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Issue 46 Spring/Summer 2017

newsletter of the Solway Firth Partnership



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60th Anniversary**  
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# Chairman's Column

Alastair McNeill FCIWEM C.WEM MCMI



Thanks, and best wishes are extended to Andrew Shankland for contributions to SFP in his capacity as an independent Board member. Having completed three separate terms with the Board over the last decade, Andrew stood down at the AGM last November. A warm welcome is expressed to Rupert Shaw who joined the Board at the 2016 AGM and attended his first meeting in March. Rupert, a farmer from Borgue and NFU Chair of the Dumfries and Galloway region, replaces Andrew as an independent SFP Board member.

An iteration workshop took place in Carlisle in March as part of the Marine Management Organisation's (MMO) policy development process for a marine plan for the North West. Co-chaired by Solway Firth Partnership, the MMO iteration workshop enabled group discussions on economic, social, environment and governance issues pertinent to the North West coast including the Cumbrian side of the Solway. The Partnership's cross-border experience is particularly relevant in respect of several issues debated during the workshop and SFP will be available to facilitate marine planning processes as these develop. Marine Planning is progressing differently north of the border where the Scottish Government introduced a National Marine Plan in 2015 and created 11 Marine Regions which will evolve into marine planning partnership areas. Two partnership areas have been established, Shetland last year and Clyde in March 2017, while there will be a roll-out to other areas including the Solway over the coming years. More information on marine planning can be found via the following Web links:

*North West England:*

<http://mis.marinemanagement.org.uk/north-west>

*Scotland:*

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/seamanagement>

A project to support research into the development of an integrated system for the collection, collation, analysis, and interrogation of data from the Scottish inshore fishing fleet was launched last November. Supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), it is envisaged that over a 30 month period the project will develop a system which will incorporate a decision support tool able to utilise information gathered to inform fisheries management and marine planning. The Scottish Inshore Fisheries Integrated Data System (SIFIDS) Project aims to deliver a step change in the way that inshore fisheries in Scotland may be managed in cooperation with the industry. The focus will be on inshore fishing vessels around Scotland, where spatio-temporal information on the distribution of vessels and associated fishing effort is data deficient.

The Project is led by the University of St Andrews (MASTS) and is designed to align with three key elements highlighted in the Scottish Inshore Fisheries Strategy 2015:

- enhancement of the evidence base on which management decisions are taken;
- promotion of stakeholder participation, and;
- the incorporation of inshore fisheries activities within spatial marine planning.

More details on SIFIDS can be found via the Web link:

<http://www.masts.ac.uk/research/emff-sifids-project/>

Grune Point, Skinburness



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# Caerlaverock National Nature Reserve

Celebrating 60 years of  
successful partnership working

Biodiversity, sustainability and partnership  
are familiar terms these days used by both  
the general public and experts alike to  
describe the management of our natural  
and cultural landscape.





View from the Flooders to Ward Law



Mudflats at Caerlaverock

However, sixty years ago, these terms were not commonly understood by those involved in conservation, farming, fishing and field sports; in many instances they found themselves in opposing camps on the economy versus environment battlefield and tended to mistrust each other's motives. In the 1950s, understanding the link between sustainability and environmentalism was in its infancy and the idea of developing a model to maintain a balance between nature, productivity and culture would not have been a familiar one to those who worked the land and sea or pursued leisure interests along the Nith and Solway Firth.

In 1957 the Duke of Norfolk, who owned the Caerlaverock Estate, had the ground breaking vision to create a special place where conservation, farming, fishing and wildfowling would coexist in harmony for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations. The Duke approached the Nature Conservation Council (Scottish Natural Heritage's predecessor), the Crown Estate Commissioners, and Wildfowling Association of Great Britain and Ireland (British Association for Shooting and Conservation's predecessor), local wildfowling and conservationists with his ideas; this led to the establishment of the Caerlaverock National Nature Reserve (NNR). Although Caerlaverock's natural and socioeconomic landscape has altered over time, this model continues to work remarkably well and has adapted successfully to the changes that have had an impact on this beautiful part of the world.

These days for example, 60 years

after the reserve was created, very few local people question the SNH wildfowling scheme or why occasional controlled commercial cockling is allowed on the reserve. We believe this is down to the successful demonstration, over many years, that exploitation of natural resources and the aims of the



Wildfowler at Brow Well before shelduck, barnacle geese and curlew were protected

reserve are compatible. This is in line with the principles and practices that underpin sustainable land management, or meeting the needs of the present, whilst protecting the needs of the future. This attitude, shared across the Nith Estuary and the wider Solway Firth, is

the enduring success of the vision that the Duke of Norfolk had for Caerlaverock NNR so many years ago.

If you want to find out more about Caerlaverock NNR and the people who make this venture an ongoing success, please keep an eye on the series of free events that the NNR team will run with SNH's partners in 2017. These events will take place on and around the reserve and will be advertised on our website throughout the year at: <http://www.nnr-scotland.org.uk/caerlaverock/>

As we celebrate our 60th anniversary we would like to hear from local residents and visitors about their ideas, stories and experiences of Caerlaverock. The NNR team hope you will join us as we contribute to the Solway Coastwise project

<https://solwaycoastwise.tumblr.com/> to collect audio recordings of people's experiences.

If you want find out more about this or any of our other events and activities please get in touch with us at [CAELAVEROCK@snh.gov.uk](mailto:CAELAVEROCK@snh.gov.uk)

Saltmarsh, Caerlaverock







Litter picking on Silloth beach

# Solway Coast Community Volunteers

Over the years, the Solway Coast community volunteers have focused their hard work and efforts on the upkeep of the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). They carry out a wide range of tasks to support the local community, Allerdale Borough Council and the staff. They are a dedicated group of people who commit their time to improve the area with activities such as regular beach litter picking events, nature reserve management, bird and animal surveys.

During recent weeks the group have been improving Silloth beach with the assistance of the Silloth Port Authority staff members and the local community, removing a trailer-load of debris that had

been washed up on to what is normally a pristine beach much favoured by visitors.

During the next few weeks the volunteer group will be assisting with the installation of a replacement pond liner at Mawbray Banks. This work is being carried out in an attempt to improve the area for the elusive and rare natterjack toad, a species which has witnessed a massive decline in recent years due to disease and habitat change. The newly installed pond liner should help retain water and should hopefully improve the breeding potential for the area for this fascinating amphibian.

Other upcoming tasks for the volunteers to get their teeth into will be annual maintenance of the



Volunteers on the dunes

Crosscanonby salt pans. This is a fine example of a method our ancestors used to acquire salt from the sea, which at that time was essential to curing meats and fish. Salt as a commodity could also be bartered for fish and grain. The Crosscanonby site is one of the best remaining examples of salt making in the country. Site maintenance includes the strimming and removal of cut grass in and around the site, as well as removal of gorse at certain times of the year.

All are welcome to join in with the work parties and activities of the group so please come and join us!

Keep an eye on our website at [www.solwaycoastaonb.org.uk](http://www.solwaycoastaonb.org.uk) for upcoming dates and meeting locations.





Natterjack Toad pond management



## Solway Fun in Tullie House

On Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 March, Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery came alive with the Nature Explorers Festival, a fun-filled weekend for the public. The museum was opened up for people to discover everything about Cumbria's wildlife and habitats. 20 organisations came together to run dozens of activities, including worm charming, skull ID, volcano exploding, bog-in-a-box making and insect investigating.

The Solway Coast AONB joined forces with Cumbria Wildlife Trust's Assistant Marine Conservation Officer, Georgie Blow, to run the coastal zone as part of this day. Our aim was to encourage people of all ages to find

out about Cumbria's coastline, with a particular focus on the Solway and why it is a protected landscape. Activities on offer included investigating a whole range of treasures from the strandline, making a jellyfish hat and pledging commitment to protecting the marine environment. A range of information was available for people to pick up and look at, including a display of the Solway Firth Partnership publication A Beachcombers Guide to the Solway Coast.

The event was very well received, 900 people attending across the weekend, and the array of activities created a real buzz.



