

Pre-event Briefing

**From Natural England with the City of York
and the Carstairs Countryside Trust**

**Journalists and photographers are
INVITED to a Photo and interview Opportunity**

Hands across countries ... wings across the world

**The Lord Mayor of York will go international for Britain with a
global message to celebrate World Wetlands Day.**

**10.30 am Wednesday 2nd February
at
The Lower Derwent Valley and Skipwith Common
National Nature Reserves office,
Bank Island,
Wheldrake, York (see location map)**

The Lord Mayor of York, the Rt Honourable Cllr. Susan Galloway and the Civic Party (Lady Mayoress, Sheriff and Sherriff's Lady) of the internationally renowned historic walled City of York, England, wearing ceremonial regalia, will mark World Wetlands Day by:

- releasing wildfowl ringed as part of international research
- sending a message of goodwill and commitment to the people of the countries where birds from the Lower Derwent Valley, York have been recorded on migration

The Lord Mayor will also unveil a plaque to officially open the Lower Derwent Valley and Skipwith Common National Nature Reserves office.

... more follows

A large map made by local Wheldrake School children will be on display showing the countries where birds from the Lower Derwent Valley have been recorded.

At the National Nature Reserves office there will be a historic 120-year-old punt and massive punt gun used by one of the area's celebrated Victorian Wildfowlers, Snowden Slights. Display banners of some 200 historic photographs taken by Sydney Smith, including many of Snowden at 'work' in the Lower Derwent Valley at the turn of the 19th Century, will be on show.

A local charity, the Carstairs Countryside Trust (CCT), will announce that it is to explore declaration of another 130 acres of its land as an extension to the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Ramsar convention on wetlands signed in the city of Ramsar, Iran on 2 February 1971 and marked annually by World Wetlands Day. Today 160 countries and other parties have committed to its aims.

The event in the Lower Derwent Valley will be attended by more than 60 people from the local community who look after and farm the internationally important landscape.

The new Reserve Base will be open to the public as part of a free family fun weekend on Saturday and Sunday 5th and 6th February 10.00am - 5.00pm when visitors will be able to see the historic photographs, the punt and punt gun. Volunteers and local birdwatchers will be on hand to point out birds and talk about the nature reserve and a range of children's activities will include bird box and bird feeder construction and making a duck mask.

For further information please contact:

Craig Ralston, Senior Reserves Manager
Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve
Tel: Tel: 0791 969 2331 or 0791 708 8021

Ends ... Photographs and Background Topic notes to Editors follow...

Lord Mayor of York's message of goodwill and commitment

Hands across countries ... wings across the world

A message from the Rt Honourable, The Lord Mayor of York, England, Cllr Susan Galloway to mark World Wetlands Day, February 2nd 2011. Bank Island, Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve, York, England.

"The traditionally-farmed wetlands of the Lower Derwent Valley are one of York's great international treasures. They are a jewel on the world stage - a natural equivalent to the unparalleled medieval building of York Minster at the heart of our walled city and our renowned Viking and Roman past.

In York we take our role in the future of the Derwent's wetland wildlife extremely seriously, knowing that we bear an immense responsibility to the people of many countries, where the thousands of birds which breed, winter or pass through here on their distant migrations also find a 'home'

On behalf of the People of York, I send our goodwill to communities and across the world, from deep southern and equatorial Africa to remote northern Russia and Scandinavia, with whom we are linked in a mutual responsibility for the natural world through the birds' distant travels. We, for our part, are committed to ensure these unique wetlands, close to our ancient city, will always be a haven for wildlife, especially the thousands of your birds when they arrive on their epic journeys. Working with our local communities we will seek to ensure they thrive for present and future generations to appreciate, learn from and enjoy."

Good wishes

Cllr Susan Galloway, Lord Mayor of the City of York, England

Short quotes:

The Rt Honourable The Lord Mayor of York Cllr. Susan Galloway.

“ The Lower Derwent Valley is York’s natural equivalent of York Minster – and an internationally important and much-loved asset of which we are very proud. We are committed to playing our part on the world stage by looking after its future and on behalf of the City of York I send our good wishes to colleagues throughout the world with whom we share a common responsibility.”

Craig Ralston, Natural England Senior Reserves Manager, Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve,

"National Nature Reserves are the best examples of the English countryside and its wildlife, landscape, social history, archaeology and geology."

