



ISSUE NUMBER 6

# FEEDBACK

9/1/92

REGISTERED CHARITY No 299 835

THE BARN OWL TRUST, WATERLEAT, ASHBURTON, DEVON, TQ13 7HU TELEPHONE ASHBURTON (0364) 53026

Welcome to the sixth annual Barn Owl Trust newsletter FEEDBACK. We hope the small print doesn't cause you any problems.

The last year just seems to have flown past, excuse the pun. Conservation and Environmental issues are not hitting the headlines and being brought to peoples attention in the same way they were a year ago. However the hole in the ozone layer and the state of the worlds oceans haven't improved, Rain forest destruction is still happening and the Antarctic is under threat of development. Depressing isn't it. When I was a child I was taught to respect other peoples space and to leave anywhere I went "better" for my having been there, we certainly can't say the Earth is a "better" place as the result of its occupation by human beings. We are custodians of this planet and we hold it in Trust for future generations, lets hope we pass on to them something worth having.

In order for things to get better there needs to be some major changes in peoples expectations and their attitudes to the Earth. THINK GLOBALLY - ACT LOCALLY is a slogan that has been adopted by many groups including the Barn Owl Trust. We believe that individuals can make an impact and achieve positive results, so don't give up. Anything you can do whether it is cutting down on your household waste, planting a tree or picking up litter is positive action and as long as it inspires you to keep on trying, it is well worth while. Looking back over the past year in order to put this newsletter together I realise how much, with the help of volunteers, we have achieved. Many thanks to all of the caring and concerned people who make it all possible by giving either time or donations. I hope as you read on you will agree that the work of the Trust is worthwhile and worth supporting.

*Frances Ramsden*



MOON  
the Barn Owl

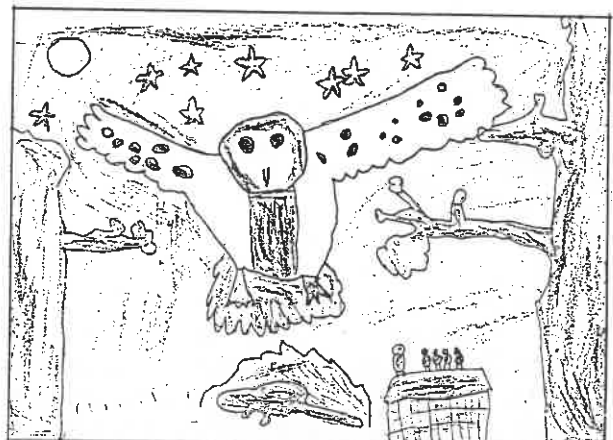


Children from Ashburton WATCH Group watching the BTO ringing of small birds at the Trust's headquarters.

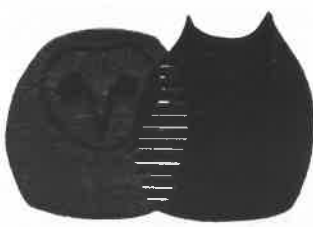
## WATCH - CHILDRENS CONSERVATION



One Sunday a month the Trust's landrover is filled up with members of Ashburton WATCH Group. The children take part in a wide variety of conservation based practical and educational activities which this year have included getting up at 4.30am for a Dawn Chorus walk and woodland breakfast, tree planting and making, erecting and checking nest boxes. Children between 8-18 with an interest in nature conservation can find out about WATCH by contacting either their County Wildlife Trust or the Royal Society for Nature Conservation.



Lee Puntis age 6  
Babbacombe School



## BRINZAL

### CENTRO DE RECUPERACION DE RAPACES NOCTURNAS

#### THE SPANISH CONNECTION

In August 1991 Inigo Fajardo from Brinzal, a Spanish owl conservation body, visited England for 10 days to find out about the work of the Barn Owl Trust. In Spain there is a much larger wild Barn Owl population than in Britain and generally speaking the habitat is very good for Barn Owls and other wildlife. The greatest threat to the owls and other birds of prey in Spain is man. Many birds are shot. The Spanish also are very superstitious and Inigo tells us that the Barn Owl is thought by many of the local people to bring bad luck. Brinzal is run by volunteers who for the most part are 4th year students from Madrid University. They run a sanctuary and hospital for injured and disabled owls and because of their scientific backgrounds they record and monitor everything. Brinzal are particularly interested in learning more about the re-introduction of Barn Owls into the wild and this was the reason for them contacting the Barn Owl Trust when they read about the Trust's re-introduction report in BBC Wildlife Magazine, December 1989. Although there is a large wild barn owl population in Spain, Brinzal feel that release work could attract media coverage which would in turn heighten public awareness of the plight of the Barn Owls which are persecuted. They hope that the publicity attached to a licensed re-introduction scheme in Spain might help to educate people.

During his time in England, Inigo went along on Trust visits to adult's talks and children's groups. He visited barn owl sites where wild birds were ringed (see article on page 5) and spent two days working with our Conservation Officer mapping habitat around a barn conversion site. He sat in on a Trustee's meeting and he also came along to the Teignmouth Flag Day and helped with Barn Owl Trust Information Stands at Manaton Village Fare and The Primrose Games at Buckfastleigh. Inigo's visit to the Trust was very interesting for both organisations and Brinzal have invited representatives from the Barn Owl Trust to visit Spain this summer to see their work at first hand. This visit is dependent upon either BOT or Brinzal finding sponsorship to cover travelling expenses. Inigo would also very much like to return to England as would other members of Brinzal funding permitting.

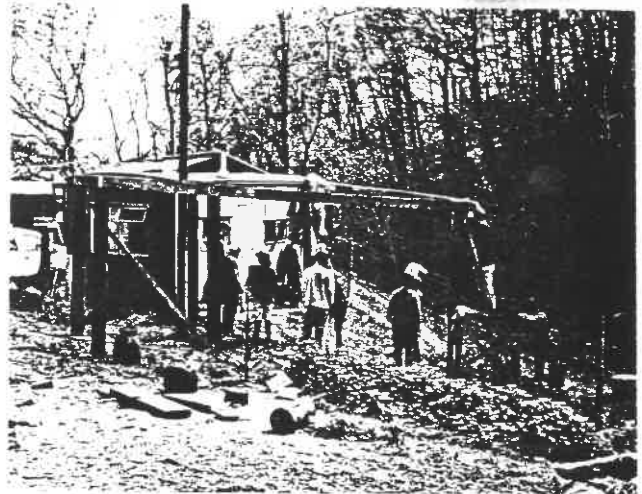
#### DEVON CREAM TEA.



Some of you may remember the occasion two years ago when Harry and Vi Jonas held a cream tea in their garden to raise funds for the Trust. We are delighted to say that they intend to do it again on Saturday 20th July 1991 between 3-5pm. If you were at the last event you will undoubtedly be there again this year if you weren't I can heartily recommend the location, the company and the tea. We look forward to meeting you at SX731614.

#### THE NEW AVIARY

The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) began building an aviary in May 1990. With help from friends of the Trust, the conservation volunteers had completed the aviary by March 1991 and in early April a barbecue was held to say thank you to those involved. The aviary has two sections, the largest contains a pond, covered in wire to prevent the owls drowning, which provides another wildlife habitat. The birds in this aviary are all permanent residents either disabled or in need of sanctuary. The other section contains a breeding pair, the nest box area for the birds is built into a hide currently being used by RSPB who are making a Barn Owl film due for release this autumn. Materials for this aviary were donated by Trago Mills Newton Abbot, Glendinnings of Ashburton and Thatcher Geoff Thame. BTCV volunteers have now started building an aviary specifically for Tawny Owls, with help from other volunteers and Mike our Employment Trainee we hope this aviary will be completed fairly soon. The frame work of the aviary is nearing completion, recycled materials for this have been donated once again by Trago Mills. SWEB have provided us with some X-telegraph poles. We have received help from Parkin Steel Stockholders with the weldmesh and from Woodstock of Totnes with the new timber we need. We will be using weldmesh on this aviary as Tawny Owls have a tendency to cut their cereas on wire netting.



South Devon Conservation Volunteers begin the Tawny Owl aviary.



East Devon Conservation Volunteers.

Whilst the wild Barn Owl population in Britain has decreased by an estimated 70% since 1932 (Shawyer) the captive Barn Owl population has increased dramatically. Barn Owls in captivity can breed prolifically - it is not unusual for 2 or even 3 broods of 4+ owlets a year from one pair.

