

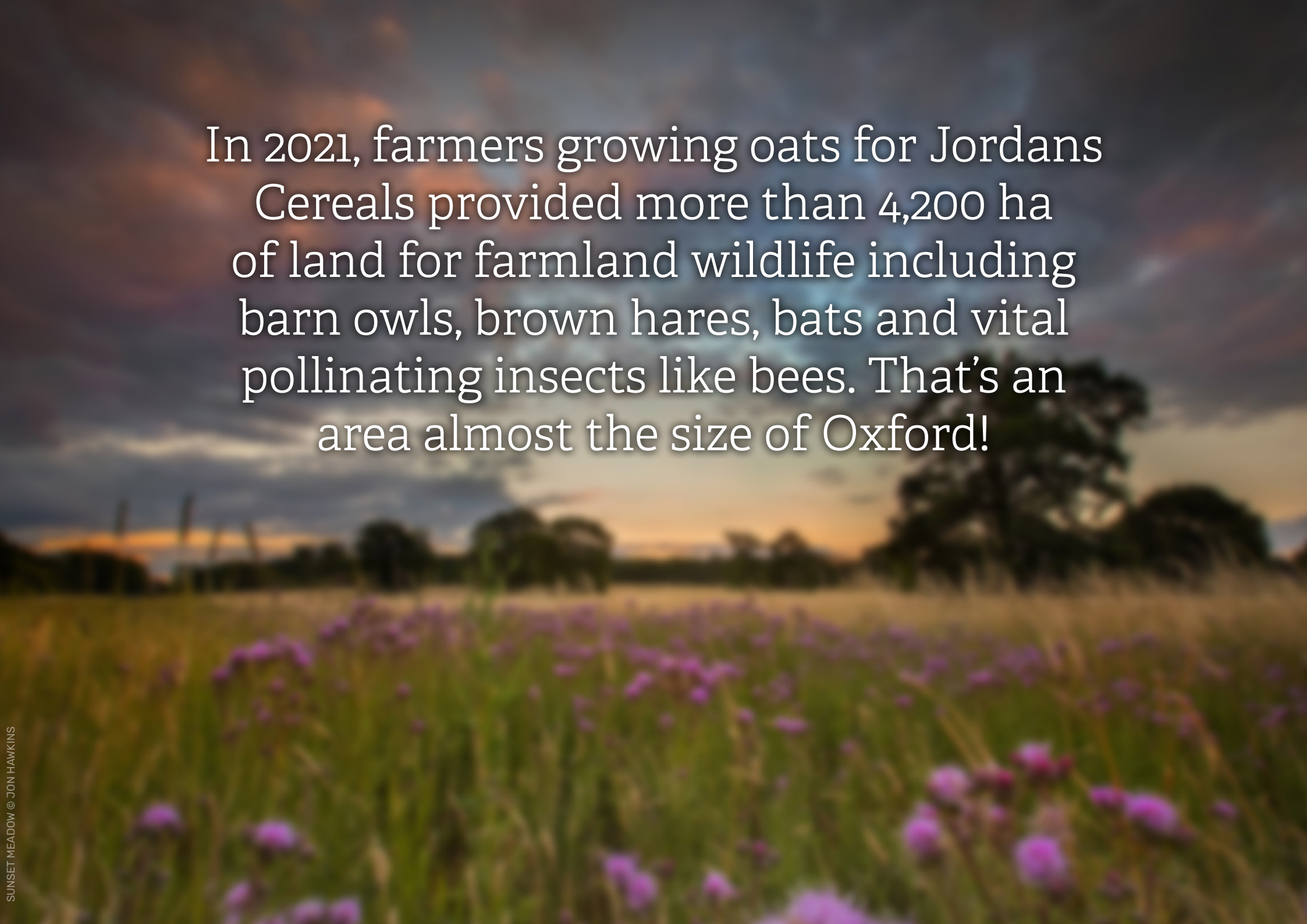


# Jordans Farm Partnership

THE WILDLIFE TRUSTS'  
IMPACT REPORT 2020-2021





A photograph of a field of purple flowers in the foreground, with a sunset sky in the background. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with some clouds. The field is filled with tall green grass and numerous purple flowers. In the distance, there are silhouettes of trees and a fence line.

