

## Lost life: England's lost and threatened species

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A new Natural England report, produced to coincide with the International Year of Biodiversity, identifies nearly 500 animals and plants that have become extinct in England, virtually all within the last two centuries.



Red kite (c) AnnMarie Jones/BWPA\*

In addition to this, nearly 1,000 native species have been given conservation priority status because of the severity of the threats facing them.

Dr Helen Phillips, Chief Executive of Natural England, said: “This report is a powerful reminder that we cannot take our wildlife for granted and that we all lose when biodiversity declines. Every species has a role, and like rivets in an aeroplane, the overall structure of our environment is weakened each time a single species is lost.”

The Lost Life report highlights how habitat loss, inappropriate management, environmental pollution and pressure from non-native species have all played a part in the erosion of England’s biodiversity. All of the major groups of flora and fauna have experienced losses, with butterflies, amphibians, and many plant and other insect species being particularly hard hit – in some groups up to a quarter of species have been become extinct since 1800.

To provide long term support for our wildlife, Natural England is working with a range of partners in the England Biodiversity Group to adopt a “landscape-scale” approach to conservation which goes beyond the conservation of small protected sites and individual species and embraces the management of entire landscape areas and the ecosystems that operate within them.