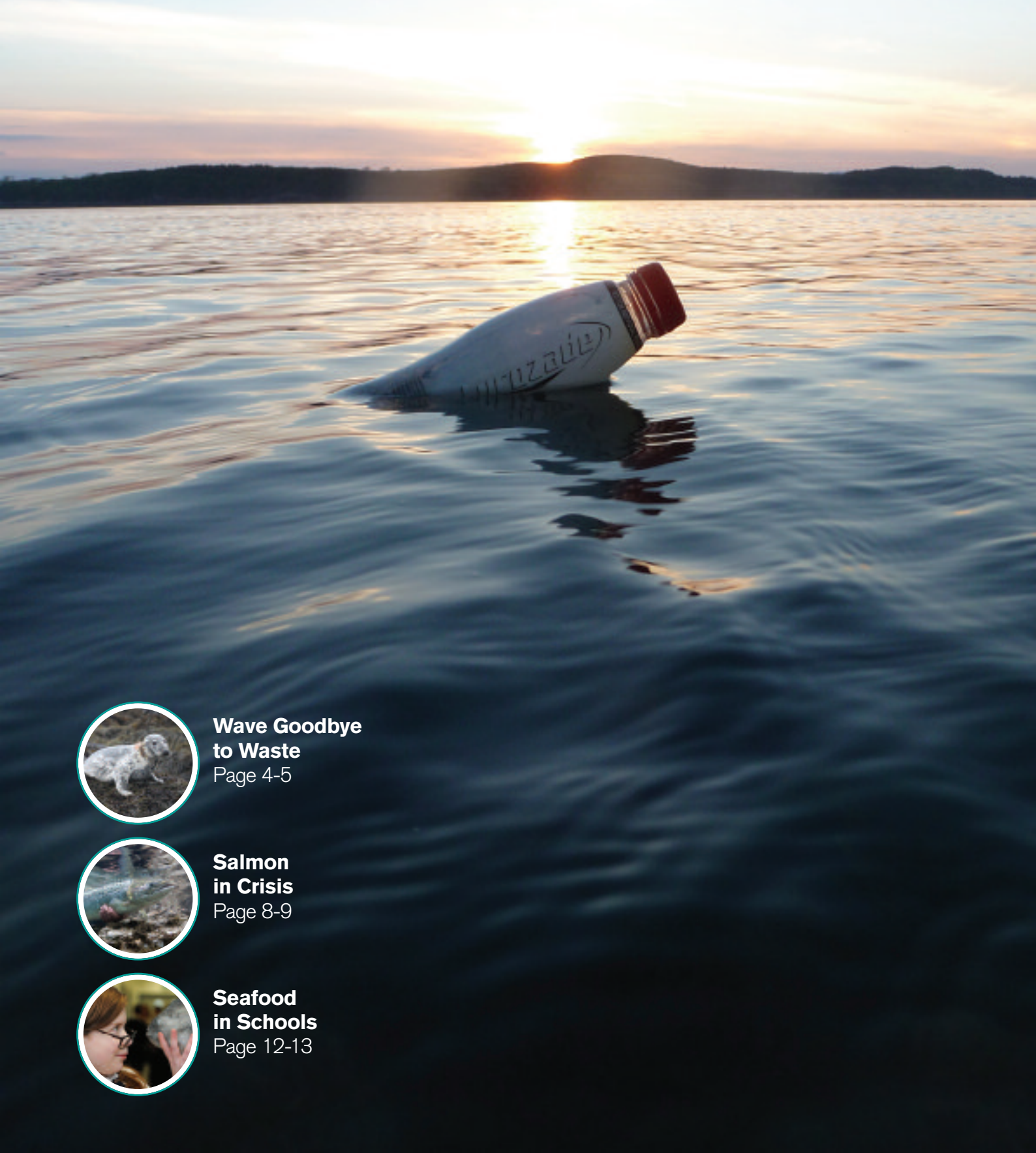


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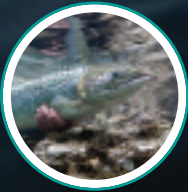
Issue 42 Spring/Summer 2015

newsletter of the Solway Firth Partnership



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Chairman's Column

Alastair McNeill FCIWEM C.WEM MCMI



In December, 21 years of coastal partnerships were recognised in a debate by the Scottish Parliament. The debate was well received by MSPs and the coastal partnerships en masse were complimented for their part in the management of coastlines and seas since the Focus on Firths initiative was established in 1992. During the debate, Elaine Murray MSP highlighted the important role of Solway Firth Partnership (SFP) by paying tribute to a number of positive contributions it has made to developments in the Solway. The parliamentary debate was followed by a reception where SFP staff had a poster display together with various recent publications for members and guests to peruse.

SFP is not solely Scottish based but has a significant cross border relationship that links both coastlines of the Solway Firth across different political boundaries and jurisdictions. Importantly, SFP contributes to issues and developments in Cumbria as well as Dumfries and Galloway. Statutory legislative processes as well as developers of potential projects such as renewables need to take cognisance of the fact that, for practical purposes, the Solway Firth is often generally best considered as a single water body. A key role of SFP is to try to ensure that as far as possible this happens in practice and there is a joined up approach.

During 2015 a number of statutory consultations with implications for the Solway and its environs will take place. DEFRA and the Scottish Government are seeking views on the UK's proposed programme of measures to maintain or achieve good environmental status in their seas by 2020 in order to meet the requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). It is intended that the MSFD will contain the explicit regulatory objective that biodiversity is maintained by 2020 so as to achieve good environmental status. The Directive also aims to protect marine resources on which economic and social activities depend. In terms of meeting the requirements of the MSFD, the Solway is likely to be considered as part of the wider Celtic Sea sub-region and not as a separate entity. Notwithstanding this there will be implications for the Solway as the result of the MSFD.

The consultation for the update of the Solway Tweed River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) will continue until the

summer. SEPA and the Environment Agency have determined that the proposed revision of the RBMP, which will be published later in 2015 and cover the period to 2021, will not generate any new or additional significant environmental effects. The WFD aims for good status for all ground and surface waters including coastal waters.

DEFRA launched a consultation on the second tranche of proposed Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) with the aim of seeking views and input on the sites. Within the Solway the inshore site of Allonby Bay, which extends some 9km along the coast and supports a nationally important reef structure, has been proposed as an MCZ.

The Scottish Government has consulted on a new strategy entitled 'Wakening the Giant' aimed at boosting Scotland's marine tourism sector and bringing more visitors to the coast over the next five years.

Other likely forthcoming consultations in the Firth relate to areas such as improved management of the inner Solway SAC and ongoing developments towards the implementation of Marine Planning. Marine Planning is unlikely to commence in the Solway during 2015 but issues pertaining to how this may happen seem likely to evolve during the year. Marine Planning is being undertaken separately by both the Scottish and English governments and SFP will have an important role in ensuring that insofar as the Firth is concerned processes are connected.

The aforementioned consultations and measures will determine future statutory strategies and controls that will directly or indirectly affect the management and future status of the Solway Firth. They will build upon current legislative controls but perhaps more importantly will encompass in law a number of activities or issues SFP has pursued on a voluntary basis since it was established. It seems likely that Marine Planning will spell the single greatest change to the management of the Firth as well as that of the role of SFP. It is anticipated that SFP will play an integral part in future marine planning but meanwhile the Partnership will continue to promote sustainable management of the Solway and its resources in line with its business plan. To enable this, the SFP Business Plan is under review and a revision will outline the Partnership's objectives over the period 2015 – 2018.

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Wave Goodbye to Waste

A new Marine Litter Campaign at the Manx Wildlife Trust



Litter pick on beach

We all know about marine litter, don't we? We spot debris of all kinds on our beaches and in the sea. It certainly looks unattractive but did you know marine litter has shocking implications for our wildlife and is even potentially harmful to human health?



Plastic in contents of
basing shark's stomach



This summer, with its brand new “Wave Goodbye to Waste” campaign, the Manx Wildlife Trust (MWT) is raising awareness of marine litter and the dangers of plastics in particular.

To set the scene: studies have shown that a large number of marine animals have been harmed through marine debris especially plastic. Several of the species identified are listed as threatened or near threatened on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. In addition to this, research has highlighted that floating litter can provide a pathway for long distance transport across the seas offering a route for non-native invasive species to reach our shores, resulting in more problems.

In addition to entanglement, litter can be ingested when mistaken for food. This can result in suffocation, starvation, loss of condition, and ultimately death. Plastic is a particular problem due to its slow degradation rate and ever increasing usage; it makes up 60-80% of litter found. Over 180 species,

Micro plastics in face scrub



including basking sharks, are known to have ingested plastic in one form or another. Additionally, as plastics gradually break down into micro plastics, they can be ingested by smaller organisms, such as filter feeders. The problem is further amplified by the plastics' property to absorb chemicals such as heavy metals and flame retardants. Plastics loaded with toxic substances ingested by small creatures are then potentially passed up the food chain: zooplankton to phytoplankton to invertebrates to fish and onto sea birds or marine mammals. This creates a harmful effect which is called bioaccumulation or bio magnification. Ultimately this has implications for human health as people consume sea food.

