

SUMMER 2024

NEWS!  
INTERVIEWS!  
UPDATES!



AN INTERVIEW WITH

*Chris Packham*

MY STORY...

Why Wendy Turner-Webster supports our 'Protect Animals. Protect People' campaign.





# WELCOME!



A warm welcome to our first-ever edition of 'Watch' magazine!

I recommend settling down with a cup of your favourite brew to enjoy a good read!

Once a year, we hope to publish this magazine filled with great interviews from our charity patrons and highlights from our animal welfare campaigning work.

Our campaigns are so varied, but we try to make a real difference for animals, with your support at the centre of all we do.

With thanks and best wishes,

*Sarah*

CEO, Naturewatch Foundation

*COVER IMAGE: Sarah with one of our patrons, Chris Packham, at a Restore Nature Now rally in London – see the back cover for photos from this year's event!*

## WILDLIFE CAMPAIGN SCOOPS AWARD!

This July, we were thrilled to receive an award for our 'police control room wildlife crime training package' at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Charity Awards in London!

This innovative animated package helps train police control room operators on handling calls from the public reporting

wildlife crime, including logging calls and dispatching the right police officer. So far, over 5,500 staff have received the training.

**Thank you for everything you do so we can continue working together to make the world a kinder place for animals.**



Image: Erroll Jones

## MEET THE TEAM!

Thanks for keeping in touch – we thought you might like to put faces to the names!



L-R: Wenna (Marketing Asst); Sarah (CEO); Jim (CM: wildlife crime, maternity cover); Nancy (Admin Asst); Katie (Website and Marketing Manager); Tash (Campaigns Co-ordinator); Kate (CM: wildlife crime); Donna (Admin Officer); Claire (Communications Coordinator); Natalie H (CM: companion animal breeding and animal experiments). Inset: Mark (CM: Protect animals. Protect people.); Natalie S (Campaigns Coordinator: animal welfare in Eastern Europe)

*CM = Campaign Manager*

*(Due to the covert nature of their work, our animal crime investigators are not included.)*

## DID YOU KNOW?

**We have six campaigns!** They're all united by our passion to end animal cruelty and improve the lives of all animals, in the UK, Eastern Europe and around the world.

(We colour-code our campaigns so you can easily find the content you're most interested in!)

Animal Experiments and the Compassionate Shopping Guide

Animal Welfare in Eastern Europe

Companion Animal Breeding, including Puppy Farming

Protect Animals. Protect People.

Wildlife Crime

World Animal Day

General

**We also operate a telephone and online hotline for reporting illegal pet breeding and wildlife crime!**



# AN INTERVIEW WITH CHRIS PACKHAM

TV presenter, naturalist, conservationist, filmmaker, photographer, campaigner... we caught up with our busy patron and asked him a few random questions!

**You've got quite a long list of roles! If you hadn't followed this career path, what else would you have liked to be?**

"As a child, I wanted to be an astronaut. Quite clearly, I grew up in the 1960s. The Apollo programme was running, and I saw Neil Armstrong step onto the moon.

I couldn't think of anything more exciting – but I recognised that I was neither going to be American, be a test pilot, and therefore be an astronaut.

But my other great passion was art, and I probably should have been an artist, because I'm now a frustrated artist. At the moment, I'm working on a series of papercuts and some paintings entirely using black paint. Yeah, and some sculptures of birds and reptiles. Brutalist style."

**The Really Wild Show ran for 20 years on CBBC and won several awards. What are your thoughts on bringing it back for the children of today?**

"Obviously, Steve Backshall does *Deadly*, but I do think that we need better science TV programmes for kids. Not just natural history, but across the whole board. It seems to have slipped off the agenda, which is a real shame, because they were valuable educational supports.

I do meet people who watched *The Really Wild Show* and say, 'I got into wildlife. I studied zoology. I'm now a conservationist'. So it clearly sowed the seeds of an interest in natural history and, indeed, a career. And people who are making a difference on the front



line of conservation. So, obviously, I'd like to see more of that. Unfortunately, we sold out to cartoons."

