

Creating a Buzz at Neyland School

Earlier this year, Neyland Community School was chosen by Keep Wales Tidy as one of five Natural Buzz demonstration sites in Wales. Funded by the Welsh Government's Nature Fund, the aim of the work was to improve the school grounds to benefit pollinators.

KWT and Green Space Wales worked with the school's eco committee to convert a number of grassed areas to wildflower beds and to plant a range of perennials and fruit trees. Pupils from the eco committee learnt about the importance of pollinators and got involved with the practical work while the rest of the school were kept informed and involved through regular updates at assemblies.



Approximately 450m² of lawn that was previously mown once a fortnight has been transformed from a sterile green space into a blaze of colour. "We are really proud of how our school grounds look now" said Annabel (aged 5). Zak (aged 6½) said "It used to be boring and muddy and wet and the flowers have made a big, massive, massive difference."

Pupils are also more aware of the importance of pollinators. Eco committee member Nia (aged 10) said "They may be tiny but bees are essential. We rely on them and other insects to pollinate most of our fruit and vegetables but bees are under threat, and without them so is

PEMBROKESHIRE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP



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In this Issue

Creating a Buzz at Neyland School

Pages 1—2

West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre Recording Days in Pembrokeshire 2015

Pages 2—3

A Stitch in Time

Pages 3—4

Integrating Natural and Social Resources

Pages 4—5

Stag Do-gooders Help Remove Himalayan Balsam in Porthgain

Page 5

Courses and Events

Pages 6—7

Contact Details

Page 8



the food we eat.”

Natalie Moir, eco school coordinator at Neyland community school said “Visually there is a real impact in and around the school grounds. Bees have already created a small natural hive. It has brought the eco committee together, making decisions together and through their roles as class reps, all the children have been involved. This has given a real positive feeling and we have now begun to create links to science projects.”

Assembly member Simon Thomas, who attended the launch, said projects like these helped pupils get a 'real value from education', by using skills like counting and measuring in a new context. He said changes to the curriculum would continue to improve freedom for outdoor teaching, and using knowledge in a fun way.

Part of the funding was used to purchase tools and equipment along with enough wildflower seed to enable to school to repeat the planting in future years. “We would definitely do it again. We loved it” said Zac.

Mari Williams
Keep Wales Tidy



West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre Recording Days in Pembrokeshire 2015

Every year West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre (WWBIC) arranges a number of Biological Recording Days throughout West Wales; this year we visited two sites in Pembrokeshire. Differing somewhat from a 'Bioblitz', these days are designed around gaining permission to visit and survey private land as a small group, often farms. This gives people the opportunity to access areas of the County which they would not

Lesser Skullcap.
Photo Rob Shaw.



normally be able to visit as well as seeing first hand some of the excellent results of good land management on farms around the area. They also allow landowners access to this expert knowledge providing them with detailed species information about their land which may not normally be accessible.

Usnea articulata.
Photo Rob Shaw.



This year we visited Dr Beynon's Bug Farm near St David's, courtesy of Sarah Beynon and Andrew Holcroft, uniquely positioned between Dowrog and Waun Vachelich commons, and a farm adjacent to Waun Cleddau SSSI near the Preseli Hills with



kind permission from Val and Eddie Kirby. Both sites afforded us the opportunity to see some county rarities like Whorled Caraway (*Carum verticillatum*), Lesser Skullcap (*Scutellaria minor*) and Three-lobed Water Crowfoot (*Ranunculus tripartitus*) as well as a host of other plants, invertebrates, lichens, birds and more. Usually well over 200 different species are seen on a day.

Our recording days have been very well supported throughout the years by a dedicated group of local experts and they provide a good opportunity for people to meet up informally as well as to pool natural history and species identification knowledge to survey a site for the most number of species possible.

We're always on the lookout for people who are interested in attending. A number of taxonomic groups are under-represented in recording effort in Pembrokeshire such as Spiders, Lichens and Gastropods for example and we are always interested to hear from people taking an interest in under-recorded groups. You don't have to be an expert to attend though an interest in species identification is essential, while the opportunity to learn in the field with help from expert recorders can be very beneficial to developing identification skills.

If you are interested in attending any of our Recording Days in 2016 or you are a landowner who might like a visit to your land please contact WWBIC via Robert@westwalesbiodiversity.org.uk 01994 241468.

Robert Shaw
West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre



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A Stitch in Time

A 15-month project to tackle invasive non-native species (INNS) in the Gwaun Valley is underway.

The *Stitch in Time* project is targeting Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) - among the priorities for action in the Biodiversity Action Plan for Pembrokeshire.

The *Stitch in Time project* is funded by the Sustainable Development Fund, administered by the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.



One ditch at a time: volunteer Rhodri Kemp locates a stand of Himalayan balsam

Survey and mapping of the three target species has built up a picture of the presence of the species in the Gwaun Valley and within individual drainage basins.