Sales of closed rings (issued by The British Bird Council) for birds intended for sale or exchange show a 600% increase during the past seven years. In addition to this a large number of captive birds are not fitted with closed rings at all. Current estimates indicate Britains captive Barn Owl population at two and a half times the wild population.

The dramatic increase in the number of Barn Owls in captivity has led to inevitable welfare problems. As with cats and dogs some Barn Owls do find their way into the hands of people simply not suitable to own them. A Barn Owl fitted with a closed ring can be sold or exchanged as easily as a cat, dog, or rabbit.

The law requires that a bird is kept in a space where it has the ability to spread its wings - however for a bird whose potential life expectancy in captivity is 20+ years this is obviously quite insufficient.

Barn Owls although messy are quite easy to keep in captivity and are by nature rather inactive, shy and of a nervous disposition. They are sometimes trained or kept as pets. Trained Barn Owls are notoriously unreliable and in order for a bird to remain trained or tame it needs regular and consistent handling and contact.

Many people feel that keeping one Barn Owl will cause the bird to be lonely and so obtain two. If the birds are of opposite sexes then they will breed and the two Barn Owls can soon become ten. The Barn Owl Trust recommends very careful consideration before allowing captive Barn Owls to breed - suitable long-term homes are not easy to find.

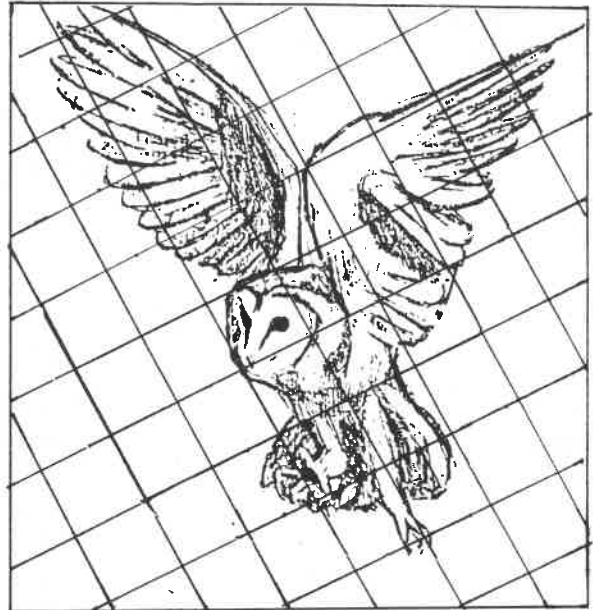
Two male Barn Owls kept together may fight.

Some people obtain Barn Owls with the intension of breeding for release into the wild, it should be remembered that 80% of wild Barn Owls die during their first year (Percival 1990) and most of the captive bred Barn Owls which are released into the wild are likely to have an even lower survival rate. Breeding Barn Owls in captivity is not difficult, successful release into the wild IS. A tremendous amount of work and planning needs to go into the release of captive bred stock.

As with any creature, anyone thinking of taking on a Barn Owl should consider carefully the long term commitment to the bird and its needs. A potential life-span of 20+ years must be taken into consideration before obtaining a bird - the sheer numbers of Barn Owls in captivity make it increasingly hard to find suitable homes for the bird should it need to be passed on.

Adequate housing, aviary space and a food supply should receive serious consideration, and be prepared before obtaining a bird.

Those people wanting to help maintain a viable wild Barn Owl population are advised to concentrate their efforts on habitat conservation and creation and the provision of nest boxes, these things are likely to have a more positive long term effect on the species than the release of captive-bred stock.



This article is available as a leaflet. If you would like to receive a copy please send a SAE marked leaflet no. 25.

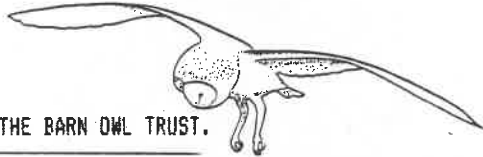
#### LEAFLETS

The Barn Owl Trust has a range of 25 information leaflets available (free of charge) on all aspects of Barn Owl conservation. Please send a SAE to the Trust if you wish to receive any of the following:-

1. Habitat for Barn Owls.
2. Rough Grassland Management.
3. Indoor Nestbox Design.
4. Outdoor Nestbox Design.
5. The "WANTED" Poster.
6. Why Release Barn Owls?
7. Captive Owl - Wild Owl; Acknowledge the difference.
8. A Local Barn Owl Survey.
9. ‡ Release Site Selection.
10. ‡ Release Site Preparation.
11. The Long Term Release.
12. ‡ The Barn Aviary.
13. Feeding Barn Owls.
14. ‡ Breeding in Captivity.
15. Ringing Barn Owls.
16. ‡ Release Night Procedure.
17. The Young Clutch Release.
18. ‡ Post Release Care.
19. ‡ Post Release Record Form.
20. Pellet Analysis.
21. Rat Poisons and Other Hazards.
22. Barn Conversions - Provisions for Owls.
23. Sexing Barn Owls.
24. Further Reading.
25. Captive Barn Owls in Britain - The situation 1991

‡ These leaflets cover specific aspects of Barn Owl Re-introduction. They are not relevant to people making general enquiries. Should you require information on the subject of breeding and release of Barn Owls please include your telephone number with your enquiry.

We have a number of very attractive wooden donation boxes and leaflet dispensers available to good homes if any one knows of a "secure" location. They have to go into places where someone will be responsible for keeping an eye on them to let us know if they need emptying or restocking and they have to be where they are accessible to the public. Please contact us if you would like to offer a home to one.



WORKING FOR THE BARN OWL TRUST.

Those of you lucky enough to receive last years copy of Feedback may recall that the Trust was looking for sponsorship to fund a student. They ended up with me, a student looking for a placement in environmental work for a period of nine months. I was able, with special permission from the Education Department, to receive a grant for the placement.

Looking back I was not what you would call well qualified for the job, I was Owl Ignorant, had no head for heights which is a definite disadvantage when looking for an owl that likes to perch up high and I was hardly able to remember left from right let alone navigate the maze of Devon lanes from a map to find isolated farms. However, with time and patience from all concerned I have overcome these difficulties to find myself 'Besotted With Barn Owls'!

I have often been asked when the rain is sheeting down and my waterproofs have long since called it a day, why does anyone in their right mind comb mud sodden or worst still slurry sodden farmyards and defy vertigo to peer into a nest box or over the ledge of an old barn for the slightest trace of a visiting Barn Owl. There are only two answers to this, Firstly I am Not in my right mind and secondly, every now and then I have been lucky enough to see a wild Barn Owl peeping out from a crevice in a wall or gliding silently away as I approach; as rewards go it is hard to beat that.

Working for the Barn Owl Trust has meant that there is hardly a dull moment. During my travels around the county I have met many interesting people and discovered all sorts of things in peoples barns apart from an occasional Barn Owl. You may be interested to learn that these things range from classic cars to nude men! I have rescued stray dogs on Dartmoor, put out a car fire and I have developed good relations with the R.A.C. following a large number of punctures in a short space of time. I have thoroughly enjoyed the time I have spent with the Trust up to now and hope to continue doing so until September when I regrettably return to the lecture rooms of Seale Hayne College for the final year of my course.

Helen Cobbold

*Helen was trained and had to apply for an Nature Conservancy Council Licence to allow her to visit Barn Owl nest sites. It is illegal to visit Barn Owl nest sites during the breeding season without an NCC licence.*

*Unfortunately due to ill health Helen resigned her placement with the Trust in May. We were all sorry to lose her and her contribution was greatly appreciated.*

# WANTED



## BARN OWL INFORMATION

WHEN AND WHERE DID YOU LAST SEE ONE?



Ashburton (0364) 53026.



Barn Owls are now rare and great efforts are being made to ensure their survival. Your information is important. We need to know the past and present distribution of Barn Owls in this area.

### BARN OWLS ARE WHITE

THEY FLY AT DUSK AND DAWN AND SCREECH

If you require information about the Barn Owl Trust and its work contact:- The Barn Owl Trust, Waterleat, Ashburton, Devon. TQ13 7HU.  
Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

### DEVON BARN OWL RECORDS

Later in the decade we hope to organise a Devon Barn Owl Survey in liaison with other conservation bodies. However, this is still very much in the discussion stage at present. We are continuing to record sightings in the County and people seeing Barn Owls or knowing of sites can let us know and we will record the information. It does help if we receive a map reference with each report.