Jellyfish hat making



Investigating Shoreline treasures





RSPB Campfield Marsh

Dave Blackledge

# Campfield Marsh

## One of the most important nature reserves in Cumbria



Acquired by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in the late eighties and initially attracting just a handful of visitors each year, nowadays thousands make the journey to the Solway Coast from across the country.

Recent investment by the Heritage Lottery funded Solway Wetlands Partnership (SWP) has seen the RSPB centre near Bowness on Solway flourishing further; establishing itself as a key contributor to the unique mosaic of wetland habitats across the Solway Plain.

The charity's site manager for the Cumbria coast is Dave Blackledge.

He explains his love for his wild and natural workplace.

"The great success of the place has been the opening up of the reserve for everyone to see what we're doing here".

The SWP has invested £250k in Campfield Marsh's 850 hectares of salt marsh, peat bog and farm land.

Over the past four years 4000 children and young people





Four spotted chaser dragonfly



Emerald dragonfly

have been involved in learning activities and thousands more families have gone along to get involved in events, workshops and training courses.

Dave is delighted with the improvements:

"We've got a brand new visitor centre, more paths, improved habitats, a family discovery field, wildflower meadows and an area for pond dipping. The reserve now has something for all ages and interests.

"Prior to the project we'd have days when we wouldn't see anyone at all. Now not a day goes by without someone turning up, even in the wildest windiest days in the middle of winter.

"We get about 8000 into the visitor centre and thousands more just going for a walk in the reserve or bird watching.

"The audience has completely changed. It's no longer just hardened bird watchers coming along. Now we get families, and not just in the spring or summer.

Dave is keen to point out the benefits of the RSPB working within the SWP:

"Being part of it has meant we've been able to work much more closely with the other organisations in the partnership such as Natural England, the AONB and Cumbria Wildlife

Trust. For example, when we were wetting up the peat bogs, creating great new habitats for waders such as redshank, curlew, lapwings and snipe.

Through our combined efforts we have improved the wider wetland landscape which has huge benefits for the health of the internationally important lowland raised mires, or bogs as they are known locally!

"It means the peat bog is growing again with the resurgence of the "bog builder" sphagnum moss as formerly dry areas become wet again".

The new 650 metre extension to the boardwalk means visitors can now take a two and a half mile walk around the bog without getting their feet wet.

Dave says he's very happy to be working at Campfield:

"No two days are the same.

"When you hear the first drumming of the snipe each year, that is a special moment.

There have been lots of special moments, though; marsh fritillary butterflies coming back, lapwings breeding in an environment we've created for them.

"It's ever changing and hopefully ever improving as we work with the partners".



Sundew and Sphagnum moss



Young Explorers on the reserve





Creeks at Scar Point



Thorn at Fishers Bush

## Where every name tells a story

**M**aps show us the names of places on the coastline of Dumfries and Galloway but now the Solway Coastwise initiative developed by Solway Firth Partnership, is seeking the help of local people to record colloquial or 'unofficial' names for places on the coast. Coastwise had a stall at Dumfries Environment Fair and we were told about a number of locations where local people use place names that don't appear on maps.

On the Shore Road from Glencaple towards Caerlaverock there is a small layby on a bend in the road. Local people know this as Phyllis' but it is marked on the OS Explorer map as Fishers Bush, adjacent to an area of merse called Scar Point.

### Scar Point

The name Scar is probably derived from an old Norse word *sker* meaning rock in the sea and in south west Scotland is mostly used to describe a reef or mud bank exposed at low tide that is littered with rocks. Scar Point is a stony projection into the Nith estuary and joins many other Scars named in the inner Solway including Corbelly Scar, Bowhouse Scar, Rough Scar, Brewing Scar, Powfoot Scar, Howgarth Scar and Whan Scar as well as several more on the English side.

### Fishers' Bush

Surveyors surveying for the first Ordnance Survey map of the area recorded the name Fishers' Bush at this point on the shore where there were a few thorn bushes and noted that the origin of the name was from the habit of fishermen using them to take refuge from inclement weather.

### Phyllis'

Fishers' Bush was also the name given to a shack where Phyllis Laurie lived on the shore of the Nith until she died in 1942 at the age of 72. Phyllis appears to have been a local character who was feared by the local children as resident Stephen Powell still remembers; "As boys, we might be accused of not being very nice to Phyllis, but in fact it was Phyllis who wasn't very nice to us! We went along the tide edge there, collecting bottles and, she really was dressed in black with a cloak – we all thought 'of course she's not a witch', but none of us really put it to the test – in case we overstepped the mark and turned into a frog or something! We were all sort of bold about it, but kept very wary around her, I mean she did have a classic look... the kind of the thing a child would draw of a witch". Find out more about Stephen Powell's memories on the Caerlaverock Community Association website, <http://www.caerlaverock.org.uk/>



## Phyllis' Creek

Creeks in the tidal mudflats often change their course and may disappear when the merse is eroded away by the river but then reclaim their names when they reappear after the merse has built up again. Phyllis' Creek was a deep channel in the past but is almost unidentifiable today.

Whatever the origin of a name each one has a story to tell and provides clues about the people who lived there in the past and continue to use the coast today, as well as its environment, history, and geography. The Solway Coastwise project workers Nic Coombey and Morag Walker will be helping individuals, communities and businesses to get involved, through a range of workshops, talks, visits and resources. They began by collecting names recorded on 19th century maps and are now searching for names held within our current oral tradition. As well as collecting these names on paper, they hope to make recordings in order to capture the sounds and stories behind



them. Coastwise are looking for volunteers who have place names to tell us about or would like to record local people about their reminiscences of visiting or working on the coast. By recording peoples experiences we hope to reveal the meanings of the names used for coastal places. By taking a closer look at the cultural heritage of the shoreline, from rocky cliffs and caves to sandy bays and muddy creeks, we hope to add to everyone's awareness and appreciation of the Dumfries and Galloway coast.

If you would like to be involved or can help identify place names and the stories behind them please contact Solway Firth Partnership. You can also add your stories and photographs to our blog at [www.solwaycoastwise.tumblr.com](http://www.solwaycoastwise.tumblr.com)  
E-mail: [coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](mailto:coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk)  
Tel: 01387 702363

Funding for Solway Coastwise is provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Scottish Government and the European Union – LEADER 2014-2020 programme and Dumfries & Galloway Council.

Muddy creek on the Nith



Supported by  
**The National Lottery**  
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Dumfries  
& Galloway







*Finlay Catches a Rainbow Trout*

# Fishing for the Future – Engaging Young Anglers

As a sport, fishing is generally under-represented by young people with local angling associations and fisheries feeling the effects of this as the number of people fishing declines year on year.

For the last four years, the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust (NCFT) has been running a “grass-roots” education initiative called Fishing for the Future. This programme aimed at schools and groups to engage young people by providing them with a knowledge of, and respect for, the aquatic environment, imparting skills so

that they will develop an interest in angling and aquatic conservation.

Fishing for the Future combines indoor sessions with field trips designed to engage children of all abilities. The lifecycle of the Atlantic salmon forms a perfect basis to tell a story that provides an insight into different aquatic environments, from the river to the sea,

introducing some of the other wildlife encountered along their journey and the interactions between humans and nature. Sessions are tailored to suit each school and contain various activities including electrofishing demonstrations, fish anatomy and dissection, handling and identifying fish, sampling for aquatic invertebrates,



habitat creation, invasive species, exploring the coast and, of course, an introduction to angling.

Because of the project, local angling communities have benefited from a small increase in the number of young people purchasing angling tickets but we knew more could be done to assist children making the leap from interest to action. This inspired the formation of the Nith Young Anglers Club, a group of interested young people who come together once a month, normally on a Saturday, to try a different method of fishing. The NCFT hires professional angling instructors from Borderlines, a not-for-profit organisation, who teach the children how to fish and what to do if they catch a fish. All of the equipment is provided and the sessions are free. This step is vital to provide children with a safe pathway to pursue this sport further and is made possible due to annual funding from the Holywood Trust, D&G Council's Nithsdale Area Committee, private funders and the kind use of venues by local fishing owners.