National Park Authority Voluntary Wardens pulling Himalayan Balsam

Survey has benefited enormously from dedicated volunteers and from sightings and grid references submitted by members of the public.



Volunteers are also helping with management and control. Volunteer work parties have been uprooting Himalayan balsam plants before the seed pods mature, and have cleared vegetation near to Japanese knotweed plants to make them accessible for spray treatment. Biosecurity measures are taken to ensure that plant fragments are not inadvertently transferred off-site.

Please get in touch with *Stitch in Time* project coordinator Matt Tebbutt for more information about the project, to report sightings of the three target species in the Gwaun Valley catchment, or to learn more about volunteering opportunities. Matt can be emailed at: matthewt@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk or contacted by phone on 07866 771164.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority



Integrating Natural and Social Resources

This summer saw the conclusion of a six month project to build ecosystem resilience through ecological enhancement and connectivity on the Castlemartin Peninsular - bringing together communities, land managers, industry and the public sector to build resilience in the local environment and economy. The work was funded by the Welsh Government's 'Nature Fund' aimed at encouraging innovative, landscape-scale partnership projects.

The project brought together the National Trust, Natural Resources Wales, Pembroke 21C (CIC), Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and Pembrokeshire County Council together with private landowners and local businesses to address known threats to high conservation



Bosherton Lakes
Photo: Sid Howells

value sites (such as Bosherton Lakes and Castlemartin Corse), improve the resilience of ecosystems at a landscape scale and build local capacity for community and volunteer-led conservation work.

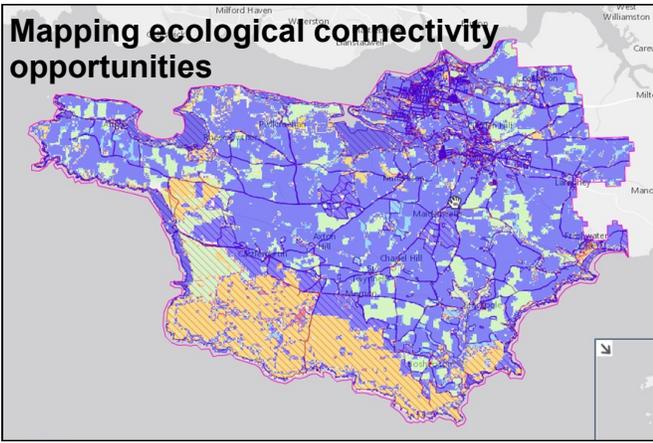
Practical works included providing infrastructure to facilitate sustainable land management; habitat creation to benefit pollinators; working with local farmers to find ways of working to benefit both agriculture and nature; and training in conservation and countryside management for local volunteers. The project also included theoretical studies to map conservation opportunities and investigate the feasibility of a lake restoration project.

The project culminated in an information sharing event at the Stackpole Centre in June where a wide selection of stakeholders was invited to contribute their ideas as to the next steps for the area. The Pro-



Castlemartin Corse
Photo: Paul Culyer

Mapping ecological connectivity opportunities



-ject Partners would like to build on the successes of the project to realise further benefits to the environment, the economy and society in the area in the coming years.

Ant Rogers

Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership



Stag Do-gooders Help Remove Himalayan Balsam in Porthgain

Conservation work may not be a traditional stag weekend activity, but that's exactly what one group of friends decided to do when they visited the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park recently.

The group of 20 men, who met at Cardiff University Mountaineering Club as students, helped National Park Authority Ranger Ian Meopham remove Himalayan balsam that had inundated a former millpond near the village of Porthgain.

One of the best men, David Webb said: "I know stag dos have a bad reputation for going to big cities and causing carnage and not doing anything good, so we wanted to do something for the community."

The group, who completed the good deed dressed in suits and novelty beards, were visiting the area to enjoy the coastering and kayaking opportunities on the coast, but found time in their weekend to help remove the invasive species from a large area of land near the seaside village.

Himalayan balsam can grow to above head-height spreading quickly. It smothers other native vegetation as it goes, especially on riverbanks and wasteland, but can also invade gardens.

Ranger Ian Meopham added: "It was fantastic to have the help of such a large group of enthusiastic volunteers as it's important to pull this highly invasive plant before it seeds.

"This is our third year trying to get rid of Himalayan Balsam here in Porthgain but it's a gradual process. I'm hopeful this year to be able to clear the whole catchment.

"We're lucky to have the help of all kinds of groups who help us conserve the National Park's natural beauty and wildlife and I'm looking forward to working with groups including students from Atlantic College and the Friends of the National Park in the near future."



National Park Authority Ranger Ian Meopham with the group of 20 volunteers.