In 2021, farmers growing oats for Jordans Cereals provided more than 4,200 ha of land for farmland wildlife including barn owls, brown hares, bats and vital pollinating insects like bees. That's an area almost the size of Oxford!





*“Everything works better when it’s connected”*

Sir David Attenborough

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH © TOM MARSHALL

# Connected and Protected

**W**e are living in a time of real challenge, facing intertwined nature, climate and health emergencies with devastating, global impacts. But by restoring nature, we can tackle the climate and nature crises and improve human health too.

The Wildlife Trusts are calling for 30% of the UK’s land and seas to be connected and protected for nature’s recovery by 2030. Making more space for nature to become abundant once again will give our struggling wildlife chance to recover and allow wild places to store carbon, helping to tackle the climate crisis.

We know that protected sites alone are not enough – they need to be expanded, more need to be created, and they need to be joined up by nature-friendly countryside. With agriculture covering more than 70% of the UK’s land, farmers can play a key role in helping to create this thriving natural world – connecting areas of land that allow animals, plants, seeds, nutrients and water to move from place to place.

The Jordans Farm Partnership is an exemplar of how farmland can be managed for both food production and wildlife. The farms growing oats for Jordans contribute to The Wildlife Trusts’ bold vision of achieving 30% of the UK’s land to be connected for nature’s recovery by 2030.





# Expert Advice

Each of the 35 farms that grows oats for Jordans is different; whether in size, what it produces or the location and landscape in which it is situated.

Because of this, a tailor-made plan is required for each individual Jordans Farm Partnership (JFP) farm, to enable them to farm in a wildlife-friendly way. These comprehensive plans are produced by an expert farm advisor from the farm's local Wildlife Trust.

Each plan will:

- identify habitats and species already present; and
- set out actions to enable the grower to do more to support wildlife.

Advisors from 15 different Wildlife Trusts work closely with the 35 Jordans farmers throughout the UK. Collectively, 15,000 hectares of countryside are farmed in the JFP, and every single farmer is passionate about wildlife. They are committed to protecting and managing an area equal to at least 10% of their farmed land for wildlife – a core principle of the Jordans Farm Partnership.

When developing the plans, farm advisors use their conservation knowledge and expertise of wildlife in each farm's local area. This ensures that every plan is meaningful and relevant to the farm and the wider landscape. Each plan sets out how the farm should be managed to provide food and habitat for a range of wildlife including farmland birds, bats, bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects. Growers can achieve this by creating and restoring features such as ponds, managing hedgerows and providing field margins. Not only do the plans support nature on the farm, they also help connect habitats and create networks for wildlife to move more easily throughout the wider landscape.



● ACTIONS ON THE GROUND

# Habitat management

In 2020-21, JFP farmers managed more than 4,200 hectares of wildlife-friendly habitats to support nature's recovery on their farms. These are just some of the wild places they have created or maintained.

*"It's important to let nature have space on the farm"*  
Frank Sapsed, JFP farmer, Hertfordshire

**120**  
ponds

**897** ha  
of woodland

**476** ha  
of field margins

**722** km  
of hedgerows

**138** km  
of waterways





## ● ACTIONS ON THE GROUND

# Conservation focus species

Each JFP farm plan identifies at least four focus species (or groups of species) for their wildlife-friendly farming measures. These are examples of some of the wildlife that they have been helping.



### Bees & pollinating insects

- Maintaining flowering hedgerows, which provide pollen and nectar
- Establishing wildflower-rich field margins, which are a good food source

*“Well managed hedgerows are a network and a refuge for wildlife”*

Matt Dodds, JFP farm advisor



### Grey partridges

- Growing bird seed plots for adults to feed
- Maintaining wildflower margins for insects, on which chicks feed

### Bats

- Keeping mature trees, which provide important roost sites
- Maintaining hedgerows, which provide routes to fly and forage for food



### Lapwings

- Keeping uncropped areas in fields for nesting
- Creating ‘scrapes’: wet muddy areas, good for food



### Brown hares

- Creating rough grassland, which provides shelter for baby leverets
- Keeping overwinter stubble, which allows for good foraging



### Barn owls

- Installing nesting boxes on the farm
- Maintaining grass margins, which are good for hunting



### Yellowhammers

- Managing hedgerows, which provide nest sites
- Keeping tall hedgerows and trees, which provide song posts







# Thriving relationships

Once a farm plan is complete the advisor remains on hand to provide support to the grower as they implement the plan, and improve their farm for nature. They also visit the farm annually to see how the grower is progressing with their action plan.

