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NEWS FROM WALES

Y BARCUD

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Breathing LIFE into blanket bog

A new five-year project in North Wales will see large areas of blanket bog being restored. The project is a partnership between the RSPB, the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission Wales.

The amount and quality of blanket bog in Wales and the rest of the UK has declined greatly over the past few decades as trees have been planted and drains installed. It is important for birds such as golden plovers.

The project work will include:

- blocking 90,800 m of drainage channels (grips)
- mowing 420 hectares (ha) of dry heath to protect 1,452 ha of blanket bog from fire
- reseeding 50 ha of degraded bog with heather
- removing trees from over 230 ha of blanket bog on Forestry Commission Wales land.

- removing rhododendrons and Sitka spruces from around 3,000 ha of land to protect blanket bog from invasion

The majority of the drain blocking work will take place in the Berwyn and Migneint-Arenig-Dduallt Special Areas of Conservation, including at the RSPB's reserve at Lake Vyrnwy. The EU LIFE-Nature programme has met 75% of the £2.57 million project costs.

Alongside the habitat restoration work, the project will also be working with local communities, including discussing best management practice with farmers and other landowners, providing regular project updates and hosting educational visits for local schoolchildren.

If you would like to find out more, please contact the project team, based at Lake Vyrnwy, on 01691 870939 or e-mail gorgorscymru@rspb.org.uk

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