

# England Species Reintroductions Taskforce: entomologist stakeholder meeting

**Date and time:** 26th October 2023, 10:30-12:30

**Location:** Online

**Attendees:** Andy Clements (Taskforce Chair), Karim Vahed (Buglife, Taskforce member), Ralph Hobbs (Amateur Entomologists Society), David Simcox (Royal Entomological Society), Nikki Gammans (Bumblebee Conservation Trust), Ray Barnett (British Entomological & Natural History Society), Simon Ward (Royal Entomological Society), Mina Patel (Natural England), Simon Lee (Natural England).

## Note of the meeting

### 1. Welcome and introductions

Andy Clements welcomed everyone to the meeting, followed by introductions and a brief description of respective professional background and experience with conservation translocations from each of the attendees.

### 2. Background to the Taskforce

Andy Clements, Karim Vahed and Simon Lee provided a potted history to the formation and background of the Taskforce, including governance and funding, membership, vision and purpose and current activity. Andy Clements also described the key role of public communications and stakeholder engagement with the Taskforce and conservation translocations, highlighting the aims and objectives of this meeting.

### 4. Roundtable discussion

All attendees contributed to an extensive and interesting discussion, debating contemporary topics and issues around conservation translocations, public communications and ways of sustaining an ongoing interaction with the Taskforce.

Key topics discussed:

- Perception that unregulated releases and captive breeding programmes are increasing in number and creating widespread issues.
- Relative dispersal/colonisation abilities of species can be both beneficial and a concern – winners and losers in changing climate require more meaningful consideration of assisted colonisation in future.
- Best methods/conduit for feeding topics to the Taskforce.
- Benefit of sharing case studies and best practice.
- More direct engagement with local natural history groups.

- Short-term funding and decision-making reducing the efficacy of conservation translocations.
- Need for bespoke translocation guidelines for invertebrates.
- Value of high-quality public communications, especially to convey the value of conservation translocations to broader nature recovery and society.

## **5. Summary and round up**

Andy Clements thanked attendees for their active, thoughtful and valuable contributions, noting the following as agreed actions from the meeting:

- Natural England to send round a note of the meeting (with an agreed version posted on the Taskforce webpage), including links to the Taskforce [blog](#) and [GOV.UK Website](#)
- Dave Simcox to share summary of potential solutions to unregulated releases.
- Karim Vahed offer to be conduit to feed entomological topics, issues and questions to the Taskforce.
- Andy Clements and all agreed that these themed discussions should continue on a regular basis.
- David Simcox offered to help host an invertebrate themed field-based meeting of the Taskforce.
- Nikki Gammans offered a presentation to the Taskforce on bumblebee reintroduction project, potentially jointly with David Simcox on large blue butterfly reintroduction programme.
- Need to consider and include those organisations currently missing from this group.