Very small plastic particles also enter our environment from micro-beads or micro-exfoliates contained in face scrubs or similar cosmetic products. Too small to be removed in sewage treatment processing they are washed directly out to sea. Again, they can be ingested by filter feeding organisms and then pass up the food chain. Particularly harmful substances to watch out for in cosmetic products are: Polyethylene/Polythene (PE), Polypropylene (PP), Polyethylene terephthalate (PET), Polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) and nylon.

To highlight these issues and raise awareness about the impacts of marine litter, MWT kicked off with a road show that is visiting the Trust's visitor centres as well as local town halls and libraries. To further boost the campaign, MWT staff members are speaking to local school children and groups throughout the summer. The Trust is also running a competition to design a logo, drawing attention to the issues of single use carrier bags. The winning design will be printed onto reusable bags and sold in the MWT shop. If you'd like more information please check out the Manx Wildlife Trust's website - <http://www.manxwt.org.uk>



Nature Festivals Unite in the South of Scotland for the First Time



Foraging for wild food on the beach

For the first time ever, two of Scotland's prestigious nature festivals have united to showcase over 150 family-friendly events taking place in the south of Scotland throughout April, May and June 2015.

The Dumfries and Galloway Wild Spring Festival (Scotland's largest and longest running wildlife festival) has joined forces with the Scottish Borders Nature Festival to celebrate the diversity of flora and fauna that can be discovered throughout the area in a fascinating programme of events. To mark Scotland's Year of Food & Drink, both festivals are also set to reveal a series of events with a special focus on the area's outstanding natural larder.

Almost all events are free or charge a modest admission of under £5 per person. Most are led by local wildlife or conservation experts and take in a host of natural delights including the iconic red squirrel, migrating geese, bats, badgers, butterflies and moths, otters, red kites, osprey, red deer, goats, gannets and sharks.

Project Manager for the Southern Uplands Partnership and spokesperson for the South of Scotland Wild Festivals, Pip Tabor, said:

"By uniting The Dumfries & Galloway Wild Spring Festival and the Scottish Borders Nature Festival we hope to shine a spotlight on the naturally inspiring countryside, forests, gardens and coastline (around 250 miles of it) across the south of Scotland.

"There are so many wonderful experiences on offer for families and wildlife enthusiasts from near and far to discover the outstanding areas of natural beauty in Dumfries & Galloway and The Scottish Borders. Many events at these festivals are

free and the local nature reserves and forestry visitor centres are second to none, offering the perfect way to get out in the fresh air and explore the south of Scotland this spring.”

Organisations hosting festival events include RSPB, Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT), the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT), Borders Forest Trust, Scottish Borders Council and Dumfries & Galloway Council, as well as a variety of independent local heritage attractions and estates.

Some of the highlights still to come include:

River Tweed Netting

**Wednesday 3 June 2015, 1:30pm to 4:30pm,
Paxton House**

Netting for salmon and sea trout is conducted at Paxton for scientific and conservation purposes by the Tweed Foundation and the Paxton Fishery Crew. Members of the public are invited to watch the netting and learn about the history, traditions and conservation work. The Tweed Foundation’s biologist will be on hand to explain the process and answer questions.

Bioblitz at Caerlaverock Wetland Centre

**Saturday 13 June 2015, 10:00am to 4:00pm,
Caerlaverock Wetland Centre**

Join the Caerlaverock Wetland Team on their first ever Bioblitz at Eastpark Farm, Glencaple, DG1 4RS. Help to find and identify as many different species of plant, insect, amphibian, bird, mammal and fungus as possible. There will be fun activities for families and natural history experts on hand to identify everything found.

Berwickshire Coastal Walk for Families

**Sunday 7 June 2015 11:00am to 3:00pm, Meet at
Burnmouth Village Hall**

A walk south along the Berwickshire coastal path to visit a colony of the rare and very localised small blue butterfly. Other butterflies which may be encountered include northern brown argus, wall, small copper and small heath. The blackneck moth also thrives here at its only known Scottish haunt. If conditions permit, the contents of an overnight moth-trap will also be examined. While the coastal path is fairly easy walking, some of the areas off-track are steep and rocky, so please have suitable footwear and a packed lunch as there are no facilities.

Booking is essential for some of the events – please see the website for further information on dates, times, costs and kit required.

For the latest news about The Dumfries & Galloway Wild Spring Festival and the Scottish Borders Nature Festival visit www.wildseasons.co.uk



Guillemots



Children at Caerlaverock



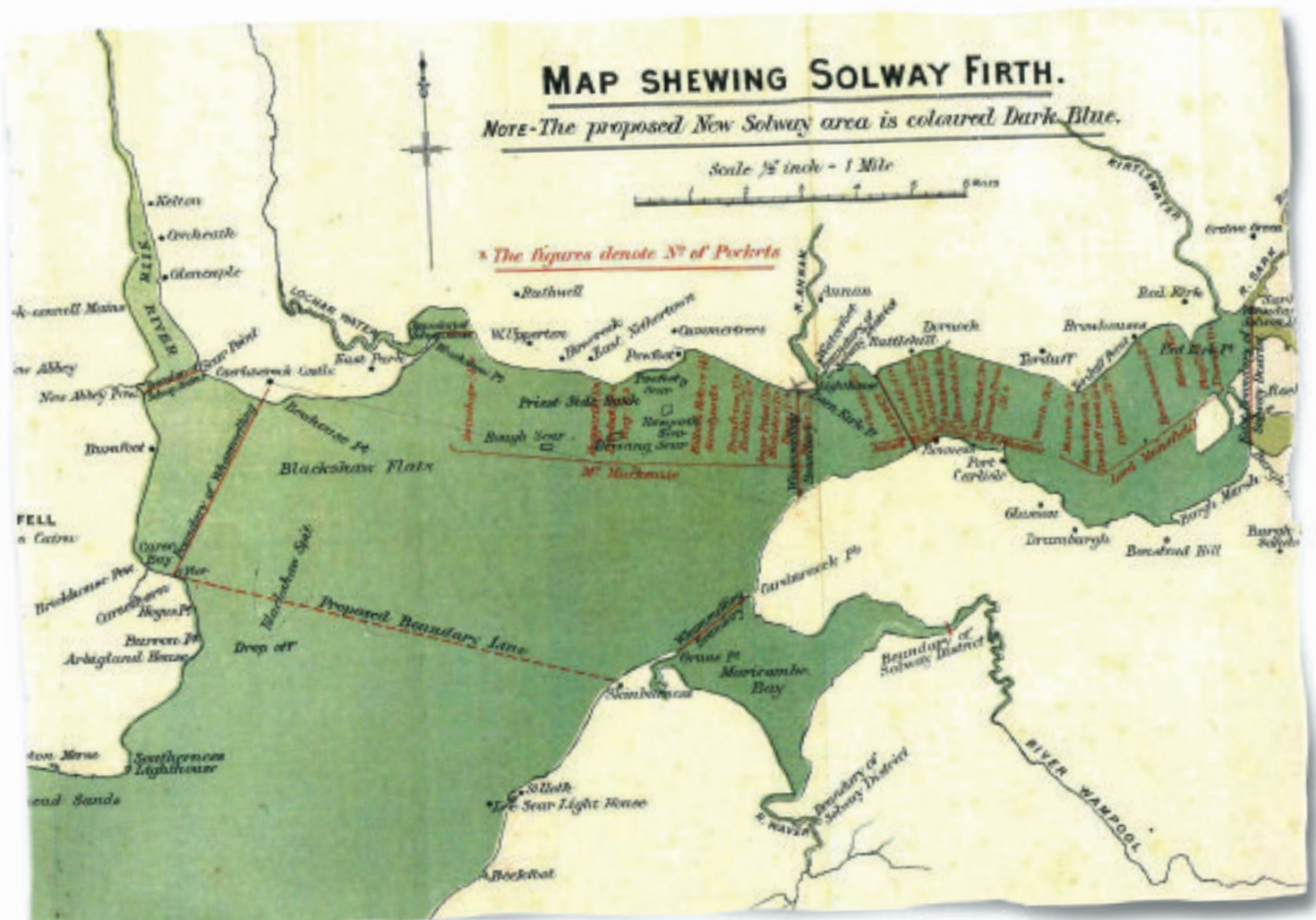
Salmon in Crisis

Atlantic Salmon are an iconic species that is very special to the Solway. They have been important for thousands of years, indeed Neolithic flint spear heads have been found on the banks of the River Annan in an area that is still used by many salmon to spawn every year.

