



Newsletter

February 2026

Supporting Wild Cymru helps us to stand up for nature by taking legal action as well as restoring habitats and species across Wales.

To remain impartial, we do not accept Government funding for any of our activities. Instead, we rely on the generous support from people like you, through regular giving, donations and bequests. Your contribution will help Wild Cymru fund important conservation work.

One of the best ways to support Wild Cymru is by signing up to our all-Wales conservation magazine [Natur Cymru](#). For more information on how you can support Wild Cymru, scan the QR code or visit our [website](#).



Wild Cymru is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Charity number 1180113.
Wild Cymru, c/o Science Centre, National Botanic Garden of Wales, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire, SA32 8HG.

Welcome

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2026 which looks towards some of our work themes over the next few months. As well as our conservation projects we have some big news to share with you. Over the past 7 years, with your generous help and support we have been able to make great strides for wildlife and the nature conservation sector in Wales. We are now ready for the next evolution of our organisation. From 1st March 2026, INCC will be known as Wild Cymru. Key to the rebranding is the launch of our new Investigations Unit – more on that in the newsletter.

Rob Parry



Wild Cymru CEO Rob Parry (top) © Lizzie Wilberforce
Natur Cymru magazine, Winter 2025 / 2026 (bottom) © Louise Waring



Wild Cymru

The next chapter of Wild Cymru's journey is an exciting one. Whilst our ongoing work will remain as strong as ever, we want to go bigger. With the rebrand comes the launch of our new Nature Investigation Unit.

Staff, trustees and volunteers have worked hard over the past two years to create this new chapter. The new team will work tirelessly to uncover the hidden (and not-so-hidden) problems that wildlife in Wales faces daily, from mismanagement of natural resources and protected wildlife sites, to wildlife crime and persecution and many issues in between. Wild Cymru will be the voice that speaks out for nature where other voices fall short. We still do not accept government funding. We are still determined to challenge those who would damage our natural world and hold them to account. We are still here to fight for a wilder Wales.

We believe that our new name will help us bring together conservationists and the wider public in growing our ambitions and amplifying our voice. Wild Cymru is harder hitting, clearer and more impactful which will help us grow our audience and increase our impact for wildlife.





Wild Cymru's Nature Investigations Unit is here

We are excited to announce that in February 2026 we appointed our new Wild Cymru Investigative Journalist – Helen Callaghan. Helen comes with a wealth of experience in the journalism sector and has worked as a freelance reporter and broadcast journalist for ITV, BBC and many other outlets. In addition, Helen also has experience as a researcher, print journalist and producer.

The appointment of Helen came not long after the appointment of our Communications Officer – Laurence Whitaker, who joined Wild Cymru in November 2025. Laurence (Loz) has expertise and a strong background in broadcasting and wildlife film making, having worked on some of the biggest wildlife documentaries in recent years, including for the BBC and Netflix.

Loz's first job was to make sure our lines of communication to different audiences in Wales are as good as they possibly can be. This will ensure that our messages and investigations reach more people and therefore have greater impact.

Helen and Loz will work with existing staff and trustees to investigate a number of issues impacting wildlife and the nature conservation sector in Wales. Once investigated we will disseminate the findings of our investigations as far as possible through different media to inform the public. Detailed, more targeted campaigns can then be developed based on our findings. The investigations will also be shared with our expert solicitors who will trawl through the findings and their implications to identify if any wrongdoing or unlawful practices have been uncovered.

This is a huge step forward for Wild Cymru, and the nature conservation sector in Wales, and we would like to thank you for being part of the journey.

Funding Success for Early Career Nature Conservationists

Supporting early career conservationists is a core aim of Wild Cymru. Over the past few years, we have been able to support several college and university students through paid and volunteer placements, residential volunteering and training days. Through the kind support of the Moondance Foundation, Wild Cymru were able to employ four college students in 2025 to work on our upland Water Vole project and at our Llwyndewi Nature Reserve. It is a great way for early career conservationists to gain more experience and contacts in the sector, as well as learn new skills through practical delivery and training.

Wild Cymru are very fortunate that the funders saw the value in this approach and have again funded us to employ another four early career conservationists this year (June – September). This time, all four students will be based at the nature reserve and will undertake livestock looking, invasive species control, habitat mapping and management, species monitoring, public speaking and leading guided walks and volunteer work parties.



Student being trained in small mammal survey techniques (above) © Rob Parry

Students from Bridgend College undertaking botanical surveys at Cefn Garthenor (left) © Rob Parry



Helping Hand for Swifts in the Amman Valley

Our community-based landscape conservation in the Amman Valley has seen some wonderful achievements for wildlife over the past few years. These include the creation of farm nature reserves, meadow and marshy grassland restoration as well as species-specific projects for Marsh Fritillary, Pied Flycatcher and Barn Owl to name just a few.

This year we are hoping to build on previous community conservation successes by focussing our attention on Swifts. The Swift was once a widespread and numerous bird in Wales and has a long history of cohabitation with people. Arriving in May from sub-Saharan Africa, Swifts only spend approximately 100 days in the UK before they head back south for warmer climates. Nevertheless, the once common screaming call of the Swift was a familiar and beloved feature of Welsh summers. Since the 1990s, we have lost over 60% of our Swifts in the UK, largely down to a lack of nesting sites as we insulate and improve our buildings. Thankfully, Swifts will readily take to externally installed nest boxes and thousands of people across the country have successfully established Swift colonies using this method.

The aim of the project is to provide nesting habitat for Swifts in the Amman Valley through the installation of purpose-built nest boxes on various buildings, as well as the erection of a Swift tower holding a number of nestboxes in one structure. Electronic audio lures will be required to encourage the birds to nest, playing an audio loop of Swift calls at specific points of the day; sunrise, midday and sunset. The lures will be locally powered with small solar panels.

The overarching ambition of this project is to facilitate the growth of the small but established Swift population in the Amman Valley, but we also aim to enthuse and inspire members of the community to install their own boxes on their houses. Within a decade, we have the potential to turn the Amman Valley into a sanctuary for one of Wales' most beloved birds.



Adult Swift visiting chicks in nest box (top) © Rob Parry

Swift Tower encompassing several nest chambers in one structure (bottom) © Rob Parry



Help Your Donation Go Further

Have you Gift Aided your donations to Wild Cymru yet?

Wild Cymru has now registered for Gift Aid, and we recently put in our first claim. Gift Aid is a significant source of extra unrestricted income for us, allowing us to do even more for wildlife.

If you are eligible for Gift Aid and are willing to sign our declaration, we can re-claim £0.25 on every pound you donate to us (or have donated in the last four years to INCC).

Many thanks to all our donors and supporters who have already signed a Gift Aid declaration. For anyone who has not yet found the opportunity, you can do so online via the link below (it only takes about two minutes). Thank you.

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/9Wra53ytju> (English form)

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/1aaYYpmVw1> (Welsh form)

Thank you for your support