



## A Rocha UK eNews: September 2021



### What the latest science means for COP26

Head of Conservation, Andy Lester comments on some of the key findings of the recent climate report - and what it means for the forthcoming UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November.

[Read more](#)



### 'Tis the Season of Creation!

In some denominations, September signifies the start of the annual season of creation (1 September- 4 October) and the recognition of it is growing. What started as an initiative by the Catholic and Orthodox churches, and was then joined by the Anglicans, is becoming a welcome month of focus on creation for many Christians of diverse denominations around the world. In the UK, some activities planned which you and your church might wish to take part in are:

- **The Nations' Climate Sunday service (5 September).** The UK's Climate Sunday service will bring the commitments made by 1800+ churches across Britain and Ireland before the UK Government and the wider church. Signatures for our common 'ask' of government, the Time is Now declaration will also be presented. Register here to join us for the service, a live broadcast from Glasgow Cathedral consisting of a mixture of worship styles and traditions, with contributions from a range of denominations and organisations. More than 30

denominations and Christian charities have joined together to make Climate Sunday the biggest ecumenical initiative ahead of COP26.

**Urgent alerts!** First, we need churches to ensure that they have registered their services, and that we have the correct data to maximise the impact of their participation, for example in presenting the number of participating churches to the government. So, please register or re-register your service if the following apply a) Your church has held a service since January 2021 but you are not 100% sure it was registered on the website, with date, church name, etc. b) Your church held its service before February 2021. (Due to a technical problem in the early stages of the campaign, we have incomplete data on churches that registered a service before February 2021). We would far rather you registered twice (and we can then delete any duplicates) than not at all.

Second, if your church hasn't yet held its own Climate Sunday, it is still worth doing it anytime before COP, where the final numbers will be presented to the government. But don't forget to register your service and the commitments your own church makes on the Climate Sunday website, [here](#), where you will also find great resources to inspire and help you.

- **The Great Big Green Week** (18 - 26 September). This will be an opportunity to raise the profile of climate change and how it is affecting nature and people, and the places we love, right here in the UK. A Rocha UK is joining with other members of The Climate Coalition and inviting our supporters to host events and activities locally. Alternatively, discover and support events taking place near you [here](#).

**Wild Christian ‘Campaign Friday’ event** (24 September). We're excited to bring our own contribution to The Great Big Green week, our first Wild Christian ‘Campaign Friday’ where we'll discuss campaigning, highlight some relevant nature and climate campaigns, and take online action together. Visit Eventbrite for more details and register [here](#).

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## A Rocha UK creating partnerships to boost nature in communities

'Cooperation' is one of our five core commitments of the international A Rocha family and we work collaboratively with other organisations and within coalitions to achieve the best collective impact from our resources. A Rocha UK has recently been involved in two significant initiatives, *Churches Count on Nature* and *Seeds of Hope*, to help inform and support action by Christians in the UK, as well as in the UK's Overseas Territories.

[Read more](#)



## Individuals motivating churches to commit to care for creation

Individual Christians and congregation members play a crucial role in engaging their churches and are having an ever greater impact. For example it is often an individual member of the congregation, or small group who 'get' the environment, who are behind a church inviting an outside speaker to help them explore caring for creation. A Rocha UK's speaker programme owes its existence to our growing team of volunteer speakers, who have been able to fulfill over 220 speaking engagements so far this year - very close to pre-covid demand. You can request an A Rocha UK speaker at your own event or church service [here](#). (Please note we need at least two months' notice.)

Eco Church is telling a similar story. For all the national profile it is now getting, we know that it is ultimately driven by committed individuals in their local churches. This year has seen the highest volume of Eco Church award applications since the scheme's launch in 2016. Every application we receive represents a church community taking the call to care for creation seriously.

A Rocha UK's small staff team is deeply grateful to the growing number of energetic and committed individuals working within their churches to help everyone understand the Christian calling to care for creation. To support and inspire you along the way, we now have a

number of videos available on our YouTube channel to help your church engage with the Christian mission to care for God's earth, and A Rocha UK's own practical work. Videos include: [The State of Nature](#); [Introductions to A Rocha UK; support for Eco Churches](#) and a short talk on '[Why should Christians care for the environment?](#)'. Subscribe to our YouTube channel [here](#) to receive a notification as soon as new videos become available.

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**Eco Tip - Remember wildlife this September.** Cooler temperatures, darker evenings, falling leaves, Autumn is fast approaching! There are a number of things that we can do to provide food and shelter for wildlife, now and in preparation for next year.

- Resist the temptation to clear up your garden; allow vegetation to die back naturally and leave seedheads, especially on plants such as teasels, thistles and sunflowers. This provides food and shelter for birds through the coldest months.
- Don't totally cut back your perennial plants but trim them instead and leave plenty of foliage at or near ground level for insects and birds. Piling up leaves and other vegetation to create an open compost heap could provide the perfect hibernation spot too.
- Clean all your bird feeders to avoid the spread of disease to winter migrants and put up a nest box well in advance of breeding season. A nest box could also prove a cosy spot for small birds to spend the night on particularly cold winter evenings ahead.
- For early spring 2022 flowers, plant Alliums, daffodils, tulips, grape hyacinth, crocus, snakes head fritillary, and bluebells this Autumn. Other wildflowers seeds which can all be sown now include: cowslip, chamomile, common knapweed, betony or meadow buttercup. Alternatively, you can buy a wildflower mix which includes all of these.