There has been a fantastic response to the Young Anglers Club with children from across the region signing up for the fishing sessions. At our recent March session we were fly fishing at Drum Loch, a local rainbow trout fishery run by Dumfries and Galloway Angling



Nith Young Anglers

Association. They welcomed us to the loch with hot drinks, cakes and lots of helpful advice. It was a beautiful day for March, with sun cream being required rather than waterproofs. The Young Anglers put their newly learned casting skills to the test, catching two lovely rainbow trout much to their delight.

Future fishing dates include coarse fishing on 13 May, Tench fishing at

Morton Loch on 17 June, Sea trout fishing at Drumlanrig on 9 August, Rainbow trout fishing at Drum Loch on 26 August, Salmon fishing on the Nith on 16 September, Rainbow trout fishing on 18 October, Grayling fishing on the Nith on 18 November and Pike fishing on 9 December. Please contact Debbie on [trust@river-nith.com](mailto:trust@river-nith.com) to book a place.

Fly fishing at Drum Loch





# An Update from the MMO

## Marine Planning Iteration 1 Engagement – the south Solway

Stakeholder Engagement Workshop, Carlisle



Grune Point, Cumbria

The Marine Management Organisation recently held two workshops in Blackpool and Carlisle to discuss the first outputs in the development of the north west marine plan. This is the plan area which covers the Solway in Cumbria.

The workshops were the first opportunity for stakeholders to see how marine planning is progressing in the north west marine plan area and marked an important milestone in the marine planning process.

The MMO would like to thank everyone who took part, especially to Dave McAleavy and Caroline Salthouse from the North West Coastal Forum, Alastair McNeil from the Solway Firth Partnership and Emma Baruah from the SIMCelt project.

The workshops were an opportunity to discuss how the marine plans will be used with attendees completing their user stories. The main discussions were on the issues and evidence database and the developing plan policies, and how they relate to the north west marine plan area in terms of economic, social, environmental and governance issues.

The workshops have provided great feedback which is now being reviewed. However, it was clear that there are many issues shared across all marine plan areas. There are specific local issues such as the





Fishing boat on the Dumfries and Galloway Solway Coast

cross border nature of the Solway area and the potential for tidal energy development in the Solway. There was a good deal of reflection on both the opportunities that new projects might bring, as well as some of the challenges which might accompany any proposal.

What next for marine planning in the south Solway?

The workshops marked the end of the first year of developing the north west marine plan. The next phase is to continue to develop more detail around the policies and new digital format. It will also provide more information, in more detail, and refine potential plan responses to issues and look at a vision for the north west marine plan area.

Over the coming months there will be more details on how stakeholders can get involved in this stage.

To keep in touch and to find out about the next events, sign up to the marine planning newsletter:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/marine-planning-newsletters>

For more information contact Sam Wright:  
[Sam.Wright@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:Sam.Wright@marinemanagement.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 822 57095.

## An Update from Marine Scotland

The National Marine Plan sets the wider context for planning within Scotland. Regional Marine Planning aims to allow for more local ownership and decision making about specific issues in the area. The Scottish Marine Region of Solway was created by the Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015 where boundaries are identified out to 12 nautical miles. A Regional Marine Plan for the Solway will be taken forward by a Marine Planning Partnership which will be made up of marine stakeholders that reflect the marine interests in their region. It will take time to set up marine planning partnerships and develop regional marine plans in all 11 Scottish Marine Regions. This will be an evolving process with lessons learned from the first two regions, Shetland and Clyde, being used to inform future processes.

Further information on Regional Marine Planning, legislation and guidance can be found at

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/seamanagement/regional>

The Scottish Government continue to fund the Solway Firth Partnership to support the implementation of marine planning.

The Scottish Government are also currently involved in 'Supporting Implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning in the Celtic Seas' (SIMCelt) - a two year project co-funded by the European Commission which aims to promote practical cross-border cooperation between three EU Member States on the implementation of the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive in the Celtic Seas.

Find out more about the SIMCelt Case Study in the Solway on Pages 20-21.





# Drift

The relationship between land and sea features in two exceptional events coming to this year's Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival.

On the weekend of Sat 27 to Mon 29 May, Sandyhills beach, near Dalbeattie, is the venue for a unique experience of soundscape and sculpture when Vision Mechanics present their innovative and captivating production, Drift.

Drift is inspired by the true story of Shetland crofter Betty Mouat who, in January 1886, aged 61, was the only

passenger on the coastal cutter Columbine which left Grutness, bound for Lerwick. She had with her a large bundle of knitting to sell. Shortly after setting sail, a storm blew up and the captain and two crew were lost overboard. Miss Mouat was presumed lost at sea. On the eighth day, the Columbine grounded on Lepsoy in Norway. Miss Mouat became a folk hero overnight and lived on her Shetland croft for another 30 years.



Set in and around a group of tents on Sandyhills beach, nine sculptures and nine songs will represent the number of

days Miss Mouat was cast adrift. The performances involve a tactile experience of the story through the installations and the soundscape, which is used to recreate the feelings of being adrift and alone at sea. This is delivered through a set of headphones during a 40-minute walk-around.

The script is written by Judith Adams and the critically-acclaimed Shetland-inspired soundtrack is put together by leading Scottish composer Eddie Macguire with songs by Gerda Stevenson.

Vision Mechanics artistic director, Symon MacIntyre, said: "Miss Mout's story lends itself well to outdoor theatre with installation. There is such a contrast between the simplicity of her life to her suddenly being thrust into fear and hardship for nine days. We wanted to do something about the resourcefulness of human beings in times of adversity.

"When people come to see Drift, they will follow Miss Mouat's nine-day adventure. It is a tactile and emotional journey. Each installation represents a day and gradually the world you have come from will drop away, leaving you lost in a soundscape until you're out there alone at the edge of land and sea."







## Shoreline Voices

Saturday 3 June sees the launch of an exciting new exploration that creates connections and collaborations between the region's four shorelines that are within sight of each other.

From Dumfries and Galloway to the Isle of Man, Cumbria to Ireland, commerce between these lands has been traditional to the existence of our region for thousands of years. Four of the finest living poets from these areas will read and discuss their work with cultural commentators representing the shorelines, revealing new insights and perspectives.

This is the first of a series of multidisciplinary events to be organised by InSight over the coming years which will celebrate the conversations we can have with each other. The event takes place at 2.30-5.30pm in the Theatre Royal Studio, Dumfries.

For further information and tickets to both these events, visit [www.dgartsfestival.org.uk](http://www.dgartsfestival.org.uk)



## EDGE - An Art Installation for Beachcombers

Artists Robbie Coleman and Jo Hodges spent their childhoods by the sea at various locations around Britain, from Oban to the Suffolk coast, so they leapt at the opportunity to create a work on the beach for Upland's Public Art Commission for Spring Fling 2017.

The artists are creating a new 'ghost' tideline at Carrick Foreshore near Borgue over the Spring Fling weekend (27 – 29 May)

Robbie explained, "We both grew up on beaches, walking tidelines in all weathers and exploring what the sea had brought in. There was always the sense that if you just carried on looking you would find something incredible and sometimes you did! Every object seemed to have some sort of story attached to it, boat wreckage, letters in bottles, dolls heads, or mystery objects that were exotic and strange and seemed to have come from the other side of the world.

For EDGE, we have tried to recreate the sense of exploration and mystery we felt as children, when, after a storm, we would rush to the beach, knowing that the bigger the storm, the stranger the tideline would be.

Visitors will be able to explore the work while visiting one of the most beautiful parts of the coast.

We want EDGE to remind people that it has always been the sea that has connected as well as separated us.

Human societies have used the sea to trade goods, skills and stories and they still do. Even now, people are setting off on perilous sea journeys in pursuit of a new life or escaping the dangers of an old one – launching themselves into the currents and trade winds with no sure way of knowing where they will end up".

We hope people will come along and discover our stories and maybe share some of their own.