"They are some of the best places for people to enjoy the amazing countryside we still have today. Winter wetlands such as the Lower Derwent Valley also provide additional economic and health benefits to us all in the form of flood storage capacity, high quality clean drinking water, healthy fisheries and important food producing areas.

"We hope that local people will visit the new management offices as part of our ongoing world wetlands day celebrations to learn about the management and importance of the Lower Derwent Valley through the centuries and to enjoy our family fun-packed hands on activities.

Ian Carstairs, trustee of the Carstairs CountrysideTrust (commonly known as CCT)

"The Ramsar convention is one of the most important ways of protecting wildlife in the world. It is thrilling that a small trust like ours can play a part to mark its 40th anniversary."

Ends

Photographs



Neil Mitchell APS (UK)/CCT

The 17 km long by up to a 1.5km wide Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar Wetland of International Importance, Special Protection Area for Birds, Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest.



Bank Island - the panoramic view from the photocall location By day (above) and by moonlight (below)



Peter Roworth



Snowden Slights pictures

By Sydney Smith. Reproduced by Courtesy of York Museum's Trust: copyright



Snowden Slights at 'work'



Snowden and helper loading the punt gun



York Minster, one of the city's jewels - the largest gothic church north of the Alps

Ian Carstairs

Topic notes about:

World Wetlands Day

2 February each year is World Wetlands Day. It marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Each year since 1997, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and groups of citizens at all levels of the community have taken advantage of the opportunity **to undertake actions aimed at raising public awareness of wetland values and benefits in general and the Ramsar Convention in particular**

2011 is a special year for Ramsar: it is celebrating its 40th anniversary.

National Nature Reserves

National Nature Reserves (NNRs) represent many of the finest wildlife and geological sites in the England.

NNRs were initially established to protect sensitive features and to provide 'outdoor laboratories' for research. Their purpose has widened since those early days. As well as managing some of our most pristine habitats, our rarest species and our most significant geology, most Reserves now offer great opportunities to the public as well as schools and specialist audiences to experience England's natural heritage.

The Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve with information on its wildlife

The Lower Derwent Valley covers some 1000ha of traditionally farmed meadows. Of this 600 ha is designated **National Nature Reserve**. This is the only large floodplain landscape in the United Kingdom with its ecological framework intact. In spring and summer the vast meadows are a sea of wildflowers and large numbers of birds breed, pass through or winter here each year.

The Valley is designated a Ramsar Wetland of international importance, Special Protection Area for Birds and Special Area of Conservation. The National Nature

Reserve, which is a strip-framed landscape intermingled with privately owned and land is owned and managed by Natural England, The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and the Carstairs Countryside Trust. The traditional farming which sustains the wildlife is an exemplar of sustainable cropping and grazing in harmony with environment.

Plant life: the reserve's wetter areas support stands of reed sweetgrass and bladder sedge, together with marsh stitchwort and tubular water-dropwort. Drier fields are rich in sedges and characteristic grasses, including meadow fescue, tall fescue and meadow foxtail. The rich herb flora includes marsh valerian, sneezewort, marsh arrowgrass and notably, early marsh and green-winged orchid, and the rare marsh pea. Aquatic habitats are also important. Ditches contain species such as water violet, greater water parsnip and flat-stalked pondweed.

Birdlife: the site supports a rich breeding bird community with more than 80 species recorded in recent years. Breeding wildfowl are of particular importance, with 13 species found here including the pintail, garganey and gadwall. Breeding waders seen in the area include curlew, lapwing, snipe and redshank.

In winter the grasslands support nationally important numbers of teal, Bewick's swan, wigeon, pochard and golden plover.

Mammals: the noctule, pipistrelle and Daubenton's bat are seen regularly, with occasional sightings of the brown long-eared bat. Brown hares are very common at the site as are common and pygmy shrew. There is a large population of field voles, and bank and water voles may also be seen.

City of York

The Romans established Eboracum (York) in the 71 AD. It was a great trading centre for the Vikings (who called it Jorvik) in the 10th Century and the Second City of England in the mediaeval period. Today its intact historic city walls encircling the ancient centre and unsurpassed Minster - the largest gothic church north of the Alps - are world-renowned and welcome large numbers of tourists from all over the world each year. The City has applied for World Heritage Site status. The office of Lord Mayor is of great antiquity, dating from the 13th Century.