### AGM

The second Barn Owl Trust AGM was held in the Ambulance Hall, Ashburton on Friday 7th September and was attended by approximately 50 people. Apologies were received from 13 people. The Chair was taken by Trustee Keith Grant. Copies of the Annual Report were available for those present. After the business a framed barn owl photographic portrait was auctioned to raise funds and refreshments were served, giving everyone present a chance to look at the information display and the children's pictures which were on show. David Ramsden, Barn Owl Trust Conversation Officer then gave an illustrated talk about his work, highlighting the Trust's 3 year Barn Conversion Project which began in April 1990 and the many school visits and education work.

The next Barn Owl Trust AGM will be held on Friday 20th September 1991 at St. Andrew's Church Hall in Ashburton. Anyone wishing to attend is welcome and should contact the office if they need directions.

## BIRD RINGING



The ringing or banding (American Term) of birds with numbered metal rings bearing a return address, is an invaluable scientific tool which has been carried out around the world for many years. All ringing is carried out under license and all work is to a very high standard.

Although a certain amount is known about bird migration, it is only through the marking of individual birds that a more detail picture emerges. The great advantage of bird ringing is that the exact whereabouts of the bird is known at least twice in its life and the finder simply needs to report the ring number and not identify the bird. Unfortunately the disadvantage is that the chances of a particular ringed bird being found again are very slim.

A prerequisite and basic assumption of ringing is that it must be safe for the individual bird and that ringed birds behave in the same way as unringed birds of the same species. If rings prevented birds from leading normal lives the results would not be particularly valuable. Rings are made of lightweight alloys and the BTO lay down the size and type of ring to be used for each species. The rings are designed to fit snugly round the long part of the leg (the tarsus) but be loose enough to move up and down without undue rubbing. Each ring is inscribed with the address of the British Museum of Natural History and a unique number for each individual bird.

Ringling is also used to monitor the breeding habitats of birds, juvenile dispersal, average life expectancy of each species, main causes of death and to monitor population fluctuations. However, this can only be achieved if the birds are found again. Therefore, the finder of a ringed bird should always report it, even if it is known to have been ringed locally. The information required is the ring number, when and where the bird was found, what happened to it, name, species or type of bird if you can and finally your name and address so that the Ringing Office can reply to you with details of the bird you have found. If you find a ringed bird, please report it either direct to the BTO c/o British Natural History Museum, London SW7 or to me and I will pass on the information. I am always happy to hear about ringed birds, Barn Owls or otherwise.

Keith Grant

*Other Countries also have ringing schemes. This recovery slip from Iceland shows the distance and duration of a Merlin found dead on Dartmoor.*

Ring No.	Reykjavik 535330	(-)	RH	XXXX
Species	Merlin Falco columbarius			(-)
Sex-age	? - Nestling			(-)
	Date	Place	Co-ord.	
Ringed	04.07.1984	SULTIR, KELDURVERFI, N-ÞING, ICELAND 5997	66°05'N 16°54'W	
Recovered	29.06.1990	SHARP TOR, DARTMOOR, DEVON, ENGLAND	50°28'N 03°56'W	
Rec. det.	Found dead			
Ringer	ÓLAFUR K. NIJLSEN		Dist.:	1886 km
Finder Reporter	ANON F. RAMSDEN		Direct.:	151 °
			Durat.:	2186 d.
Remarks			Bréfl. tilk.	00.07.1990

Icel. Bird Ring. Scheme, Dept Zool. Icelandic Museum of Natural History Box 5320, 125 Reykjavik, Iceland.



THE TRUST OFFICE.

The Barn Owl Trust office has since September 1989 been contained in a 22' caravan. Out of windows on one side we can see a stream and a nest box which for the second year running contains a brood of pied flycatchers and on the other side we can see the Trusts new aviary on the outside of which is another nestbox housing a brood of 8 very noisy young bluetits. As the workload of the Trust grows the office becomes more cramped hence our plan to renovate a two roomed wooden building nearby and move the office into it. We have volunteers who come in and help with the administrative workload and as the available floor and seating space in our office is limited (to say the least) it can be quite entertaining although not always easy to work in. I have to say that all the volunteers who help out here are extremely good sorts and do seem to enjoy their work! The new office space should make things a lot easier, not to mention more comfortable. We have a volunteer working on the renovation and we hope to have the building sorted out and ready to use by the autumn, materials and costs permitting. We can then look towards turning our current office space into a bird room with facilities designed especially for use with young or sick birds. The Barn Owl Trust Office is open for information and enquiries on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9.30am. At other times an answering machine will take a message, emergency enquiries will get a response as soon as possible, general enquiries will be usually be dealt with during office hours unless otherwise requested. Anyone leaving a message should begin with their name and telephone number as sometimes the machine has been known to cut out leaving us with someone needing advice and no way of contacting them.

## TALK TO ADULT GROUPS AND PLANNERS

Since July 1990 David Ramsden Barn Owl Trust Conservation Officer has given 27 talks to adult groups. Called "Restoring the Balance" the talk describes the Barn Owl and its lifestyle and delivers a strong conservation and environmental message. David has also given a talk called "An introduction to Barn Owls" to planning officers at North Devon District Council and Teignbridge District Council. This talk is designed to make planners aware of signs of occupation by Barn Owls and to encourage them to take account of the Owls and their requirements when assessing planning applications.





#### BARN OWL TRUST BARN CONVERSION RESEARCH PROJECT

In 1990 The Barn Owl Trust began a three year research project to assess the impact of barn conversions on the Barn Owl population.

In seeking to ascertain the effects of barn conversions on Barn Owls the county of Devon presents an ideal study area. The overall Barn Owl decline in Devon at 66% is typical of the country as a whole. Unlike some other areas Devon's Barn Owls are dependant on the availability of suitable buildings for roosting and breeding with over 88% of all known breeding sites in buildings as opposed to trees. The practice of converting barns into dwellings is also well established in Devon with large numbers of barns undergoing conversion at present.

The first twelve months have seen the initial design of methods which are working very well. The project comprises of three main sections, a buildings survey, a sixty site study and a search through literature with an investigation of case histories. The buildings survey is complete with the results awaiting analysis.

The first priority with the sixty site study part of this project is the location of sufficient study sites in each of three categories, 20 control sites where nothing happens to the building, 20 sites where the building will be lost or converted and no action is taken to help to resident owls, and 20 sites where the building will be lost or converted and where some special provision is made for Barn Owls in the immediate area. Approaches to conservation and agricultural bodies and appeals through the media have shown good results so far. Of just over 50 sites notified to us, 29 have been identified to date as being suitable for the project, the rest having been found unsuitable because a) the owls have already left, b) a major habitat change which will affect the food supply is due to take place, c) other factors. Initial survey and habitat mapping has been completed at 20 of these and to date 15 four-monthly re-checks of the buildings are complete. Over 1,200 buildings and hollow trees (very few of the latter) are being visited within these 20 study areas every 4 months, and it is anticipated that this figure will increase to around 4,000 by the beginning of the third year.

The research through literature has so far confirmed the need for this project as no similar studies have been published to date. The fundamental question remains -

will the site loss cause resident owls to move to the next available barn or will they disappear altogether? Some interesting case histories have already come to light with evidence that Barn Owls will make use of special provisions in some cases. From the data collected it will be possible to estimate the scale of the overall loss of traditional agricultural buildings in Devon and the likely effect on Barn Owls.

David Ramsden

#### THE BUILDING SURVEY

Due to the economic decline of the Farming Industry the loss of Traditional Agricultural Buildings (TABs) is likely to increase. Which is of course bad news for Barn Owls (B.O.s) who favour the high rafters, wide ledges and the safety of darkness that these old buildings provide as places to roost and nest. The most obvious loss of TABs is by conversion to residential or industrial use. The temptation to convert a redundant barn is hard to resist for farmers who are struggling to make a profit in farming, even in today's recession converted barns are fetching a premium. Whilst conversion is preferable to loss from decay, in most cases the building becomes unavailable to owls and may as well be nonexistent as access to the lofts are blocked and the owls are evicted. Further losses of TABs can be attributed to their limited suitability for today's modern methods of farming and the high cost of maintainance.

