



Worcestershire Wildlife Trust



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Family helps scarce butterfly

Wednesday 9th January 2019



A Droitwich family came together in December to plant trees that will help a scarce butterfly species.

Yvonne O'Byrne contacted Worcestershire Wildlife Trust to find out how she could both commemorate her late husband as well as help wildlife. Sean O'Byrne was a regular visitor to the Trust's [Trench Wood nature reserve](#), near Droitwich Spa, and his family wanted to do something in his memory in the woodland.

Dom Cragg, Conservation Officer responsible for the 100 acre nature reserve, explained "It was great to spend time with Yvonne and her family at Trench Wood just before Christmas.

"Together we planted 20 elms of two different varieties that have been grown by Pershore Nurseries from trees that have proven to be resistant to the devastating Dutch elm disease.

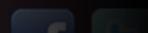
"Since Dutch elm disease took hold in the 1970s, numbers of white-letter hairstreak butterflies, a species that relies on elm trees for survival, have



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White-letter hairstreaks are found in sheltered hedgerows, mixed scrub and along sunny woodland rides. The larvae of the butterflies only eat the flower buds of elm trees so the loss of so many trees also saw a decline in the butterfly.

Trench Wood is jointly managed by Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and [Butterfly Conservation](#). The woodland consists of wide sunny rides and glades – areas that greatly benefit butterflies as well as many other species of wildlife.

The O'Byrne family joined staff and volunteers from both Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and Butterfly Conservation to plant the new elm trees in December.

Yvonne, who together with Sean has been a member of Worcestershire Wildlife Trust for more than 30 years, also dedicated a tree to Sean in the memorial orchard at Lower Smite Farm between Droitwich and Worcester.

Yvonne commented "Sean loved Trench Wood and enjoyed many happy walks there over the years.

"He would have been delighted to help restore elm trees to the wood, and the added bonus of increasing butterflies. The project is a lovely way for us to remember Sean as we watch the trees and butterflies flourish in future years."



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