Matt Dodds is the farm advisor from Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust. *“This area is a hotbed of oat growing in the UK”* laughs Matt *“and I have ten JFP farms on my patch. Having multiple farms to support is a great opportunity for me to write plans that will make a significant contribution to conservation targets across the county and to connect the farms with the wider countryside”*.

Visiting each farm, catching up with the growers and developing each individual relationship is *“vital to understand what is working well and to discuss solutions for any unexpected challenges”*. As well as strengthening the relationship between him and each grower, Matt says *“One of the best bits of these annual visits is the chance to hear how wildlife is responding to the improvements put in place on the farm!”*.

*“The farmer was delighted to receive positive feedback on habitat creation from the local community”*

John Lamb, JFP Assurance Reviewer




## ● THRIVING RELATIONSHIPS

# Independent assurance

To ensure that the Jordans oat growers are carrying out the conservation actions set out in their farm plan and that they are meeting the JFP wildlife standard, farms are independently assessed by ecological consultants.

The third round of independent assessments was undertaken in 2020–21 when a random sample of six farms was assessed. All were found to be managing an area for wildlife equal to at least 10% of their farmed land, with most achieving far beyond that. Furthermore, half of this area provides year-round food and habitat for birds and pollinators in line with the standard.

The Jordans Farm Partnership farmers are passionate about wildlife on their farm; such as barn owl, brown hare, grey partridge and bees and other pollinators. At the assurance visits, the assessors were impressed by the enthusiasm and breadth of knowledge of the farmers, not only about their own farm but wider environmental issues, too.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a black puffer jacket, is looking through black binoculars. She is standing in a forest with tall trees and green foliage. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on her.

*“Four barn owl chicks have fledged successfully this year — they sit in the trees near their nest box, hissing and waiting for their parents to deliver food”*

Frank Sapsed, JFP farmer, Hertfordshire



● STORIES FROM THE FARM



# Frank Sapsed

Codicote Bottom, Hertfordshire

HAMISH STEWART © MATTHEW ROBERTS



# A passion for wildlife

Frank farms his family farm in Hertfordshire, as did his father and grandfather before him. He has been growing oats for Jordans Cereals for over 25 years and has been a part of JFP since it started back in 2015.

As with all the farmers that grow oats for Jordans Cereals, Frank has a passion for wildlife – in particular, for wildflowers and all they offer for bees and other pollinators on his farm.

In this time of climate and ecological emergencies Frank says that *“people are looking at farming more closely. They want to know that farmers are doing their bit to support birds, bees and other farmland wildlife”*. Frank provides field margins – a non-cropped area of wildflowers and grasslands around each field – which he manages with as much care and attention as the crops themselves. His impressive 5ha of wildflower plots, *“some of the best in Hertfordshire”* according to his farm advisor Matt, are brimming with native wildflower species like oxeye daisy, lady’s bedstraw, field scabious, and bird’s-foot trefoil – all of which provide a valuable food source for bees, butterflies and other pollinators. It gives Frank a great sense of pride when he sees users of the public footpaths crossing his farm, stopping in their tracks to take photographs of his impressive wildflower areas in bloom.

>



## ● STORIES FROM THE FARM

It's not just the seeds of plants that he sows in the margins that grow, sometimes new species occur naturally! In one area, pyramidal orchids have suddenly appeared and in the last few years species surveying, undertaken by a PhD student, has revealed rare species of bumblebee feeding within his margins.

But Frank is not alone. Six miles to the north, Barbara, Frank's wife, is also growing oats for Jordans on her family farm. Between them they manage an impressive 40ha of land for wildlife, including hedgerows, wild bird seed plots, waterways and field margins. These important habitats support pollinators, small farmland birds, such as corn bunting and linnet, grey partridge and water vole.