As part of the three year Barn Conversion Research Project the Trust has carried out a building survey in order to assess the proportion of TABs that are suitable and available to B.O's. The survey also takes account of the number of remaining buildings which have reached a state of terminal decay, the number which have collapsed or been demolished, the proportion which have been converted to another use and finally in how many cases provision has been made for owls.

The survey was carried out in 20 randomly selected tetrads throughout the county of Devon and involved visiting all farms and buildings within the selected tetrad. We are pleased to be able to report that the response from farmers was extremely encouraging and hopefully many will have been persuaded to provide nestboxes in their modern buildings or include provision when converting their barns.

Helen Cobbold

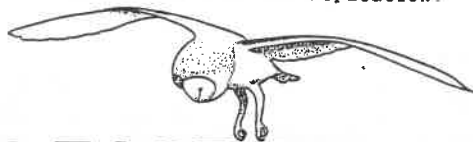
Helen and David recording information



BARN OWL TRUST  
BARN CONVERSION RESEARCH PROJECT  
1990 - 1993



In liaison with the  
DEVON WILDLIFE TRUST,  
DEVON BIRD WATCHING AND PRESERVATION SOCIETY  
and the South Western Region of the  
ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS,  
THE BARN OWL TRUST  
is researching the effects of barn conversions  
on Devon's Barn Owl Population.



## PLEASE TELL US

IF YOU KNOW OF ANY BARN OWL SITES WHICH  
ARE GOING TO BE CONVERTED BEFORE 1993

THE BARN OWL TRUST NEEDS TO IDENTIFY 40  
ROOSTING OR BREEDING SITES WHICH WILL BE  
CONVERTED TO MONITOR AS PART OF THIS  
PROJECT.

 Ashburton (0364) 53026.

# NOW

For information about the Barn Owl Trust  
and/or this project please send an SAE to

The Barn Owl Trust, Waterleat,  
Ashburton, Devon, TQ13 7HU.

### FOR SALE LONG WHEEL BASE LANDROVER

Well maintained, full service history, one careful owner, reluctant sale.

Since the start of the Barn Conversion Research Project in April 1990, the Trust's mileage has increased dramatically. Because of this after much discussion at Barn Owl Trust meetings, it was decided that it was necessary to have a more economical vehicle and that using the Landrover all the time was no longer viable. However in order to obtain any other vehicle the landrover would have to be sold as there was no money available to buy anything else without selling it. Another problem came to light at about this time and that was that no other vehicle in the price range we would be looking at could do everything we expected of the landrover more economically. This led us to the conclusion that we would need two vehicles, a cheap four wheel drive for the off-road work visiting remote Barn Owl sites, habitat mapping etc. and another economical and reliable estate of some kind capable of carrying equipment and people to events and travelling long distances. The landrover was advertised for sale at the end of 1990 and the beginning of 1991. The current economic climate meant that it did not sell and as a result the Trust is unable to purchase another vehicle. The Landrover has a very good high profile for the Trust and we will be very sad to see it go after nearly 4 years of faithful service. However, we do have to try and obtain a more economical vehicle for long journeys. We would really like to hear from anybody who can help us solve this problem.

### ROAD DEVELOPMENT BARN OWL SURVEY

In April 1990, Devon County Council approached the Trust and requested that we undertake a survey to assess the effect of the A30 Okehampton to Launceston road development on Barn Owls. Construction of the new dual carriageway is due to start in Mid August 1991. The survey entailed a search of buildings and hollow trees either side of the road development for signs of occupation by Barn Owls. An area 22km long by 1km wide was searched and two roosting sites in current use discovered. Interviews with local landowners indicate a significant decrease in resident Barn Owls during the past eight years. Nest boxes have been erected at 10 locations, a minimum of 1km from the road to encourage Barn Owls away from increased traffic hazards. This survey represents the first such contract undertaken by the Trust.

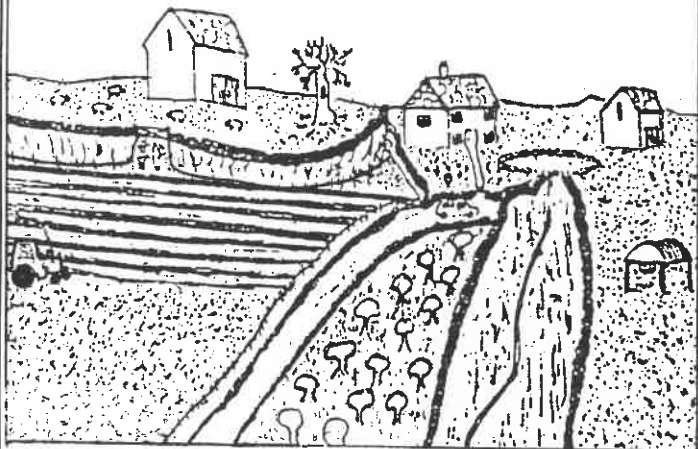
### DEVON COUNTY SHOW

This year for the first time, the Trust attended the Devon County Show. We had a 20ft display in The Living Countryside area at the show. A steady stream of visitors asked questions and took away information leaflets on Barn Owl conservation. Many people expressed surprise at the ease with which an indoor nest box for Barn Owls could be created. The box attached to the front of the Barn Owl Trust display stand attracted so much attention that a cardboard cut out of a barn owl was put in the back to peer out at everyone who peeped inside. Several people who had previously contacted us by telephone or post came along and introduced themselves and it was nice to be able to put a face to a name. The Trust's stand was sponsored by Matford Landrover. The conservation area was organised by The Game Conservancy Council.



Providing information and advice at  
the Devon County Show.

An ideal modern farm for barn owls.



Ruth Bone Stawley School

#### RELEASE SITE ROUNDUP

The Trust's national role as far as the release of captive bred Barn Owls is concerned, is to provide detailed information on release methods for those already involved in the practice, (we do not encourage people to begin breeding or releasing Barn Owls). The release methods we recommend are based on the experience gained since our first release in 1985. We press hard for the adoption of the best methods by schemes up and down the country. In Devon we operate our own release sites with the help of volunteers. All birds are fitted with BTO rings (see article on page 5) and detailed records of each site are kept. Release sites used in 1990 were:-

##### Trusham

The four owlets placed at this site all fledged successfully and were seen perching on the newly insulated SWEB transformer without coming to any harm. Food stopped being taken by the Owls approximately one month after fledging. One of these birds was recovered as a road casualty over 8 months after fledging approx 3 miles from the release site.

##### Clayhidon

Two Owlets were released from this site using the young brood method. The Owls were last seen at the site three months after placement although food was still being taken six months later.

##### Hennock

A young brood release of four owlets was undertaken from this site at the end of April '90. The owlets dispersed in the normal manner the last food was 2 months after release.

##### Doddiscombesleigh

A brood of 4 owlets were delivered to this site at the end of April and after a little modification to the nest box siting they were installed. The last food was taken in early July and the last sighting was in a neighbouring building where one was seen roosting in a barn undergoing conversion to a dwelling. With advice from the Trust special provision for owls was incorporated in the conversion.

##### Ipplepen

A late brood of well developed owlets were placed at this site during October and all fledged successfully the last food being taken in March of this year.

##### Southleigh A

Long term release site. After initial difficulties this site has shown some success with two barn owls present at the site in the winter and one remaining to date (summer '91).

##### Southleigh B

Long term release Site. After a false start with six infertile eggs the pair went on to hatch two owlets. The female adult was unfortunately killed on a road shortly after release. A juvenile was also found dead after having flown into telegraph wires.

##### Kenn

Six owlets were installed in June '90 for a young brood release. By August pellets with wild food in were found and in Sept the food provided was no longer being taken. The owls have chosen to remain and breed at this site producing 5 owlets in an early brood this year which are fledging at the time of writing.

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Several release sites from previous years have Owls present:-

##### Modbury.

In terms of the number of owlets produced at any one site this is by far our most successful to date. The original pair were released using the long term method in 1986. Breeding has occurred twice every year with a staggering 41 owlets fledged up to the end of 1990 and another brood of five growing well at time of writing.

##### Dunsford.

After a long term release back in 1987 the adult pair remained at site and produced broods of five in '88 and '89. In 1990 they were double brooded and produced a further six young. This year only one adult is present.