Further information: <http://www.spring-fling.co.uk/event/edge>







**Ocean Quahog** (*Arctica islandica*): Ocean quahogs are a type of slow growing clam that live buried in the mud and sand. They are the world's longest lived animal and have been known to live for over 500 years!

**Brittle Star**, (*Ophiothrix fragilis*)



# All You Need is Mud

Georgie Blow - Assistant Marine Conservation Officer

Beneath the waves, vast muddy landscapes stretch out across the Irish Sea. These areas support an array of weird and wonderful creatures from strange delicate looking sea pens to bright beautiful fireworks anemone and glossy ocean quahogs.



**Sea pen** (*Pennatula phosphorea*): Reminiscent of an antique feather pen, Sea pens are a type of soft coral, related to anemones and jellyfish. These colonial animals are made up of 'polyps' which feed on plankton and organic material from the water column.

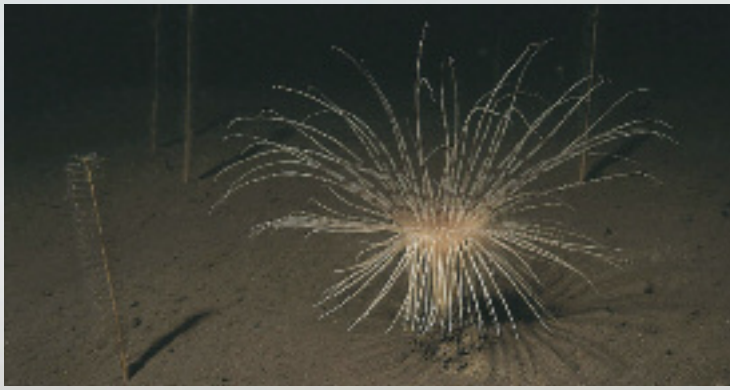
Extending into the shallows, where these muddy plains meet the rise and fall of the tide, shallow nutrient-rich, muddy habitats teem with an incredible variety of life such as worms, bivalve molluscs, anemones and brittle stars.

As well as being important to the creatures that live on or in the mud, muddy areas are also important to a wealth of other wildlife and also to us as humans. Muddy habitats and the communities they support are responsible for burying carbon and recycling nutrients from the seafloor back into the water column. These communities and nutrients provide food for populations of small fish, moving up the food chain for larger commercially fished species such as plaice, sole, cod, haddock and whiting and ultimately, our large charismatic species such as whales, dolphins and a variety of seabirds.

So what is the trouble with mud? Deep sea muddy habitats are naturally subject to very little tidal movement and disturbance so human activities occurring in muddy areas can have a big impact. Physical disturbance caused by dredging shipping lanes and channels, bait digging and bottom trawling for fish and shellfish can therefore all pose a big threat to these sensitive areas.

Last summer the North West Wildlife Trusts launched its #MarineMudness campaign to raise awareness of the





**Fireworks anemone** (*Pachycerianthus multiplicatus*): Fireworks anemones have beautiful, bright tentacles that look like a firework exploding. They can grow up to 30cm across and unlike their rocky shore counterparts; these anemones bury their long tube-like body into deep, muddy sediments.

wonderfully muddy Irish Sea, running a variety of mud-themed events along the coast and throughout the region. The idea of the campaign is to inspire people to find, enjoy, learn, and value more of the fantastic muddy habitats in the Irish Sea and support its protection. Throughout my time with the North West Wildlife Trusts, I have found myself searching through rock pools, sculpting marine species out of sand and getting my hands dirty digging through the mud to search for the creatures that live there.

Slowly more areas throughout the UK's seas and coast are receiving protection through designation as Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). So far in the Irish Sea, from two stages of designations, four MCZs have been created. Two of these zones will protect mud habitats in our shallow coastal

seas and their associated species, when they are actively managed. Three deep water mud sites have been put forward to Government as recommended MCZs but have not yet been designated. These sites are needed to complete the network of protected areas in the Irish Sea and we will be working hard to ensure the third and final round of designations is ambitious enough to give our seas the protection they deserve.

You can find out more about the campaign at [www.irishsea.org/MarineMudness](http://www.irishsea.org/MarineMudness), or you can show your love for mud and keep up to date with the latest news by signing up to 'Become a Friend of muddy MCZs' at [www.irishsea.org/muddyMCZfriends](http://www.irishsea.org/muddyMCZfriends)

You can also tweet us @LivingSeasNW with pictures of you and your friends/family getting muddy – #MarineMudness.



**Mud event:** Participants at a marine mudness event get their hands dirty searching through the mud to find out more about the variety of species that live there.

**Sea potato or Common heart urchin**  
(*Echinocardium cordatum*)







The Solway Coast



# Supporting Implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning in the Celtic Seas

## Recap!

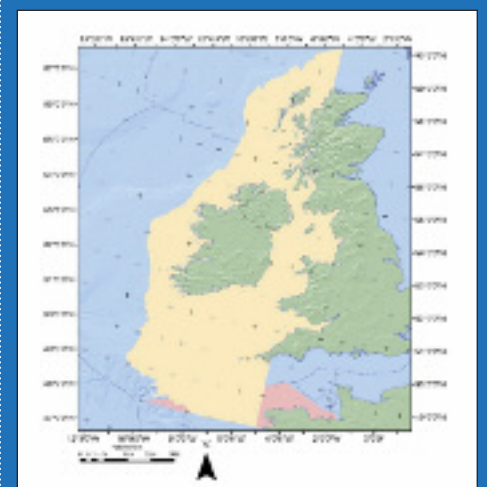
The Solway Firth Partnership appointed Emma Baruah to the post of SIMCelt Project Officer in August 2016. The SIMCelt Project, which runs to December 2017, is funded by the EU and aims to support the implementation of maritime spatial planning. SIMCelt is a collaboration project between Marine Scotland, University College Cork, Marine Institute Ireland, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland, Agence des Aires Marines Protégées and SHOM France and the University of Liverpool. The outputs from SIMCelt will be key to the introduction of the new EU Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning. See the website! [simcelt.eu](http://simcelt.eu)

## Amended project area

Last edition, we introduced our project area, the Celtic Seas. Since then, the Commission has accepted a request we made to amend the boundary. The new area is superjacent to the Celtic Seas Shelf, shown in red on the map, right. Inclusion of this area increases coverage of the French Atlantic seaboard thereby enhancing involvement of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) competent authorities in the region.

Work by ICES and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) has informed new maps released by the European Environment Agency in November. Regional sea areas have been aligned with the MSP Directive and the

biogeographic regions identified in the Habitats Directive as well as, to the greatest extent possible, those of the Regional Sea Conventions. You can explore the maps on the ICES website.





# What we have been up to:

The MSP Challenge Game



Coastal Futures Conference 2017, London

## Coastal Futures 2017 Conference, London

Over 300 delegates attended the event and SIMCelt's presence as a 'sponsor' meant we had fantastic exposure on all the event publicity. Our pop-up slot during the conference allowed us to speak about some of the ways we want stakeholders to participate. We interacted with a number of key people from the Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and marine planning agencies and we made useful connections with the Crown Estate who offered help with securing marine data.

## MMO NW Iteration Workshop

In the Solway, Emma facilitated the Marine Management Organisation first iteration workshop for the Northwest marine plans in Carlisle in early March. The event was a great success and allowed local stakeholders to discuss potential policy responses to issues that had previously been identified in the northwest area.

## Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Challenge Game

The interactive MSP challenge game was played at the Geographic Information Centre, University of Liverpool with SIMCelt members and students. A version of the game has been purchased by the Liverpool Institute for Sustainable Coasts and Oceans to assist with outreach and education work on Marine Spatial Planning.