Wings around the world -

Lower Derwent Valley Birds in other countries - sharing of responsibilities.

The following is a full list of all the sightings and recoveries of birds whose details have been recorded or which have been ringed or satellite tracked

More than 30,000 birds have been ringed here by local volunteers in the last 30 years Years.

They comprise

- i) International movements of birds ringed in the Lower Derwent Valley**
- ii) Data for messages to other countries**

**International Movements involving birds ringed, recovered and re-sightings in the
Lower Derwent Valley**

Iceland	47*
France	14*
Channel Islands	1*
Denmark	14*
Germany	10*
Netherlands	9*
Belgium	1*
Sweden	5*
Portugal	2*
Czech Republic	1*
Hungary	1*
Finland	7*
Estonia	1*
Lithuania	1*
USSR	18*
Svalbard	2*
Spain	2*
Morocco	1*
Mauritania	1*
Senegal	1*
Gambia	1*
Guinea	1*
Guinea B	1*
(23)	(140)

Data for individual messages to other counties to go with the Lord Mayor's message of goodwill and commitment to shared responsibility

A message for the people of Iceland

Species of bird using the Lower Derwent Valley NNR during the year from Iceland have included Whooper Swans, Pink-footed Geese, Wigeon and Scaup, Black-tailed Godwits and Whimbrel (47 birds to or from Iceland via ringing)

Greylag Goose (adult female) ringed on 02.03.03 at Lingham lake, Nosterfield, N.Yorks

Seen	19.04.03	Bard, Midfjordur, Iceland	1778 Km
seen	09.03.04	Lingham lake, Nosterfield, N.Yorks	
seen	21.01.05	Castle Howard, N. Yorks	
seen	11.02.05	Castle Howard, N. Yorks	
seen	19.02.05	Lower Derwent Valley NNR	

Black-tailed Godwit (adult female) ringed on 12.08.99 at Terrington, The Wash

seen	01.05.99	Alftafjordur, E. Iceland	
seen	24.04.00	Lower Derwent Valley NNR	
seen	30.04.00	Hofn, E. Iceland	

Whooper Swan (adult male) ringed 11.12.2005 at Lower Derwent Valley

found	15.04.2007	Fit, Eyjafjoll, Rangarvalla, Iceland	1537 km
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See also the story of wally the whimbrel at www.whimbrel/info

A message for the people of France

A total of 14 birds (via ringing) have moved to or from France including Mallard, Shoveler, Garganey, Fieldfare and Sand Martin

Sand Martin (adult male nesting in colony) on 17.06.05 at Allerthorpe in Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Caught again on	20.08.06	Oudale, seine-maritime, France	495 Km
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Shoveler (duckling) ringed on 30.06.99 in Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Present on 14.12.02 Brucourt, Calvados, **France 519Km**

Garganey (duckling) ringed on 22.07.97 in Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Present on 04.08.97 at Boulogne-sur-mer, Pas-de-calais, **France 318Km**

Message for the people of the Channel Islands

Only one movement of a ringed bird so far – a Cormorant ringed at Wheldrake Ings in Lower Derwent Valley NNR as a chick in the nest on 14.04.03 and found dead on 28.09.03 at Mannez, Alderney, Channel Islands
471 Km

Message for the people of Denmark

14 ringed birds have been reported moving to or from Denmark involving the Lower Derwent Valley NNR – these include Bewick's Swan, Teal, Wigeon, Black headed Gull and Swallow

Wigeon ringed on 15.11.03 and found dead on 04.11.04 at Vilslev Enge, Jylland, **Denmark 645Km**

Teal ringed on 11.11.89 in Lower Derwent Valley NNR and found dead on 01.09.90 Errindlev, Lolland,
Denmark 817 Km

Black Headed Gull ringed on 20.03.97 at Svanemollebugten, Kobenhavn, **Denmark**

seen 30.03.97 Utterslev, Mose, Kobenhavn, **Denmark**

seen 29.09.03 Nordrieland, Schleswig-holstein, **Germany**

seen 15.11.03 Clifton Ings, York

seen 15.02.04 Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Message for the people of the Netherlands

A total of nine interchanges between the Netherlands and the Lower Derwent Valley NNR involving species such as Bewick's Swan, Mallard, Ruff and Sand Martin

An adult male Mallard ringed on 20/11/89 at Lower Derwent Valley NNR found dead on 15/09/96 at Den Helder, Noord-Holland, **The Netherlands 392 Km**