##### Bicton.

This site has had Barn Owls present since release in 1988 and breeding occurred twice in 1990. BTO ringing has proved very difficult as the owls have used various inaccessible nest sites. Adults are still present, the current nest site is as yet undiscovered.

##### Woodbury Salterton.

A long term release site in 1989. No nest was located in 1990 but this year we ringed a brood of three in the original release site and were pleased to see a fresh dead vole in the nest box, no supplementary feeding has occurred since 1989.

##### Yealmepton.

After a young brood release in 1988 the owls dispersed within two months with only the occasional sighting in the vicinity of the barn. To our surprise in 1990 the owls returned to breed in the nestbox and reared three owlets without any supplementary food. This year they are breeding again!



### Yealton 2.

An ideal very large stone barn was selected for a young brood release in 1989 and barn owls remained in the area throughout the following winter. They produced five young last year in a small modern double garage 500 meters away in preference to the barn ! This was the first young brood release to our knowledge where breeding occurred the following year.

### Woodland.

This long term release site was very successful in 1987 with broods of two and five successfully fledged. In March the following year the owls left the site and only an occasional sighting was recorded. This year two barn owls are present, we have yet to confirm that these are the same birds. Breeding looks very likely.

### Moniton

Using the young brood method four owlets were released in May 1989. Three of the owls fledged successfully and two remained in the area through the following winter. In 1990 they bred in a barn 1 Km away where a nest box had previously been unoccupied since its erection in 1984. We have just ringed a further brood of two (1991). No supplementary feeding has occurred since the end of 1989. Success !

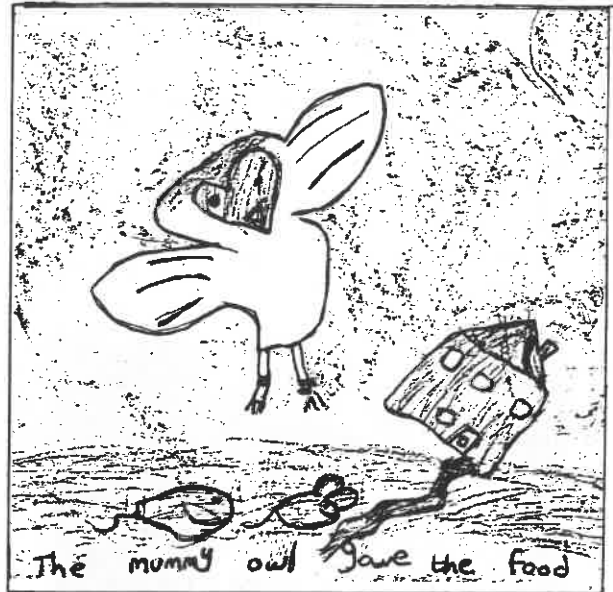
MANY THANKS to all release volunteers. Any one interested in details of the recovery rates of released birds should read the Barn Owl Trust Re-introduction Report.

### BOT JUMBLE SALE

The sixth annual jumble sale was held in May and raised £288.50. St. Andrews church Hall was used as a location for the first time and this meant that by using the garden we had more room to spread out. Despite the overcast weather we were able to serve teas on the lawn and several people commented that it was the most civilized jumble sale they'd ever attended. One local lady told us she had purchased a dish at last years sale which she had subsequently had valued and found to be worth £150 which just goes to show real bargains can still be found at jumble sales.



The jumble sale is organised and run by volunteers. We managed to get some of them to pose for this picture.



### WHAT IS THE BARN OWL TRUST ?

The Barn Owl Trust is a registered Charity. The aims of the Trust are, "to conserve the Barn Owl and its Environment". In order to achieve these aims the Trust undertakes the following:-

To provide a free information service nationally, by both post and telephone we answer enquiries and advise on Barn Owl related topics. The Barn Owl Trust is the only national organisation providing a comprehensive range of information leaflets on Barn Owl conservation, these include barn conversions - provisions for owls, nest boxes, habitat, re-introduction techniques and pitfalls.

To liaise with other conservation organisations, groups and bodies in the pursuit of the Trusts aims, and to provide these organisations etc. with specific Barn Owl information and advice when required.

To collect and record reports of Barn Owl sightings, roost and nest sites, past and present in Devon and the surrounding area. This is in order to build up a picture of Barn Owl distribution in the area and to identify the remaining Barn Owl sites in order to help to protect and preserve them.

We create "tailored" information on Barn Owl conservation for different groups e.g. schools, educational bodies etc.

The Trust campaigns for and advises on, the conservation and creation of good Barn Owl habitat and provision of nest boxes. To achieve this the Trust visits on request, farmers and landowners to increase awareness of the effects of intensive farming on both the Barn Owl and other forms of wildlife.

We talk to groups and societies and illustrate the close links between the Barn Owl and Man and the environmental consequences of everyday human activities. The Trust also visits schools to educate on the changes in the countryside and the effects on Barn Owls and other wildlife.

We operate a local newspaper and aluminium can recycling scheme and encourage the use of bottle banks, stamp and silver paper collections, organic produce and other "environmentally friendly" schemes and ideas.

We execute a carefully planned and monitored re-introduction programme locally where appropriate, and nationally we provide advice and information for groups and individuals **already** releasing captive Barn Owls to encourage the adoption of release methods which take account of habitat requirements, safeguard WILD Barn Owls and give RELEASED Barn Owls the best chance of survival.

The Trust is also involved in Research with its Barn Conversion Project, the ringing of Barn Owls to enable the collection of useful data (see article on page 5) and increasingly the care of damaged birds.



Woodstock is a blind Tawny Owl.

#### THE BIRDS

At the time of writing this the Trust currently has 24 resident Barn Owls, 7 tawny Owls, 3 Little Owls, 1 Short Eared Owl and a European Eagle Owl. With the exception of 6 Barn Owls and 3 Tawny Owls due for release these are all permanent residents for various reasons. We have three breeding pairs of Barn Owls whose offspring are all released into the wild using gradual release methods. During the past year the Trust has dealt with a number of live bird casualties and problems, many as a result of road traffic accidents, these include 19 Barn owls, 13 Tawny Owls, 2 Short Eared Owls, 6 Little Owls, 3 Buzzards, 3 Kestrels, a Swift, a Pigeon and a Jackdaw, (also 2 Hedgehogs and a thoroughbred rabbit with a ring that needed removing ended up here). Any seriously injured or diurnal birds of prey are passed on to our local very experienced Licensed Rehabilitation Keeper Joanna Vinson or the Veterinary Hospital in Plymouth where they receive expert care and attention often returning to us for convalescence. Any of the birds which recover well enough are released wearing BTO rings (see the article on page 5), some will of course die and others will never recover well enough to survive in the wild and these become permanent residents. At this time of year the majority of telephone calls about live birds are from members of the public finding what they assume are "abandoned" Tawny Owlets, in most cases the parents are nearby and the advice given is to leave

well alone. If there is an obvious hazard nearby e.g. road or cat, action can be taken to place the owlet out of harms way and this is most easily done by nailing a wooden box on the nearest tree and popping the owlet inside it. If the bird is either injured or starving advice should be sought.

We are currently receiving a large number of Barn Owl enquiries most of which concern captive bred birds (see article on page 3). Many of these birds have been bred with the intention of being released, some need homes and some the owners can no longer keep. Some enquiries concern lost or found birds. Many escaped and released captive bred Barn Owls are found either dead or starving. One lady rang the Trust having found a Barn Owl one morning on her balcony - she lived in a block of flats within site of Tower bridge in London !! She caught the owl and put it in her bathroom whilst she sorted out what to do next. Her local pet shop had advised her that 6 dead day old culls would feed a Barn Owl for 3 weeks, in fact a Barn owl with a normal appetite would eat that much food in 3 days !! We contacted the RSPCA wildlife section who sent an officer around to remove the bird and find a suitable home for it, the lady was very pleased to get her bathroom back and arrangements were going to be made for her to visit the Owl in its new home.



Spock the Little Owl was injured by a car.

THE TRUST DOES NOT OPERATE A VISITOR CENTRE OR DISPLAY LIVE BIRDS TO THE PUBLIC.

#### VOLUNTEERS

Working on the basis that if you don't ask for help people don't know you need it, last year we asked for volunteers to help with all sorts of things. We are pleased to report that IT WORKED, several people did come and offer us their services.