**You waited decades to see a live pangolin. Which other animal are you most keen to see in the wild?**

"Well, the chances are diminishing because I no longer travel at all for leisure. I don't fly for leisure. There are quite significant constraints when it comes to work. There are things I will and won't do.

I've seen most of the British species that I wanted to see. I'd love to see them again – many of them, of course.

I'd like to see one of those wild cats that have been reintroduced into the Cairngorms Connect rewilding area. That would be super."

**Many of our supporters love dogs and walking. What are your top three British walks?**

"Maiden Castle on a lead – it's a hill fort in the south of England. I've had two extraordinary experiences with my dogs

over the years. Really emotional and it's a phenomenal place. Beautiful. Stark. Ancient.

My dogs like the beach. And, obviously, there are some beaches that you can let your dog off on, only if appropriate – no nesting birds and so forth.

So we take ours to a beach called Shell Beach in Studland on the Purbeck Peninsula but, again, there are only certain parts of the beach at certain times of the year where I would take them and let them off the lead. I'm really a dog-on-lead person, I'm afraid. I think too many people let them off and they disturb wildlife.

Third one... Charlotte, my partner, takes them out on the lead in the New Forest but, again, they're on the lead at all times. It's a national park. 48% of the birds that breed there nest on the ground – they cannot be off the lead as far as I'm concerned."

**We coordinate World Animal Day every year on October 4, which you regularly support. Do you have any words of encouragement to get people involved?**

"Whether we like it or not, we're in a dire situation. Climate breakdown and biodiversity loss are impacting ever more rapidly, ever more forcefully and destructively. Every single day, we've got to stand up and do something about it. We're not blessed with the right collection of decision-makers in the world at the moment, so it really does come down to us as individuals and collectively, as people, as citizens of planet Earth, to make that difference.

So I would urge you to do everything you can to get involved, not just on that day, but to consistently ask yourself, not what wildlife can do for you, but what can you do for wildlife and animals? Basically, to improve their health and welfare is incredibly important."



To find out more about Chris, go to [chrispackham.co.uk](http://chrispackham.co.uk) or visit his Instagram – @chrisgpackham2



# MEET THE PET RESCUE GRANT 2024 WINNERS!

Thanks to your generous support, earlier this year, we launched the Pet Rescue Grant to help rescues look after dogs, cats and rabbits who've been impacted by the cruel pet trade.

After receiving a whopping 72 applications for funding, we shared £12,850 between three fantastic charities that are going above and beyond for pets.

## BLISS CAVALIER RESCUE: £5,000



Cavalier King Charles Spaniels are a popular breed in the UK, but sadly their cute appearance comes at a big cost to their welfare. They often suffer from serious health issues, including painful neurological conditions, caused by irresponsible breeding.

Luckily, Bliss Cavalier Rescue exists to rescue and advocate for them.

Set up in 2018, the charity rehomes Cavaliers across England and Wales, and regularly takes in adults who've been exploited by the pet trade.

**They have been awarded £5,000 to help rehabilitate six ex-breeding Cavaliers.**

Founder, Rebecca Mosley, said, "The Cavaliers arriving in rescue need so much veterinary care and this grant donation will go a long way to helping a number of dogs that have been rescued from dire circumstances.

You are helping us transform lives and we are so incredibly grateful to you all."

## RABBIT RESIDENCE RESCUE: £5,000



We've all heard the phrase "designer dogs", but sadly harmful breeding trends like flat faces are also invading the rabbit world.

Rabbit Residence Rescue in Hertfordshire often find themselves

picking up the pieces when "cute" rabbits come into their care suffering with complex medical issues.

**We awarded £5,000 to this fantastic rescue to help rehabilitate "designer rabbits".**

Trustee, Lea Facey, said, "We are particularly appreciative as these rabbits often require additional costly treatments prior to rehoming to allow them to have good ongoing quality of life."

## AXHOLME CAT RESCUE: £2,850



At the end of last year, Axholme Cat Rescue was faced with a dilemma. They'd raised money they needed to replace part of their cattery roof. But they were also inundated with requests to help cats and kittens in need.