## Look out for:

### Marine Protected Areas: Science Policy and Management 15 - 17 May 2017

The Poole Harbour Study Group in partnership with The Estuarine and Coastal Sciences Association will be hosting a three-day conference. Themes include climate change, policy developments such as Brexit, and how progress in marine science all contribute to a fast changing context for MPAs. This conference aims to examine the current issues from a variety of perspectives at a time when questions on the future approaches to MPAs are the subject of policy development

### European Maritime Day 17 - 18 May 2017

SIMCelt will be hosting a joint workshop with Baltic Scope and NorthSee projects on transboundary marine spatial planning and transboundary resolutions. The workshop will be a fantastic interactive session, bringing together a wide range of people from across Europe to discuss transboundary marine planning. This will be the last time the UK gets to host the European Maritime Day so book your tickets now or miss out!

### SIMCelt closing conference Nov 2017

SIMCelt will be hosting its closing conference in Liverpool on 28 and 29 November 2017. Updates and further details are to follow on the SIMCelt newsletters and will be advertised on the SIMCelt and SFP website in due course.



# Dates for your Diary

May - September 17

## MAY

**Note:** Weekends in May and June, daily in July

**Frog Make-and-Take Sessions**  
11am - 12noon  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
11.00am to 12.00noon  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Explore the reserve to discover eleven, individually-designed, larger than life LEGO® brick animal sculptures (included in admission). Completed the trail? Then come along to the yurt to make your very own mini Fred the Frog souvenir to take home!

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

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

Cost: Drop-in session, £5 plus admission charge

### Monday 1 May

**Willow Workshop**  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
10.00am to 12.00noon  
**Booking: Essential**

Make your own beautiful willow star, heart or flower to take home. Suitable for all ages.

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

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply,  
WWT members free

### Monday 1 May

**Talk on Mull of Galloway:**  
**Scotland's southernmost point**  
(Logan Botanic Garden)  
2.00pm to 3.00pm  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Find out more about the RSPB and the Mull of Galloway at this exciting talk at Logan Botanic Garden. The Mull is home to thousands of nesting seabirds and bustles with wildlife so is one of the UK's best spots for witnessing visible migration during the autumn.

Contact: 01776 860231 or  
logan@rbge.org.uk

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

Cost: contact the venue for costs

### Wednesdays 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 May

**Seabird Spectacular**  
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)  
1.00pm start  
**Booking: Not Essential**

The Mull of Galloway is home to thousands of nesting seabirds. Join the warden for a guided walk to find out more about seabird ecology and the importance of the reserve in supporting these magnificent birds. Bring binoculars if you have them, suitable clothing and stout footwear.

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

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

Cost: Adults £3, Children £1.50, Under 5's Free. RSPB members 20% off

### Saturdays 6 and 13 May

**Natterjack Nights**  
(RSPB Mersehead)  
8.30pm to 10.30pm  
**Booking: Essential**

Visit the reserve at dusk to hear the natterjack toad chorus. The male toads come down to the shallow pools to sing to the females encouraging them to spawn. Bring a torch and wellies.

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

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

Cost: £5 Adult, £2 Child, £3 Adult Members, £1.50 Child Members; Car parking charges apply for non-members

### Saturday 6 May

**Bird Ringing Demonstration**  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
11.00am to 4.00pm  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Join the North Solway Ringing Group as they demonstrate how to ring a range of birds.

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

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply,  
WWT members free

### Saturday 6 May to Sunday 7 May

**LEGO Brick Animal Trail**  
**and Workshops**  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
11.00am and 2.00pm  
**Booking: Essential**

Explore the reserve to discover eleven, individually-designed, larger than life LEGO® brick animal sculptures (included in admission). Take part in an awesome, hour-long LEGO® brick workshop! There are two exciting LEGO challenges and a LEGO brick frog to make and take home.

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

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

Cost: £8.50 plus admission charge

### Sunday 7 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: 01387 770200 or  
info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk

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

Cost: Free

### Sunday 14 May

**Natterjack Talk and Walk**  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
8.30pm to late  
**Booking: Essential**

Learn about natterjack toads and why they are the rarest amphibian in Britain. There may be a possibility at dusk, of taking a walk out onto the reserve to try and hear the toad chorus as the male toads come down to the shallow pools to sing to the females to encourage them to spawn. Bring warm clothing and a torch.

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

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

Cost: Normal admission charges,  
WWT members free

### Thursday 25 May

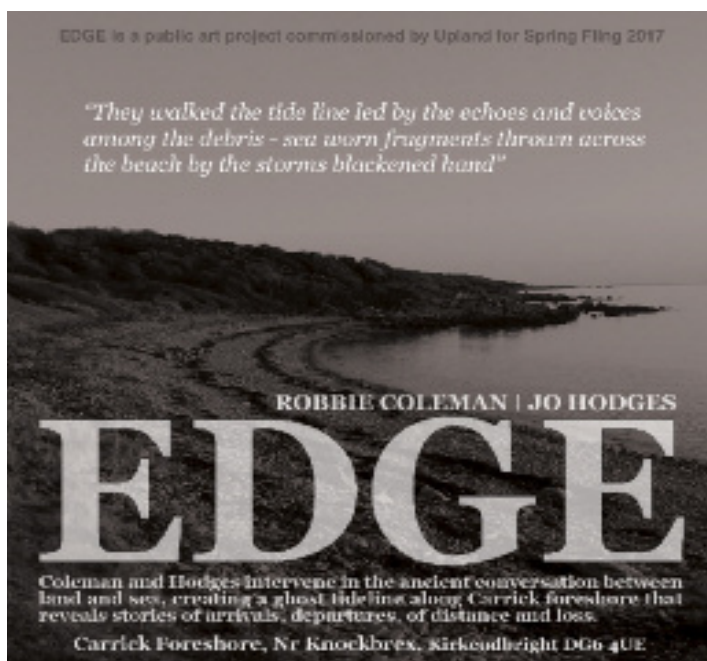
**Port Logan Beach Clean**  
(Logan Botanic Garden)  
10.00am to 3.30pm  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Join the RSPB and Logan Botanic Garden staff on a beach clean at Port Logan. Help clear up the beach and prevent rubbish from washing into the ocean and damaging our marine wildlife. Bring gloves and litter picks if you have them.

Contact: 01776 860231 or  
logan@rbge.org.uk

Meet: Port Logan Village Hall, Port Logan,  
Stranraer, Dumfries and Galloway,  
DG9 9NG

Cost: Free



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.



## Daily from Friday 26 May to Tuesday 30 May

**Wild Challenge: Get up Close to Nature (RSPB Mersehead)**  
**11.00am to 3.00pm**  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Come along with your family and get up close to nature using different senses. Pop into the visitor centre anytime where the friendly staff will give you a map and get you started. Then visit the different stations and "get close to nature".

Contact: 01387 780579 or [mersehead@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mersehead@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £3 Child

## Friday 26 May

**High Tide Perambulation (RSPB Crook of Baldoon)**  
**12.00noon to 2.00pm**  
**Booking: Not Essential**

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

Contact: 01988 402130 or [crookofbaldoon@rspb.org.uk](mailto:crookofbaldoon@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £3 Members, £4 Non-members, Children half price

## Friday 26 May

**Monreith Guided Walk (Solway Coastwise)**  
**5.30pm to 7.30pm**  
**Booking: Essential (limited to 12 people)**

Discover the stories behind place names and find out what is revealed by the low tide.

Contact: 01387 702363 or [coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](mailto:coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk)

Meet: Back Bay car park, Monreith, NX364394

Cost: Free

## Friday 26 May

**Weird and Wonderful Moths (Caerlaverock NNR 60th Celebrations)**  
**8.00pm to 10.00pm**  
**Booking: Essential**

Join the NNR reserve staff at Caerlaverock where they will be available to share their knowledge and show you the wide variety of moths. They will also teach you identification skills and methods to catch your own moths. Come with warm clothing, waterproofs and head torch.

Contact: Adam on 0300 067 3200

Meet: Caerlaverock NNR, Castle Corner Car Park, DG1 4RU, NY018652

Cost: Free

## Saturday 27 May

**Mull of Galloway Marathon Trail (Stranraer Rotary)**  
**10.00am at Mull of Galloway, Marathon / 11.30am at Sandhead, Short route**  
**Booking: Essential**

Take part in a run from the stunning Mull of Galloway to Stranraer. The trail is 26 miles long over mostly rough path. There is an alternative route of 10 miles, which can be walked, from Sandhead to Stranraer. Routes are well marked and there will be water and energy stations.