They must have been an important food source to our early ancestors who relied on the diverse landscape of the Solway for all of their needs. The abundance of the salmon in the Solway and the movement of people into the area from different cultures spawned a variety of ways in which salmon were harvested. Up until the 19th century this harvest would have

been something that was important locally and would have provided cheap sustenance for many. The opening up of transport, primarily the arrival of the train, made the Solway one of the most important salmon fisheries in Britain. Fresh fish were in seemingly endless abundance and a large industry grew up harvesting salmon (and trout) to be sent to the large cities where fresh fish was

at a premium. The profits would have been substantial, indeed at the River Annan District Salmon Fishery Board (DSFB) when we were given copies of a ledger which listed the sale of declared salmon on the Scottish side between Gretna and Dumfries we were astounded at the values. In the 1920s the income of the fishery often exceeded £250,000; in today's terms that is



Map of the Inner Solway Nets produced by a 19th century review of the regulations in the Eden, Esk, Annan and Nith. The red letters indicate where every netting station was. A fraction of those nets remain.



around £11million. The industry no doubt secured employment for a substantial amount of people and must have caught a huge amount of fish.

Unfortunately things have changed. The large ranges of stake nets, the rows and rows of poke nets and the numbers of haaf nets have declined alarmingly. There has been a relentless decline in the numbers of salmon returning to our rivers. The reasons are not clear but rivers that the salmon depend upon for breeding are not in as good a condition as they might be. The intensification of land use has had significant effects on the quality of the habitats, water quality and even access for the fish. Straightening, dredging, wetland drainage and grazing right to the rivers' edges have seen a significant reduction in the biodiversity of many freshwater areas. Great progress has been made on improving habitats over the last 10 years and many of our freshwater systems are healthier than they have been for half a century. However, a lot more is still to be done.

Although the issues in the rivers are serious they do not explain the dramatic fall in Solway salmon. When young salmon (smolts) leave the river to go to their feeding grounds in the North Atlantic they face a huge number of challenges. They move offshore and north relatively quickly, we believe hitching a ride on the north flowing currents, and have to find food quickly to grow. Despite all the risks this treacherous journey entails, sea survival used to be in excess of 25% but is now below 5%. Although reasons for this are unclear a number of factors are pointed to. Mackerel and herring, possibly as a

result of climate change, are found much further north than they used to be, and in vast numbers. Are they competing with the food resource of the salmon, or even predating on them whilst small? Pelagic fishing vessels in the North Atlantic chasing the bounty of mackerel may, unintentionally, catch significant numbers of salmon as a bycatch. There may be many other reasons as yet unknown; more research is needed.

The effect of poor sea survival on the home waters is significant. Many rivers are now failing their conservation limits meaning that after fisheries have taken a harvest there are insufficient adult fish left to fill the rivers with young fish. In the short term hard decisions have to be taken. The importance of allowing as many fish as possible to spawn outweighs the needs of fishermen to

catch and kill fish. Many of the rod and line fisheries are responding by increasing the number of fish that are returned after capture (on the Annan rod fishery 90% of the fish caught are put back alive to continue on to spawn). The haaf net in particular is, along with salmon, an iconic part of the Solway's history and culture but if this fishery is to survive there will have to be an acceptance that the number of fish killed must be dramatically reduced.

It is unfair to blame any individual sector of salmon fishing for the decline in fish stocks as fishing took place year upon year without any signs of decline and so was clearly sustainable. However, it is clear now that with current sea survival the fishery is no longer sustainable and everyone involved must take responsibility to try and help reverse this trend. <http://www.riverannan.org>





Grayling butterfly on heather

Take a closer look at the Galloway & Southern Ayrshire Biosphere



Eyebright on the Borge Coast

The Galloway coast is part of Scotland's first Biosphere Reserve, simply known as a Biosphere, awarded in recognition of its special environments which are valued by local people.

Covering an area of 5,268 square kilometres it has an amazing combination of countryside, wildlife and culture so it is easy to see why people care about their surroundings and want you to take a closer look. Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere is a place where continued cooperation and collaboration will show that a sustainable way of living is not only possible but already happening.

The varied coastline is studded with ancient remains and hidden caves with many secrets to reveal from gory tales to fascinating geology. Wherever you go along the Galloway and Ayrshire coast you don't have to walk far before you find a stunning view but if you take a look down you may be surprised by the beauty of the plants at your feet.

Where the land meets the sea is always a demanding place for plants to survive because

they have to cope with a combination of wind, salt water and lack of soil. A summer carpet of yellow, pink and blue flowers adorns different types of seashore from sand dunes to rocky cliffs. These plants have adapted to flourish by the sea and some are so scarce that they are protected so remember a wild flower always looks better in the ground than in your hand.

Flowering plants attract many sorts of insects, the most attractive being butterflies and day-flying moths. The rare Northern Brown Argus is a butterfly that lays single eggs on the upper surface of the leaves of the yellow flowering rock-rose. Like its name suggests, it is a chocolate brown colour on

top but has a pretty spotted underside and is often seen basking in the sun, hiding away in long grasses when it becomes breezy.

Of course the coast is more than just a haven for wildlife in the newly designated Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere. It also provides valuable resources for education, recreation and tourism as well as for commercial fishing and future tidal energy production.

Find out more on gsabiosphere.org.uk and discover how you can become a proud supporter of the Biosphere by signing up to the new Biosphere Charter.

Green-veined white butterfly on perennial flax



GALLOWAY AND
SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE
BIOSPHERE



Northern Brown Argus



Perforated St John's wort





Seafood in Schools sails into Moffat!

A collaboration between Solway Firth Partnership's Out of the Blue project, Seafood Scotland and Moffat Academy led to the acclaimed Seafood in Schools project visiting Moffat on 19th and 20th March.

Pupils from the Academy were joined by children from Moffat and Beattock primary schools with over 200 children taking part in the event. A series of workshops explained where seafood comes from, how healthy it is to eat, and how it gets to our plates. Teachers, parents and the wider community were also welcomed along to an open event where session leaders were on hand to answer questions.

Jane Mills from Marine Scotland Science explained the work she undertakes to survey fish stocks which can involve lengthy spells at sea. On a recent two-week trip in the North Sea, Jane had collected a diverse array of species which pupils could examine first hand. Jane entertained her audience with a wealth of curious facts about her



collection. She explained how the peculiar lumpsucker attaches itself to rocks like a limpet while the well-camouflaged monkfish uses a lure to attract small fish which it captures by closing its huge lower jaw. Children learned that a kipper is a smoked herring and that much shellfish is sold live to ensure freshness. Pupils could feel the rough texture of a dogfish's skin by getting hands on and heard about how it's used to sand fine objects including violins.

Health and wellbeing was high on the agenda with a lively interactive session with Catriona Frankitti of Fish for Health. Fish provides important nutrients that help with everything from keeping skin smooth to improving concentration levels. Cat also explained the



importance of product development in the seafood sector with processes including vacuum packing, pickling and canning being valuable ways of lengthening shelf life. Pupils enjoyed a 'Come Dine With Me' tasting session featuring smoked trout, crab pate and pickled herring served with oatcakes.

Moffat Fisheries explained the process of raising trout on their farm nearby and the important role that aquaculture can play in feeding a growing world population. The local flavour was continued with the Buccleuch Arms of Moffat

demonstrating just how simple it is to cook delicious fish dishes in minutes. Needless to say, the results disappeared even faster than they were prepared!

The fun doesn't stop there and Solway Firth Partnership and Seafood in Schools are already working together on further events including outdoor visits to local harbours and seafood processors over coming months.

The Seafood in Schools project is funded by the Scottish Government, Aberdeenshire Council, Seafish, the Scottish Salmon Producers'

Association, the Scottish Fishermen's Trust and the Scottish Whitefish Producers' Association and relies on in-kind contributions and involvement by the fishing and aquaculture industries for its success. For more information visit www.seafoodinschools.org

The Solway Firth Partnership Out of the Blue project is funded by the European Fisheries Fund and Dumfries and Galloway Council. For more information please contact Pam Taylor on 01387 251991 or visit www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk





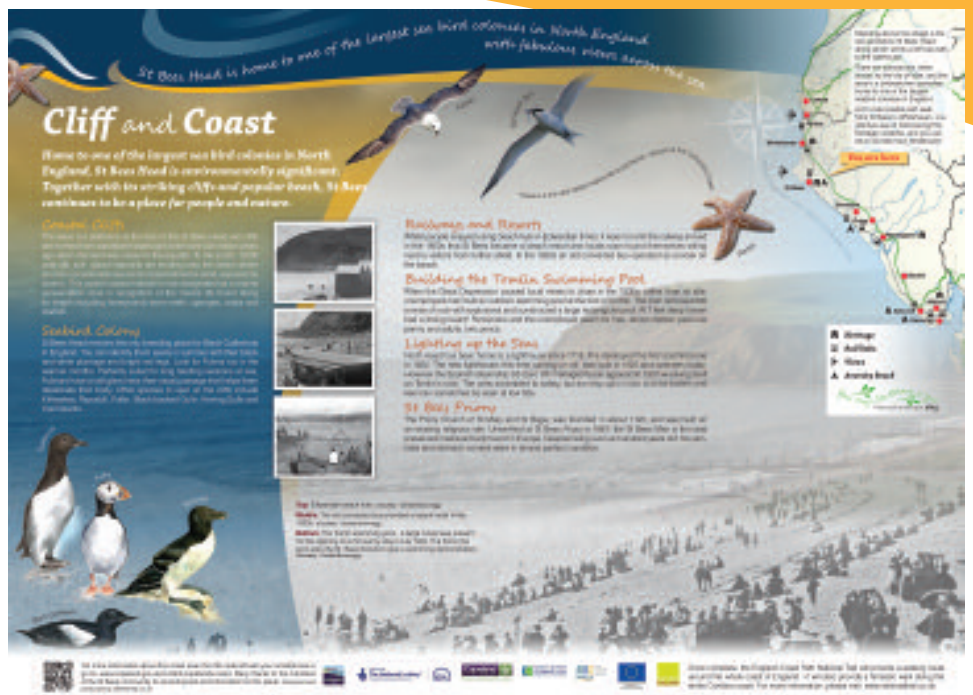
consulted the local community and asked for the stories the local people felt were important to share with visitors to the coast. We have received great support from various individuals and organisations, such as Cumbria Railway Association, Millom Discovery Centre and The Beacon, Whitehaven News and the North West Evening Mail who have kindly permitted the use of some fantastic old photographs, and Cumbria Wildlife Trust who alongside volunteers have helped to identify key species along our coast.



