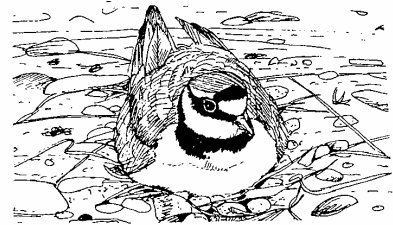




GREEN BUSINESS NETWORK

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# DELIVERING BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

*... for business, the environment and local communities ...*

**Conservation Area - no public access**

**Warning:** This conservation area has been created and is being maintained for the benefit of breeding, migrant and wintering birds. Wilful or reckless disturbance of certain bird species in this area, such as Little Ringed Plover, is punishable by law. For further information go to [www.calderdalebirds.co.uk](http://www.calderdalebirds.co.uk)

Supported by the **Hanson** environment fund  **Marshalls** plc



*Habitat improvement for wading birds at Ringstone Reservoir in the South Pennines Heritage Area, notably the Calderdale Priority Species: Little Ringed Plover*

## Background

October 1st 2003 saw the introduction of a new category to the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme ("Object DA"), which related specifically to the conservation and preservation of the Nation's biodiversity - including both habitats and species.

This extended the scope of the Scheme to include projects on land that need not have public access, in order to conserve, restore or enhance sensitive sites or fragile habitats.

GBN and its partners, including Calderdale Bird Conservation Group, Calder Future, Pitstop 2000 and The ABLE Project, are at the forefront of the new category, through habitat management, survey work and species protection/conservation determined e.g. by priority species lists and Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP).

## Wading Birds

Across Europe, many bird species have begun to "decline alarmingly" (Birdlife International, 2004). Of particular concern are Snipe, Lapwing and the Golden Plover. Little Ringed Plover (LRP) breeding populations, whilst up to 20 times smaller,

are stable, but can be transient and in decline at the local level. A summer visitor from Africa, the LRP favours post-industrial sites which are often only temporarily vacant. A Schedule 1 bird ("protected by special penalties at all times"), it is one of only four such species breeding locally.

## Ringstone Improvement Project

Pioneering in many ways - *not least of which is that Ringstone Edge Reservoir is acutely exposed at over one thousand feet (300 metres) above sea level* - the project was the first 'on the ground' under Calderdale's LBAP. It addresses a bird of national significance, in a moorland habitat area of international importance, and was one of the first twelve biodiversity (DA) proposals in the country to be both approved and funded.

A purpose-designed wetland area (two scrapes) has been created, overlooked by a robust observation hide built entirely through volunteer effort. The 2 ha reserve mitigates for 6 ha 'lost' to a 98,000 sq. ft commercial shed development at a prime location during 2004. The new site (SE 051184) is viewable from the B6114, readily accessible by public transport or the West Yorkshire Cycle Route

## Project Timeline

<b>July 2003</b>	Project first proposed
<b>Oct. 2003</b>	Category DA introduced
<b>March 2004</b>	ENTRUST Registration
<b>April 2004</b>	Trial pits dug on site
<b>Sept. 2004</b>	Yorkshire Water approval
<b>Sept. 2004</b>	£5,950 HEF* grant secured
<b>Oct. 2004</b>	Hard landscaping (13 days)
<b>Dec. 2005</b>	Long-term access secured
<b>Jan. 2006</b>	Hide receives final approval
<b>April 2006</b>	Hide completed (23 days)



**\*the Hanson Environment Fund is managed by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. The fund has distributed more than £16 million over the past eight years, using landfill tax money generated by Hanson Aggregates. See [www.hansonenvfund.org](http://www.hansonenvfund.org)**

## History

Calderdale Bird Conservation Group has its origins in Halifax Birdwatchers Club founded 1991 (part of BTO's Bird Clubs Partnership). The Group's members have monitored Ringstone regularly since at least 1973, but the earliest published records date back to c. 1914.

Now owned by Yorkshire Water, Ringstone was built for Wakefield City Council in 1886. Two cylindrical wheel-houses are Grade II Listed. Mesolithic worked flint, including an axe found in 1923, has been noted and there are Scheduled prehistoric monuments (including a circle of stones) nearby. The area is thought to have the potential to produce archaeological remains of high regional importance and may have been a settlement on the shores of a small lake. See [www.geograph.org.uk/photo/52165](http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/52165)

Little Ringed Plover first nested in Britain in 1938, reaching Calderdale by 1967. Its social history is detailed in "*Birds Britannica*" (M. Cocker and R. Mabey, September 2005).

## Success factors

**1. The key contribution was fundraising by the Green Business Network who secured over £11,000 for the project.**

**2. The project was unlocked by an initial donation of over £1,500 by Marshalls plc, a major local employer and leading UK manufacturer of landscaping products. The 'final brick' in the fundraising campaign was provided by the Hanson Environment Fund, who featured the project on the front of its 2004 Annual Report. £18,000 provided locally through a Section 106 Planning Agreement has secured longer-term sustainability.**

**3. Cost-effective Public Liability Insurance has been obtained through BTCV's Group Association scheme, [www.btcv.org](http://www.btcv.org)**

**4. Cooperation, full support and expert advice has been received from Yorkshire Water (including using its grid to maintain the level of the reservoir at a crucial time), Police Wildlife Officers and the RSPB.**

**5. Daily updates at [www.grayimages.co.uk](http://www.grayimages.co.uk) and [www.calderbirds.blogspot.com](http://www.calderbirds.blogspot.com)**

## Recent developments

**Two further DA projects are underway: a GBN Tenth Anniversary Award to restore Pennine haymeadows (with benefits for the Red List bird, Twite) and a pilot project on Balsam eradication in Calder Valley headwaters**