

# How to talk like a farmer

Making meaningful environmental  
impact on farmland.

- Chris D'Agorne
- Marketing at Ecosulis
- **howtorewild.co.uk**
- 3.5 acre rewilding project



- How can we have impact?
- 2% of Scottish land is national nature reserve
- 70-80% is agricultural

## Sources



NatureScot  
NàdarAiba

Scotland's  
Nature Agency  
Eòranach  
Nàdar na h-Alba

Search NatureScot

National Nature Reserves (NNRs) are areas of land set aside for nature. As in other countries, the accolade is given to Scotland's best wildlife sites, to promote their conservation and enjoyment.

Most reserves contain nationally or internationally important habitats and species, so the wildlife is managed very carefully. Visitor facilities are designed and managed to ensure that people can enjoy NNRs without harming or disturbing the wildlife that lives there.

Scotland has 43 NNRs: these are special places, showcasing the very best of Scotland's nature, and cover just under 2% of Scotland's land area.



Publication - Statistics

### Scottish Agricultural Census: June 2018

Published: 9 October 2018  
Directorate: [Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate](#)  
Part of: [Farming and rural](#)  
ISBN: 9781787812871

Statistics regarding the area of crops and other farmland, livestock, agriculture workforce and rented farmland.

 This document is part of a collection 

- Small changes to large areas have big impacts
- But how can farmers and ecologists see eye to eye?



- We must overcome a common myth
- Ecologists and farmers are heterogenous groups
- Active listening is crucial



- Farmers spent their whole life on the land
- They see changes over time
- And details we miss



- A site survey is a snapshot
- Farmers can fill in the missing details
- So let's listen to them



- Many farmers are tired
- They've correctly followed government guidance
- But this guidance has destroyed their soils





- What do **we** say when we speak to a farmer?
- Can we be more mindful of the context?



- How can we find common ground?
- Ecologists aren't often interested in yield/profit
- Farmers need to keep finances a priority



- Which fields lose money?
- Which corners are waterlogged?
- How often are hedgerows trimmed?



- Haseley – a case study
- Used unprofitable fields and corners
- Reduced hedge-cutting frequency



- A single, sitewide plan
- Restoring hedgerows to connect the landscape
- NoFence collars are great when they're economical



- How can we go beyond the financial?
- Focus on the **why**, not just the **what**
- Give a real explanation



- Soil health
- Compaction causes waterlogging
- Rewilding can be a tool, rather than an end state

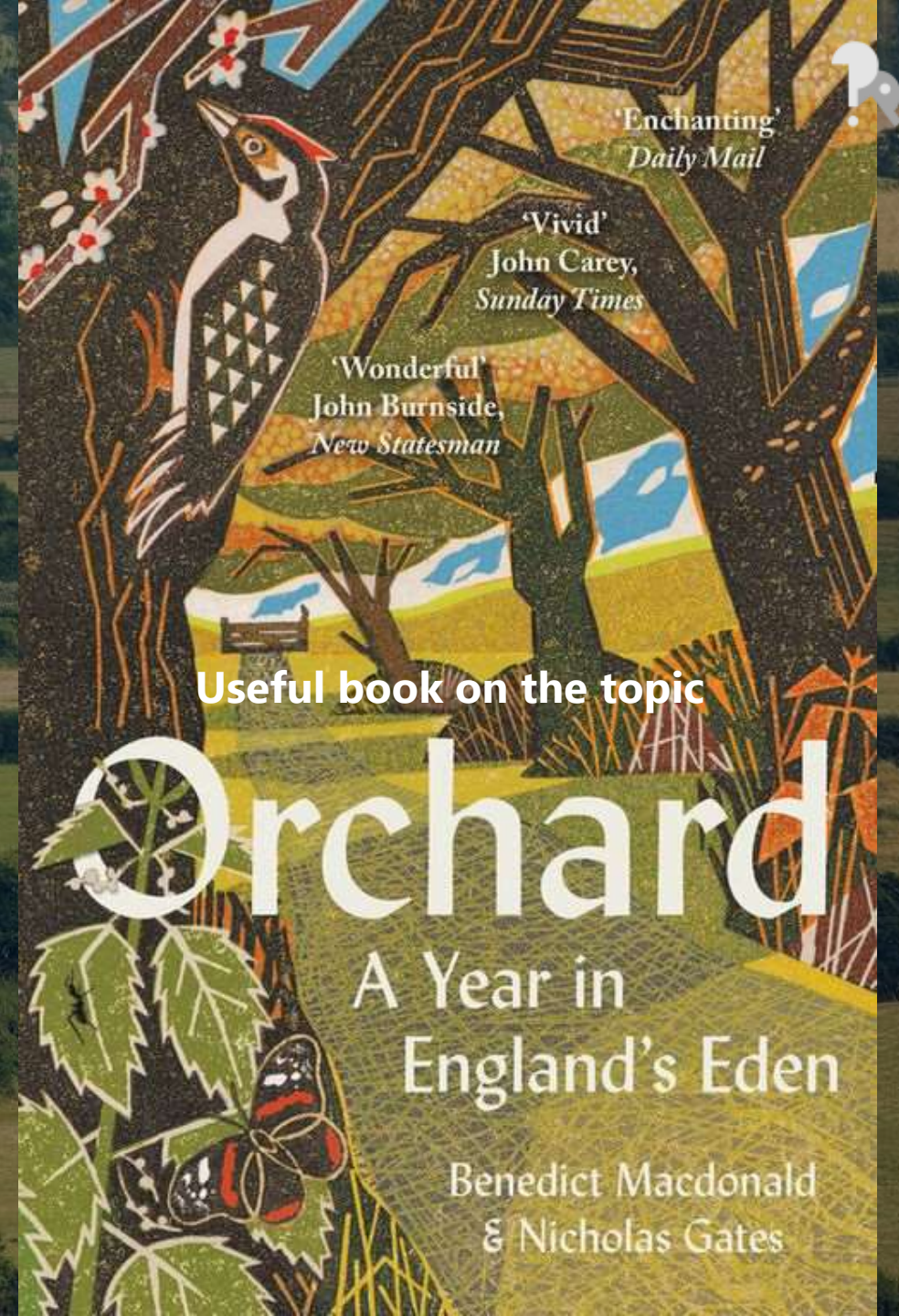


- Ecological services
- Hillesden is a great case study – genuine farm
- But hard to predict, so better to use as a 'frame'





- Orchards/Silviculture
- Biodiverse, profitable
- So many options
- Better than monocultures
- Scale is important here





- A farmer's legacy is the health of their land
- Agriculture dominates our landscape
- So let's work together to make a bigger impact

**Land managed for agriculture**

**Land managed for nature**