Natural England have also supported the scheme by funding a new interpretation panel to be located at Drigg alongside the general interpretation board which will give information regarding the newly designated Marine Conservation Zone which stretches from St Bees Head to Ravenglass.

We are also providing marine litter information to enable both a greater understanding of the issue and hopefully foster a more responsible attitude to the local environment. We had some great support from the young people at Whitehaven Harbour Youth Project, North Copeland Youth Partnership, Action for Children (Haverigg) and Shackles Off (Seascale) who helped with the design for the marine litter message.

New interpretation boards have been designed for Lowca, Parton, Whitehaven, St



Bees, Drigg, Ravenglass, Bootle, Silecroft, Haverigg and Millom (Seascale had a new interpretation board in 2012). All of the new panels, plus the one at Seascale, will be provided with an audio version of the information to ensure those with vision problems / reading difficulties can still access the information. All sites will also display the marine litter information.

The project has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, North & West Cumbria FLAG and Copeland Borough Council.





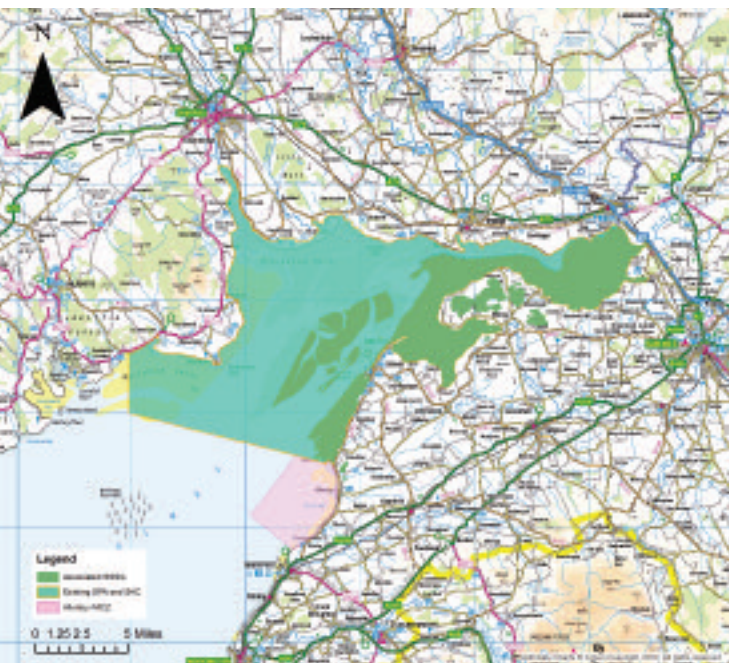
Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 Sites

Ruth Crundwell, Marine Adviser Cumbria Area Team Natural England



Natural England and the Environment Agency have recently been working together on a project called Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites - IPENS. This is a strategic approach to the management of these sites.

Silloth Coast looking across to Scotland



Barnacle geese



Natura 2000 sites are the Special Protection Areas (SPA) for birds and the Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) for habitats that have been created under the Habitats and Birds Directives from Europe. The Solway Firth is a European Marine Site with SPA and SAC designations as the map shows.

This strategic approach to obtain favourable condition will review risks and issues impacting or threatening the condition of the site, look at actions and measures that can be used to address those risks, identify funding options and identify gaps in our knowledge of how issues affect sites. Bringing all the strands together will help to provide better delivery of the site condition objectives required by Europe.

Each site has had a Site Improvement Plan (SIP) created, which outlines the actions to achieve and maintain the site in favourable condition and contains high level descriptions of issues affecting the site. They are in three parts: a summary table which sets out the priority issues and measures, a detailed actions table which sets out who needs to do what and when and a set of tables with contextual information and links. These documents are not 'written in stone' and can be developed as new issues or impacts arise that affect the site. The Solway Firth SIP is available on GOV.UK website within the Natural England publications pages and Environment Agency River Basin Management Plans pages.

Blue mussels

A Solway Cockle



Oystercatchers



The beach at Silloth

Working together to support a sustainable Solway creel fishery



Two projects are underway to help protect the long term sustainability and profitability of the Solway creel fishery: a lobster v-notching study and the introduction of creel escape panels. Both initiatives are voluntary and are intended to help increase valuable commercial crab and lobster stocks and shorten the time it takes fishermen to sort their catch.

Maximising recruitment can play an important part in achieving a sustainable and profitable fishery for the long term

Lobster v-notching

A scoping study is being carried out in the Solway to explore the potential local benefits of v-notching which is a way of harmlessly marking breeding lobsters by cutting a notch in the tail. Because there is no restriction on landing berried (egg-bearing) lobsters in Scotland, there is a loss of potential recruitment whenever one is taken. By v-notching berried females, and preventing landing of notched animals, we can ensure that eggs are protected and recruitment is improved.

Reproductive lobsters produce eggs after each moult and v-notches can take two or three moults to grow out. With each hen producing

thousands of eggs, v-notching can substantially increase egg production per individual and recruitment to the overall population. Practical and scientific studies in places including Northern Ireland, the Irish Republic and North America have shown that v-notching can result in considerable increases in reproduction in local lobster fisheries.

Collecting the notches can also provide information about lobster genetics to improve understanding of local populations. Better information can lead to improved management of the fishery and can offer the potential for fishery certification in the future. Establishing local provenance and sustainability can provide marketing opportunities to increase the value of the catch.



Minimising mortality can play an important part in achieving a sustainable and profitable fishery for the long term

Creel escape panels

Creel escape panels are used in other parts of the UK and abroad and are designed to allow juvenile crab and lobster to escape unharmed. The measure also reduces the time it takes to clear pots so has benefits for both stock conservation and the working practice of fishermen.

Escape gaps of 80 by 45mm will typically retain lobster and brown crab above landing size but let those below the minimum size escape. However, catch still needs to be measured to make sure any retained crab and lobster are above the minimum landing size.

Practical and scientific trials have proven the value of escape gaps over many years including work by Cumbria Sea Fisheries Committee, Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority and Bangor University. Retaining juveniles is damaging due to the impact of creel movement, aggression in creels, handling and translocation from refuges so it's better to leave them on the seabed.

The use of escape hatches:

- reduces damage to, and mortality of, juvenile crab and lobster
- reduces limb damage to saleable lobsters thereby maximising their value
- reduces the time needed to clear creels

Solway Lobster Fishery Data Collection

The v-notching and escape panel projects are being supplemented with work on more general data collection to improve understanding of the Solway lobster fishery. By collecting evidence of the use of traditional fishing grounds and developing a better understanding of the status of lobster stocks, local fishermen will be able to contribute more effectively to future management of the fishery and to the evolving marine planning process.

Enabled by funding from Marine Scotland and supported by the South West Inshore Fisheries Group, these projects are being taken forward in a partnership between local creel fishermen, scientists and Solway Firth Partnership. Galloway Static Gear Fishermen's Association is the industry body representing most local creel fishermen and is a key partner in the projects.

Inshore Fisheries Groups (IFGs) are non-statutory bodies established recently to improve the management of Scotland's inshore fisheries. There are six IFGs covering the whole of Scotland's coastline with the Solway being part of a larger South West IFG area. www.ifg.org.uk

Solway Firth Partnership is an independent local charity supporting sustainable use of the coast and sea and helping to protect the distinctive character of the local area. www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk

Female lobster with eggs





Environmental Fair volunteers and organisers with Dr Aileen McLeod, Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform

A New Experience at SFP

For eight weeks 3rd year Environmental Stewardship student Henriette Scholz was on placement with Solway Firth Partnership. Her responsibilities included drafting the Partnership's monthly newsletter, updating the website, producing PowerPoint presentations, cataloguing and updating the internal image database, organising the Dumfries and Galloway Environment Fair and assisting with various other tasks. Here's a personal account of her experience:

"Being in my third year of study at the University of Glasgow I have come across many environmental theories, concepts and systems. However, sitting in a lecture room is just not the same as gathering practical experience; there are so many generic and transferable skills that you can only really fully understand through hands-on involvement. During the eight weeks I gained a great insight into not only the work with communities, environmental agencies, local authorities and independent contractors but also into the daily office routine.

