



# Trustees' Annual Report for the period

<b>From</b>	Period start date			<b>To</b>	Period end date		
	6th	April	2014		5th	April	2015

## Section A Reference and administration details

**Charity name**

The Wildlife Gardening Forum

**Other names charity is known by**

**Registered charity number (if any)**

1156608

**Charity's principal address**

17, Honey Lane  
 Cholsey  
 Oxfordshire  
**Postcode** OX10 9NL

### Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Dr Andrew Salisbury	Chair	All Year	None
2	Helen Bostock	Hon Treasurer	All Year	None
3	Laura Brook		All Year	None
4	Marc Carlton		All Year	None
5	Becky Groves		All Year	None
6	Jan Miller		All Year	None
7	Adrian Thomas		All Year	None
8	Dr Ken Thompson		All Year	None
9	Caroline Ware		All Year	None
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### Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

**Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)**

Type of adviser	Name	Address

**Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)**

Dr Stephen Head    Coordinator (unpaid volunteer)

**Section B                      Structure, governance and management**

**Description of the charity's trusts**

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Appointed by existing Trustees

**Additional governance issues (Optional information)**

<p>You <b>may choose</b> to include additional information, where relevant, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;</li> <li>• the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;</li> <li>• relationship with any related parties;</li> <li>• trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.</li> </ul>	<p>As a new charity, procedures for future trustee induction are under current consideration. The Charity corresponds with a large number of other not-for-profit organisations, and is a member of Wildlife and Countryside Link.</p> <p>The charity is a volunteer operated organisation with no employees.</p> <p>The Trustees are completing a Risk Register and mitigation procedures, but most risks are proving minor, except for financial resources and loss of key personnel.</p>
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**Section C                      Objectives and activities**

<p><b>Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document</b></p>	<p>a)        To promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of gardens and their biological diversity.</p> <p>b)        To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment and biodiversity of gardens and the consequent human health and well-being benefits.</p>
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**Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)**

Gardens are remarkably diverse and important habitats for our declining wildlife, and are where the great majority of children find their first direct contact with nature. Nearly 90% of UK households have gardens and so our work is able to benefit a very large proportion of the public who wish to manage their gardens sustainably and with wildlife in mind. In planning and executing our work, the Trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and in particular to its public benefit guidance on advancing education and on conservation of the environment.

Object a) Promoting conservation, protection and improvement ...

The Wildlife Gardening Forum furthers this object through holding public conferences, maintaining a website to provide access to evidence-based information and advice, through coordinating and informing the work of the many charities and other organisations within our membership and contacts, and influencing decision makers through disseminating evidence.

Our conferences are based on academic studies, backed up with examples of successful applications and best practice. Scientists have been keen to speak about their work in progress, as well as interpreting their published work, and our conferences are very popular with research students for networking and gaining experience in communicating their work. Conference costs are kept close to break-even, and some concessions have been made on request. Conference proceedings are written up and made available to all Forum correspondents, and are freely available as pdf files on our website.

Our website, launched in November 2014, already contains extensive background information in garden and wildlife science and planting for wildlife, reviewing information largely unavailable to a general reader. Sections on garden wildlife, education opportunities, practical management are currently being written, and the website will soon become the largest compendium of freely available information about garden biodiversity and its management anywhere on the web.

The Forum's Manifesto, now available in both English and Welsh on the website, provides a simple introduction to decision makers about the policy changes we would like to see to improve the status of gardens for wildlife and people. Our membership of the umbrella organisation Wildlife and Countryside Link is allowing the Forum to contribute its voice alongside other charities in environmental issues.

Object b) To advance the education of the public....

This object is addressed through public conferences, creation of publications and newsletters, work with the media, provision of professional guidance and training for teachers and practitioners and maintaining a website to provide access for everyone to evidence-based information and advice.

The Trustees ensure a powerful educational outcome by insisting on testing all statements and guidance in our material and on our website against established and published fact, giving attribution so that those who wish can have access to original work. We identify and point out areas where evidence is inadequate, and have succeeded in starting research projects (such as the RHS-run "Plants for Bugs Project" investigating the relative value of native and non-native garden plants)

where a major deficiency of evidence has let myths and assumptions stay unchallenged. The Trustees wish to increase our role here through partnership with other organisations in citizen science projects. The recent OPAL (OPen Air Laboratory) study on garden invertebrates was an example in which the Forum assisted with the experimental design.

