

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2023

Project reference	DPLUS131
Project title	A “B-Line” to Re-Wilding: Anguilla’s Pollinator Project
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Anguilla
Lead partner	Anguilla National Trust
Partner(s)	Agriculture Unit-Department of Natural Resources, Gender Affairs Anguilla
Project leader	<i>Farah Mukhida</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>31 October 2023, HYR3</i>
Project website/blog/social media	

Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your M&E systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report against any Standard Indicators, do your assumptions still hold true?). The guidance can be found on the resources page of the relevant fund website.

Output 1. Ecosystem values of Anguilla’s pollinators and potential effects of climate change identified

While baseline surveys were completed during Years 1 and 2 of the project along with the identification (and presentation) of potential effects of climate change on pollinators, we have continued to undertake insect assessments using a Flower-Insect Timed survey approach which monitors pollinator diversity (at the family level) and abundance (Activity 1.2). By continuing with these assessments, we are able to track changes in diversity and abundance over time and between seasons. Initially, we were monitoring ten sites across the mainland island on a quarter basis, for our Quarter 2, Year 3 assessment (September 2023), however, we added an additional site at the request of Belmond Cap Juluca. The hotel is interested in working with local project partners to enhance their landscaping to support native pollinators and in working with the Queen Bee Collective (Output 4, Activity 4.3) to establish a managed bee hive on their property to assist with pollination and local honey production. Flower-Insect Timed surveys at the 11 sites will continue through at least the remainder of the project period but will likely continue post-project, being integrated into the Anguilla National Trust’s ongoing mainland biodiversity monitoring programme.

Output 3. Re-wilding of Anguilla for the short- and long-term benefit of pollinators implemented, monitored, and evaluated.

Over the last six months, activities have focused on growing plants that support pollinators and outplanting them. In April 2023, as part of Anguilla’s Earth Day celebrations (20 April 2023) and with the Anguilla National Trust’s Young Explorer’s after school programme, we partnered with

the Ministers of the Government of Anguilla and the Governor's Office to plant 60 red mangrove seedlings at Road Salt Pond. For International Biodiversity Day (22 May 2023) we partnered with the Anguilla Enhancement Project community group and the Ministry of Infrastructure to plant 40 lignum vitae seedlings along main road that runs through the centre of The Valley, the capital of Anguilla. Once again in collaboration with the Anguilla Enhancement Project community group and the Ministry of Infrastructure, an additional 14 lignum vitae seedlings were planted along the same road to celebrate Plant a Tree Day (Activity 3.2).

Also, as part of Plant a Tree Day, we organised a pollinator plant and hummingbird feeder give-away (Activity 3.2, Activity 3.4). As part of this initiative, 230 seedlings and 190 hummingbird feeders were distributed to 76 people, with map created of where the plants have been planted and the hummingbird feeders hung (Activity 3.2). With each plant and feeder, a *Building Your Backyard Pollinator Garden* was also disseminated (Activity 3.1). Leading up to the day, an additional 67 seedlings were shared (and mapped) with 25 other individuals.

To scale up our re-wilding efforts, we have partnered with two of the largest hotels in Anguilla, Aurora Anguilla and Belmond Cap Juluca. Since engaging in this partnership, Aurora Anguilla has rewilded their property with 1176 buttonwood and seagrape trees and is currently assisting us with the germinating the notoriously difficult but locally and culturally significant cocoplum which is at risk of extirpation from coastal development. Aurora Anguilla's hydroponics and landscaping team has so successfully germinated over 40 (out of 50) seeds and an additional 50 have been shared with them. Meanwhile, Belmond Cap Juluca has expressed interest in helping to grow (and plant) mangrove seedlings and are currently growing 75 white mangroves from seed in their nursery (Activity 3.2).

We have also partnered with the Department of Natural Resources and rewilded a stretch of coastal habitat with 90 seagrape seedlings, grown from seed.

The local high school has also approached us to assist with landscaping their campus located in The Valley. The project team is currently assessing the site to determine which plants would be best suited for the location.

By end of September 2023, a total number of 1793 plants, 190 hummingbird feeders, 40 bug boxes have so far been distributed. We are mapping and calculating total area rewilding and will provide maps and other deliverables in our Year 3 annual report.

Output 4. National capacity to plan, manage, implement, and monitor a national pollinator strategy is raised, supported by enhanced technical skills, greater public awareness, and vested community interest

Training and on-the-job mentoring has focused on building local beekeeping capacity, especially amongst members of the Queen Bees Collective which was established during Year 1 of the project. With the President of the Association of Caribbean Beekeeping Organisations and the St. Lucia-based Iyanola Beekeeping Collective, Mr. Richard Matthias, providing on-going remote assistance and mentorship, two additional managed hives have been established on the Anguilla National Trust office grounds. Members of the Queen Bee Collective, supported by Anguilla National Trust staff (male, who are not officially Collective members), conduct on-going hive inspections and maintenance, with Richard's expert advice.

Our public awareness and outreach activities (Activity 4.5, Activity 4.6) have included:

- One press release posted to Facebook and shared with four radio stations (Radio Anguilla, Kool FM, Heartbeat Radio, Klass FM) and through WhatsApp broadcast and status posts.
- Holding two public activities including two hikes during which Anguilla's pollinator plant species were identified and discussed and iNaturalist was (re-)introduced as a way for residents and visitors to contribute to our shared knowledge.
- Presentation to members of the Anguilla Enhancement Project (no. of attendees: 10) about the project purpose, activities, and results
- Celebrating Earth Day (20 April 2023, see above Output 3)
- Celebrating International Biodiversity Day (22 May 2023, see above Output 3)

- Celebrating Plant a Tree Day (28 September, see above Output 3)
- Partnered with Republic Bank (no. of attendees: 18) to sustainably collect seeds of native pollinator-friendly seeds, with a presentation about the project purpose, activities, and results (2 September 2023)

Created during the first few months of the project, individuals have continued to post their pollinator sightings on the Anguilla Pollinator Project iNaturalist page (Activity 4.6). There are now 71 registered observers, 303 identifiers, and 938 posted observations representing 265 species on the page (recognising that not all species may actually be pollinators).

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

There have been no notable problems or unexpected developments.

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS: n/a

Formal Change Request submitted: n/a

Received confirmation of change acceptance n/a

Change request reference if known: n/a

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

Actual spend: ██████████

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2024)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

4c. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.**

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

There are no other issues that we would like to raise.

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response, or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

All new projects (excluding Darwin Plus Fellowships and IWT Challenge Fund Evidence projects) should submit their Risk Register with this report if they have not already done so.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**