An adult male Ruff, ringed on 29.04.05 at Oosterlittens, Skrips, **Netherlands**

seen	15.07.05	Cley Marshes, Norfolk
seen	12.06.06	Vadso, Ekkeroy, Norway
seen	30.06.06	Cley Marshes, Norfolk
seen	22.08.06	Ousefleet, Blacktoft, The Humber
seen	12.12.06	Lower Derwent Valley NNR
seen	08.08.07	Clay Marshes, Norfolk
seen	21.04.08	Lower Derwent Valley NNR
seen	24.04.08	Wommels, Netherlands
seen	05.05.08	Skrok, Umra, Ume delta, Sweden
seen	03.01.09	Lower Derwent Valley NNR

An adult male Ruff ringed on 18.04.09 at Gaast, Ploder Gaast-Ferwoude, **Netherlands**

seen	01.04.10	Lower Derwent Valley NNR
seen	21.04.10	Koudum, Haanmeerpolder, Netherlands
seen	23.10.10	Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Message for the people of the Sweden

Five known interchanges between Lower Derwent Valley NNR and Sweden including Whimbrel (see www.whimbrel.info/), and Ruff

An adult male Ruff, ringed on 29.04.05 at Oosterlittens, Skrips, **Netherlands**

seen	15.07.05	Cley Marshes, Norfolk
seen	12.06.06	Vadso, Ekkeroy, Norway
seen	30.06.06	Cley Marshes, Norfolk
seen	22.08.06	Ousefleet, Blacktoft, The Humber
seen	12.12.06	Lower Derwent Valley NNR
seen	08.08.07	Clay Marshes, Norfolk
seen	21.04.08	Lower Derwent Valley NNR
seen	24.04.08	Wommels, Netherlands
seen	05.05.08	Skrok, Umra, Ume delta, Sweden

Message for the people of the Portugal

2 known interchanges between birds from the Lower Derwent Valley NNR and Portugal, listed below

Adult female Teal ringed on 30.10.96 at Lower Derwent Valley NNR and caught again on 24.02.99 Paul da madriz, Beira litoral, **Portugal** 1634Km

An adult Reed Warbler ringed on 04.09.05 at Lagon De Santo, Setubal, **Portugal** and recaptured at the Lower Derwent Valley NNR on 29.04.07 1862 km

Message for the people of the Finland

Seven interchanges between the Lower Derwent Valley NNR and Finland, including Black-headed Gull, Peregrine Falcon, Whimbrel, Scaup, Teal and Wigeon

Juvenile male Wigeon ringed on 15.11.03 at Lower Derwent Valley NNR and found dead on 26.09.09 at Sotkajarvi, Pudasjarvi, Oulu, **Finland** 2027Km

Juvenile wigeon ringed on 20.03.2004 at Lower Derwent Valley NNR and found dead on 16.05.2007 at Liakka, Lappi, **Finland** 1924 km

Peregrine falcon (ringed as chick in the nest) on 22.07.95 at Site confidential, Inari, **Finland and found dead on** 15.10.00 in Lower Derwent Valley NNR 2,229km SW

Message for the people of the USSR (Russia)

18 known interchanges of ringed birds between the Lower Derwent Valley, including Wigeon, Teal, Scaup, Bewick's Swan, Shoveler

Wigeon (duckling) ringed on 17.07.71 at Kandalaksha Murmanskj, **USSR and found dead on** 01.01.74 at Lower Derwent Valley NNR

A wigeon ringed as a first winter male on 09.04.03 in the Lower Derwent Valley and present on 01.05.03 River Istok, Ketovo, Kurgan, **U.S.S.R** 4268 Km

Two shovelers ringed as ducklings on 26.06.04 in the Lower Derwent Valley NNR from the same brood and found on 15.05.05 at Pinezhskiy, Arkhangelsk, **U.S.S.R** 2764 Km and on 21.08.05 Krasinskoe, Privolzhskiy, Ivanovo, **U.S.S.R** 2678 Km

Bewick's Swan ringed as an adult female on 10.08.92 at Kashin Island, Korovinskaya, **Russia**

Seen 06.12.92 Neu Kallis, Kreis Ludwigslust, **Germany**

Seen 03.04.93 Seedorfer see, Kries segeberg, **Germany**

Seen 16.01.94 Dersum, **Germany**

Seen 24.12.96 Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Seen 01.01.97 Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Message for the people of the Czech Republic

