

Celebrating the Members' Year

Scientist, Michael Hassell, diver Chris Mandry, and artist & poet Paula Newbery, all Coastwise members, recently helped Coastwise celebrate the Members' Year and in so doing helped explain the secret of Coastwise's success. The wide ranging interests of the members and their enthusiasm for sharing these with others have contributed to the group's growing popularity .. For more information see Chairs' report for 2011 attached.

Michael Hassell reported his recent appointment as Chair of the National Biodiversity Network, the national repository of authoritative wildlife records. Coastwise members were delighted to hear that the Marlin, with its marine database, would be joining the many agencies contributing data to the NBN, data which would then be available for widespread use. Members were encouraged to contribute their records via Marlin.

Chris Mandry, Ilfracombe Sub-Aqua diver and regular contributor to Coastwise, shared his 2011 underwater sightings in a spectacular slide display of the marine life around Lundy and in Barnstaple/Bideford Bay, including this lovely Devonshire Cup Coral. He challenged members to devise a competition to identify the species, with the tantalising prospect of a summer trip to Lundy aboard a dive boat for the winner.



Paula's contribution, this poem, speaks for itself, and was inspired by the creative 2010 Art Walks at Northam Burrows organised by ecological artist and friend to Coastwise Linda Gordon.....

Elements

Under pale indigo clouds
we walk
wind on our skin
rain against our hoods
sounds in our heads
soft light on muted colours
sky seeping into sea

All our histories
etched in stones
millions of years travelling

tossed through water
hurled against the beach
snatched back by the sea.
Insistent voices

quietly lapping the shore.
And the skylark rises

And sings
And sings