My greatest challenge was organising the Dumfries and Galloway Environment Fair. Within six short weeks and in co-operation with the D&G Council's Ranger Service we put together an event hosting nearly 1,000 visitors from



Henriette Scholz



Organisers with Dr Aileen McLeod



Councillor Ronnie Nicholson, Leader of Dumfries & Galloway Council visits the Environment Fair

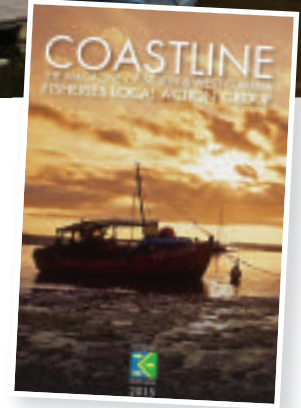
across the region. I have given all my time and effort to managing volunteers, organising activities and dealing with stall holder queries. The amount of work required for this event turned out to be much greater than I had anticipated and yet, in the end, all the effort paid off; what a rewarding experience!

Another project I was involved with, more scientific and less sociable, was the monitoring of harbour basins for marine invasive non-native species (INNS). I conducted a trial survey using settlement panels made from black correx sheet in the New Dock basin at Sillloth harbour. The panels were deployed and then retrieved again after eight weeks to record any presence of marine INNS. Although no INNS were found in this test run, further monitoring to ensure early detection of invasions is crucial.

Overall, I had an absolutely brilliant time with Solway Firth Partnership; I felt welcomed and appreciated by all other members of staff and am grateful for their trust in my skills and abilities. While this experience has contributed to my personal development, given me confidence and joy, I am certain that this placement will be hugely valuable for my future career – Thank you Solway Firth Partnership!"



Cumbrian FLAG Funds Successful Projects



With the successful European Fisheries Axis 4 Grant fund now closed to new applicants, the North & West Cumbria Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) team's focus has switched to assisting grant recipients to claim their funding and to reflect on what has been achieved in the FLAG area so far. With just under £1.5 million in grant funding issued to date, the impact of the funding along the coast will be felt for some time.

This March saw the publication of the N&W Cumbria FLAG's first magazine, "Coastline", which was produced to provide a closer look at some of the FLAG's supported projects and to highlight the diverse benefits to the communities along the beautiful coastline of North & West Cumbria.

A particular highlight from the projects featured is the Whitehaven Marina Project which helped to provide new berths, pontoons, lock gates, a landing stage for cruise liners and a stunning new office building on the Harbour at Whitehaven. The changes have given an updated and modern edge to the historic harbour without overshadowing its unique character.

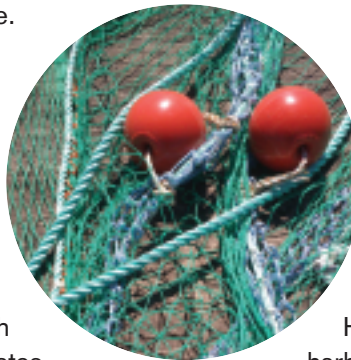
The FLAG team are particularly excited about a recently launched project by Whitehaven Harbour Youth Project. Their aim is to provide the project's local youth groups and primary and secondary schools in the area with aquatic sporting

adventures on their own doorstep.

Previously, the youth project's excursions have been predominantly focused on the Mountains and Lakes of the Western Lake District but this time the activities will be enjoyed a stone's throw away in the harbour and marina at Whitehaven, with participants getting the chance to try sea kayaking, sailing and paddle boarding for the first time.

Hopefully launching in time for the Easter holidays will be the new extension to the Lake District Coast Aquarium. It is unique in the country – with the majority of fish being native to the British coast. FLAG funding has enabled the aquarium to expand and build a sea lab, lobster hatchery, jellyfish lifecycle display and improve education facilities as well as build a conservatory for the popular Harbour Café that has stunning views over the harbour and Solway.

The FLAG team aims to raise awareness of the many community projects that have benefited from the EEF funding by distributing the magazine to its members locally and through social media. The magazine "Coastline" is available to view online by following this link: http://issuu.com/theguidemediagroup/docs/coastline_magazine It is also available via the FLAG website www.cumbriaflag.org.uk and on Twitter @cumbriaflag





Shag

Great Places to Bird Watch & Explore around Loch Ryan

Loch Ryan is one of the most important wildlife sites in the UK. It is a significant location for wild birds throughout the year and holds nationally important populations of several species.

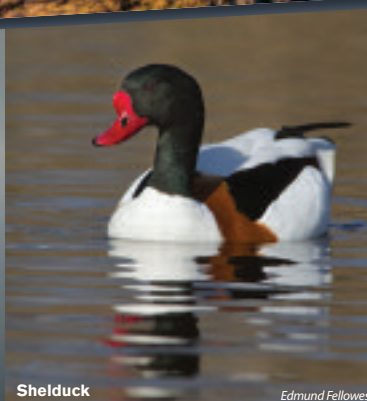
A new booklet showcasing this special site is now available from visitor outlets and libraries in the region. An electronic copy can be downloaded from www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk

The booklet was produced by Solway Firth Partnership with support from RSPB and funding from Dumfries and Galloway Council.

**BOOKLET
OUT NOW**



Gannet

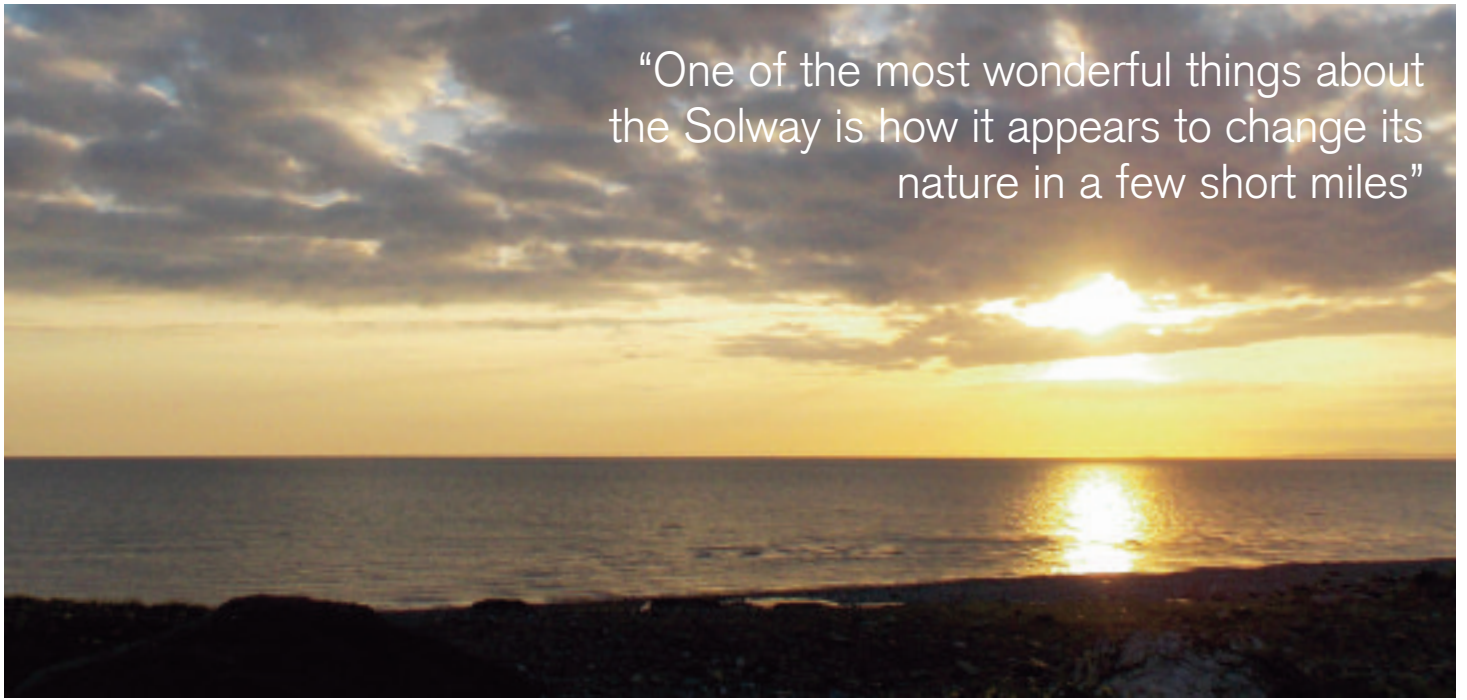


Shelduck

Edmund Fellowes



“One of the most wonderful things about the Solway is how it appears to change its nature in a few short miles”



The Solway Coast

The Solway Coast by H C Ivison – A review by Henriette Scholz

This is a book full of fascinating mysterious, magic and historic tales about the Solway Coast. From St. Bees on the Cumbrian side to Whithorn on the Scottish side, from prehistory to the present day, H.C. Ivison takes you on a journey along one of the most diverse stretches of Britain's heritage coast.

