



Welcome to the April 2026 edition of **Earthly Matters**, the blog dedicated to the partnership between Cemex and the RSPB.



Partnership Update

By Carl Cornish, RSPB Senior Business Conservation Adviser

Away from my office work, the conservation volunteers have been continuing their management work at Cemex's Kensworth Nature Reserve. This winter they have cleared Blackthorn and Dogwood scrub from the calcareous grassland, removed old tree guards, and planted Horseshoe Vetch plug plants, and Cowslip and Horseshoe Vetch seeds.

Practical habitat work has now paused to leave wildlife undisturbed. My surveys will start next to monitor the plants and butterflies, hopefully showing a positive response to the habitat management work.

I've completed an assessment of wintering birds using the disused landfill at South Ferriby and made a visit in early April to see which birds are starting to use the site during the breeding season. Migrant birds included three Wheatears (see photo below) stopping off on passage before reaching their moorland breeding sites, Sand Martins feeding over the site, and a Little Ringed Plover was displaying over suitable nesting habitat. Skylarks were singing overhead and a pair of Mallards had already bred - a female with a brood of eight ducklings seen.



Actions for Nature

The spring awakening of wildlife features one of the wonderful experiences of the natural world - the dawn chorus of bird song. Each year this is celebrated on International Dawn Chorus Day, which is Sunday 3 May this year.

For further information scan the QR Code on your phone to go to the RSPB website. There may be guided walks near where you live, which are good way to experience the dawn chorus.



There's a new programme about birdwatching on Channel 5 called Sam and Ade Go Birding <https://www.channel5.com/show/sam-ade-go-birding>. It features Sam West, an actor and theatre director, who is a RSPB ambassador, and comedian Ade Edmonson. We've watched the first episode and really recommend it.

Contact Carl

If you would like advice or a visit from Carl Cornish, our RSPB Senior Business Conservation Adviser for the Cemex Partnership, please get in touch: carl.cornish@rspb.org.uk

Focus on Reedbeds

Reedbed is a special type of grassland dominated by a species of grass called Common Reed, which forms stands in shallow water. It occurs around lakes and along rivers. Historically it was a more widespread habitat but many reedbeds have been lost through land use changes and lack of management – over time reedbeds will dry out through a buildup of dead plants in the water and eventually become woodland.

Reedbeds sound a sleepy sort of habitat but are alive with wildlife come spring and summer: a chorus of singing Cetti's, Grasshopper, Reed and Sedge Warblers and Reed Buntings; dragonflies hunting for insect prey; amphibians and fishes swimming amongst the submerged reed stems; a Harvest Mouse making its nest amongst reed stems. One of the famous inhabitants of reedbeds is the Bittern. It is a member of the heron family with a plumage of browns, buffs and black making it very well-camouflage against reeds. Whilst it can be very hard to see it's easy to hear. The male has a booming call that can travel miles. Bitterns became rare breeding birds in the UK because of habitat loss and the creation of new reedbeds through quarry restoration helped bring Bitterns back from the brink. It's one of the conservation success stories of this century.



Photo: A Bittern

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Encouraging pollinators at Hereford Readymix

For the past three years Adrian Radnor, Plant Manager at Hereford Readymix, has been sowing meadow flowers across the site to help encourage bees and local wildlife. His efforts have created a thriving habitat right on the plant's doorstep, and he's captured thousands of incredible photos of the wildlife that now visits the area. Adrian has shared some of his favourite images from previous years to showcase what's possible and inspire other site managers to create their own wildlife-friendly spaces.

A huge thanks to Adrian for sending us these amazing photos.



Send us your stories and photos

We are looking for staff stories to include in upcoming blogs, these can be experiences from work or home. We would love to share them in an upcoming blog.

Send them in to: gb-communicationsandpublicaffairs@cemex.com