



Dates 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

Weird and Wonderful Animal Conservation

Annual report and financial statements

Charity number 1196186



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1. Reference and administrative information

Charity Name: Weird and Wonderful Animal Conservation (WAWA Conservation)

Charity registration number: 1196186

Registered Office and
operational address: WAWA Conservation
165 Ramsgate Road,
Margate.
Kent
CT9 4EY

Trustees

Mr Jack Haines	Chair
Mr Tomas Cain	Treasurer
Ms Kashmir Flint	Secretary
Ms Katie Parker	
Ms Sophie Cain	
Ms V. Darby Moore	



2. Objectives and activities

Weird and Wonderful Animal Conservation (WAWA) exists to support the preservation of biodiversity across the globe for future generations to enjoy by supporting the effective, science-based conservation of unique and important wildlife species.

We at WAWA want to help create a world where the strange and unique species are valued and protected alongside the bright and bold ones.

The Objects of WAWA, as set out in our constitution are:

1. To promote protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment for the benefit of the public by supporting wildlife conservation organisations across the globe to preserve biodiversity in its natural environment by making grants and supporting research; and;
2. To advance the education of the public through the provision of information and opportunities to promote conservation of the natural environment.

WAWA is committed to encouraging as many people as possible to learn about, and support, the conservation of wildlife species that are valuable due to their endangered status, unique genetics, or role in the environment. This is in contrast to a traditional approach that promotes the charisma of wildlife as a function of their size, colouration, and “cuteness”. WAWA promotes the support of evolutionarily distinct and genetically endangered species through an educational/exposure campaign on social media that endorses in-situ organisations and their conservation work, in turn encouraging financial or in-kind provisions where they will have the greatest impact. Our services provide exposure of the conservation issues of relatively unknown species to the general public, garner support for their protection and research, consult on conservation and research methodologies, and provide financial assistance to in-situ organisations working with target species.

When planning our activities for the year, WAWA have considered the Commission’s guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of the conservation of the environment. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to support the protection of the environment as part of our online community through:

- Provision of information about the conservation issues surrounding little known, yet ecologically important species.
- Fundraising for our consultative support of, and provision of grants for, the conservation activities carried out by in-situ organisations around the world
- Sale of merchandise to further fund our support of target species

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the cohesion of our online community and the online infrastructure of WAWA.



3. Achievements and performance

The 2024/5 period remained relatively limited in terms of direct in-situ conservation delivery, largely due to reduced trustee capacity associated with personal and professional commitments. However, this period marked a significant transition in how WAWA approaches its role in supporting conservation action.

Building on discussions initiated in the previous reporting period, WAWA began implementing a new model centred on targeted, small-scale financial support to ongoing conservation projects. This took the form of the development of a small grants programme, designed to provide modest, rapid funding (typically in the range of \$500 to \$1,000) to address specific needs within existing projects. These grants are intended to support discrete components of larger conservation efforts, where relatively small inputs can unlock or accelerate meaningful outcomes.

The programme represents a strategic shift towards more direct engagement with in-situ conservation, allowing WAWA to contribute tangible support while maintaining a manageable level of operational demand given current trustee capacity. It also serves as a mechanism for strengthening relationships with conservation practitioners, providing an entry point for deeper collaboration over time.

In parallel, WAWA expanded its involvement beyond purely financial support. In several cases, engagement with organisations extended into advisory roles, particularly where projects would benefit from additional technical input rather than, or alongside, funding. This included providing guidance on project design, methodology, and overall strategic direction. These contributions were delivered on a pro bono basis, reflecting WAWA's commitment to supporting effective, science-based conservation beyond financial mechanisms alone.

3.1 In-situ conservation support

The primary development in WAWA's in-situ conservation support during the 2024/5 reporting period was the launch and initial implementation of its small grant programme. This initiative was designed to address a persistent gap in conservation funding, where high-quality projects targeting evolutionarily distinct and globally endangered (EDGE) species often lack access to relatively small amounts of funding required to initiate or complete key components of their work.

