

Time to show your support with the new GWCT 500 Club

Friday 3 July, 2020

The Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) has launched an exclusive new club for the next 500 people who join as members. In a proactive response to the financial pressures of the pandemic, the charity is aiming to recognise those who come forward to support them "in their hour of need".

Andrew Gilruth, GWCT director of marketing, membership and communications, said, "We have set up a dedicated club to welcome the next 500 people who join us as members – in our hour of need. None of us know what the next few months will bring, but if you would like to support our unique programme of research, now is the time to join."

The GWCT, like many charitable organisations, is expecting a significant financial shortfall this year. Mr Gilruth continued: "GWCT scientists have been humbled by the support we have received since we announced that we expect to lose around £1million, or 15% of this year's projected income. We wanted to recognise the commitment of people who are deciding to support our work by becoming members at this difficult time for all of us."

500 Club members will receive a specially commissioned 500 Club badge and an invitation to welcome drinks in 2021 to meet existing members (date to be announced). The 500 Club is open to those deciding to support the GWCT through one of their main membership types*, who make a single annual payment and who are not already a member (or were one in the last 12 months).

A dedicated webpage has been created for the initiative, allowing people to sign up or find out more at www.gwct.org.uk/500club.

Membership supports groundbreaking research throughout the British countryside, not just gamebirds. Its fisheries team is amongst the best in Europe, leading international research into trout and salmon declines, while its demonstration farms in Leicestershire and Aberdeenshire inform both government policy and the hundreds of visitors who pass through their gates each year. The Trust also challenges misinformation in the press, advises land managers on best practice and showcases the conservation success stories possible on private land.

Mr Gilruth concluded, "We are so grateful to all our supporters who have stuck by us, but one anonymous donation of £1 has stood out for us. The envelope was addressed to the Game Conservancy Council, so was presumably from a long-term supporter, and the pound coin had been carefully wrapped. We may never be able to say thank you for this donation, but for us it symbolises just how highly some people feel about the GWCT's long history of evidence-based conservation."

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