


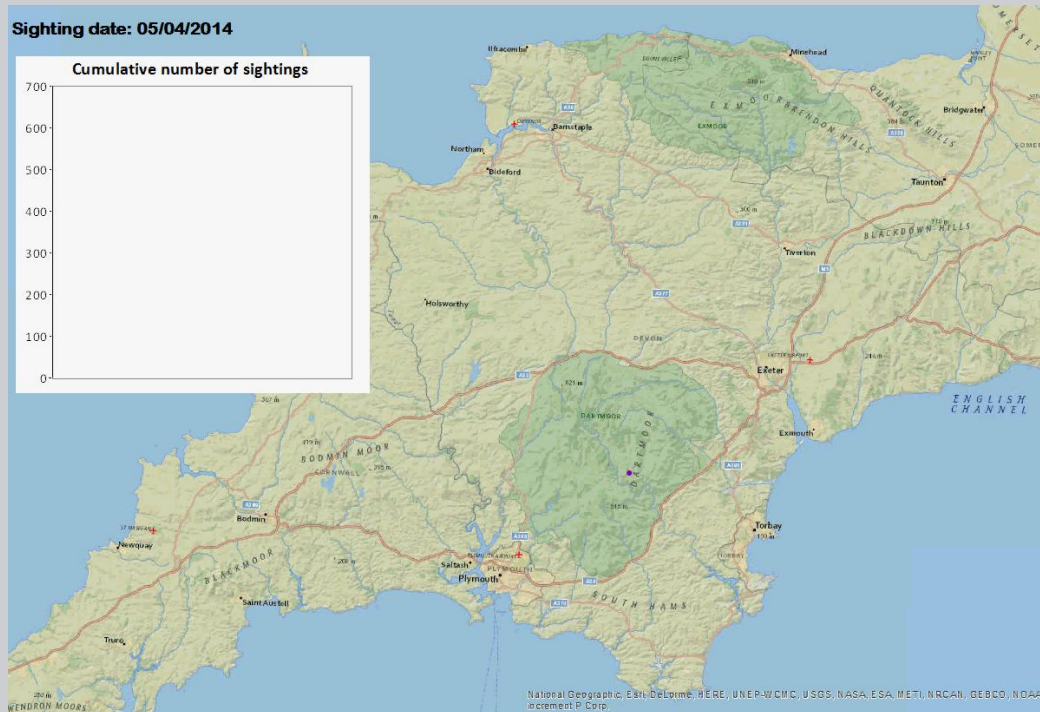
# The use of Twitter in the Devon Cuckoo citizen science project

Sara Zonneveld  
University of Exeter

 @sarazonneveld  
sz297@exeter.ac.uk  
[devonbirds.org/cuckoos](http://devonbirds.org/cuckoos)



# Devon Cuckoo project



### Submit a Cuckoo Sighting

Grid Ref:  (must be SS, ST, SX, SY)

Place:

Date:  /  /

Time:  :

Number:

Additional Details: ☐ Seen ☐ Heard

E.g. male or female, juvenile or adult, flying or perching.

Name:

Email:

So we know you are a human being and not a spam robot please answer the following question before submitting your sighting.

What is the capital city of England?

The Devon Cuckoo project is a citizen science project started in 2014 by the University of Exeter, Devon Birds and the Dartmoor National Park Authority. We ask local citizens to report Cuckoos seen and heard across Devon on our project website ([devonbirds.org/cuckoos](http://devonbirds.org/cuckoos)). We aim to use this data to map local Cuckoo hotspots, and identify possible breeding areas.

# Promoting the project



Sara Zonneveld @sarazonneveld · Apr 10

Cuckoos are arriving! Remember to report your [#Devon](#) & [#Dartmoor](#) sightings/hearings to [@DevonBirds!](#) [#heardacuckoo](#) [devonbirds.org/birdwatching/r...](#)

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## Heard or seen a Cuckoo?