The River Mimram, one of Hertfordshire's finest chalk streams, flows through Frank's farm. As well as supporting a healthy population of water voles, the river acts as a commuter highway for bats – enabling them to move between roost sites and feeding areas. Frank's combination of extensive wildflower margins, woodlands, hedgerows, and the river provides a perfect habitat for many species of bat including soprano pipistrelles and brown long-eared bats. The linear habitats provide connectivity to other areas beyond Frank's farm, helping wildlife to move between and access different areas of the landscape.





● STORIES FROM THE FARM

# Fergus Lyon

Easthall Farm, Hertfordshire





## ● STORIES FROM THE FARM

# Providing Habitat

Through his careful management, Fergus's farm has been committed to wildlife for many years, and being a part of JFP has allowed him to do even more.

*"My family have been farming for a long time" Fergus recalls, "I want to make sure that I leave the land as I found it, or ideally, in an even better state". Farming for wildlife is incredibly important to Fergus and he knows things don't always happen overnight – so much so, he has developed a 200-year strategy for the farm!*

*"I know that thinking about things like leaving standing and fallen deadwood, trees and branches that have come to the end of their life that are left in situ, is vitally important for providing habitat for a variety species, in particular bats". Fergus's farm advisor from the Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust has worked with the Herts and Middlesex Bat Group looking at barbastelle bats, one of the rarest bat species in the UK. Fergus was delighted that "through surveying on my land, they found one of the largest barbastelle maternity roost populations in the whole country!" Up to 12 different roost sites have so far been discovered on the farm, along with the bats' foraging areas.*

>





## ● STORIES FROM THE FARM



Through his JFP farm plan, Fergus is now working to encourage greater insect numbers on his farm in order to support the bats. He is creating and restoring habitats, including new wildflower areas, grasslands and ponds which all benefit insects and provide enhanced foraging opportunities for bats. Fergus knows that connectivity between the habitats is also important, so that foraging and commuting routes are maintained.

His farm is 4 miles north of Frank's and the connectivity on their farmland provides the opportunity for wildlife to move through the environment to find food and shelter, establish territories and reproduce.

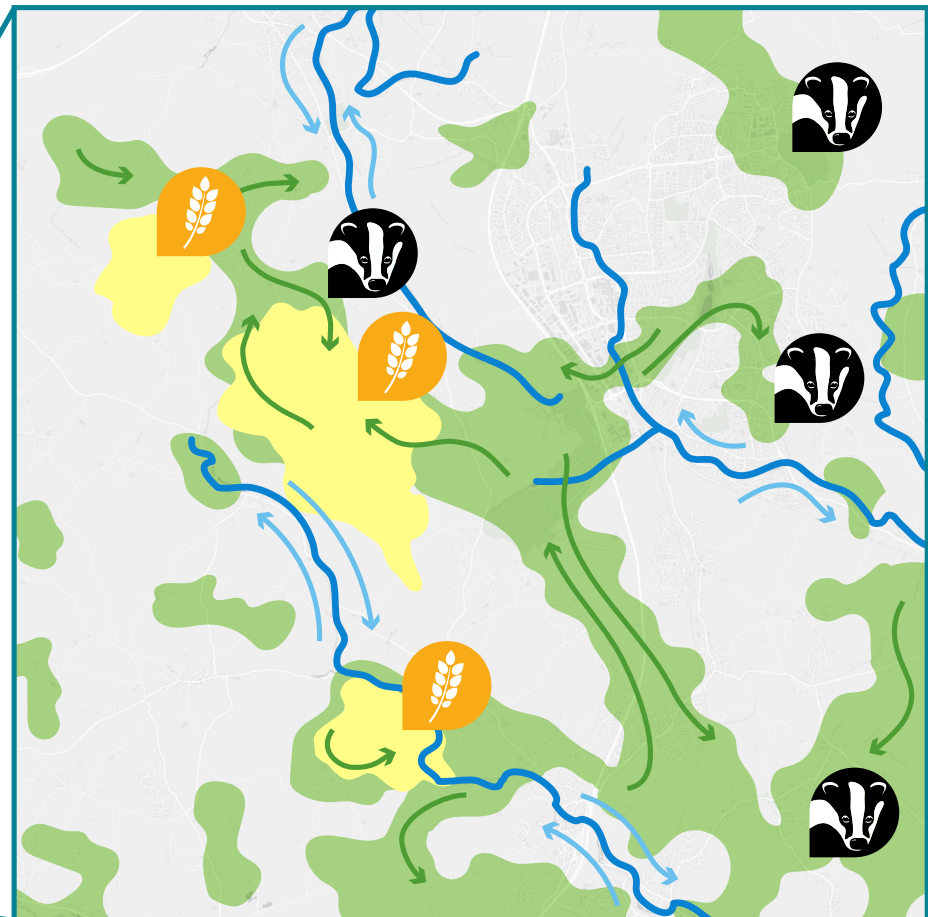
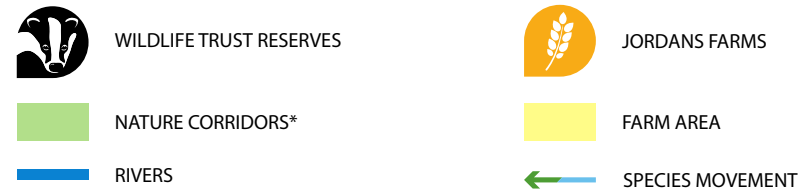
Fergus believes that JFP farms are key wildlife areas and along with Wildlife Trust nature reserves, other landowners can connect to these areas giving wildlife the opportunity to move throughout the landscape.



