

BAP Newsletter October 2006

The Sustainable Wetland Restoration in the New Forest (Life 3) Project was completed in December 2006. An outstanding success, this four year initiative enabled the New Forest Life Partnership to improve the conservation value of more than 600 hectares of valuable wetland habitat, benefiting the associated wildlife and local livelihoods.

40% of the £2.9 m budget was provided by the European Commission LIFE-Nature fund and the remainder by the project partners - English Nature, the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission, Hampshire County Council, the National Trust, and the RSPB. The following priority wetland habitats within the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) were restored:

- riverine woodland, 261 ha
- bog woodland, 18 ha
- wet grassland 141 ha
- valley mires 184 ha
- 10 km of rivers

Local people and organisations with an interest in the New Forest were also involved in the project, via a stakeholder group – the Water Basin Management Forum. One outcome of the Forum was a 10 year wetland management plan which prioritised further work needed to restore rivers and wetlands and to maintain what was gained through the Life 3 project.