Please report your sighting at:

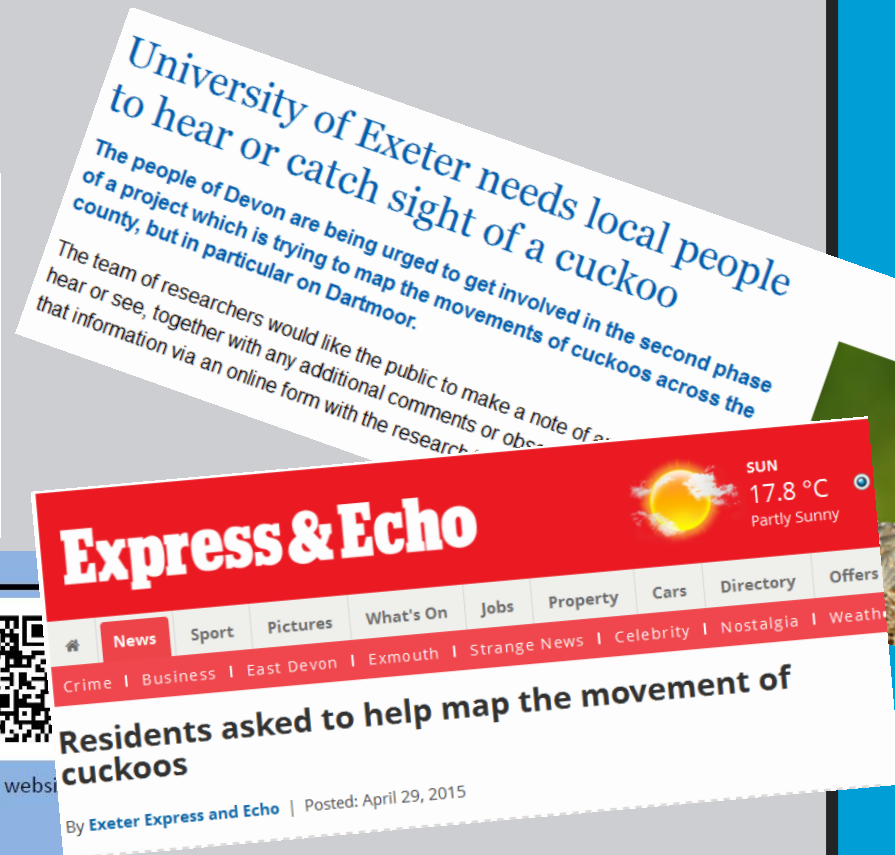
[www.devonbirds.org/cuckoos](http://www.devonbirds.org/cuckoos)



This year Devon Birds is again collecting information on the number of Cuckoo sightings in Devon. We hope to build on last year's wonderful response from you, the public, from whom we received information on over 700 soundings and sightings. This year we need



Scan to visit website



To maximise the number of responses, we promote our project in several ways. For example, we have coverage by local press and use flyers displayed in visitor centres in Dartmoor National Park. We also use promotion on twitter. The following slides will illustrate some general Twitter practices that I use to promote the project.

# Twitter use

Be personal, but not too much



It is best not to combine your personal and professional Twitter accounts. However, it is important to give a personal touch to your professional account, to show the faces and personalities behind a citizen science project. Personal tweets help gain new followers, and can help followers feel more personally connected to the project.

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# Twitter use

## Retweet related tweets



**PiedFly.Net** @piedflynet · 15 May 2014

Today satellite tagged 3 Dartmoor cuckoos with & for @\_BTO project with @DevonBirds @dartmoornpa at @DevonWildlife Trusts Emsworthy reserve.



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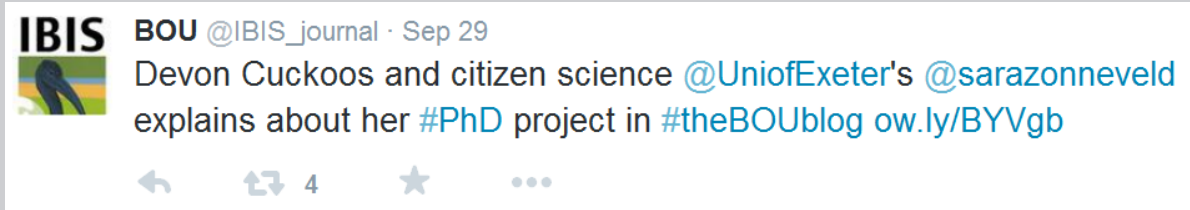
Retweeting is important. I retweet tweets that are related to the project, ranging from new publications about Cuckoos, to updates from the BTO about their national Cuckoo tracking project. Retweeting relevant tweets helps your followers relate to the broader background and relevance of your work.