## CONNECTED HABITATS

# Connecting wild spaces in Hertfordshire

Thanks to work of Jordans oat growers, like Frank and Fergus in Hertfordshire, wildlife-rich habitats are expanding and connecting. This enables wildlife to move more easily to establish territories and find food, shelter and mates.



\*Natural England Network Enhancement Zones



# Connecting with others

30 Days Wild!

During 2020-2021, we've reached almost 900,000 people with news of the great work the Jordans Farm Partnership (JFP) is doing for wildlife.

## Harvest Festival Live!



Jordans Cereals teamed up with pop star JB Gill and Eco-Schools to host the first ever virtual Harvest Festival, which was streamed live on YouTube on 9th October 2020 and which has now received over 1,600 views.

With schools up and down the country unable to gather to mark this special time of year due to coronavirus restrictions, Jordans was determined to find a way to say thank you to the farming communities that worked so hard to feed us during the pandemic. As well as featuring one of the farmers growing oats for Jordans Cereals, The Wildlife Trusts were delighted to be able to provide our principal farm advisor to answer questions from the children.

## Wild LIVE



We were delighted that Stephen Honeywood, one of the fabulous JFP farmers, took part in The Wildlife Trusts' Wild LIVE panel event: 'So, where next for nature and British farming?' The event was broadcast live on The Wildlife Trusts' YouTube channel on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020. Almost 500 people tuned in to see the broadcast live and it has now received over 6,000 views online. [Watch it here!](#)

## Wildlife Trusts Member Comms




We shared the great work of the JFP with our 870,000+ Wildlife Trust supporters, with a feature in our membership magazines and e-newsletters on wildlife-friendly farming. Not only did this help raise awareness of the JFP farmers but also helped to explain why wildlife-friendly farming is so important for nature's recovery.

To celebrate the first day of the UK's biggest nature challenge – The Wildlife Trusts' 30 Days Wild – we brought participants the 'Big Wild Breakfast' in collaboration with Jordans Cereals! We encouraged people to take their breakfast in their garden or local green space and enjoy the fresh air. And whilst there, see what wildlife they could spot. The perfect way to kick off their wild month in June!

We created a special Big Wild Breakfast placemat for 30 Days Wilders to print off and use to mark down the wildlife that they spotted during their mini breakfast bioblitz. 30 Days Wild 2021 was our most successful year yet with over 760,000 people signing up to take part. We were delighted that the placemat featuring Jordans' logo was downloaded over 15,500 times and there were over 800 uses of #BigWildBreakfast on the day.





A man with short brown hair, wearing a light-colored checkered shirt, is leaning over a field of green crops. He is looking down at the plants with a focused expression. The background shows a line of trees and a utility pole under a cloudy sky. A large teal semi-circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

“The Countryside means everything to me. That not only means growing the crops but to enhance the environment that we live in for future generations.”

Stephen Honeywood,  
JFP farmer, Suffolk