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU to all those people (and you know who you are) who have helped with everything that has needed doing this year. There are too many of you to list names - and I would be terrified of forgetting someone - so whether you have helped in the office with administration, accounts, post or telephone, or with practical tasks like making and erecting nest boxes, doing local survey work, helping with aviary construction, cleaning aviaries, bundling newspapers, fund raising, painting, collecting owls food, compiling reports, collating newsletters,

photocopying, survey work, at events, transporting birds, release site work or by providing any of the 1001 things we need help with, give yourselves a pat on the back and accept from us a heartfelt THANK YOU. We are a small organisation and we do run on a shoestring. We have one full time paid member of staff, a grant aided student and an Employment Trainee, everyone else is a volunteer. So if you have any time or expertise you would like to share with the Trust and would like to get involved in some way we would be really glad to hear from you.

FUND-RAISING

The Barn Owl Trust provides all it's conservation information free of charge and in order to be able to do this we have to spend some time raising funds. The fund-raising actually organised by the Trust is limited to the flagday collections and the annual jumble sale held in Ashburton. However last year volunteers raised money to support the Trust in a variety of ways including cream teas, coffee mornings, jumble sales, raffles and car boot sales. A lady artist holding an exhibition of her work had a collection for the Barn Owl Trust which raised £133. One of the most unusual fund-raising ideas came from a lady having an eightieth birthday party who asked her guests to give a donation to the Barn Owl Trust instead of giving her a birthday present, she told us that she really enjoyed her birthday. A local couple who help the Trust out with a lot of practical tasks also organised and ran a plant sale which took many months of planning and work. The children from Dartmouth who call themselves the Owl Club are still raising funds for the Trust by selling badges to their friends and several children from schools visited by the Trust have written letters and sent donations from their pocket money. Many thanks to everybody who has raised money and to everyone who has given a donation to support the work of the Trust.



Derek Crocker

FLAG DAYS

Last years flag days in Devon raised a total of £1,128. The amount of money collected depends as much on the number of collectors as it does on the location and the weather so we are always delighted to hear from volunteers with an hour or two to help out. All collectors are recognisable by their miniature sandwich

boards carrying an owl picture. This years dates and location are Teignmouth Friday 12th July, Newton Abbot Wednesday 17th July, Sainsburys of Exeter Friday and Saturday 16th and 17th August, Ashburton 17th August, Totnes Friday 13th September and Trago Mills Sunday 17th November. On the first flag day of 1991 at Trago Mills on 26th May we collected £161.17 and the use of the Trusts caravan as rest room for collectors made the whole event much easier.

CHUDLEIGH KNIGHTON PRIMARY SCHOOL XMAS PLAY

In December 1990 we were delighted to receive and accept an invitation to a performance of Chudleigh Knighton Primary School's xmas play. We were very intrigued to learn that the play was based around the aluminium can bank in the school and had been written by the acting headteacher Mary Fossey. Those of you who remember Batman and Superman and can imagine the Joker trying to take over the world or at least all the of the aluminium cans in it, will have an idea of how entertaining the evening was. The play also featured a Barn Owl, an Owlet and a young lady playing Frances Ramsden dressed in a long white dress...quite amazing. In addition to treating us to an evening of extremely good fun the school also sent the Trust a donation of £38 raised at the event. Many thanks to all of the pupils and staff at Chudleigh Knighton Primary School who all now have Barn Owl Trust badges.

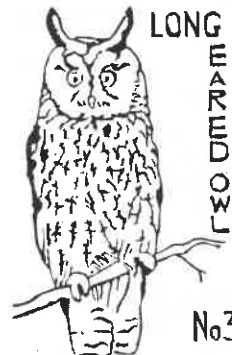
LITTLE OWL



No2

LETTERBOX WALK ON DARTMOOR

LONG EARED OWL



No3

I have suggested that I set up a "letterbox walk" on Dartmoor on behalf of the Barn Owl Trust. A series of rubber stamps depicting Owls will be hidden in small containers and placed for 3 months in strategic spots on the moor. The boxes will be in place by 21st July and can be searched for and found with the aid of a clue sheet. The clue sheet can be purchased from the Trust by post after 15th July, please include a stamped addressed envelope and a check, postal order or postage stamps to the value of £1.50.

This is a tried and tested way of raising funds already used by the Scouts, RSPB, the Guide Dogs Association and many more organisations very successfully. Please note that none of the stamps will be buried or placed in environmentally sensitive areas. Also that anyone walking on Dartmoor should wear sensible clothing and footwear. A copy of the letter boxing code of conduct and sensible equipment will accompany each set of clues sent out. If you have any enquiries I can be contacted on 0364 - 43865. Good hunting.

Mike Wallsh

**ADOPTION**

The Barn Owl Trust adoption scheme is now well established. In 1990 several Owls were adopted on behalf of people as a Christmas gift and in one case as a birthday present. The first couple to adopt an Owl in May 1989 are now beginning their third year of supporting the Trust in this way. We do not operate a membership and the adoption scheme was devised to provide an opportunity for people to support the Trust in a personal and individual way, and of course to raise funds. The adoption of an individual Barn Owl costs £30 per year. An introduction to the adopted owl is sent out with a certificate of adoption and is followed up at the end of the year with a report of the individual owls progress. Please ask for more details.

**CERTIFICATE  
OF  
ADOPTION**

This is to Certify that


.....

has adopted a Barn Owl

Named..... Ring No.....

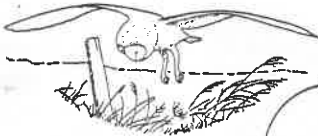
from


**THE BARN OWL TRUST**



From.....

For..... Bear(s)





Signed..... Dated.....

**BUSINESS ADOPTION SCHEME**

We run a corporate adoption scheme, aimed at businesses in an effort to encourage financial support for the Barn Owl Trust. The annual cost of this scheme is £250 and businesses will adopt the Trust rather than an individual bird. Certificates of adoption and a framed Barn Owl portrait are on offer as an incentive to this project. Further details are available from the office.

**FUNDING THE TRUST**

In order to achieve its aims of conserving the Barn Owl and its Environment the Trust needs to raise enough money to support its work and to plan ahead. Most charities and voluntary bodies are feeling the pinch with the current economic recession and the Barn Owl Trust is no exception. Each year the work load of the

Trust increases and therefore the amount of money needed to respond to demand does as well. The majority of the Trust's income has always come from individual donations from members of the public. Fund-raising through flag days, other events and sales goods also generates income.

Large charitable organisations employ full time fund-raisers or even teams of them, the Barn Owl Trust doesn't and spends very little time trying to raise money. We are not actually very good at it, preferring to concentrate our efforts on practical and tangible work. However it does need to be done and during the past year we have with help and advice applied for and received grants towards the Barn Conversion Research Project and the Trust's Educational work, these grants have come from a variety of bodies including other Charitable Trusts, local authorities and businesses. We did not reach our funding targets for these projects which are being subsidised by small donations. The Trust is run on a shoestring and long term planning is very difficult.

We need money to operate. Small donations do make a difference, are worth while and are gratefully received. Standing orders enable us to plan ahead. Covenanted donations are even better as they enable us reclaim from the Inland Revenue any tax already paid on the money given to the Trust. With a gift of £25 per year covenanted to the Trust by a tax payer we can reclaim £9.34 from the Inland Revenue effectively increasing the donation to £33.34 at no extra cost to the person making the gift. Standing Order and Deed of Covenant forms are available from the Trust on request as are Deposited Deed of Covenant forms. Please consider supporting the work of the Trust with a donation and help us to continue to respond.

The Barn Owl Robert Barnes

Class 6

One dark night when I was walking home  
A Barn Owl Scooped down low.  
I jumped back with an astonished face  
But the barn owl had gone, as if he was in a race.

The next night it happened again but this time  
I caught a glimpse  
It was beautiful, all gray and white with  
yellow eyes for his sight.

It had caught a mouse all covered in blood, and  
it also had on it a bit of mud.