Contact: <https://www.entrycentral.com> for online registration by Friday 26 May or [gordon.baird@me.com](mailto:gordon.baird@me.com) for late entries.

Meet: Mull of Galloway, Drummole, DG9 9HP (Marathon) or Tigh na Mara hotel, Sandhead, DG9 9JF (Short route/Walk)

Cost: £27.50 (Marathon), £16 (Short route) includes transport and BBQ

## Saturday 27 to Monday 29 May

**Edge (Spring Fling)**  
**All weekend**  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Artists, Robbie Coleman and Jo Hodges, create a ghost strandline along Carrick Foreshore that reveals stories of arrivals, departures, of distance and loss.

Edge is a public art project commissioned by Upland for Spring Fling 2017.

Contact: Visit <http://www.spring-fling.co.uk/event/edge/> for more information

Meet: Carrick Foreshore, Nr Knockbrenx, Gatehouse of Fleet, DG7 2DT NX576500

Cost: Free

## Saturday 27 to Monday 29 May

**Drift (Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival)**  
**10.00am to 7.00pm**  
**Booking: Essential**

Vision Mechanics Norland Visual Theatre presents the true story of a lady Shetland crofter who was the sole survivor of sea journey hit by a storm in 1886. A fascinating tale told in Shetland song cycle on the Sandyhills beach.

Contact: Tickets from Dumfries Midsteeple Box Office or from [www.dgartsfestival.org.uk](http://www.dgartsfestival.org.uk)

Meet: Sandyhills Beach, Sandyhills, Dalbeattie, DG5 4NZ NX890552

Cost: £4, Under 26's half price; £2 for car parking at Sandyhills. NB This is not suitable for small children

## Saturday 27 May

**Carrick Guided Walk (Solway Coastwise)**  
**5.30pm to 7.30pm**  
**Booking: Essential (limited to 12 people)**

Discover the stories behind place names and find out what is revealed by the low tide.

Contact: 01387 702363 or [coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](mailto:coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk)

Meet: Carrick Foreshore, Nr Knockbrenx, Gatehouse of Fleet, DG7 2DT, NX576500

Cost: Free



Honeycomb Worm reef

## Sunday 28 May

**Sandyhills Guided Walk (Solway Coastwise)**  
**6.00pm to 8.00pm**  
**Booking: Essential (limited to 12 people)**

Discover the stories behind place names and find out what is revealed by the low tide.

Contact: 01387 702363 or [coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](mailto:coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk)

Meet: Sandyhills Beach, Sandyhills, Dalbeattie, DG5 4NZ, NX890552

Cost: Free

## Wednesday 31 May

**Wildflower Walk (RSPB Mull of Galloway & Logan Botanic Garden)**  
**2.00pm to 3.00pm**  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Enjoy a guided walk around the RSPB Mull of Galloway Reserve. Wildflowers are in full bloom so learn more about their ecology and importance to our native wildlife.

Contact: 01988 402130 or [mullofgalloway@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mullofgalloway@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £1.50 Members, £3 Non-members, Children free

# JUNE

## Friday 2 June

**We're Going on a Frog Hunt (WWT Caerlaverock)**  
**10.00am to 12.00noon**  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Hunt for amphibians around the reserve, including frogs and toads hiding under stones and logs at this family event.

Contact: 01387 770200 or [info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk](mailto:info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk)

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply, WWT members free

## Friday 2 to Sunday 4 June

**Shark-a-tag Weekend (SSACN)**  
**All weekend**  
**Booking: Not Essential**

This festival will encompass a wide range of exciting activities including SSACN's flagship event Sharkatag, boat and shore Species Hunts, a pegged Shore Sweepstake and a fun filled educational Outreach programme for all ages at a venue to be confirmed.

Contact: [contact@ssacn.org](mailto:contact@ssacn.org)

Meet: to be confirmed

Cost: FREE

## Saturday 3 June

**Shoreline Voices (InSight)**  
**2.30pm to 5.30pm**  
**Booking: Essential**

The launch of an exciting new exploration that creates connections and collaborations between our four shorelines that are within sight of each other. From Dumfries and Galloway to the Isle of Man, from Cumbria to Ireland, commerce between these lands has been traditional to the existence of our region for thousands of years. Four of the finest living poets from these areas read and discuss their work with cultural commentators representing the shorelines, revealing new insights and perspectives. This is the first of a series of multidisciplinary events to be organised by InSight over the coming years which will celebrate the conversations we can have with each other.

Contact: Tickets available from the Midsteeple Box Office, Dumfries or online [www.dgartsfestival.org.uk](http://www.dgartsfestival.org.uk)

Meet: Theatre Royal Studio, 66-68 Shakespeare Street, Dumfries DG1 2JH

Cost: £12, Under 26s £6



## Sunday 4 June

### **Wildlife Photography Workshop (WWT Caerlaverock) 10.00am to 4.00pm Booking: Essential**

Join the wildlife photography workshop with Tom Langlands and Bob Fitzsimmons. Learn how to take fantastic macro photographs of the insects and plants on the reserve. This workshop is suitable for beginners as well as more experienced photographers.

Contact: 01387 770200 or [info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk](mailto:info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk)

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

Cost: £75 (includes admission)

## Wednesdays 7, 14, 21, 28 June

### **Seabird Spectacular (RSPB Mull of Galloway) 1.00pm start Booking: Not Essential**

The Mull of Galloway is home to thousands of nesting seabirds. Join the warden for a guided walk to find out more about seabird ecology and the importance of the reserve in supporting these magnificent birds. Bring binoculars if you have them, suitable clothing and stout footwear.

Contact: 01988 402130 or [mullofgalloway@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mullofgalloway@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: Adults £3, Children £1.50, Under 5's Free. RSPB members 20% off

## Friday 9 June

### **Bat and Moth Night (WWT Caerlaverock) 8.00pm to 11.00pm Booking: Essential**

Freda Seddon from Dumfries Bat Group will give a talk about bats, followed by a bat walk around the reserve. Alison Robertson, the County Moth Recorder will also be looking at moths. Bring warm clothes and a torch.

Contact: 01387 770200 or [info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk](mailto:info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk)

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

Cost: Normal admission charges, WWT members free



## Sunday 11 June

### **World Oceans Week Event (Solway Coastwise / NTS Rockcliffe Beach) 12.00noon to 4.00pm Booking: Not Essential**

Discover seaside wildlife, explore the coast, find out about place names and have fun learning about the marine environment.

Contact: 01387 702363 or [coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](mailto:coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk)

Meet: Rockcliffe Beach NX847537

Cost: Free

## Sunday 11 June

### **Woodland Wonders (RSPB Mersehead) 10.00am to 12.00noon Booking: Essential**

Explore the woodland, discover wildlife, play games, make nature crafts and build confidence in playing outdoors. For children aged 5-12.

Contact: 01387 780579 or [mersehead@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mersehead@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £3 Child

## Friday 16 June

### **Merse Walk (Caerlaverock NNR 60th Celebrations) 10.00am – 1.00pm Booking: Essential**

Come along and join the reserve staff for a guided walk along the boardwalk through flooders to the saltmarsh (locally known as Merse) to learn about the conservation and farming at Caerlaverock and the tidal dynamics of the reserve. Bring warm clothing, waterproofs, binoculars, lunch and a hot flask.

Contact: Francois on 0300 067 3200

Meet: Caerlaverock NNR, Hollands car park, DG1 4RS

Cost: Free

### **Rose Chaffer beetles at Mull of Galloway**



## Sunday 18th June

### **Portpatrick Guided Walk (Solway Coastwise) 12noon to 3.00pm Booking: Essential (limited to 12 people)**

Discover the stories behind place names on a clifftop walk.

