

Little terns at Gronant



Interactive whiteboard resources

Lesson 3 - Conservation of the little tern

Teachers lesson resources.

For more information on the little tern learning packs, accessible versions or on site activity packs for school visits, please visit littleterns.denbighshirecountryside.org.uk or call 01824 708313.

All learning packs are available for download in PDF format and accessible PDF versions.

Interactive whiteboard resources

This document contains links, resources and assets for use in the little tern conservation lessons.

Video and animation assets

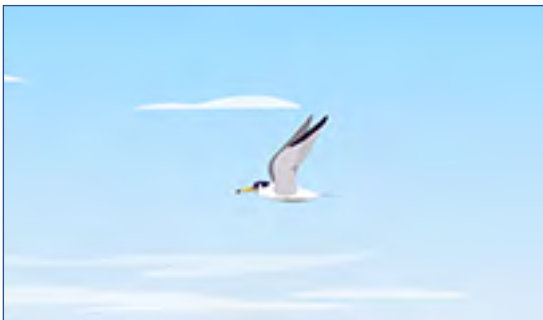
Introduction to the conservation of the little tern video (9 minutes)

Play this video about the conservation of the little tern at Gronant as an introduction to the lesson



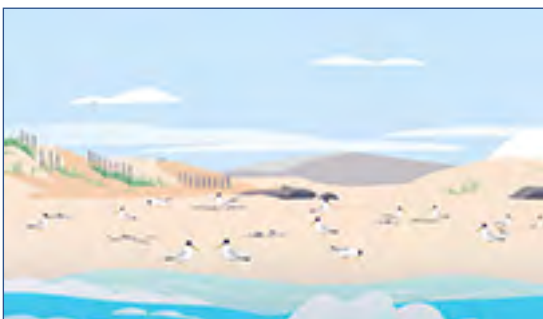
Introduction to the little tern animation (1 minute 23 seconds)

Play this quick explainer animation to learners if they haven't already viewed it in lesson 1.



Conservation animation (1 minute 11 seconds)

Play this animation as an introduction to the lesson's subject: conservation of the little tern.



CONSERVATION

is the act of protecting and preserving animals, plants
and their habitats from extinction and destruction.



The warden and volunteer conservationists at Gronant dunes protect the terns from...

1. Climate change

- Rising seas
- Increased storm events
- Coastal flooding and high winds can blow sand and bury eggs and young chicks.

2. Disturbance

- Adult little terns leave the chick if they are disturbed. An example of this is people walking their dogs near the nests.

3. Predation

Predators like:

- Red fox
- Kestrel
- Herring gull
- Stoat
- Crow
- Weasel
- Peregrine falcon
- Badger

Why is it important to protect the little tern?

The little tern is one of the UK's **rarest** seabirds. Human disturbance, predation and climate change have threatened the numbers of little terns.

If the little tern is not protected they may become an **endangered species**.

People have an opportunity at Gronant to protect the little terns and increase the numbers in the colony so they don't become **extinct**.



Conservation

These are some of the ways
conservationists protect little terns:

Nest moving

Little terns build their nests on shingle beaches. During bad weather and rising tides, nests, eggs, chicks and adults, are at risk from flooding.

Conservationists lift the nests up and put them on plant pots to stop the nests being washed away. They only do this when they absolutely have to. This gives the birds a better chance of survival.

Please don't try and move nests yourself!



Protecting from predation

Eggs, chicks and fledglings are at risk from predation. Adults can fend off predators.

Predation from the land and sky are ongoing threats to little terns. Foxes can take a whole nest of eggs at one go, eating the fledglings!

Conservationists warden the site in the daylight hours to keep away daytime predators.

They build pens and put up electric fencing to keep nocturnal predators like the red fox and badgers away from the nests.



Predation from the sky

Wardens and volunteers employ scare tactics by using a starter pistol and chasing away avian predators.

A feeding station has been installed and baited with poultry chicks so predators will take those instead of the little terns. This has been successful as predators, mainly kestrels, are taking fewer little terns.