While most of our focus has been on biodiversity, our education object is also concerned with the role of gardens and urban green space on human mental and physical health, and the cohesion and better function of communities. This is another relatively new research field that has not yet become widely known among the public and decision makers, but is of increasing importance as Britain becomes steadily more urban. There is great synergy between this aspect of gardens, and biodiversity conservation, and we see our role as helping to make the health research findings accessible to everyone alongside the biodiversity, and with the same standards of rigour.

**Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)**

The Wildlife Gardening Forum is not yet in a position to disperse grants, and does not manage investments.

The Wildlife Gardening Forum does not have any paid employees, so all its activities are managed and executed through volunteer action.

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

**Section D Achievements and performance**

**Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year**

The Wildlife Gardening Forum came into being as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on the 9th April 2014, although as a small unregistered charity it had been operating since 2010, and for five years before that as a loose affiliation of interested people and organisations.

Within its first year the new Charity has held or participated in three conferences.

The first was at the Royal Horticultural Society's Wisley site describing the first results of the Forum-initiated Plants for Bugs Project run by the RHS. This study is investigating the comparative value for garden invertebrates of assemblages of native, near native and exotic garden plants. This is a most important experiment, because there are few aspects of wildlife gardening where there are such polarised opinions based on hitherto extremely limited evidence. Once formally published, the results will be made available through the RHS and Forum's websites in a format suitable for general readers.

The Forum collaborated with the Snowdonia National Park Plas Tan y Bwlch in the first conference National Parks and Wildlife as Natural Health Service Providers. This conference is being collated as a publication, and proved so successful that a new organisation, the UK National Parks and Wellbeing Forum is being created, which will work alongside the Wildlife Gardening Forum where interests run parallel.

In November 2014 the Forum held its first conference on Citizen Science and Biological Recording in the Garden. This proved exceptionally successful, because the importance of public-based scientific investigation is being increasingly recognised, both to allow monitoring of environmental change, and for the great educational benefits it can bring. It is likely that the creation and management of one or more Citizen Science Projects, probably in partnership with other charities, will become a core element of our developing five year plan.

This year saw the revision and updating of the Forum's Manifesto, originally released through Natural England in 2007. This is an important introductory document explaining the opportunities and issues over wildlife in gardens. The Trustees are very grateful for volunteer help to translate the Manifesto into Welsh, and both versions are available on the Forum's website.

In addition to conferences and newsletter releases, the Wildlife Gardening Forum's ability to reach the widest audience was hugely boosted by the launch of our website [www.wlgf.org](http://www.wlgf.org) at our November Conference at the Natural History Museum in London.

The current website release contains 59 web pages written and illustrated by 30 contributors, presenting summaries of information for the casual reader, backed up by a total of 60 much more detailed reviews and other files to download. There are 101 external web links and > 200 partner links to our partner organisations. Further pages are being constructed, including an major section on garden wildlife, and the site will grow to be in excess of 120 pages through 2015-2016.

The website and our conferences are helping to recruit new contacts for the Wildlife Gardening Forum, and our mailing list is now over 670 people, affiliated with over 290 organisations.

## Section E

## Financial review

### Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Wildlife Gardening Forum has general funds, currently approximately equal to one year's operating costs, which the Trustees consider prudent to maintain the charities core activities during a time of growth and change, and no designated funds. This policy will be reviewed in 2015-2016. It has one Restricted Fund, of monies received from the Patsy Wood Trust, which are for the development of the Charity, extending its reach and influence through sound planning and for example developing the website.

### Details of any funds materially in deficit

Nil

### Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The Charity's main core funds have come from its charitable activities of holding conferences, where the delegate charges are at approximately break-even level. The great significance and achievements made possible by the Patsy Wood Trust's Development grant are gratefully acknowledged. The Charity is beginning to attract donations (already much more in 2015-2016) and this will increase with web-based donation facilities.

The Charity's future fundraising activity will be tailored to the goals of its five year development plan currently under construction. It is the Trustees intention to keep the charity modest in size and instead to achieve its aims in partnership rather than creating a substantial infrastructure.

## Section F

## Other optional information

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## Section G

## Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)		
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)		
Date		