The programme focuses on providing targeted, supplementary grants, typically in the range of \$500 to \$1,000, to support discrete, high-impact elements within larger conservation projects. The intention is not to fund entire projects, but to enable specific actions that may otherwise be delayed or unachievable due to limited resources. This approach allows WAWA to maximise impact while maintaining a realistic operational scope.

In its first cycle, the programme received a total of 15 applications from a diverse range of organisations and researchers working across multiple taxa and geographic regions. These included projects focused on species conservation, habitat restoration, applied research, and population monitoring. The quality and breadth of applications received exceeded expectations and demonstrated strong alignment with WAWA's focus on underrepresented and non-charismatic species.



Following review, two projects were initially selected for funding based on their scientific merit, clarity of design, and alignment with WAWA's objectives. These were a study investigating the impact of agricultural deep ploughing on the survival of the common hamster, and a conservation genetics project focused on the Bengal florican. Both projects formed part of larger, well-developed conservation programmes and required relatively modest additional funding to deliver key components of their work. This closely matched the intended purpose of the grant scheme.

Due to the overall strength of the applicant pool, an additional project was subsequently supported. This focused on the protection of nests of the Fitzroy River turtle, addressing a critical life-stage bottleneck in the species' survival. The decision to expand support beyond the initial allocation reflected both the high standard of applications and WAWA's commitment to supporting impactful, well-justified conservation actions where possible.

The three projects supported through this funding round are summarised below:

The common hamster agricultural impact study (Hungary)

This project focuses on the conservation of the common hamster, a critically endangered species across much of its European range. The primary threat addressed is the widespread use of deep ploughing in agricultural landscapes, which may directly cause mortality or displacement, though this has not been well quantified. The project aims to assess survival rates and behavioural responses of hamsters in ploughed versus unploughed areas using a combination of burrow density monitoring and capture-mark-recapture methods, including the use of microchips and radio transmitters.

The expected outputs include robust data on survival and movement patterns, which will directly inform agricultural management practices and mitigation strategies, such as translocation or adjustments to ploughing regimes. The work is being carried out by an experienced research team in Hungary, operating within a broader national conservation framework where the species remains locally abundant but under increasing pressure.

The Bengal florican conservation genetics project (South Asia)

This project targets the Bengal florican, one of the world's most threatened bustards, with fragmented populations across South and Southeast Asia. The key issue addressed is the lack of genetic data needed to guide effective conservation management, particularly in small and isolated populations.

The project aims to conduct genetic analyses to better understand population structure, genetic diversity, and connectivity. These insights are critical for informing conservation planning, including potential translocations, habitat management, and long-term recovery strategies. Outputs will include a genetic dataset and associated analysis that can be used by conservation practitioners and policymakers to guide evidence-based decision making. The work is being delivered by a highly experienced team working within an established conservation programme for the species.

The Fitzroy River turtle nest protection project (Australia)

This project supports conservation action for the Fitzroy River turtle, a freshwater turtle endemic to Queensland, Australia. The species faces significant threats at the egg and hatchling stage, particularly from predation and environmental pressures affecting nest success.



The project focuses on the protection of nests during the breeding season, aiming to increase hatchling survival through targeted in-situ management. This includes identifying and monitoring nesting sites, implementing protective measures, and improving understanding of nesting success rates. The primary outcome is an increase in recruitment through improved hatchling survival, alongside data that can inform longer-term conservation strategies. The work is led by a dedicated local team with strong field experience and an established track record in freshwater turtle conservation.

Results of these grants will be published as part of the next annual report, as the start of these projects fell right at the end of the reporting period.

3.2 Research and conservation consultation

Alongside the development of the small grant programme, WAWA expanded its role in providing direct conservation and research consultation. This work was delivered entirely remotely, primarily through online meetings, and focused on supporting practitioners and organisations to strengthen the design, implementation, and strategic direction of their projects.

The aim of this support was to improve the quality and effectiveness of conservation science being carried out by partner organisations, particularly where access to technical guidance or external expertise may be limited. This included advising on research design, sampling methodologies, project structuring, and identifying realistic pathways for scaling work through future funding applications.