Contact: 01387 702363 or [coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](mailto:coastwise@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk)

Meet: Portpatrick start of Southern Upland Way NW997542

Cost: Free

## Wednesday 21 June

### **Summer Solstice Walk (RSPB Mersehead) 7.00pm to 9.00pm Booking: Essential**

Surround yourself with the beautiful sights, sounds and smells of RSPB Scotland Mersehead on the longest day of the year. Join staff for a gentle stroll around the reserve to see what can be found.

Contact: 01387 780579 or [mersehead@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mersehead@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £3 Child

## Thursday 22 June

### **Cumbria Low Tide Shore Walk (Ann Lingard) Starts 5.00pm Booking: Essential**

A walk with Ann Lingard, Solway Shore Stories Author, from Allonby to Dubmill Point enjoying the new Allonby Bay Marine Conservation Zone with its honeycomb-worm reefs. The terrain on the lower shore is slightly rocky, often slippery and always wet, so wellies are essential! Bring walking-poles if you feel happier using them. Please note that – in very rare circumstances – weather and other factors might force cancellation, so please leave your phone number when booking.

Contact: 016973 21967 or [enquiries@annlingard.com](mailto:enquiries@annlingard.com)

Meet: Car park opposite Twentyman's Shop, Allonby, NY080426

Cost: Free

## Saturday 24 June

### **Fun on the Beach (RSPB Mersehead) 11.20am to 2.30pm Booking: Essential**

Join RSPB for some fun on the beach. Meet at the visitor centre for the walk to the beach. You will then have a look at what lives on the beach and create some amazing artwork. Bring your lunch to have a picnic on the beach.

Contact: 01387 780579 or [mersehead@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mersehead@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £2 Child; Car parking charges apply for non-members.

# JULY

## Tuesdays 4, 11, 18, 25 July

### **Bug Hunt (WWT Caerlaverock) 11.00am to 1.00pm Booking: Not Essential**

Spend a morning hunting for bugs on the reserve. Look under stones and in dead wood, as well as on plants and trees.

Contact: 01387 770200 or [info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk](mailto:info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk)

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply, WWT members free

## Wednesdays 5, 12 July

### **Seabird Spectacular (RSPB Mull of Galloway) 1.00pm start Booking: Not Essential**

The Mull of Galloway is home to thousands of nesting seabirds. Join the warden for a guided walk to find out more about seabird ecology and the importance of the reserve in supporting these magnificent birds. Bring binoculars if you have them, suitable clothing and stout footwear.

Contact: 01988 402130 or [mullofgalloway@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mullofgalloway@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: Adults £3, Children £1.50, Under 5's Free. RSPB members 20% off



Wednesdays  
5, 12, 19, 26 July

**Pond Dipping**  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
11.00am to 1.00pm  
**Booking: Not Essential**

What creatures can you catch in the raised pond? Use nets, bug pots and aqua scopes to find and identify the pond creatures.

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

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply,  
WWT members free

Daily from Saturday 8 July  
to Wednesday 12 July

**Wild Challenge: Flowers and Butterflies**  
(RSPB Mersehead)  
11.00am to 3.00pm  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Come along with your family and find out what flowers are around and what butterflies can be found. Pop into the visitor centre anytime where the friendly staff will give you a map and get you started.

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

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

Cost: £3 Child

Saturday 15 July

**SNH Celebrates 60 Years of Caerlaverock NNR**  
(Caerlaverock NNR 60th Celebrations)  
All day  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Find out about SNH's work on the NNR and that of their partners face to face; learn about the local history and culture of the Caerlaverock area; discover wild food – taste it, eat it or forage for it; wildlife craft activities for kids.

Contact: <http://www.nnr-scotland.org.uk/caerlaverock/> for more details

Meet: Barbour Hall, Glencaple, DG1 4SP  
Cost: Free

Saturday 15 July

**How Does Mersehead Work?**  
11.00am to 1.00pm  
(RSPB Mersehead)  
**Booking: Essential**

Have you wondered how RSPB Scotland Mersehead is managed? Would you like to know more about how the land is looked after for a variety of birds and wildlife? Would you like to see the areas of the reserve that are not open to the public? Join one of the members of the team for this walk and find out how lapwing numbers have increased, how the site is managed for natterjack toads and how the reserve gets ready for the geese arriving in the winter.

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

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

Cost: FREE but charges for walks: £4 Adult, £2 Child, £3/£1.50 Members

Wednesdays 19, 26 July

**Wednesday Wildlife Walk**  
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)  
1.00pm start  
**Booking: Not Essential**

The Mull of Galloway is a hive of activity with buzzing bees, fluttering butterflies and birds a plenty. Join RSPB for a guided walk to learn more about the wonderful wildlife. Bring binoculars if you have some, suitable clothing and stout footwear.

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

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

Cost: Adults £3, Children £1.50, Under 5's Free. RSPB members 20% off

Wednesday 19 July

**Sea Trout Fishing for Young Anglers**  
(Nith Young Anglers Club)  
Start time tbc  
**Booking: Essential**

Join the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust to try your hand at fishing for sea trout in the Nith Catchment. Never fished before? Don't worry – professional angling instructors from Borderlines will be on hand to teach you how to fish and what to do when you catch one. All equipment is supplied. Under 12's must have parental supervision / parents are welcomed at all events.

Contact: 01387 740043  
or trust@river-nith.com

Meet: Information will be provided on booking

Cost: Free but booking essential, transport is available but limited

Thursday 20 July

**Paper Making Workshop**  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
10.00am to 4.00pm  
**Booking: Essential**

Information still to be confirmed, contact WWT Caerlaverock direct for details.

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

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply

Daily from Saturday 22 July  
to Wednesday 26 July

**Wild Challenge: Tree-mendous**  
(RSPB Mersehead)  
11.00am to 3.00pm  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Come along with your family and discover the world of trees. Pop into the visitor centre anytime where the friendly staff will give you a map and get you started. Then visit the different stations and "get close to nature".

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

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

Cost: £3 Child

Monday 24 July

**High Tide Perambulation**  
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)  
12.00noon to 2.00pm  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Take a gentle stroll along the flood bank through natures 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: £3 Members, £4 Non-members,  
Children half price

Wednesday 26 July

**Cumbria Low Tide Shore Walk**  
(Cumbria Wildlife Trust / Ann Lingard)  
Starts 8.45am  
**Booking: Essential**

A low tide walk with Cumbria Wildlife Trust and Ann Lingard, Solway Shore Stories Author. This walk, from Allonby to Dubmill Point, takes in the new Allonby Bay Marine Conservation Zone with its honeycomb-worm reefs. The terrain on the lower shore is slightly rocky, often slippery and always wet, so wellies are essential! Bring walking-poles if you feel happier using them. Please note that – in very rare circumstances – weather and other factors might force cancellation, so please leave your phone number when booking.

Contact: 01539 816300 or  
admin@cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk

Meet: Car park opposite Twentymans Shop,  
Allonby, NY080426

Cost: Free

Thursday 27 July

**Beautiful Butterflies**  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
10.00am to 12.00noon  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Find and identify the different butterflies out on the meadow. Search for ringlet, meadow brown, green veined white, painted lady and tortoiseshell butterflies.

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

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply,  
WWT members free

# AUGUST

Tuesdays  
1, 8, 15, 22, 29 August

**Bug Hunt**  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
11.00am to 1.00pm  
**Booking: Not Essential**

Spend a morning hunting for bugs on the reserve. Look under stones and in dead wood, as well as on plants and trees.

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

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply,  
WWT members free

Wednesdays  
2, 9, 16, 23, 30 August

**Pond Dipping**  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
11.00am to 1.00pm  
**Booking: Not Essential**

What creatures can you catch in the raised pond? Use nets, bug pots and aqua scopes to find and identify the pond creatures.

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

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply,  
WWT members free

The Solway Coast







Flax at Brighthouse Bay

## Thursday 3 August

**Dragons and Damsels  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
10.00am to 12.00noon  
Booking: Not Essential**

Discover the dragonflies and damselflies present on the reserve and learn the differences between them at this family event.