For more information about volunteering with the National Park Authority email:

recman@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk



Biodiversity Events September—December



Date	Title	Information	Contact
05/09/2015 & 19/09/2015 09:30 – 15:00	Seals on Skomer	Explore the autumn island of Skomer and find out more about the grey seal. September is the pupping season, and the seals use the isolated beaches and caves on the island as a safe retreat. BOOKING ESSENTIAL	01834 845040
05/09/2015 10:00 – 12:00	Reptile Ramble. Bosherston.	Join our National Park ranger as he introduces you to some of Pembrokeshire's most elusive reptile residents. The session includes a short walk to where the reptile sites are.	01834 845040
10/09/2015 & 24/09/2015 09:45 – 14:00	Seals in September. St David's Peninsula	The pupping season has arrived and the grey seal is visiting the coast of Pembrokeshire to give birth. Join our National Park ranger on this exploration of the St. David's peninsula on this half-day walk in search of seal pups. BOOKING ESSENTIAL	01834 845040
10/09/2015 19:00 – 21:00	Brilliant Bats. Carew Castle	A family friendly evening where history meets wildlife. Explore Pembrokeshire's most special historical locations. Follow footsteps to the past, look for bats and listen for their calls. BOOKING ESSENTIAL.	01834 845040
12/09/2015 09:00 – 10:30	National Moth Night. Cilgerran	Come and learn about the wonderful world of moths with Nia Stephens. We will be looking at moths caught in traps set the night before at Teifi Marshes. Price: Adults £5, Children £2.50 Booking is essential for this event.	Please call 01239 621600 or email n.stephens@wels.hwildlife.org to reserve your place.
14/09/2015 19:30 – 21:15	Bird Ringing. Cashfield Community Centre, Haverfordwest.	A talk by Wendy James. Indoor meetings held at Cashfield Community Centre, Cashfield Way, Haverfordwest, SA61 2GF (off Crowhill). Admission £1 (includes tea/coffee and biscuits).	John Steer— 01646 278966; biojohn@tiscali.co.uk
15/09/2015 19:30 – 21:15	Water Voles & Beavers. Foundry House Community Centre	Rob Parry, Conservation Officer for WTSWW, will give a talk on Water Voles and provide an update on the Beaver project. All welcome, £1.50 for members and £2.50 for visitors – includes Tea or Coffee and biscuits.	Christine – chrisjones58@gmail.com 01646 673912

Biodiversity Events September—December



Date	Title	Information	Contact
12/10/2015 19:30 – 21:15	Travels of a Welsh Naturalist Cashfield Community Centre, Haverfordwest,	My quest for birds, whales and other mammals A talk by Elfyn Pugh. Admission £1 (includes tea/coffee and biscuits).	John Steer—01646 278966; biojohn@tiscali.co.uk
20/10/2015 19:30 – 21:15	The Brown Hairstreak Butterfly. Foundry House Community Centre, Pembroke.	Talk by David Redhead about this butterfly, found on West Williamston Nature Reserve.	Christine – chrissiejones58@gmail.com 01646 673912
24-27 October 11:00 - 16:00	Bat Quest. Carew Castle	Carew Castle is famed for its resident bats, which like to hide in the dark nooks and crannies of the Castle walls. Join our Quest to see if you can find them all! Included in normal admission	0845 345 7275
28/10/2015 13:00 – 15:30	Wild Woodland Adventures. Colby	Watch out for the woodland wildlife preparing for winter in these family activity events. A mixture of outdoor and craft activities.	0845 345 7275
29/10/2015 13:00 – 15:30	Wild Woodland Adventures. Colby	Watch out for the woodland wildlife preparing for winter in these family activity events. A mixture of outdoor and craft activities.	0845 345 7275
01/11/2015 11:00 - 16:00	Bat Quest. Carew Castle	Carew Castle is famed for its resident bats, which like to hide in the dark nooks and crannies of the Castle walls. Join our Quest to see if you can find them all! Included in normal admission	0845 345 7275
17/11/2015 19:30 – 21:15	The Future of Gupton Farm. Foundry House Community Centre, Pembroke.	Chris Oliver – National Trust Ranger for the Stackpole estate will give a talk on the latest plans for Gupton Farm near Freshwater West, the tenancy of which came back into National Trust care in 2013.	Christine – chrissiejones58@gmail.com 01646 673912



PBP Contact Details

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Pembrokeshire Biodiversity website:

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk (search - biodiversity)

Wales Biodiversity website:

www.biodiversitywales.org.uk

Biodiversity Newsletters

Mae'r cylch-lythyr hwn ar gael yng Nghymraeg, cysylltwch â Ant am gopi cymraeg.

PBP would like to thank all those who contributed to this newsletter. If you would like to write an article for the next newsletter please contact Ant.

PBP Members

County Landowners Association



Pembrokeshire Rivers Trust



Farmers Union of Wales



Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority



Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group



Pembrokeshire Local Action Network for Enterprise and Development



Keep Wales Tidy



Prince's Trust Cymru



Royal Society for the Protection of Birds



National Farmers Union – Wales



The National Trust



Natural Resources Wales



The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales



Pembroke 21C Community Association Limited



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Pembrokeshire County Council



West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre

