve as it has a range of priority habitats</b> including every Scottish native tree species (excluding the very rare Arran service-tree ( <i>Sorbus pseudofennica</i> )) and is important for wildlife including otters ( <i>Lutra lutra</i> ) and several bat species. There is evidence of otters moving between Duddingston Loch and Figgate Burn Park so this habitat connectivity should be protected.	Protect	Native Trees Otter Bats
EN032	Inverleith and Stockbridge	<b>Enhance habitat in Inverleith Park.</b> Large areas of amenity grassland should be enhanced to benefit wildlife. Inverleith pond has water quality issues due to the hydrology of the incoming burn, which could be better understood and improved.	Enhance	
EN033	Inverleith and Stockbridge	<b>Enhance habitat at Fettes College grounds.</b> There is a lot of amenity grassland that should be enhanced to create wetlands for flood regulation and create wildflower meadows to increase pollinator habitat.	Enhance	

EN034	Inverleith and Stockbridge	<b>Enhance habitat within Warriston Recreation Ground.</b> It is prone to flooding so wetland creation would mitigate this, as well as providing habitat for wetland species.	Enhance	
PR023	Inverleith and Stockbridge	<b>Protect Water of Leith as it provides habitat for wildlife and ecosystem services for people.</b> Many new developments were permitted directly adjacent to Water of Leith, resulting in loss of habitat and over shading, as well as increasing the likelihood of flooding. Remaining habitat should be protected through creation of an ecological buffer.	Protect	
RE016	Inverleith and Stockbridge	<b>Restore wetlands to King George V Park.</b> This area was historically a wetland fed by a laid, which offers potential for habitat restoration to mitigate flooding.	Restore	
PR003	Leith	<b>Protect remaining riparian habitat along the Water of Leith.</b> It is fragmented and under pressure due to new development in the area. Many developments have already been permitted directly adjacent to the Water of Leith resulting in loss of habitat and over shading, as well as increasing the likelihood of flooding. Remaining habitat can be protected through creation of an ecological buffer.	Protect	
PR004	Leith	<b>Protect Lochend Park as it is important for breeding birds.</b> The loch is surrounded by native woodland and provides habitat for a variety of waterfowl such as coot ( <i>Fulica atra</i> ) and moorhen ( <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> ).	Protect	Coot Moorhen
EN050	Liberton, Inch and Little France	<b>Enhance wetland habitats in Little France Park to support wildlife using Niddrie Burn.</b> This will also provide more flood regulation ecosystem services where they are needed.	Enhance	



EN051	Liberton, Inch and Little France	<b>Enhance Liberton Golf Course.</b> Enhance riparian habitat along Niddrie Burn by planting native trees and shrubs to support wildlife on site and provide a corridor between Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park and both Craigmillar Castle Park and Hunter's Hall Public Park. Enhance grassland with diverse nectar-rich wildflowers to provide pollinator habitat.	Enhance	
PR035	Liberton, Inch and Little France	<b>Protect Inch Park as it provides priority habitat for wildlife including native woodland and wetlands.</b> It provides ecosystem services such as noise regulation and flood regulation where there is high demand.	Protect	
CR026	Newcraighall	<b>Create more priority habitat along Niddrie Burn such as native riparian woodland, wetlands and species-rich grasslands.</b> This will improve habitat connectivity along the watercourse and in-stream biodiversity as well as providing ecosystem services such as flood regulation and water purification.	Create	
CO002	Pentlands	<b>Connect riparian habitats from the reservoirs to the Water of Leith and the shelter belt, from Bonaly to Harperrig in West Lothian.</b>	Connect	
CR001	Pentlands	<b>Create native woodland.</b> There are opportunities for woodland planting in the upper catchment of the Water of Leith. Riparian habitat should be enhanced by creating wide buffers and preventing access for livestock to allow it to naturally regenerate. Woodland creation will slow the flow of water and reduce siltation from surface water runoff following severe weather events, and reduce water temperature, which is becoming increasingly important with a warming climate, especially for south facing watercourses. Trees should not be planted on peat soils.	Create	

EN002	Pentlands	<b>Enhance habitat around the reservoirs to encourage biodiversity.</b> This will benefit a range of rare plants, including moonwort ( <i>Botrychium lunaria</i> ). City of Edinburgh Council Flood Prevention department oversee the cutting regime here. Operational requirements should be balanced with biodiversity enhancements.	Enhance	Moonwort
PR002	Pentlands	<b>Protect existing wetland.</b> Threipmuir, Bavelaw and Harlaw are important areas for winter bird migration. The arable fields surrounding these areas are used by large flocks of geese so should be protected and enhanced. Landowners here receive funds to manage their land to benefit waders e.g. by creating scrapes.	Protect	Birds – notably geese and waders
EN020	South Queensferry and Dalmeny	<b>Enhance wetland habitat within Dalmeny Estate.</b> There are small patches of priority wetland habitat within the estate, however these should be enhanced and more areas created, especially along Cockle Burn.	Enhance	
EN022	South Queensferry and Dalmeny	<b>Enhance Dundas Castle Estate for Great Crested Newts (GCN) (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>).</b> There are historical records from 1996 and 2005 of newts in the ponds at Dundas Castle Estate. A survey should be conducted to determine if the newts are still there, and habitat should be enhanced. New ponds should be created within the dispersal range of current ones and connectivity provided through features such as rough grassland or hedgerows.	Enhance	Great Crested Newt
CR037	Stenhouse and Saughton	<b>Create habitat for flood regulation where Water of Leith borders Murrayfield Rugby Stadium and Roseburn Park.</b> Water of Leith flows all the way round the stadium and the park, where there is high demand for flood regulation. Creating a wetland on the floodplain will mitigate flooding and provide water purification, as well as increasing habitat availability for wildlife.	Create	

EN058	Stenhouse and Saughton	<p><b>Enhance habitat for wildlife, including pollinators, in Saughton Allotments.</b> The allotments should be enhanced by eliminating the use of herbicides and pesticides and using natural pest control, incorporating areas for wildlife and adding bat boxes, hedgehog homes and log piles for invertebrates. Enhancing wet areas by adding small ponds would help with flood regulation.</p>	Enhance	<p>Bats</p> <p>Hedgehogs</p> <p>Invertebrates</p>
PR043	Stenhouse and Saughton	<p><b>Protect riparian habitat along Water of Leith.</b> It is rare to find Water of Leith bounded by riparian habitat, which is important for a range of wildlife including bats, who utilise it for commuting, foraging and roosting.</p>	Protect	<p>Bats</p>