The next night he wasn't there.  
When I crossed the road next day I found  
him there

**DEAD!**



Robert Barnes age 9  
Greylands School, Paignton

## LIAISON AND LICENSING ?

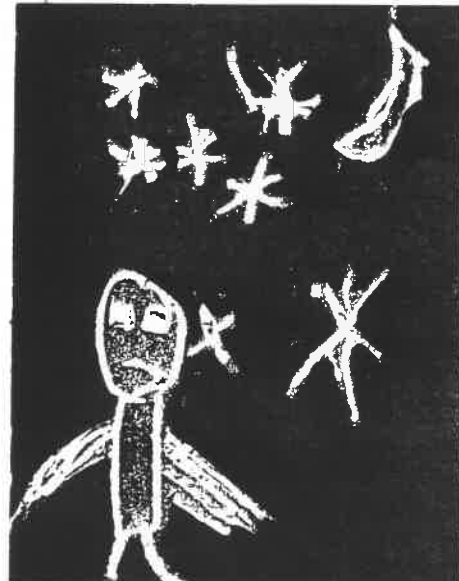
The Barn Owl enjoys the unique position of being the only species in Britain with its own National Liaison Group. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) formerly the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) organises meetings twice a year in Peterborough. Representatives of Barn Owl Trust (BOT), British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), Edinburgh University, Hawk and Owl Trust (HOT), JNCC and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) meet to discuss latest research and information available on the species. Each organisation in the group is primarily interested in the wild Barn Owl population. However the subject of captive Barn Owls inevitably comes up at meetings because of the numbers of Barn Owls in captivity, (see article on page 3) and of those being released. Because of the concern expressed by all member organisations of the group about the scale of Barn Owl releases JNCC has written to the Department of the Environment (DOE) with a recommendation that the Barn Owl is moved to schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. This would mean that Barn Owls could only be released into the wild under license. The Barn Owl Trust's support for this move is totally dependant on licensing conditions and the Trust has written to DOE making suggestions for these conditions. These should include detailed local survey work and habitat assessment before release, the use of a gradual release method, BTO ringing of all released birds and detailed record keeping. This would allow the value of releasing to be assessed over a period of time. The BOT feels that a licence should be granted to any individual or organisation prepared to meet these conditions. Special provision would need to be made to enable Licensed Rehabilitation Keepers (LRK's) to release any rehabilitated wild Barn Owls. Other major conservation bodies have suggested that the Barn Owl is also removed from Schedule 3 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, (thus preventing the sale of captive bred Barn Owls) however the sheer number of Barn Owls in captivity and the ease with which they breed make this highly unlikely. There are also suggestions that the Barn Owl should be moved from schedule 3 to schedule 4 (birds which should be registered and ringed if kept in captivity). This would have the advantage that any recovered birds could be traced to their keepers. It would also discourage the very casual purchaser who buys a Barn Owl on impulse. The sheer number of Barn Owls in captivity, estimated at 25,000+, would make the whole process of registration an administrative nightmare and very expensive to organise and police. It seems likely that of all the recommended changes to the Wildlife and Countryside Act affecting Barn Owls the move to schedule 9 and release only under licence are the most likely.

In December Laurel Hannon from Edinburgh University spent a few days with us here in Devon. Laurel is doing research into Barn Owl genetics and is looking for any genetic variations in birds from different regions as well as for any differences in the genetic make-up of captive-bred and wild Barn Owls.

## BBC

In June 1990 two representatives of the Barn Owl Trust went to Coventry to a meeting of the British Bird Council BBC (the body that supplies the majority of closed rings used for marking captive bred birds). The BOT suggested to the BBC that because an increasing number of people were breeding Barn Owls to release them, (many by simply letting the birds "go") a "cautionary note" could be sent out to purchasers of Barn Owl rings warning them that although breeding Barn Owls in captivity was easy, successfully releasing them into the wild was NOT and that the majority of released birds would not survive. This suggestion has not as yet been adopted by the BBC. The BBC are required by the Department of the Environment to sell closed rings for Barn Owls to any breeder whether or not they are members of the BBC. There is no legal requirement for any breeder to keep a record of who they sell the bird to. This causes a problem when live birds are recovered as a Barn Owl cannot be traced back to its owner by its closed ring number. Many Barn Owls found dead or starving in Britain wear closed rings and it is not usually possible to discover whether these are escaped birds or "released" birds. The BOT suggested that Victor Carr (Chairman of BBC) was invited to the last Liaison group meeting, he told the group that the sale of rings for Barn Owls had increased by 666% over the last 7 years and early indications are that numbers seem likely to rise again this year.

Tim Thomas from the Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals RSPCA Wildlife Section at Horsham came to visit the Trust in January 1991. We discussed the captive Barn Owl issue and the increase in the number of welfare problems reported to both organisations. This not only gave us the chance to meet, previous contact having been limited to telephone calls, it also gave us the opportunity to find out how we could each make use of the others expertise and resources. The RSPCA has a country-wide network of officers that we can call on in cases where live birds may need assistance, we in turn can offer specific information and advice on Barn Owl related matters.



Ulick Burke age 6  
Park School, Dartington





Children from Chudleigh Knighton School collect cans to raise funds for the Trust

**RECYCLING**



In last years newsletter we mentioned we were looking for sheds for storing materials for recycling. We haven't actually found a recycling shed yet, the newspapers are currently burying the freezers where the owls food is stored, but the good news is that we were awarded £250 from the Shell Better Britain Campaign towards one and we have recently been given £150 as a Teignbridge District Council Environment Award as well, so we have the money to buy one now, it is just a question of finding a good one, preferably recycled, for the money we have. The price for newspapers fell again last year and is now £8 a ton. Amazingly most of the recycled paper products sold in this country are imported which seems really crazy. Falling prices have meant that most of the organisations that collected newspapers in the past have now stopped. To dispose of the paper that we collect we have to transport it 25 miles to Exeter, this is done when someone is going in that direction anyway. Very little money is made on newspaper recycling especially when you take into account how much time and effort it takes to move it around and how much a ton actually is..... However the Trust has raised £71.64 for recycling 7,620 kg of newspaper in the last year. Collecting aluminium cans is another way of raising funds through recycling although in many areas cans do need to be sorted by hand to separate the steel from the aluminium. Schools and youth groups anywhere in the country can join in with the Trust's Aluminium can recycling project, all that is needed is an enthusiastic adult to supervise sorting and transporting the cans to the nearest collection point. For further information please contact the Trust office. Chudleigh Knighton primary school, Daddiscombeleigh primary school and St. Dunstons Abbey have all received certificates from the Trust for raising funds by collecting cans. The Trust has raised £92.56 so far from its can collecting initiative. It is interesting to note that like newspaper, the market price for aluminium cans has dropped during the last few months.

Many local authorities throughout the country are now taking an active role in recycling, in Devon all of our local waste collection points have been designated recycling centres. Scrap metal, rags, bottles, cans, in fact almost anything can be recycled. CFC's can also be removed from old fridges before scrapping thus reducing

the damage to the ozone layer. Before you dump your unwanted junk in the dustbin to be taken off to land-fill sites consider recycling, surely some of it could be given to a local jumble sale. Put your glass into local bottle banks and your vegetable peelings into a compost heap. This planets resources are finite and we should remember that we borrow the Earth from our children, they will have to live with the consequences of our actions and the problems we create. Ring your local council today and ask to speak to your recycling officer, ask where and how you can recycle your waste and take care of your environment. If you live in an area where there is no recycling provision organised by the local authority write and request it, send copies of your letter to the local papers, maybe then something will be organised. You can make a difference.

## Recycle Aluminium

**COLLECT ALUMINIUM DRINKS CANS**

Raise Money to support  
**The Barn Owl Trust**

**Reduce Waste**  
Don't trash it

Cash it!