Visited by Vikings, Romans, Smugglers and Saints, the Solway once lay at the heart of the old Northern Lands. With its widely expanding mudflats, beaches and marshland the Firth is considered as one of the most beautiful coasts in Britain – a hidden gem. This is the message the book conveys. This extraordinary beauty was certainly what attracted famous visitors such as Charles Dickens, Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns to the area. For others it was the productivity of the lands and the richness of natural resources.

However, the Solway is also known to be uniquely dangerous because of its fast flowing tides that can come in faster than a galloping horse, as pointed out in various legends captured by Ivison. One of them brutally highlights the unpredictability of the sands at low tide. There once were two brothers, fighting. One killed the other and dragged him out on the mud at low tide to hide the body near Moricambe Bay. When the murderous brother came to unload the body he realised, to his despair, that rigor mortis had set in and he couldn't rid himself of the load. So, weighed down by his dreadful burden, both brothers were sucked down into the quicksand never to surface again.

Different legends describe the tragic tale of Bega who fled across the Irish Sea to escape a forced marriage and later became a well-known saint. Another story tells of sea wives, or mermaids as they are referred to on the Scottish side, taking on the form of beautiful women to enchant young men

“when the sun lies low and you can scarce tell the difference between land and sea”.

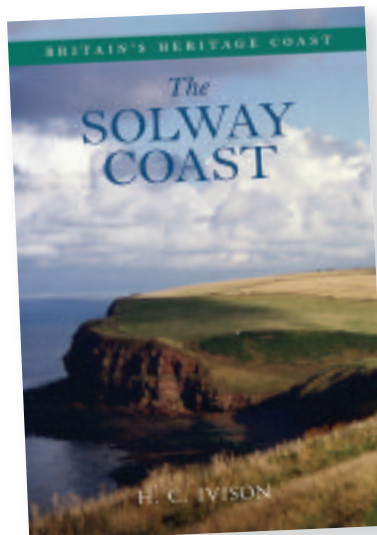
Sunsets are referred to as a speciality of the Solway and supposedly even gave the estuary its name; ‘Sol’ and ‘Way’ – the Sun's Way or ‘Path of the Sun’. On the contrary, much less romantically, is the explanation that Solway derives from the Old Norse word ‘Sol-vagr’ meaning ‘muddy bay’. One way or the other, this book, full of curious, stunning and interesting photographs of past and present, makes it clear that the Solway Firth is special and full of life, history and heritage – then and today.

Did you know?

Whitehaven was the home of US president George Washington's father, Augustine, when he was a boy.

The name Silloth, a town on the Cumbrian side of the Solway, derives from Old Norse meaning ‘barn’.

In 1856 an Act was passed to stop the flow of desperate lovers crossing the Solway to Gretna Green. The new law required three weeks of residence in Scotland before marriage could take place.



Amberley. 2014. ISBN 978-1-4456-2180-7. £14.99

Dates for your Diary

May – October 2015

MAY

Saturday 2, 16 May

**Dawn Chorus
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)
5.00am to 7.30am
Booking: Essential**

Be an early bird for one day only, and experience one of the wonders of the natural world! The dawn chorus at the Crook of Baldoon is a riot of sound, from the trill of skylarks, to the complex scratches of reed buntings. We'll help you tell them apart, or give you the space to just stand and listen. Bring binoculars if you have them (though really, you just need your ears).

Contact: 01988 402130 or crookofbaldoon@rspb.org.uk

Meet: Crook of Baldoon Nature Reserve, Wigtown, DG8 9AG, NX445530

Cost: £1.50 members, £3 non-members, children free

Sunday 3 May

**Coastal Foraging & Wild Cook-In
(Galloway Wild Foods)
4.00pm to 7.30pm
Booking: Essential**

Learn about coastal and maritime plants (including seaweeds) in a 2.5 hour walk covering about 1 mile. There will be wild treats and tasters to enjoy throughout.

Contact: mark@gallowaywildfoods.com or 07900692478

Meet: Carrick Shore, details provided on booking

Cost: £25 Adult, £15 Child (5-16), under 5 free, £65 Family

Sunday 3 May

**In Focus
(WWT Caerlaverock)
10.00am to 4.00pm
Booking: Not Essential**

Try before you buy the latest binoculars and telescopes from the huge range available today. In Focus experts on hand all day to give advice. WWT Caerlaverock benefits from every sale.

Contact: Pam Mundy 01387 770200 or info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk

Meet: WWT Caerlaverock Wetland Centre, Eastpark Farm, Glencaple, DG1 4RS, NY052657

Cost: Free

Monday 4 May

**Amphibian Fun
(WWT Caerlaverock)
10.00am to 2.00pm
Booking: Essential**

Find out about frogs, toads and newts and Caerlaverock Wetland Centre, look for tadpoles and frogs and learn about amphibian lifecycles. Family event.

Contact: Pam Mundy 01387 770200 or info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk

Meet: WWT Caerlaverock Wetland Centre, Eastpark Farm, Glencaple, DG1 4RS, NY052657

Cost: £7.99 Adult, £6.10 Concession, £3.90 Young person, £21.40 Family, under 4 and members free

Sunday 3 May

**Forest Foraging & Wild Cook-In
(Galloway Wild Foods)
1.00pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential**

A guided foray through Cally Woods exploring the delicious, healthy and surprising array of edible spring plants and fungi. Enjoy a wild cook-in of our finds in the forest afterwards. Family friendly - 1.5 miles easy walking for all ages

Contact: mark@gallowaywildfoods.com or 07900 692478

Meet: Cally Woods, details provided on booking

Cost: £25 Adult, £15 Child (5-16), under 5 free

Tuesdays 5, 12, 19, 26 May

**Mull of Galloway Guided Walk
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)
1.00pm Start
Booking: Not required**

Join the warden for a guided tour around the Mull, a stunning location at all times of the year. Seabirds, flowers, butterflies and bugs during Spring and Summer with migrating birds during Autumn. Bring binoculars and wear warm clothing and stout footwear.

Contact: 01988 402130 or mullofgalloway@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB, Mull of Galloway, Drummole, DG9 9HP, NX155304

Cost: £1.50 members, £3 non-members, children free

Thursday 7 May

**Bird Song Identification
(Logan Botanic Garden)
1.00pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Not Essential**

Come along and learn to identify birds found around the Botanic Garden. This event is run in conjunction with the RSPB.

Contact: Richard Baines 01776 860231 or r.baines@rbge.org.uk

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, Stranraer, Dumfries and Galloway, DG9 9ND

Cost: £6 Adults, £5 Concession, Children free

Thursdays 7, 14, 21, 28 May

**Mull of Galloway Guided Walk
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)**

Details as previous

Friday 8, 22 May

**Mocha and Moths
(RSPB Mersehead)
9.30am to 11.00am
Booking: Essential**

Not all moths are dull brown and boring! We've got dozens of species at Mersehead, and they come in all different shades and sizes. With the help of our moth trap, you'll be able to see them up close before we release them, and find out a bit more about how they live, and enjoy a hot or cold drink while we look through our catch.

Contact: 01387 780579 or mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead, DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £5 Adult, £2 Child, members half price

Saturday 9 May

**Natterjack Night
(WWT Caerlaverock)
8.30pm to 10.00pm
Booking: Essential**

A walk out onto the reserve to find the rarest amphibian in Britain, the Natterjack Toad. If we are lucky we may hear the toad chorus as the male toads come to the shallow pools to encourage the females to spawn.

Contact: Pam Mundy 01387 770200 or info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk

Meet: WWT Caerlaverock Wetland Centre, Eastpark Farm, Glencaple, DG1 4RS, NY052657

Cost: £7.50 Adult, £2.50 Child, £5 Concessions

Tuesday 12 May

**Guided Walk: The Magic of Spring
(Logan Botanic Garden)
10.30am to 12.00noon
Booking: Not Essential**

Come along and enjoy a tour around the garden in the company of a member of the horticultural team. See the seasonal displays of floral delights such as Primulas, Madderia Rhododendrons and Paeonias.

Contact: Richard Baines 01776 860231 or r.baines@rbge.org.uk

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, Stranraer, Dumfries and Galloway, DG9 9ND

Cost: £6 Adults, £5 Concession, Children free

Saturday 16 May

**Guided Solway Shore Walk
(Solway Shore Walker)
5.00pm
Booking: Essential**

Join Ann Lingard for an informal ramble down to the low-tide mark on the southern shore of the Firth, Beckfoot, to look at animals, the submerged forest, and whatever the sea might have deposited on the tidelines. Wear wellies, warm clothes, and bring waterproofs.

Contact: Ann Lingard 016973 21967 or enquiries@annlingard.com

Meet: Beckfoot, northernmost Mawbray Banks carpark opposite Bank Mill Nursery

Cost: FREE, donations welcome

Sunday 17 May

**Wildlife Photography for Beginners
(WWT Caerlaverock)
10.00am to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential**

Special beginners photography workshop with Tom Langlands and Bob Fitzsimmons. Learn how to take fantastic macro photographs of the insects and flowers present on the reserve.