One such request was for a kitten called Bap, who'd arrived at a local vets with a serious prolapse. She was underweight, scared and had been handed over by someone they knew was involved in selling kittens. The seller had decided Bap wasn't worth hundreds of pounds in vet fees, so they left her with the vets to deal with.

Axholme Cat Rescue took her in, and after several weeks of love and rehabilitation, Bap started to flourish. But she was just one of many cats they needed to help, and the roof fund was quickly depleted.

**So we awarded them £2,850 to make the much-needed improvements to their shelter.**

Skye May from the charity said, "We are overwhelmed by the generosity of the wonderful supporters of Naturewatch Foundation for enabling the award of this grant. The funds will now allow us to ensure our rescue facilities are structurally robust, safe and well maintained. On behalf of the volunteers, little kitten Bap, and all the other cats and kittens in our care, now and in the future. THANK YOU!"

On behalf of us, and each of the rescues, **thank you** for helping change the story for dogs, cats and rabbits who've been exploited for profit.

*Look forward to an update about the animals you've helped later this year!*



# SPREADING THE IMPACT OF WORLD ANIMAL DAY!

Like you, we believe that every day of the year should be a day for animals, but having a specific date to recognise them can be helpful to remind us all of how important all animals are.

To ensure that the positive impact of World Animal Day is felt throughout the year, we offer an annual grant of £10,000 to World Animal Day ambassadors to support their animal welfare work.

Last year, the main winners of the grant were **Jakarta Animal Aid Network (JAAN)** in Indonesia. They used it to transform a van into an animal ambulance that is now used to rescue and treat wildlife and stray animals.

The 2024 grant has already closed and we'll be announcing a winner soon, so keep your eyes open!



Above: The JAAN team and ambulance  
Below: A turtle treated in the vehicle



World Animal Day wouldn't be what it is without people like you being involved, so we invite you to think about how you can be a part of it.

Perhaps you'd like to host a coffee morning for October 4, or encourage children you know to get involved in our mug design competition this summer? (Closes 31/08/24.) You'll find lots of ideas on the website (below)!

*Whatever you'd like to do, have fun!*



Find out more:  
[worldanimalday.org.uk](https://worldanimalday.org.uk)

**Don't forget – this year's inspiring World Animal Day theme is 'The world is their home too!'**

## CRUELTY-FREE BEHIND THE SCENES

Earlier this year, we went behind the scenes with Sheabutter Cottage, one of the fantastic cruelty-free brands in our Compassionate Shopping Guide (part of our campaign to end animal testing).

Owner, Akua Wood, told us about how she creates ethical skincare products that are truly cruelty-free.

**Why did you become endorsed in the Compassionate Shopping Guide?**

"I wanted to show support and be accredited as a cruelty-free business."

As a natural skincare brand using plant-based products, I didn't want to see any cruelty being shown to animals.



**Are you involved with any other charities or community projects?**

"Back in 2018, I set up a project in Ghana. The Jilima co-op produces shea butter. It is probably the third co-op I've set-up, and this one I set up on my own, as in self-financing it.

We have about 53 dynamic women making the shea butter and I've decided to let them make it to international standards so that we can sell it to other beauty brands as well. Some of the products they make are branded for

them, so that proceeds from the sales can go back to them to help with income diversification. They are very, very hardworking women. It's always nice to visit them and work with them."

[sheabuttercottage.com](https://sheabuttercottage.com)



### WATCH THE VIDEO!

Watch a behind-the-scenes video at [compassionateshoppingguide.org](https://compassionateshoppingguide.org), where you can also browse our full directory of cruelty-free brands.



# CATCHING UP WITH NATALIE IN UKRAINE

We asked if you had any queries for Natalie, our colleague in Ukraine. *Thank you to everyone who sent her a question!*

**What do you love about Ukraine?**  
(S.C., Gloucestershire)

“Ukraine is actually a great country. A lot of people who have moved abroad would never do it if there was not for the war.

We have wonderful nature that, sadly, suffers a lot now. We’ve got many national parks where rare animals and plants can be found.

We have good and cheap medicine, it’s easy to get a doctor’s appointment and, for most people, it is affordable.

We have quite good laws regarding protecting of animals. Unfortunately, it’s not easy to enforce them.