Only 1 known interchange to date

A fieldfare ringed on 14.03.96 at Thorganby, Lower Derwent Valley NNR and recaptured on 30.11.97 at Biskupice u Luhacovic, **Czech Republic** 1,396 Km – the first British ringed fieldfare to be found in the Czech Republic

Message for the people of the Hungary

Only 1 known interchange to date

A Lesser Whitethroat ringed on 08.09.02 at Allerthorpe in the Lower Derwent Valley NNR and recaptured by ringers on 29.09.03 Sumony AH, **Hungary** 1601 Km

Message for the people of the Estonia

One known movement to date

An adult bewick's Swan ringed on 04.12.91 at Martin Mere, Lancs UK

Seen 30.01.92	Martin Mere UK
Seen 18.10.92	Grijpskerk, Groningen, Netherlands
Seen 28.11.92	Blija, Friedland, Netherlands
Seen 05.01.93	Wieringerwet, Wieringermeer, Netherlands
Seen 16.01.93	Creil, Noordoostpolder, Netherlands
Seen 18.04.93	Assamalla, Laane-Virumaa, Estonia
Seen 19.11.93	Ternaard, Friesland, Netherlands
Seen 30.11.94	Lauwersmeer, Groningen, Netherlands
Seen 09.01.95	W.Enumatil, Groningen, Netherlands
Seen 08.02.96	Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Message for the people of the Lithuania

One interchange to date

A gadwall, ringed on 15.08.88 at Ventes Ragas, Silute, **Lithuanian SSR** and found on 31.12.88 River Derwent near Lower Derwent Valley NNR 1409 km

Message for the people of the Belgium

One interchange to day although still awaiting details of a whimbrel recaught at Wheldrake Ings, Lower Derwent Valley NNR wearing a Belgium ring in 2009

A goldfinch, a first winter female, ringed on 14.05.96 at Koksijde, West-Vlaanderen, **Belgium** was found dead on 23.07.96 at East Cottingwith, Lower Derwent Valley NNR 391 Km

It is only the third Goldfinch ringed in Belgium to be found in Britain, although 81 ringed in the UK have been found in Belgium

Message for the people of the Spain

One interchange between the Lower Derwent Valley NNR and Spain although still awaiting details of a whimbrel wearing a Spanish ring recaught at Wheldrake Ings, Lower Derwent Valley NNR in 2007

A sand martin, ringed on 28.07.05 at Los Albardales, San Martin de la vega, **Spain** and recaught on 18.06.07 in the Lower Derwent Valley 1533 Km

Message for the people of the Svalbard

Two interchanges relating to Barnacle geese, a father and son!

Male and juvenile Barnacle goose ringed on 10.08.90 at Oienkukla, Bohemanflya, Svalbard and seen on 29.10.9 at Caerlaverock, Scotland and again 04.12.90 before appearing on 05.01.91 in the Lower Derwent valley NNR

Message for the people of the Germany

10 interchanges between the Lower Derwent Valley NNR and Germany including species such as Bewick's Swan, Mallard, Wigeon, and Black-headed Gull

Bewick's Swan ringed as an adult female on 10.08.92 at Kashin Island, Korovinskaya, **Russia**

Seen 06.12.92 Neu Kallis, Kreis Ludwigslust, **Germany**

Seen 03.04.93 Seedorfer see, Kries Segeberg, **Germany**

Seen 16.01.94 Dersum, **Germany**

Seen 24.12.96 Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Seen 01.01.97 Lower Derwent Valley NNR

A Mallard ringed as a duckling on 21.07.79 at Lower Derwent Valley NNR and found on 14.10.82 Weser-Ems, Germany

A shelduck ringed on 27.02.04 at Lower Derwent Valley NNR and seen on 18.09.04 Trischen, **F.R. Germany** 629 Km

A wigeon ringed on 16.02.05 at Lower Derwent Valley NNR and seen on 08.05.05 at Merldorfer, Speicherkoog, **Germany**

Message for the people of the Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea and Guinea B

www.whimbrel.info/ 2 interchanges to date both involving whimbrel – Wally and Wallace!!

In May 2005 a whimbrel who was stopping off to roost (sleep) at Wheldrake Ings nature reserve near York in the Lower Derwent Valley NNR, England, with some of its friends was caught and fitted (very carefully) by experts with a rather interesting piece of equipment! A satellite tag.