Laser hazing

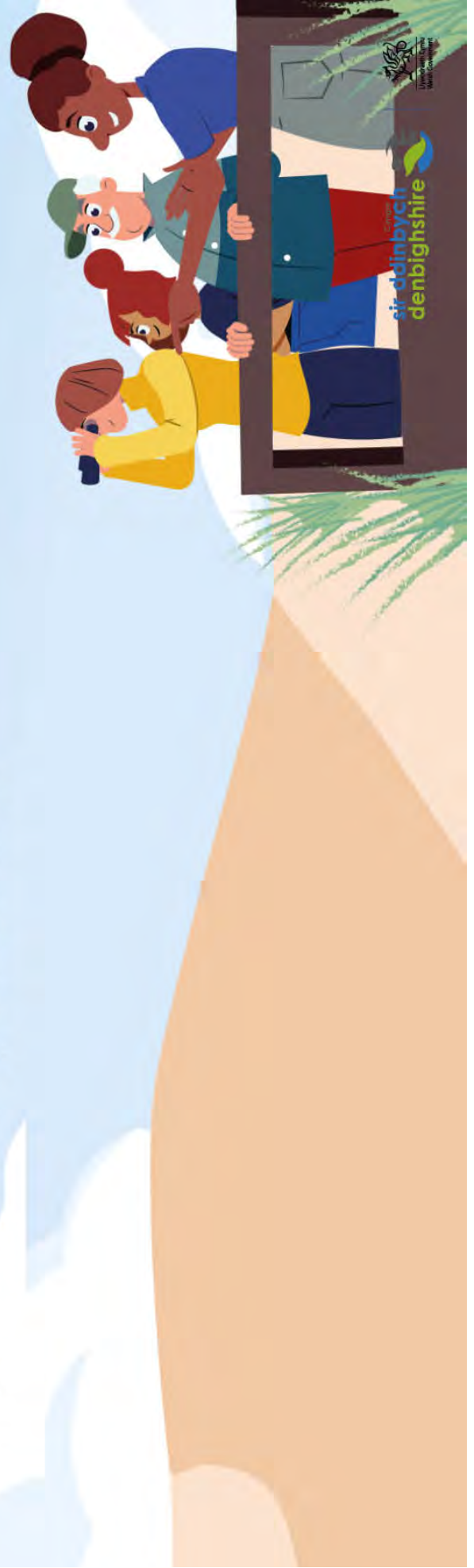
Conservationists use a clever laser device that scares away predators like crows and kestrels.

The birds don't like the light from the laser and when it is used repeatedly they don't come back to the site.

Visitor management

Conservationists put a blue rope around the little terns' breeding grounds so people know that they and their dogs should stay away and not disturb the birds.

The wardens also spend all day at the colony keeping a watchful eye and speaking to anyone who comes too close to make sure they are aware and keep a safe distance.



Visitor management

They put up signs to give visitors information about the little terns and viewing areas.

The viewing area enables people to see, appreciate and learn about the little terns without disturbing them.

They can also learn about other rare and common coastal plants and animals.



People are encouraged to volunteer to help protect the little terns, becoming conservationists themselves.