Contact: 01387 770200 or info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk

Meet: WWT Caerlaverock, Eastpark Farm, Caerlaverock, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, DG1 4RS

Cost: £60

Whilst every effort is made to check the accuracy of the information given, Solway Firth Partnership cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies or wrong information contained here and strongly recommends that you confirm details/arrangements/charges beforehand.



Sunday 17 May

**Woodland Adventure
(RSPB Mersehead)**
11.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential

Join us for an adventure in the woods. Follow a trail and see what activities you have to complete. Find out about what lives in the woods and what you can do to help them.

Contact: 01387 780579 or
mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead,
DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £2 per Child

Friday 22 May

**Birds at Camer Woods
(CVCWT)**
9.30am to 12.00noon
Booking: Essential

Come and celebrate the return of migrant birds on this walk through the ancient semi-natural woodland. Suitable for beginners.

Contact: Linda or Pete at Cree Valley
Community Woodlands Trust 01671
401423 or enquiries@cvcwt.org.uk

Cost: Free, donations welcome

Sunday 24 May

**Seabird Safari
(National Trust)**
11.00am to 2.00pm
Booking: Essential

Join our Coastal Ranger on this super seabird safari. Go from beach to cliff top, and back again, to discover the secret cove of Fleswick bay and some of the best viewing points for a bit of seabird spotting.

Contact: 017687 74649 or
whitehavencoast@nationaltrust.org.uk

Meet: Whitehaven Coast, St Bees

Cost: FREE

Saturday 30 May

**Gardening for Wildlife
Course - Birds
(RSPB Mersehead)**
11.00am to 2.00pm
Booking: Essential

Come along for a fun and interactive demonstration on how to create a perfect garden for wildlife and take away cuttings from plants, plant your own seeds, make a pot plant bird feeder, learn what plants have seeds and berries which will attract birds to your garden and so much more!

Contact: 01387 780579 or
mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead,
DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £4 Adults, £2 Child, members half price

Tidelines

Sunday 31 May

**Music on the Beach
(RSPB Mersehead)**
11.00am to 2.00pm
Booking: Essential

Come down to the beach with the RSPB to search amongst the driftwood and see what musical instruments can be made.

Contact: 01387 780579 or
mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead,
DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £1 Adult, £3 Child

JUNE

Tuesdays 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 June

**Mull of Galloway Guided Walk
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)**

Details as previous

Thursdays 4, 11, 18, 25 June

**Mull of Galloway Guided Walk
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)**

Details as previous

Saturday 6 June

**Maryport Trawler Race
(Maryport Inshore Rescue)**
Booking: Not Essential

Charity fun day, involving visiting boats and trawlers from all around the Solway Firth and the Isle Of Man. Family day for all. The race is run from this fishing port on the Cumbria coast in aid of charities including Maryport Inshore Rescue independent lifeboat.

www.facebook.com/maryporttrawlerace

Sunday 7 June

**Guided Solway Shore Walk
(Solway Shore Walker)**
9.45am
Booking: Essential

Join Ann Lingard for an informal ramble down to the low-tide mark on the southern shore of the Firth, Allonby, to look at animals, the submerged forest, and whatever the sea might have deposited on the tidelines. Wear wellies, warm clothes, and bring waterproofs.

Contact: Ann Lingard 016973 21967 or
enquiries@annlingard.com

Meet: Dubmill Point, northernmost carpark in Allonby just before 30mph de-restriction sign.

Cost: FREE, donations welcome

Sunday 7 June

**Sealife Safari
(National Trust)**
10.00am to 12.00noon

Join our Coastal Ranger to discover the wonderful world of the sealife beneath the waves on this guided walk down to the low water mark at Whitehaven Harbour.

Contact: 017687 74649 or
whitehavencoast@nationaltrust.org.uk

Meet: Beacon Museum, Whitehaven Harbour

Cost: FREE

Sunday 7 June

**Coastal Wildflower Wander
(National Trust)**
1.30pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Not essential

Join our Coastal Ranger for a wander through the flower rich cliff top meadow habitats high above the bustling Whitehaven Harbour. Look closely, what's growing amongst the grasses?

Contact: 017687 74649 or
whitehavencoast@nationaltrust.org.uk

Meet: Beacon Museum, Whitehaven Harbour

Cost: FREE

Friday 12, 26 June

**Mocha and Moths
(RSPB Mersehead)**

Details as previous

Saturday 13 June

**Caerlaverock Bioblitz
(WWT Caerlaverock)**
10.00am to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential

Join us on our first ever Bioblitz at Caerlaverock Wetland Centre. Help us find and identify as many different species of plant, insect, amphibian, bird, mammal and fungi as we can. There will be fun activities for families and natural history experts on hand to identify everything we find.

Contact: Pam Mundy 01387 770200 or
info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk

Meet: WWT Caerlaverock Wetland Centre,
Eastpark Farm, Glencaple, DG1 4RS,
NY052657

Cost: £7.99 Adult, £6.10 Concession,
£3.90 Young person, £21.40 Family, under
4 and members free

Saturday 13 June

**Off the Beaten Track
(RSPB Mersehead)**
11.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential

Mersehead has toads, deer, otters, badgers, and of course birds! Join our guided walk to see how many different things you can spot. We will be looking in mammal traps to see what we have caught, following trails and much more.

Contact: 01387 780579 or
mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead,
DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £4 Adult, £2 Child, members half price

Sunday 14 June

**Woodland Adventure
(RSPB Mersehead)**

Details as previous

Tuesday 16 June

**Ken Dee Guided Walk
(RSPB Ken Dee Marshes)**
10.00am to 12.00noon
Booking: Essential

Join the warden for a leisurely walk around the reserve to learn how our on-going work on site is giving nature a home. Meet at the Reserve car park.

Contact: 01988 402130 or
crystal.maw@rspb.org.uk

Meet: Ken Dee Marshes Reserve, Castle Douglas, DG7 2LY

Cost: £4 Adult, £2 Child; members half price, £10 Family ticket

Saturday 20 June

**Bats, Moths and Toads
(RSPB Mersehead)**
8.00pm to 10.00pm
Booking: Essential

Join us for a guided walk and see what wildlife uses the reserve at dusk. If we are lucky we might catch a glimpse of the barn owl and bats hunting or hear the natterjacks croaking. Please bring a torch and midge spray.

Contact: 01387 780579 or
mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead,
DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £4 Adult, £2 Child, members half price



Foraging for wild food on the Galloway Coast

Saturday 20 & Sunday 21 June

Dads & Kids Camp (WWT Caerlaverock)
Saturday 6.00pm to Sunday 10.00am
Booking: Essential

Spend a night camping at WWT Caerlaverock, to celebrate Father's Day. Take part in activities such as open fire cooking, a night-time wildlife safari, tracks and signs and fire lighting. Food is provided, please let us know of any dietary requirements. Children aged 8 -14.

Contact: Pam Mundy 01387 770200 or info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk

Meet: WWT Caerlaverock Wetland Centre, Eastpark Farm, Glencaple, DG1 4RS, NY052657

Cost: £15 Adult, £7.50 Child

Sunday 21 June

Fun in the Garden (RSPB Mersehead)
11.00am to 12.30pm and 2.00pm to 3.30pm
Booking: Essential

Come and join us for a wild family day out, with treasure trails, minibeast hunting and more. Have fun with nature and find out how you can help nature.

Contact: 01387 780579 or mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead, DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £2 per Child

Saturday 27 June

Butterfly Walk (RSPB Mersehead)
11.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential

Come and join us for a walk around the reserve looking at what butterflies make their home at Mersehead. We will look at butterflies in detail looking at their features and the different species.

Contact: 01387 780579 or mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead, DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £4 Adult, £2 Child, members half price

Sunday 28 June

Sounds of the Wetlands (WWT Caerlaverock)
Saturday 6.00pm to Sunday 10.00am
Booking: Essential

Come to the reserve and listen to all the different sounds in our wetlands, using our special parabolic amplifiers. Family event.

Contact: Pam Mundy 01387 770200 or info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk

Meet: WWT Caerlaverock Wetland Centre, Eastpark Farm, Glencaple, DG1 4RS, NY052657

Cost: £7.99 Adult, £6.10 Concession, £3.90 Young person, £21.40 Family, under 4 and members free

JULY

Thursday 2 & Tuesdays 7 July

Beetlemania (WWT Caerlaverock)
10.00am to 2.00pm
Booking: Essential

See how many different kinds of beetles you can find on the reserve. Play games and take part in craft activities. Family event.