Satellite tag

The tag which weighs just 12 grams and sits on the birds back like a rucksack, is solar

powered (no need for heavy batteries) and sends out signals which are picked up by satellites up in space. The signals told experts exactly where Wally the Whimbrel was throughout her journey (Yes it was later discovered that Wally was in fact female!!)

Wally the Whimbrel sporting her newly fitted tag before heading off on her amazing journey.

WALLYS' JOURNEY

- 2nd May 2005 Stopped off at Wheldrake ings nature reserve in the Lower Derwent Valley near York, England. (fitted with satellite tag)
- 12th May, left the nature reserve after a good feed on leather jackets at a field in Storwood in the LDV.
- Two days and 1000 miles later she arrived in Iceland, wow! What a journey. She may have bred there.
- 20th July, moved over to Western Iceland, 141 miles
- 1st August left Iceland and flew the 1346 miles to Brest in Brittany, France. She stayed here until 13th August.
- 13th August, left France and by the 18th of August was off the coast of Morocco Africa.
- 22nd August moved through Muaritia and 26th August Senegal (both Africa)
- 30th August, arrived to spend the winter in Guinea (still Africa)
- Wally stayed here until 22nd April 2006 when she flew back to Senegal then back to Guinea again!! She stayed there until 17th June 2006 when unfortunately the Satellite tag stopped sending signals. We don't know why

Hey but WHAT A JOURNEY!!!!

In April 2007 the team who tagged Wally the Whimbrel in the Lower Derwent Valley Nature Reserve decided to try again.

They caught and satellite tagged another Whimbrel on the 28th April. The whimbrel stayed in the valley for a further 14 days and left on the 12th May. Local school children from Bubwith Primary school were told about the tagged bird and they adopted him and named him Wallace

Heres Wallaces journey 14th May arrived near Jokulsarlon the largest glacial lake in Iceland.

- After a long tour of Iceland and possibly raising babies Wallace left on 4th August.
- 6th August satellite tag bleeped at sea south East of Ireland.
- 8th August Wallace had reached Africa!!! What a mammoth flight. Actual location South east of Bissau capital of Guinea.
- 17th December 2007 last bleep received

Ends

York birdlife goes international

February 2nd is World Wetlands day and the River Derwent's birds are showing up in wetlands around the globe.

As the world marks the importance of wetland areas everywhere, Natural England explains how birds recorded at their internationally important Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve near York are also turning up in 24 other countries.

Wally the whimbrel is a bird who has come to symbolise flights across the globe having recently been tracked by radio transmitter as far as Guinea Bissau on the west coast of Africa. Shoveler ducks ringed at the reserve have been found in Archangel, on the northern coast of Russia.

"It's fascinating to understand where birds fly off to when summer or winter ends, we've tracked birds from here to Iceland, west Africa and Svalbard. We can use this information to target international conservation efforts around the birds' migratory routes" says Craig Ralston, Senior Reserve Manager at the Reserve.

Natural England are also marking the day by opening their new reserve office. The new office base overlooking the National Nature Reserve will enable schools and the local community to learn more about resident and visiting wildlife and the internationally significant wetlands of the reserve. The new building will be formally opened by the Lord Mayor and Sheriff of York and will include a temporary exhibition of historical photographs from around the valley.

Cllr. Susan Galloway, The Lord Mayor of York, said "The Lower Derwent Valley is York's natural equivalent of York Minster – and an internationally important and much-loved asset of which we are very proud. We are committed to playing our part on the world stage by looking after its future and on behalf of the City of York I send our good wishes to colleagues through the world with whom we share a common responsibility."

On the weekends either side of World Wetlands Day, there'll be host of fun-packed family events on the Reserve. For details, see the Yorkshire and Humber events pages at www.naturalengland.org.uk.

About the reserve

Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve (NNR) is one of three internationally important wetland sites in Yorkshire and includes a series of meadows, pastures and woodlands on the border between North Yorkshire and the East Riding. In winter the grasslands flood, as water that would otherwise backup in York spreads out across the meadows. The flooded meadows also support nationally important numbers of teal, Bewick's swan, wigeon, pochard and golden plover. The land is traditionally farmed

World Wetlands Day marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands in 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar, and is celebrated annually. The other sites in Yorkshire are the Humber Estuary and Malham Tarn.

Ends

Map