Engagements during this period included collaboration with seabird researchers in Indonesia working on the Christmas Island frigatebird. Discussions focused on improving population monitoring approaches, with particular attention given to survey design, selection of field sites, and sampling methodology. The objective was to strengthen the reliability and consistency of population estimates, thereby increasing the value of the data for conservation planning and improving the project's competitiveness for future funding opportunities.

WAWA also provided support to a Madagascar-based organisation working within the Mahavavy-Kinkony Complex Protected Area in western Madagascar, focusing on the conservation of the Madagascar sacred ibis. The project aimed to address ongoing population declines driven by direct exploitation, habitat degradation, and human pressure, while also establishing a stronger scientific and community-based foundation for long-term conservation. Support centred on helping refine the structure of a proposed research and conservation programme, including approaches to baseline population monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and the integration of community-led education and outreach. Particular emphasis was placed on the practical realities of implementing conservation within a large, multi-use landscape, including how to effectively work with local communities, authorities, and site managers to enable access, build trust, and ensure project viability. Guidance also extended to positioning the project within a broader funding landscape, with the aim of strengthening future grant applications and supporting the development of a scalable, evidence-based conservation initiative.

These consultations reflect WAWA's broader objective of acting not only as a funding body, but also as a source of practical expertise. By supporting organisations at early or developing stages, WAWA aims to improve the overall standard and impact of conservation projects, while building relationships that may lead to deeper collaboration in future.



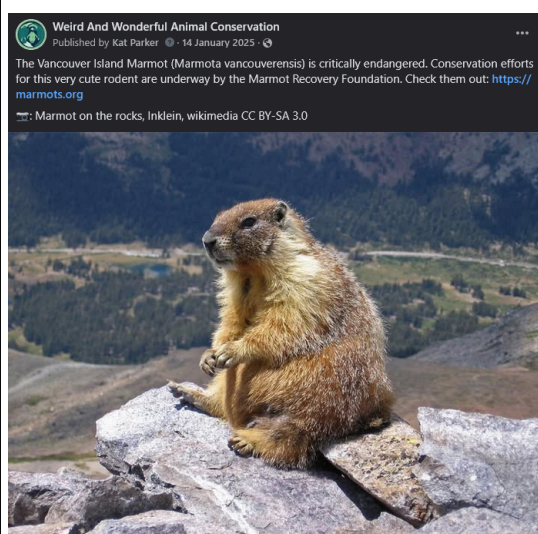
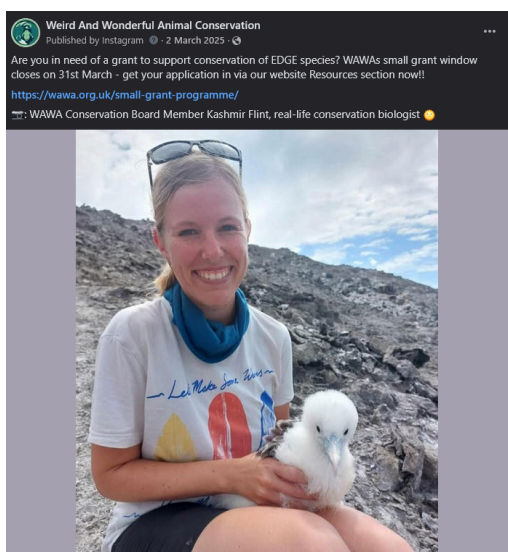
3.3 Public education