Contact: Pam Mundy 01387 770200 or info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk

Meet: WWT Caerlaverock Wetland Centre, Eastpark Farm, Glencaple, DG1 4RS, NY052657

Cost: £7.99 Adult, £6.10 Concession, £3.90 Young person, £21.40 Family, under 4 and members free

Thursdays 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 July

Mull of Galloway Guided Walk (RSPB Mull of Galloway)

Details as previous

Friday 3, 10, 17, 24 July

Nature Tots (RSPB Mersehead)
11.00am to 12.30pm and 2.00pm to 3.30pm
Booking: Essential

Whatever the weather, come along with your little nippers for this interactive wildlife trail. Play outdoor games and sing songs, followed by a story and a cup of tea or coffee (juice for the little ones).

Contact: 01387 780579 or mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead, DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £2 per Child

Saturday 4 July

High Tide Perambulation (RSPB Crook of Baldoon)
1.00pm to 3.00pm
Booking: Not required

Take a gentle stroll along the flood bank through nature's home, watching for wildlife that use the muds and saltmarsh to feed being evicted by the advancing tide. Bring binoculars and walking boots.

Contact: 01988 402130 or crookofbaldoon@rspb.org.uk

Meet: Crook of Baldoon Nature Reserve, Wigtown, DG8 9AG, NX445530

Cost: £1.50 members, £3 non-members, children free

Sunday 5 July

In Focus (WWT Caerlaverock)

Details as previous

Sunday 5 July

Guided Solway Shore Walk (Solway Shore Walker)
8.45am
Booking: Essential

Join Ann Lingard for an informal ramble down to the low-tide mark on the southern shore of the Firth, Allonby, to look at animals, the submerged forest, and whatever the sea might have deposited on the tidelines. Wear wellies, warm clothes, and bring waterproofs.

Contact: Ann Lingard 016973 21967 or enquiries@annlingard.com

Meet: Dubmill Point, northernmost carpark in Allonby just before 30mph de-restriction sign.

Cost: FREE, donations welcome

Tuesdays 7, 14, 21, 28 July

Mull of Galloway Guided Walk (RSPB Mull of Galloway)

Details as previous

Friday 10, 24 July

Mocha and Moths (RSPB Mersehead)

Details as previous

Saturday 11 July

Off the Beaten Track (RSPB Mersehead)

Details as previous

Sunday 12 July

Arty Butterflies and Dragonflies (RSPB Mersehead)
11.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential

Come and join us for a creative day looking at butterflies and dragonflies. We will create our own butterflies and dragonflies and then try and fly them in the garden.

Contact: 01387 780579 or mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead, DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £4 Adult, £2 Child, members half price

Monday 13 July

Guided Solway Shore Walk (Solway Shore Walker)

4.30pm
Booking: Essential

Join Ann Lingard for an informal ramble down to the low-tide mark on the southern shore of the Firth, Beckfoot, to look at animals, the submerged forest, and whatever the sea might have deposited on the tidelines. Wear wellies, warm clothes, and bring waterproofs.

Contact: Ann Lingard 016973 21967 or enquiries@annlingard.com

Meet: Beckfoot, northernmost Mawbray Banks carpark opposite Bank Mill Nursery

Cost: FREE, donations welcome

Thursday 16 July until Wednesday 19 August

Scottish Nature Photography Awards (Logan Botanic Garden)
Daily 10.00am to 5.00pm
Booking: Not required

An exhibition of winning images from the 2014 Scottish Nature Photography Awards, selected from over 2000 entries, will be on show. Images will feature Scotland's iconic landscape, wildlife and natural environment.

Contact: Richard Baines 01776 860231 or r.baines@rbge.org.uk

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, Stranraer, Dumfries and Galloway, DG9 9ND

Cost: £6 Adults, £5 Concession, Children free

Saturday 18 July

Moth Morning (RSPB Crook of Baldoon)
Start 10.00am
Booking: Essential

Join the Warden to identify the moths that have been attracted to the moth trap the night before.

Contact: 01988 402130 or crookofbaldoon@rspb.org.uk

Meet: Crook of Baldoon Nature Reserve, Wigtown, DG8 9AG, NX445530

Cost: £1.50 members, £3 non-members, children free

Saturday 18 July

Hedgerow Safari (RSPB Mersehead)
11.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential

Get up close and personal with the small mammals that live in the hedgerows. Our Hedgerow Safari events give children the chance to see native wildlife that is often difficult to spot. During the event we will head along the hedgerow to open up the traps and see what's inside!

Contact: 01387 780579 or mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead, DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £4 Adult, £2 Child, members half price

Mull of Galloway





Starfish and sponge

Friday 24 July

Mystery Moths
(RSPB Ken Dee Marshes)
10.00am to 12.00 noon
Booking: Essential

Join the warden to discover what exciting minibeasts turn up after a night's insect trapping at Ken Dee Marshes.

Contact: 01988 402130 or
crystal.maw@rspb.org.uk

Meet: Ken Dee Marshes Reserve car park,
Castle Douglas, DG7 2LY

Cost: £1.50 members, £3 non-members,
children free

Saturday 25 July

Big Butterfly Count
(RSPB Mersehead)
11.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential

Come and join us for a walk around the reserve looking at what butterflies make their home at Mersehead. We will look at butterflies in detail looking at their features and the different species while recording them for the Big Butterfly Count.

Contact: 01387 780579 or
mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead,
DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £2 per person

AUGUST

Saturday 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 August

Crafty Saturdays
(RSPB Mersehead)
11.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm
Booking: Essential

Come and join us every week where we will explore creatures around the reserve and then have a crafty session, we might make a bottlescope, planters, bee houses and much more.

Contact: 01387 780579 or
mersehead@rspb.org.uk

Meet: RSPB Reserve, Mersehead,
DG2 8AH, NX925561

Cost: £3 per child

Sunday 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 August

Fun in the Garden
(RSPB Mersehead)

Details as previous

Tuesdays 4, 11, 18, 25 August

Mull of Galloway Guided Walk
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)

Details as previous

Thursdays 6, 13, 20, 27 August

Mull of Galloway Guided Walk
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)

Details as previous

Friday 7 August

Moth and Bat Night
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)
9.30pm to 10.30pm
Booking: Essential

To coincide with the Big Wild Sleepout, why not join Paul in Wigtown, to experience the sounds of the night. Bat detectors will be available.

Contact: 01988 402130 or
crookofbaldoon@rspb.org.uk

Meet: Crook of Baldoon Nature Reserve,
Wigtown, DG8 9AG, NX445530

Cost: £1.50 members, £3 non-members,
children free

Friday 7, 14, 21, 28 August

Nature Tots
(RSPB Mersehead)

Details as previous

Friday 7, 21 August

Mocha and Moths
(RSPB Mersehead)

Details as previous

Saturday 8 August

Moth Morning
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)

Details as previous

Thursday 20 August until Saturday 31 October

The Mull of Galloway Exhibition
(Logan Botanic Garden)
Daily 10.00am to 5.00pm
Booking: Not required

An exhibition of an illustrated history of the Mull of Galloway.

Contact: Richard Baines 01776 860231 or
r.baines@rbge.org.uk

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan,
Stranraer, Dumfries and Galloway,
DG9 9ND

Cost: £6 Adults, £5 Concession, Children
free

A beadlet anemone



Friday 28 August

Mud Walk
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)
1.00pm to 3.00pm
Booking: Essential

Wigtown Bay Local Nature Reserve from a different angle. Starting from the RSPB's Crook of Baldoon. What makes an estuary a great home for nature? Mud, plants and wildlife set within the beautiful landscape of Wigtown Bay. You will need wellies as you will be going out onto the mud.

Contact: 01988 402130 or
crookofbaldoon@rspb.org.uk

Meet: Crook of Baldoon Nature Reserve,
Wigtown, DG8 9AG, NX445530

Cost: £1.50 members, £3 non-members,
children free

Monday 31 August

Guided Solway Shore Walk
(Solway Shore Walker)
7.45am
Booking: Essential

Join Ann Lingard for an informal ramble down to the low-tide mark on the southern shore of the Firth, Allonby, to look at animals, the submerged forest, and whatever the sea might have deposited on the tidelines. Wear wellies, warm clothes, and bring waterproofs.

Contact: Ann Lingard 016973 21967 or
enquiries@annlingard.com

Meet: Dubmill Point, northernmost carpark
in Allonby just before 30mph de-restriction
sign.

Cost: FREE, donations welcome

SEPTEMBER

Tuesdays 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 September

Mull of Galloway Guided Walk
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)

Details as previous

Thursdays 3, 10, 17, 24 September

Mull of Galloway Guided Walk
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)

Details as previous

Friday 11 September

Moth and Bat Night
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)
8.00pm to 10.00pm
Booking: Essential

On National Moth Night we will be putting out a couple of moth traps near to the car park, and using bat detectors we will go for a stroll around the reserve to see what bats are hunting the area.

Contact: 01988 402130 or
crookofbaldoon@rspb.org.uk

Meet: Crook of Baldoon Nature Reserve,
Wigtown, DG8 9AG, NX445530

Cost: £1.50 members, £3 non-members,
children free

Saturday 12 September

Moth Morning
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)

Details as previous



For further information, to submit an article or to join the SFP mailing list please contact:
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