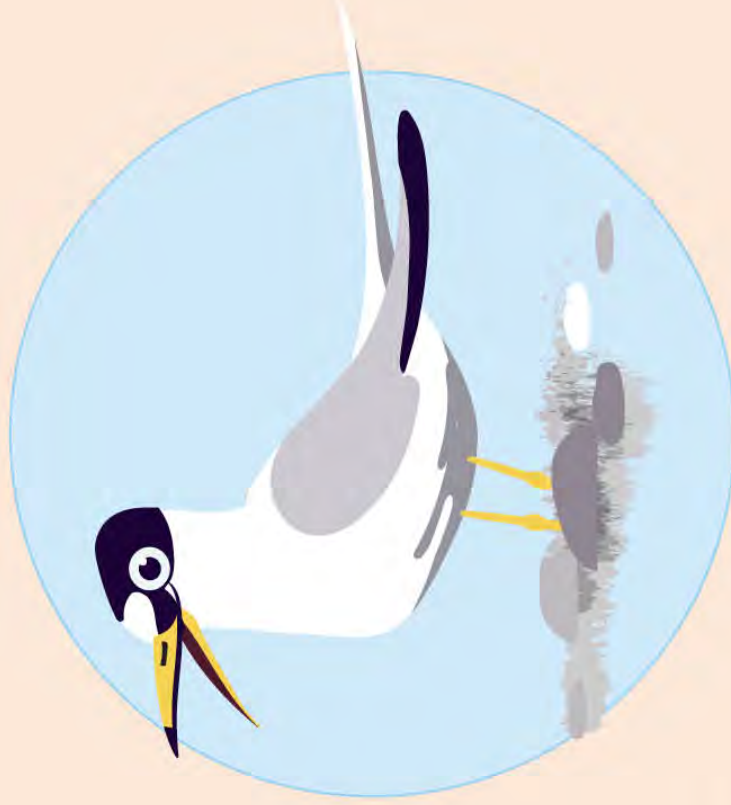
Ringling

Ringling is an important part of the research about and conservation of the little tern.

Rings are carefully attached to the feet of both chicks and adult birds.

When the ringed birds are caught again, the information on the rings is recorded.

Over time, this information helps conservationists to track where the birds go on migration, where they nest and find out how old the birds are.



An important part of conservation is to make other people aware of the work being done to conserve the little tern.

This is where you come in!

1. Write a letter to your local newspaper telling them why it is important to protect little terns.
2. What is already being done by conservationists at Gronant dunes to protect little terns? Describe at least 3 things.
3. Explain in your letter what people can do to learn about and help conserve the little tern. (See this slide show for help)

Press article

<https://www.rhyljournal.co.uk/news/18559642.gronant-tern-conservation-work-caught-camera/>

Gronant Tern conservation work caught on camera

By Arron Evans, Reporter

THE work of protecting the Little Tern colony at Gronant has carried on over recent months, despite the covid-19 outbreak, with Denbighshire Countryside Service introducing safe working measures to protect the colony from human disturbance, predation and extreme weather events.

Now a video, narrated by naturalist Iolo Williams has been produced to highlight the great conservation work going on at the location and charts the history of the five year project from its start to present times.

The colony, the last remaining one of its kind in Wales, is amongst only a few colonies across the UK implementing protection for the little terns this season, making our efforts more important than ever. It is of vital importance that we continue to protect the last little tern colony in Wales, despite these exceptional circumstances faced during 2020.

The work is carried out by wardens with support from volunteers, but due to the covid -19 restrictions, staff from Denbighshire Countryside Services have taken over warden duties. To date, the counts of birds has been 300+, with 172 nests created and many chicks are now appearing.

Councillor Tony Thomas, Cabinet Lead Member for Housing and Communities, said: "At the very beginning of the season, fencing was put in by 3 members of staff whilst working at a safe distance and implementing sanitation procedures to prevent any potential cross contamination. In total we managed to construct 7 pens, with 2 additional areas of strap fencing which encapsulate areas of prime breeding habitat.

“The team has faced a number of challenges, including quad bike users tearing up the nesting areas of shingle, then came the storms and high tides that washed away some of the nests, and there is the constant threat of predation from foxes and kestrels. These issues have been addressed as best possible by the small team, through police involvement, repairs to fencing under difficult conditions, and having a daily warden presence to ward off predators and intrusive humans.

“It is on track for being a good season for the colony, thanks to the great efforts of Denbighshire Countryside Service staff. They have overcome this year’s challenges with the usual enthusiasm, willingness and a clear focus on protecting the Little Tern colony for future generations.

“And what better way to celebrate the work on the project to date than having it documented on video. The footage shows the little tern in its habitat and speaks with volunteers that have been involved in the ground-breaking project. We hope people enjoy the film and get a real taste of the project and the honour we have in Denbighshire of being involved in such great conservation work.”