And we have many very good people who do so much for others, sacrificing their own time, money and health. They are ready to give everything they have to help others.”



**What is daily life like in Ukraine?**  
(J.C., Sussex)

“It depends on the region. Ukraine is a big country and there are regions where the shelling goes on pretty much all the time. Here, people just do their best to survive and help others, including animals and people.

There are regions where missiles explode almost every day, but not all over the city, like in Kharkiv. Here, people live their usual lives, working, doing business and planting flowers. They say they are used to explosions and don’t care about them anymore, but if you look at their faces, you will see that, during these two years, they became about 10 years older.

There are also other regions, where it is comparatively safe. In these regions, children even are able to go to school. However, during every red alert, they have to go to bomb shelters. And such alerts can be several times per day. It is very cold in such shelters, so kids have to sit there in winter clothes.”

**Are animal welfare organisations still rescuing animals and taking them out of Ukraine to other countries?**  
(Telephone query)

“The animal evacuation procedure is quite difficult because people can only take ‘owned’ animals across the border, no more than five per person. Also, animals should have a European-type vet passport with microchipping, vaccination and titer test information.

However, there are organisations who help with the paperwork, and it is possible to bring the animals over the border.

Evacuated animals are either returned to their families, or they go to shelters and foster homes with future rehoming. (In many cases, the animals were not abandoned, but people were forcefully evacuated and they could not take their

pets, or they were trying and the animal escaped during the evacuation.)

**Kharkiv Animal Rescue** has a centre for cats (below), which they now use as a rehoming facility and rehab, not only for cats, but for military people or others who suffered from the war.”



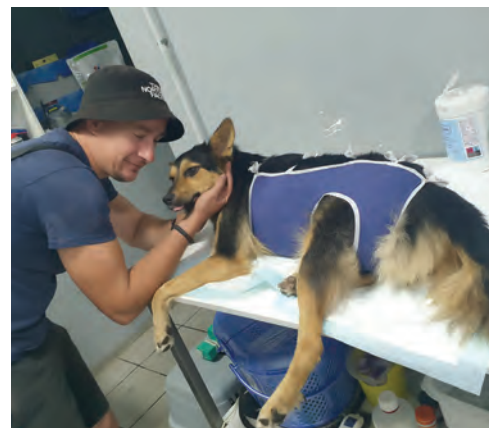
Image: Kharkiv Animal Rescue

**How have animals personally helped you get through the war?**  
(N.H., Pembrokeshire)

“I guess that the main way they have been helping is that they need me and, however depressed I am, I have to wake up in the morning to feed my pets, take care of them and keep on helping other animals. This brings sense to my life, even in the moments when I am ready to give up. Certainly, my dogs and cats make me smile every time they bring their toy to play or lie down to sleep on my pillow.”

**How can I help Ukrainian animals?**  
(G.Y., Leicestershire)

“Please donate to our causes. We have a huge demand to spay and neuter, and we publish booklets for children to teach them humane attitude to animals. Plus, we help other organisations with medical kits for service dogs, transportation, spaying equipment and vaccines.”



To follow our work in Eastern Europe, please visit our website: [naturewatch.org](https://naturewatch.org).



# MY STORY: BREAKING THE LINK

Our patron, Wendy Turner-Webster, shares her experience of being in a relationship where a beloved pet was used to control her.

“I have always loved animals and, for many decades now, I have neither eaten them nor worn them.

Right from when I was very little, our home in Stoke-on-Trent seemed to be a magnet for all manner of waifs and strays... a tortoise, guinea pigs, a parrot, a canary, dogs, cats, a rabbit; even a pony ended up in our garden one day (who was never claimed, so we kept him until he died of old age).

“

Of course, back then, I couldn't have foreseen that one day my love of animals would be used so cruelly against me.

”

Unfortunately, when you are in an abusive relationship (as I was from the age of 17 to 22), the things you love are quickly identified by your abuser, and in my case my partner used our border collie dog 'Rupert' in a bid to control me.

I remember trying to leave the house once, after a violent argument. 'If you leave this house,' he shouted, 'I'll take a knife to the dog.'

Job done. I was in complete shock.