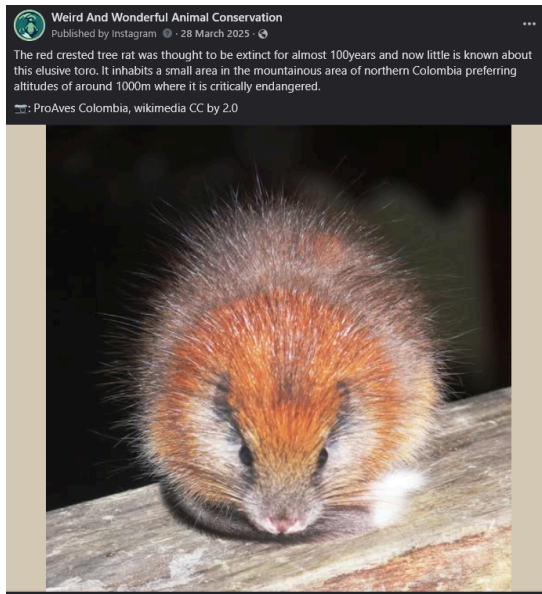
During the 2024/5 reporting period, WAWA's public education and outreach activities were more limited than in previous years, reflecting reduced trustee capacity and a strategic shift towards developing new operational approaches, particularly the small grant programme and consultation work.

Despite this, WAWA maintained a baseline level of engagement through the continued production of online content, including website articles and social media posts. Several written articles were published on the WAWA website, focusing on underrepresented and evolutionarily distinct species, including the numbat, the aye-aye, and the Brazilian guitarfish. These articles aimed to raise awareness of lesser-known species and highlight the conservation challenges they face, in line with WAWA's core objective of addressing taxonomic and funding biases in conservation.

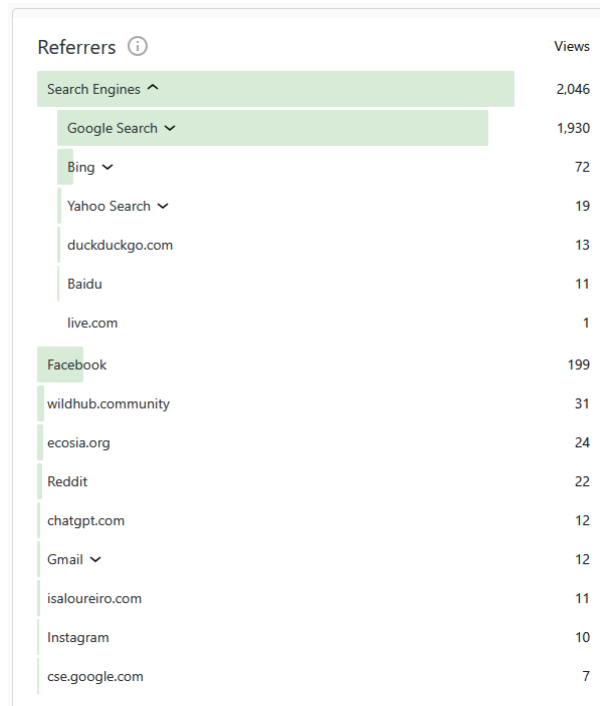
Social media activity was also maintained at a lower intensity, with posts highlighting a range of threatened or unusual species, including the red crested tree rat, Vancouver Island marmot, and hellbender. Engagement levels varied, but notably, a post promoting the launch of WAWA's small grant programme achieved substantially higher reach than other content during the year, indicating strong interest in practical conservation support opportunities.

Overall, while output was reduced compared to previous years, WAWA continued to deliver targeted educational content aligned with its mission. This period also provided an opportunity to reassess the organisation's approach to outreach, with future efforts expected to integrate more closely with its developing role in funding and supporting active conservation projects.