# 2



# Twitter use

## Regular, varied updates



Make your tweets as varied as possible. If you only repeat the same tweet, e.g. asking people to submit Cuckoo sightings, people will end up ignoring those repeated messages. I try to vary my twitter activity by for example sharing media attention covering the project, which can then get picked up by more readers.



In addition, I keep an eye on any relevant tweets not directed at my account, for example by looking at relevant hashtags such as #Cuckoo or #Dartmoor. I can then interact with these twitter users, and reach out beyond my usual followers.

# 3

# Twitter use

## Twitter “events”



**Sara Zonneveld** @sarazonneveld · May 27

Lots of #Cuckoo activity on #Dartmoor this week! Did you report your bank holiday sightings? [devonbirds.org/birdwatching/r...](https://devonbirds.org/birdwatching/r...)  
@DevonBirds @dartmoornpa

It has also been helpful for me to keep an eye on any events or special occasions featured on twitter. For example, during the spring holidays many people tweeted about their day trips on Dartmoor, so I responded to this by asking if people spotted any Cuckoos.



**Sara Zonneveld** @sarazonneveld · 3 Jun 2014

Check out the great @DevonBirds cuckoo page & help by submitting #Dartmoor cuckoo sightings/hearings!  
#DartmoorHour: [devonbirds.org/cuckoos](https://devonbirds.org/cuckoos)

← ↻ 3 ★ 2 ...

Relevant topics might be discussed on Twitter on certain days or times using a specific hashtag. For example, during #Dartmoorhour people tweet about events and businesses on Dartmoor for one hour each week. Tweeting during these twitter meetings helped me gain new followers and retweets to a much wider audience.

# 4

# Twitter use

## Targets and updates



**Sara Zonneveld** @sarazonneveld · Jun 2

963 #Devon #Cuckoo sightings, we broke last year's record of 728!  
Can we hit 1000 by the end of the week? Submit here: [devonbirds.org/cuckoos](https://devonbirds.org/cuckoos)

Try to come up with targets to motivate people to help with the project. For example, this year I encouraged people to break last year's number of records. Updating people on the progress of the project, and giving them a reason to keep helping, are key to making twitter outreach a success by keeping people interested and involved.

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# Twitter use

## Ask for help!



**University of Exeter** @UniofExeter · Apr 24

Have you heard a cuckoo recently? We need local people to help us with a project to map the movement of cuckoos: [ift.tt/1OOI6GW](https://ift.tt/1OOI6GW)



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**Dartmoor NPA** @dartmoornpa · Apr 17



Spring is in the air, and so are the cuckoos, let us know if you hear one on Dartmoor [dartmoor.gov.uk/cuckoo](https://dartmoor.gov.uk/cuckoo)  
[youtu.be/ZeAyGiuZ5bs](https://youtu.be/ZeAyGiuZ5bs)



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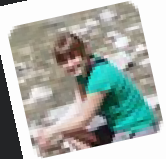


[View media](#)

Lastly, do not be afraid to ask for help on twitter. Most ornithologists will never have the same outreach as large organisations. Universities and wildlife organisations have many followers, and often have twitter feeds shown on their website to reach out beyond twitter users. By actively approaching stakeholders or relevant contacts, and asking them to tweet about your project, you can greatly increase the number of people reached.

# 6

# The use of Twitter in the Devon Cuckoo citizen science project



Sara Zonneveld @sarazonneveld - Aug 4  
Sweden 2013: lost for hours in a forest trying to walk a 100m line from  
one Flycatcher nestbox to another... #fieldworkfail #ornithology



Sara Zonneveld  
@sarazonneveld  
sz297@exeter.ac.uk



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My attempt at a Lapwing for #drawabirdday.



As a final piece of advice; do not take yourself too serious, and enjoy all the fun bird-related hashtags that Twitter has to offer.