

Can you lend an ear?

The Quantock Hills AONB is undertaking a scheme to monitor on going population trends of singing male Nightjars within the Quantock Hills and need volunteers to assist with surveying.

Nightjars can be found on a range of habitats including heathlands, moorlands, open woodland clearings and in recently felled conifer plantations. They are a migrant breeder overwintering in areas of Africa, visiting us to breed in our warmer summer months. Nightjars are more often heard because of their distinctive 'churring' call, feeding at the start and end of the day, and resting on the ground in-between.

The survey aims to help pinpoint where these birds might be, finding out more about the habitats they use and what management work can be undertaken for their benefit. There is also a partner scheme being undertaken in the Blackdown Hills AONB.

We are looking to recruit Nightjar Survey Volunteers to work alongside staff. Survey volunteers will need to attend a survey training session on Saturday 8th June at Fyne Court, Broomfield. The session will involve running through the theory of the surveys and identification of the Nightjar then heading out to apply the learnt knowledge. It will run from 7pm -10pm. The surveys will take place on the 13th June (dusk) and 6th July (dawn) and individuals should ideally be available for both. Survey sites will be allocated to volunteers at the survey training event.

To register your interest please contact the Quantock Hills AONB Service on either 01823 451884 or email QuantockHills@somerset.gov.uk.