I couldn't risk him hurting my beloved Rupert, so I stayed in the relationship, only to endure more years of threats and violence.

When you're in an abusive relationship, you think that you're the only person that this is happening to, but sadly,



Wendy Turner-Webster is a TV presenter, author, award-winning animal rights campaigner and patron of Naturewatch Foundation

using a much-loved pet as a form of control is commonplace, and countless women find themselves trapped in a life of pain and misery because of it.

Naturewatch Foundation's '**Protect Animals. Protect People**' campaign is one that I'm so proud to be involved with, and I have shared my own story in a bid to raise awareness for this key message: *not recognising the animal-human abuse violence link is a missed opportunity to protect the public.*

Since the campaign started, I have been overjoyed to hear how many police forces are embracing this new approach; sending out clear messages which detail how victims of domestic abuse can get help for themselves and their pets. For me, this shift in attitude

makes the pain of reliving these dreadful events from my youth worthwhile.

**If a little piece of me dies inside when I dip back into my past, then a much bigger piece of me springs back into life when I know that, by speaking out, I have at least helped in some way to make a difference."**



The '**Protect Animals. Protect People**' campaign is about explaining to police, prosecutors and politicians why taking animal abuse seriously matters and that, *when animals are protected, people are too.*

Many people reading Wendy's story will have experienced what she has had to deal with.

The **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** is available for confidential support, any time, on **0808 2000 247**.



# REMEMBER US IN YOUR WILL TO HELP MAKE THE WORLD A KINDER PLACE

Since 1991, Naturewatch Foundation has been passionately campaigning to end animal cruelty and advance animal welfare standards in the UK and worldwide.

We don't receive government funding, so we rely on our supporters' generosity to continue our work. Their donations have made a real difference so far, but there's always more cruelty to stop and more animals to help.

Through our varied campaigns, we work hard to raise awareness about animal cruelty and poor welfare standards. We also equip professionals and the public with the knowledge they need to take action.

We can't do it alone. We rely on donations to fund our campaigns; over half of our donations come from gifts in wills.

As a small charity, it's difficult to put into words just how important a legacy gift is. Without them, we would not be able to continue our campaigning work and take actions that can make a positive impact on animals worldwide. *Whatever amount you wish to leave behind goes a long way.*

## Your legacy is our future

Making a will is one of the most important things we can do during our lifetimes. When you make or amend your will, it's important to have a qualified solicitor to take care of it for you. A properly written will makes your intentions clear – and it can protect those close to you from having to deal with complex challenges down the line.

That's why we've teamed up with the **National Free Wills Network**, which allows you to write or amend a simple will for free. You can find out more at:

[naturewatch.org/leave-a-legacy](https://naturewatch.org/leave-a-legacy)



## Make a lasting difference

Your gift, no matter how small, can make a real difference in the fight against animal cruelty. But being an animal welfare advocate isn't just about financial contributions – there are many other ways to support our campaigns.

You can find out more about all the other ways you can get involved and support our work on our website at [naturewatch.org](https://naturewatch.org).

With your support, Naturewatch Foundation can continue making the world a kinder place for animals.

— “  
Ending animal cruelty and improving animal welfare is a cause close to my heart.  
Knowing I can help make a difference in the years to come is incredibly important to me.  
” —

Veronica, supporter



## Working together

To get the best results for animals, we believe in working with other organisations through coalitions, partnerships and memberships.

In June, Sarah represented us at a peaceful **Restore Nature Now** march in London, attended by over 60,000 people and 400+ organisations! *Will we see you at the next one?*



## GET INVOLVED!

Animals need **you** to be part of the team too – *your involvement is crucial!*

## How you can help

- attend events like the one above
- report wildlife crime or illegal breeding of dogs, cats and rabbits
- make a donation online or by phone
- recycle stamps, jewellery and printer cartridges
- support our petitions and other actions
- follow us on social media and share our posts...

**Facebook:** @Naturewatch.org

**X:** @Naturewatch\_org

**Instagram:** @naturewatchfoundation

*Thank you so much for your support!*



**GET IN TOUCH:** Email [info@naturewatch.org](mailto:info@naturewatch.org) or call 01242 252871.

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