Contact: 01387 770200 or [info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk](mailto:info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk)

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply, WWT members free

## Daily from Saturday 5 August to Thursday 10 August

**Wild Challenge: Be a Bug!  
(RSPB Mersehead)  
11.00am to 3.00pm  
Booking: Not Essential**

Come along with your family and discover what kind of bug you would like to be? Pop into the visitor centre anytime where the friendly staff will give you a map and get you started. Then visit the different stations and "get close to nature".

Contact: 01387 780579 or [mersehead@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mersehead@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £3 Child

## Wednesdays 9, 16, 23, 30 August

**Wednesday Wildlife Walk  
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)  
1.00pm start  
Booking: Not Essential**

The Mull of Galloway is a hive of activity with buzzing bees, fluttering butterflies and birds a plenty. Join the warden for a guided walk to learn more about the wonderful wildlife. Bring binoculars if you have some, suitable clothing and stout footwear.

Contact: 01988 402130 or [mullofgalloway@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mullofgalloway@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: Adults £3, Children £1.50, Under 5's Free. RSPB members 20% off

## Wednesday 9 August

**Sea Fishing for Young Anglers  
(Nith Young Anglers Club)  
Start time tbc  
Booking: Essential**

Join the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust to try your hand at sea fishing in the Nith Catchment. Never fished before? Don't worry – professional angling instructors from Borderlines will be on hand to teach you how to fish and what to do when you catch one. All equipment is supplied. Under 12's must have parental supervision / parents are welcomed at all events.

Contact: 01387 740043 or [trust@river-nith.com](mailto:trust@river-nith.com)

Meet: Information will be provided on booking

Cost: Free but booking essential, transport is available but limited

## Thursday 10 August

**Small Mammal Trapping  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
10.00am to 12.00noon  
Booking: Essential**

Find out what small mammals live on the reserve and see what has been caught in the small mammal traps! Take part in art and craft activities at this family event.

Contact: 01387 770200 or [info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk](mailto:info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk)

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply, WWT members free

## Saturday 12 August

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

To celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Caerlaverock NNR, WWT Caerlaverock is holding a Bioblitz, in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage and Dumfries and Galloway Environmental Resources Centre. The objective of the day is to find and identify as many different species of bugs, plants, birds, mammals, amphibians etc. as possible, with the help of natural history experts.

Contact: 01387 770200 or [info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk](mailto:info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk)

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

Cost: Free

## Saturday 12 August

**How Does Mersehead Work?  
11.00am to 1.00pm  
(RSPB Mersehead)  
Booking: Essential**

Have you wondered how RSPB Scotland Mersehead is managed? Would you like to know more about how the land is looked after for a variety of birds and wildlife? Would you like to see the areas of the reserve that are not open to the public? Join one of the members of the team for this walk and find out how lapwing numbers have increased, how the site is managed for natterjack toads and how the reserve gets ready for the geese arriving in the winter.

Contact: 01387 780579 or [mersehead@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mersehead@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £4 Adult, £2 Child, £3/£1.50 Members

## Thursday 17 August

**Owl Pellet Dissection  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
10.00am to 12.00noon  
Booking: Not Essential**

Find out what the barn owls are eating – dissect an owl pellet and work out what all the bones are!

Contact: 01387 770200 or [info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk](mailto:info.caerlaverock@wwt.org.uk)

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

Cost: Normal admission charges apply, WWT members free

## Friday 18 August

**Mud Walk  
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)  
1.00pm to 3.00pm  
Booking: Not Essential**

See Wigtown Bay Local Nature Reserve from a different angle. 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](mailto:crookofbaldoon@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £4 Members, £5 Non-members, Children free

## Daily from Saturday 19 August to Thursday 24 August

**Wild Challenge: Be a Hedgehog!  
(RSPB Mersehead)  
11.00am to 3.00pm  
Booking: Not Essential**

Come along with your family and discover if you could be a hedgehog? Pop into the visitor centre anytime where the friendly staff will give you a map and get you started. Then visit the different stations and "get close to nature".

Contact: 01387 780579 or [mersehead@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mersehead@rspb.org.uk)

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

Cost: £3 Child

Butterfish







Starfish

Worm casts in the sand



## Wednesday 23 August

**High Tide Perambulation  
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)  
12.00noon to 2.00pm  
Booking: Not Essential**

Take a gentle stroll along the flood bank through natures 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: £3 Members, £4 Non-members,  
Children half price

## Thursday 24 August

**Cumbria Low Tide Shore Walk  
(Ann Lingard)  
Starts 8.15am  
Booking: Essential**

A walk with Ann Lingard, Solway Shore Stories Author, from Allonby to Dubmill Point enjoying the new Allonby Bay Marine Conservation Zone with its honeycomb-worm reefs. The terrain on the lower shore is slightly rocky, often slippery and always wet, so wellies are essential! Bring walking-poles if you feel happier using them. Please note that – in very rare circumstances – weather and other factors might force cancellation, so please leave your phone number when booking.

Contact: 016973 21967 or  
enquiries@annlingard.com

Meet: Car park opposite Twentyman's Shop,  
Allonby, NY080426

Cost: Free

## Saturday 26 August

**Bat and Moth Night  
(RSPB Mersehead)  
8.30pm to 10.30pm  
Booking: Essential**

Join the reserve staff for an evening adventure to discover what bats live in and around RSPB Mersehead. Bat detectors will be on hand to listen to the bats as they fly around looking for their dinner. A moth trap will also be put out to see what the bats are eating.

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

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

Cost: £4 Adult, £2 Child, £3/£1.50  
Members

# SEPTEMBER

## Daily in September

**Stars & Stripes Badger Watching  
(WWT Caerlaverock)  
Starts 8.00pm  
Booking: Essential**

Watch wild badgers feeding just outside the WWT comfortable observatory. Fair-trade tea, coffee and biscuits available.

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

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

Cost: £10.00 Adult, £7.50 Concession,  
£5.00 Child. Tickets must be paid for in  
advance

## Sunday 3 September

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

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

Cost: Free

## Wednesdays 6, 13, 20, 27 September

**Mulling over Migration  
(RSPB Mull of Galloway)  
1.00pm start  
Booking: Not Essential**

Thousands of birds fly over the Mull of Galloway on route to their wintering grounds. Join the warden for a guided walk to mull over the wonder of migration. Bring binoculars if you have some, suitable clothing and strong footwear.

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

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

Cost: Adults £3, Children £1.50, Under 5's  
Free. RSPB members 20% off

## Fridays 8 and 22 September

**High Tide Perambulation  
(RSPB Crook of Baldoon)  
12.00noon to 2.00pm  
Booking: Not Essential**

Take a gentle stroll along the flood bank through natures 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: £3 Members, £4 Non-members,  
Children half price

## Saturday 16 September

**Salmon Fishing for Young Anglers  
(Nith Young Anglers Club)  
Start time tbc  
Booking: Essential**

Join the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust to try your hand at fishing for salmon in the Nith Catchment. Never fished before? Don't worry – professional angling instructors from Borderlines will be on hand to teach you how to fish and what to do when you catch one. All equipment is supplied. Under 12's must have parental supervision / parents are welcomed at all events.

Contact: 01387 740043 or trust@river-nith.com

Meet: Information will be provided on  
booking

Cost: Free but booking essential, transport  
is available but limited

## Wednesday 20 September

**Autumn Walk  
(Caerlaverock NNR 60th  
Celebrations)  
11.00am – 1.00pm**

Join the reserve staff for a guided walk along the boardwalk through flooders and reed bed to the bird hide where you can see and hear autumn migrant birds and migrating shorebirds. Wear warm clothing, waterproofs and bring binoculars if you have them.

Contact: Adam on 0300 067 3200

Meet: Caerlaverock NNR, Hollands car  
park, DG1 4RS

Cost: Free

Whelk case on the beach







For further information, to submit an article or to join the SFP mailing list please contact:  
Solway Firth Partnership, Campbell House, The Crichton, Bankend Road, Dumfries, DG1 4UQ  
t: 01387 702161 e: [info@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](mailto:info@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk) [www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](http://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk)

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