**Save Resources**

*I've GOT MY BADGE - HAVE YOU!*

**SALES GOODS**

The Trust has a small number of Christmas card and notelets for sale (packs of 5) £1.50



Badges (2 designs) 50p each

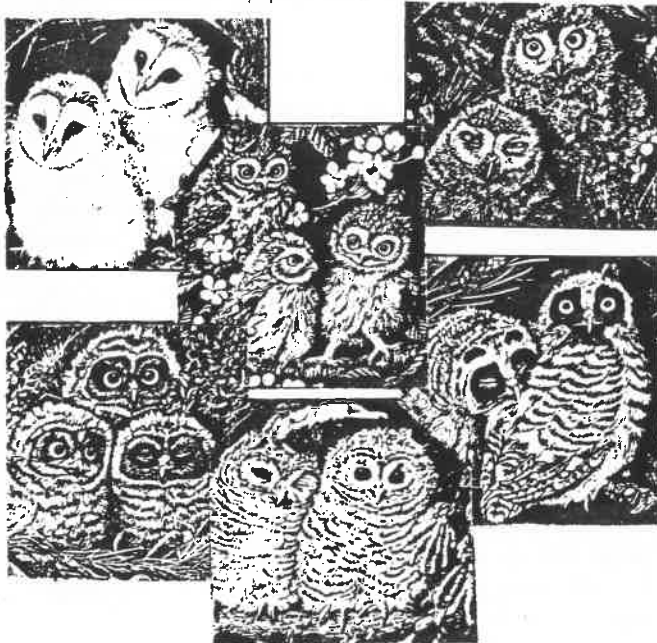


Car stickers 50p each

4" x 4"

Barn Owl Trust full colour portrait posters are now available at £2 each. If ordering by post please include £1 post and packing per order.

Wildlife artist Dick Twinney from Cornwall has donated a selection of autographed baby owl prints to the Barn Owl Trust, these are being sold to raise funds. There are six different prints, Barn Owl, Tawny Owl, Little Owl, Short Eared Owl, Long Eared Owl and Snowy Owl. These delightful 8" x 10" full colour prints are available framed or unframed by post from the Trust.



Price :- MOUNTED + FRAMED £25 per print. £130 per set of six.

UNMOUNTED + FRAMED £14 per print £70 per set of six.

The prints are available for viewing at the Outpost, North Street, Ashburton, where John will be happy to help you choose your frame.



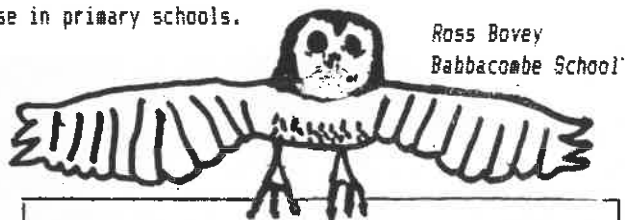
MOONS VISIT TO OUR CLASS  
Sarah Pearce age 8  
Totnes School

#### SCHOOL VISITS AND PICTURE EXHIBITION

Moon, the Trust's tame barn owl, and David Ramsden have now visited 83 schools and Youth Groups to talk to children between 3 and 18. Moon will be 3 years old this month and is very popular with everybody, she even receives her own post which of course she delegates to volunteers in the office to deal with. David uses a blackboard and coloured chalks to tell the children the

story of a particular farm and the owls that inhabit it. As the story progresses the landscape changes and the owls are affected. School visits last about an hour and Moon makes a 10 minute appearance at the end of each visit to enable the children to have an opportunity to see a barn owl at close quarters and ask questions. Most schools take the opportunity to look at Barn Owl pellets as a class activity after the visit and many schools send children's pictures to the Trust. Each child that sends a picture receives a barn owl Trust Certificate with their name on and from September 1990 to March 1991 an exhibition of some of these pictures from schools throughout the County was exhibited in the Ark at Paignton Zoo. The exhibition was put together by Michelle Gates, a Rural Resources Management Student, at Plymouth Polytechnic South West, Seale-Hayne Faculty.

The Trust is currently working on an education pack for use in primary schools.



#### THE BARN OWL

Moon is a Barn Owl.  
She is very beautiful.  
She flies around at night.  
Searching for food;  
She hears a tiny squeaking...  
What is it?  
Suddenly she sees it...  
It's a tiny mouse!  
She pounces on it  
And grabs it with her sharp talons;  
Then carries it back to  
The old, hollow oak tree,  
Where she swallows it, whole.  
Then she goes out again,  
The rough grass verge  
Is where she goes this time;  
Can she find anything?  
Yes. She can see a small shrew.  
Down she flies and grabs it.  
Back she flies to the tree.  
She eats it, then goes to sleep.  
She is a very happy owl.

Laura Parkes, aged 11, Berry Pomeroy School

WHERE THERE IS A WILL THERE IS A WAY

The Barn Owl Trust

Conserving the Barn Owl and its Environment

Together we can make a difference

Please consider a donation now and a legacy to help us in the future.

For advice or information please contact the Trust.

## RE-INTRODUCTION REPORT 1986-88.

The Barn Owl Trust received national publicity in 1989 when it published the first ever Barn Owl re-introduction report. The report contained details of all the Barn Owls released by the Trust between 1986-88, with ring recovery statistics including distances and durations. The 140 Barn Owls in the report were directly compared with ringed wild Barn Owls in the county. Copies of the report are available from the B.O.T. for £2.50 inc. p & p. In 1992 the report will be updated to include results from sites used by the Trust between 1989-91.

THE BARN OWL TRUST DOES NOT ENCOURAGE THE WIDESPREAD OR INDISCRIMINATE USE OF RE-INTRODUCTION. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT ANYONE INTENT ON TAKING THIS COURSE SHOULD SEEK ADVICE BEFORE OBTAINING LIVE BIRDS.

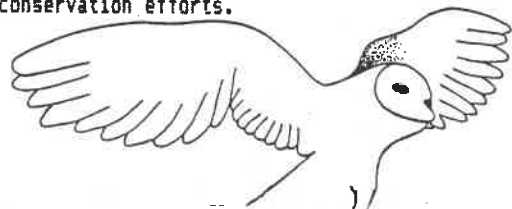
## HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you are reading this newsletter then you are probably NOT one of the many people in the country who think that conservation and environmental issues are either "boring" or "nothing to do with them". Amazing it may be but there are still people who are really not concerned about the destruction of the ozone layer because they don't believe it will affect them! Everyone can be involved in the conservation of our environment - in fact I would go so far as to say everyone should, we all have a vested interest in keeping the world habitable. Everything we do has an environmental impact from where we shop and what we buy to where we live and dispose of our waste. By thinking about how we live and the way in which we use our resources, be they time, money or energy we can each look at our own individual effect on the environment. By buying items in reusable or recyclable containers we are not only reducing our waste output we are also telling manufacturers (in terms that they can understand) that we want less waste. If we walk short distances instead of driving it might take longer but the exercise is good for our health as well as being better for our environment. Planting a tree, making a nest box, composting and recycling waste are all things that individuals can do to make a difference. Picking up litter may not seem like a very constructive way to save the world but it is a link in a chain of positive actions.


You can make a difference. Whatever you do has an impact so make it a positive one. Join your local Wildlife Trust and go along to conservation events and have fun learning about your local area and its wildlife. Find out about and get involved in your local recycling schemes, if you haven't got one ask your local authority to organise one, if enough people ask them to they will!

Support the Barn Owl Trust if you can. We rely on donations to fund our work so if you are able to make a contribution to the Trust please do. We always need funds so are very pleased to hear from people with fund-raising ideas, (some of last years ideas were really good). Volunteers to help in the office or with practical tasks are always welcome so if you have some spare time and would like to get involved give us a ring. Please be aware that the practical work we need assistance with does not involve dealing with birds. We hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter and hearing about the Trust's year. Our AGM held in September is an open meeting and anyone wishing to find out more or to get involved is welcome to come along. Remember to think globally and act locally - the Earth IS worth protecting.

We wish you peace in your lives and GOOD LUCK with all your conservation efforts.



# THINK GLOBALLY ACT LOCALLY



**WILDLIFE INCIDENT INVESTIGATION SCHEME**

Wildlife casualties may occasionally result from the use of agricultural pesticides. In most cases the chemical is being misused and may even be deliberately intended to cause wildlife deaths. Such use of agricultural chemicals is **ILLEGAL** as is any use which is not permitted on the product label.

The Ministry of Agriculture's advisory service, ADAS, will carry out free investigations of any wildlife deaths linked to pesticide use. The enquiries will be in confidence and where products are deliberately misused, prosecutions of offenders will be sought.

If you have evidence to indicate that pesticides have caused wildlife deaths please contact ADAS Wildlife Biologists.

*Dr Ken Willey (for Devon and Cornwall)  
0126 851481 or Caryn Cumbin (for Avon,  
Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire and Dorset)  
01272 811000*

**ADAS**

**wildlife  
POISONING**

## Barn Owls.

I found out some facts about Barn Owls and I put them down for you. Did you know that barn Owls were crepuscular and nocturnal if you didn't know what crepuscular means it means that they come out at twilight.

by Heather

