

April 2010

## MARINE ACT

The Marine Act is in place and the work of protecting our marine life through a network of marine conservation zones underway. Coastwise is involved in developing proposals for North Devon, through representation on the Devon MCZ Group (Jill Portsmouth) and dialog with Finding Sanctuary, tasked to make south west proposals -

- Focus on protected species, and
- Representative threatened habitats
- Under Defra's (draft) guidelines
- With stakeholder engagement
- Aiming for consensus
- Science tempered by sustainability
- By June 2011, a tight timetable

Despite the conservation importance of Lundy and the VMCA, North Devon is relatively short on data & expert champions compared with South Devon. With this in mind, we have joined forces with the Biosphere through a Working Group chaired by Robert Down and including representatives of North Devon Fisherman's Association, Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority, North Devon Plus, Natural England, the AONB & the Biosphere to collate available data.

Sources include Joint Nature Conservation Committee data, and the Outer Bristol Marine Habitat Study, Lundy material & local inter-tidal data - all indicative of biologically rich habitats in the Biosphere area.

The group's task will be to help prepare North Devon MCZ proposals for the Devon MCZ, taking account of the interests of the significant local fishing industry and the implications of off-shore wind generation developments.

### JOINING FORCES



## NEW SPRINGTIME PROJECTS

The Plankton Team's visit to the Continuous Plankton Recording Labs, organized by Jay Nicholson & hosted by Clare Buckland of SAHFOS (left).

ventured onto the Skern and Crow Point. They were just one of three teams taking part in new Coastwise projects.

For the last three months twelve Coastwise members have been surveying, sampling and recording on our shores and estuaries. Braving winter weather they have been taking part in projects supported by Ambios Ltd. as part of their "Nature@sundown" scheme. Funded by the Government's "Learning Revolution" initiative, the scheme aims to support innovative and informal adult learning projects.

Keen to take advantage of this offer, I submitted three projects all of which were accepted:

1. An **Anemone Study** to survey movement, growth etc. by our anemone species in the winter months. What do they get up to! The Anemone team got some surprises when they made repeat visits to their survey sites.
2. A **Plankton Survey** to collect and identify inshore samples in the months before Spring growth. The Plankton team were able to develop their ID skills further after a visit to plankton survey organisation SAHFOS laboratories at Plymouth. (see pics above).
3. An **Invertebrate Study**. What lives in the muds of the Taw/Torridge Estuaries? What eats what in the relationship with overwintering wading birds? After several trips to collect samples and identify species the team are looking forward to improving their ID skills on a planned visit to worm and mud expert Phil Smith at Crediton. In keeping with the spirit of the project, all the teams are intent on continuing their surveys after the 31<sup>st</sup> March closing date. Watch this space!

Jim Monroe, Coastwise Projects Manager

A Marine Educator's conference organized by the Biosphere Foundation on Tuesday 9th February

brought together 80 educators from across Devon, to hear about learning on the coast. Expert presentations ran throughout the day. Members helped and provided a [display](#) which attracted [much attention](#). Popular beach taster sessions were provided by [Mark Ward](#), Nettlecombe FSC, and [Pete Jollands](#), a Biosphere Foundation Director. The event was organised by a Co- Director, Fiona Fraser-Smith, with AONB SDF funding.

Coastwise took part in the **Biosphere's Big Beach Clean Weekend**, on 21st March. We were joined at our regular site, Downend, by members of Croyde Surf Club and Surf South West, and a total of over 40 volunteers. Thanks to this excellent co-operative effort all the beaches and rocky gullies leading to the headland were cleared of rubbish in under two hours - about 50 sacks full and a load of broken glass. There was less debris than in previous years, but some large items including two lorry tyres, and piles of tangled fishing tackle.

We were pleased to be invited by Steve Mulberry of the **National Trust** to make a presentation to staff about Coastwise activities. Copies of the newsletter are to be circulated to them, and Jim Monroe will liaise between us. Hopefully opportunities for collaboration will follow.

Diver Chris Mandry and ecologist Pip Jollands reported rich marine life at **Greencliff** reef and shore respectively when they talked to Coastwise. Pip & Pete Jollands led a visit there with Coastwise members on 2nd March. Over 40 animals were found on this semi-exposed shore, where goosebump sponge and gooseberry seasquirts were common. Highlights included: three species of sea slug, Painted Topshells, Squat Lobsters, Tompot Blennies, and Wart Barnacle - all records and Rob Jutsum's barnacle photo were sent to **Marlin**. Coastwise hopes to increase the number of records from North Devon and asks everyone to report their finds [www.marlin.ac.uk/](http://www.marlin.ac.uk/)

Geologist Paul Madgett generously encouraged Coastwise geology enthusiasts & rock-poolers to join him on one of his popular geology field trips to **Hartland Quay** on 16th March. Little could upstage Paul's expertise on the spectacular rocks, some small black blobs on the shore did their best. Over 50 Sea Hares were found in rock-pools and crevices coming together to breed.

## SO TIMELY

The Spring programme offered the usual wide range of fascinating topics. Some were so timely that they deserve a special mention. Peter Howard's *Whose Coast?* had lessons for the stakeholder consultation, favoured by government, with which we are involved through the Marine Act. Natural England's Andrew Knights gave us a valuable introduction to the 600+ page Act in 60 slides - some achievement. Tegwyn Harris's talk, *Glorious Mud*, was strong on learning and laughs, and without which the Invertebrate Team could still be looking for their first worms. But particular honours must go to Paul Madgett, who finally got to give the talk on Clouds first scheduled over a year ago. Well worth the wait, it beautifully demonstrated how fortunate we are in our North Devon skylines.

## SUMMER EVENTS

The **Shore Safari Team** have now completed their training organized by Project Co-ordinator Jim Monroe, insurance cover and kit is in place, arranged by Robert Down, and reference and promotional materials have been prepared by Anne Brown. All that remains is to get down to the beach.

The **first public event** is scheduled for Wednesday morning, 14<sup>th</sup> April 10.30 am at Barricane Beach, Woolacombe, the first of 3 at Barricane this summer, the others on 16 June & 12 August. Do come and support us, call Jim to book your place, 07889 134466.

We will also be participating in **Combe Martin Discovery Day** 15 May, 10 am - 4 Pm.

In June we will be monitoring Lee & Abbotsham beaches for Marlin's **Shore Thing** annual survey. The Plankton Team will be assisting Marlin present a plankton display during **Appledore Arts** in early June.

Our Summer Programme will also include **Beach Profile Visits**. Already scheduled: Saunton on 28 May, 10.30 am, followed by Croyde on 28 June. Some of us also hope to join the south Devon **Bioblitz** 11/12 June for more monitoring. For further details: [www.coastwisenorthdevon.org.uk](http://www.coastwisenorthdevon.org.uk)

## AUTUMN PROGRAMME

There will be a new 10 week course in the autumn starting 7 October, 9.45 am start, at Barnstaple Library.

John Broomhead and Malcolm Roberts are working on the programme, which will offer plenty of variety and take account of suggestions received.