The video can be found at: <https://youtu.be/HQsbVvOBNBY>

News

3rd July 2020

Gronant Tern conservation work caught on camera



By Arron Evans | @ArronEvansNews
Reporter



One of the terns caught on camera on the Youtube video.



0 comment

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Press release

We Need You to help protect little terns at Gronant, North Wales

The little tern is the smallest and one of the rarest terns breeding in the British Isles. They are easily recognised by a short tail, a white forehead and a yellow bill with a small black tip.

Little terns begin arriving in mid-April to nest on sand or shingle beaches, spits or small inshore islands around much of the British coastline. They return to Africa in August.

Little tern numbers in Britain have been declining since the 1970s due to diminishing suitable habitat, human disturbance, high tides and predation. To help protect little terns, many colonies are extensively managed in Britain.

Gronant is the only little tern colony in Wales. Due to hard work by local volunteers, it has become one of the most successful colonies in the British Isles. Last year, volunteers helped Denbighshire Countryside Services by monitoring breeding birds, talking to local beach users about the birds, constructing protective fencing and scaring away predators. These dedicated volunteers gave 896 hours of their time to help 99 little terns fledge at the site.

Denbighshire Countryside Service is a partner in the EU LIFE+ Nature Little Tern Recovery Project lead by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). This project is a five-year partnership between 11 organisations working together to ensure the long-term future of little terns in Britain.

Since 2013, through EU LIFE funding of the project, we have increased public awareness, provided new equipment, employed extra wardens at sites and introduced a colour-ringing programme. Through this programme we hope to discover more about movements of little terns. So far we have seen birds ringed at Blakeney and Winterton on the Norfolk coast resighted in Gambia.

For years little terns at Gronant have suffered heavily from kestrel predation. In 2015 alone, we lost 3 adults, 33 chicks and 8 fledglings to kestrels.

During this year's breeding season, the Welsh Ornithological Society (WOS) are providing funding to try to solve this problem by supplying food for kestrels, as an alternative food source to little terns. This technique is known as diversionary feeding.

Jack Slattery (LIFE+ Little Tern People Engagement Officer for Gronant) said, "We are very pleased the WOS has provided funding for this project because kestrels are one of the biggest threats to little terns at Gronant. We have decided to begin diversionary feeding because success scaring away kestrels using starter pistols, air horns and whistles is very limited. We enjoy seeing kestrels, but they are a huge threat to little terns. We hope this project will help both species flourish."

We welcome new volunteers to help protect this delightful, chattering seabird at Gronant. Between Tuesday 3rd May and Thursday 5th May, we will be constructing protective fencing from 10.00 until 15.00. If you would like to help with this or any other work, please email littleterns@denbighshire.gov.uk or phone 01745 356197.

If you cannot volunteer, why not show your support by becoming a member of the North Wales Little Tern Group. This community group helps protect little terns in north Wales. For a £5 membership, you will receive a welcome pack, a regular newsletter and an invitation to their end of season event. If you would like to become a member, please email nwlittletern@gmail.com.

Images of the little tern



Little Tern photograph taken by David Woodfall at Gronant in 2015



One of the signs put up to try to raise awareness



Conservation poster examples

Little tern teachers' resources - KS2 Years 3-6



Figure 33 - Feeding station being loaded.

Figure 34 - Kestrel taking food.

Feeding stations



Image 2 & 3: Shelter at the end of the boardwalk, platform at the end of the boardwalk