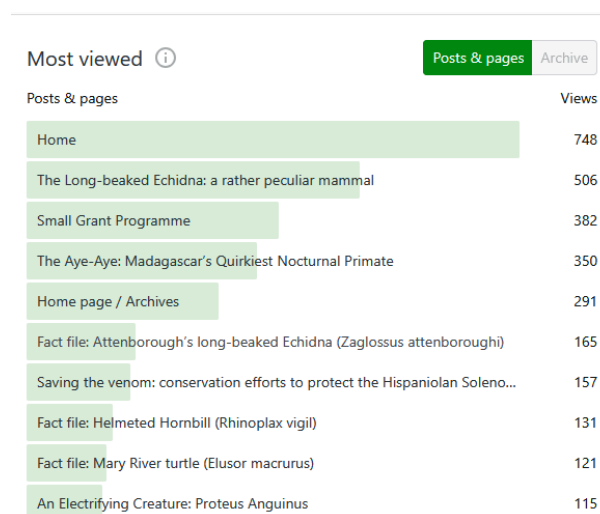


Website traffic increased steadily across the year with a total of around 5,000 page views. The 3.3k unique visitors was greater than last year's 2,300 unique visitors. The most clicks came from the following sources suggesting Google is by far the greatest driver of traffic, and that we should be increasing blog writing accordingly:



Notably, interactions from Reddit cratered this year as we lost access to the account and while trying to recover it focussed solely on instagram and facebook.

The Echidna and Aye-aye posts remain our most frequently visited pages, again suggesting that high quality, interesting blog articles are the strongest source of engagement.





4. Financial review

No fundraising campaigns were carried out this year, relying on passive income streams from donations and sales of merchandise throughout the year, totalling £180, with £1,478.08 carried over, leaving our total assets at £1,658.08. Expenditure was minimal, at £36 charged from Printful merchandising for their on-demand printing services.

All small grant projects described above were awarded after the end of this reporting period and thus will be reported with the next annual report.

During the reporting period, WAWA continued to actively reduce operational costs in line with its aim to maximise the proportion of funds directed towards conservation activities. A key development was the transition of the organisation's website hosting to Krystal Hosting, which provides free services to registered charities. This change is expected to eliminate ongoing website hosting costs entirely. In addition, WAWA established a dedicated charity bank account with The Co-operative Bank, improving financial transparency and management. The organisation also moved away from paid services within the Google ecosystem, including hosted email accounts, transitioning instead to free email services. This change has not impacted day-to-day operations or communication but has removed a recurring monthly expense. These adjustments reflect a deliberate strategy to minimise overheads, which is considered appropriate given current income levels and supports WAWA's commitment to operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.

WAWA currently holds no other assets or liabilities.

5. Structure, governance and management

WAWA conservation acts as a charitable incorporated organisation, using the foundation structure, and the Weird and Wonderful Animal Conservation constitution, as last amended on 20/04/2021, as its governing document.

As per the constitution, the members of this CIO shall be its charity trustees for the time being. The only persons eligible to be members of the CIO are its charity trustees. Membership of the CIO cannot be transferred to anyone else.

WAWA are always open to new trustees joining the team, while the number of currently serving trustees is under 12, the maximum allowed. While unsolicited formal written applications will be reviewed, recruitment is usually carried out through an invitation to apply, as delivered by any serving trustee. Applications are reviewed by all current trustees and will be discussed in a trustees meeting. Where preliminary support is provided by at least one trustee, voting will take place formally at the next feasible general meeting of members, where a majority in favour is required for the applicant to be accepted as a new trustee.

Currently WAWA is without committee groups due to its small size. All members are invited to have input on all issues. Meetings are held as required and in response to developing situations, where non-consensus decisions are decided by a majority vote.

Within this period, there was a change in the board, with Ms Megan Haines stepping down in her role of Trustee and Secretary, to move on to new ventures, with Ms Kashmir Flint stepping up to role of Secretary.



6. Exemptions from disclosure

None noted



7. Financial statements

04/2024	03/2025					
Recommended categories by activity		Guidance note	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Endowment funds	Total funds
			£	£	£	£
Income (Note 3)			F01	F02	F03	F04
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	S01		£10.00	£0.00	£0.00	£10.00
Charitable activities	S02		£170.00	£0.00	£0.00	£170.00
Other trading Activities	S03		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Investments	S04		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Separate material item of income	S05		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Other trading Activities	S06		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total	S07		£180.00			£180.00
Expenditure (Notes 6)						
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	S08		£36.00	£0.00	£0.00	£36.00
Charitable activities	S09		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Separate material expense item	S10		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Other	S11		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total	S12		£36.00	£0.00	£0.00	£36.00