Visitor hides and viewing area

Glossary

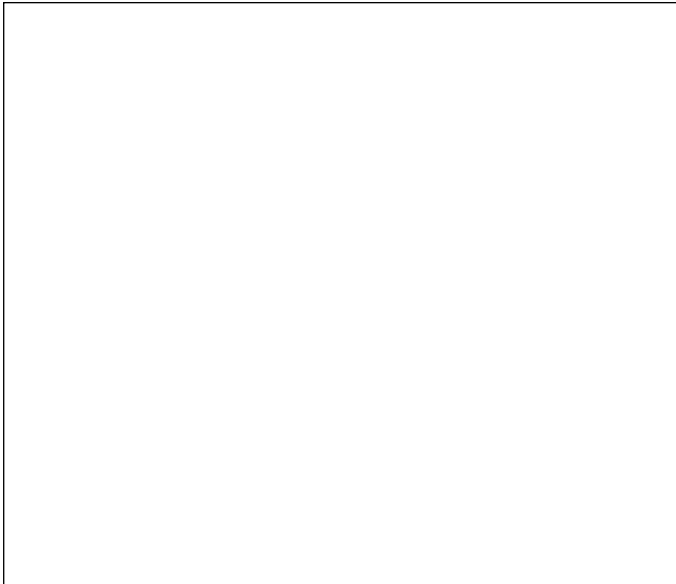
Glossary of helpful words

- | | | |
|------|--------------------|--|
| i. | Conservation | The act of protecting and preserving animals, plants and their habitats from extinction and destruction. |
| ii. | Conservationist | Somebody who works to conserve wildlife and the environment. |
| iii. | Habitat | The natural home of an animal or plant. |
| iv. | Colony | A number of birds of the same species that nest or roost in the same site. |
| v. | Extinct | When a species of plant or animal no longer exists on the Earth. |
| vi. | Endangered species | When a species is likely to become extinct. |

Year 5 - 6, newspaper article templates

Handwriting practice lines (left column).

Handwriting practice lines (right column).



Handwriting practice lines (right column, below the box).

Handwriting practice lines (left column, below the box).

Handwriting practice lines (right column, below the box).

Year 3 - 6, poster template

Other web resources

Denbighshire Little Tern Project

North Wales Little Tern

North Wales Wildlife Trust

British Trust for Ornithology

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

RSPB's Wild Challenge award scheme provides a perfect framework for learning and is open to all ages and abilities. Encourage your pupils to apply their curriculum knowledge outdoors in nature and support them to develop resilience and agency.

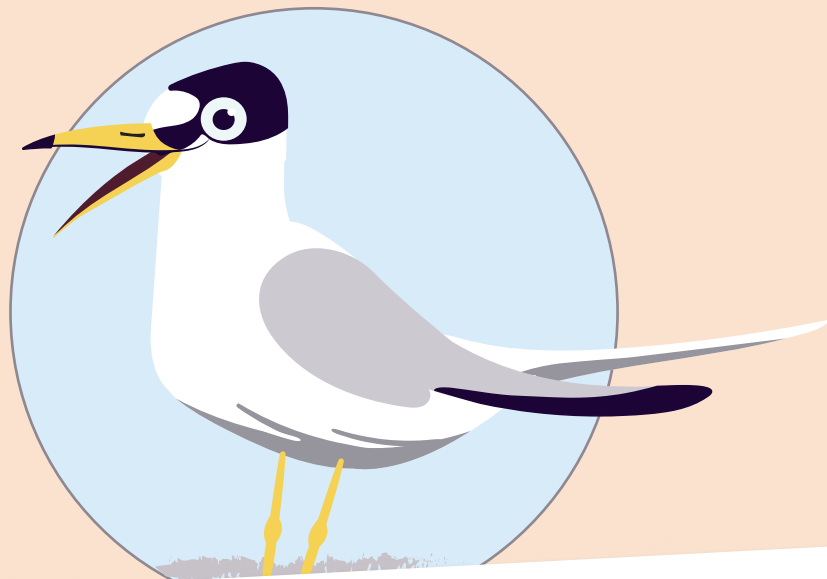
RSPB Wild Challenge is an award programme containing 24 activities which can link to your curriculum learning. You can choose the most relevant activities and each one helps children to connect with and learn through nature. There are bronze, silver and gold awards to achieve depending on how many activities you do.

rspb.org.uk/schoolswildchallenge

Welsh Government Digital Compliance Framework

Welsh Government National Literacy and Numeracy Framework Curriculum for Wales

Little terns at Gronant



**Visit our website at
littleterns.denbighshirecountryside.org.uk
to find out more about the little terns at Gronant**