

# BEACON NEWSLETTER

ISSUE No. 13

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**Apologies that this newsletter is later than planned. Things here at BEACON have been hotting up with new projects on the horizon, water quality data to analyse, funding to apply for, fundraising to do and lots of balsam bashing and invasive species control to get stuck into. Read on for more on what we've been up to and how you can get involved...**

## TAKE THAT, INVADERS!

Staff from Cheshire East Council and the Bollin Valley Partnership have been controlling invasive plant and animal species in the areas they manage. Rangers at Macclesfield Riverside Park have been controlling American Signal Crayfish found in ponds at the park, and at Poynton Pool there is lots of American Skunk Cabbage, terrapins and American Mink to be dealing with! Balsam bashing is being done in Trafford and Wilmslow; with the hope of eradicating it completely this year at one site, and in Trafford the fight to control Giant Hogweed continues. This work is very important as it links up with work done by other BEACON partners and volunteer groups! Great job!



American Skunk Cabbage  
(*Lysichiton americanus*) at  
Poynton Pool.



## ENVIRONMENT AGENCY INCIDENT REPORTING HOTLINE

Do you notice odd smells from your local river or brook whilst you're out walking the dog? Perhaps as you're out fishing you see some discolouration to the water, or as you're checking your sheep you notice some foam floating downstream? For anything like this, or any other concerns you may have about a waterbody please report it to the Environment Agency Incident Reporting Hotline, open 24 hours a day, on:

**0800 80 70 60**

These incidents are logged once you phone in, and help us build a holistic picture of what's going on in the catchment so we can look further into areas where there are persistent problems.

## BALSAM BASHES

Balsam bashing is the removal of invasive Himalayan Balsam by pulling it up by hand. It's very easy and anyone can do it. If you would like to host your own balsam bashes there are now resources available on the BEACON website to help you. You can download our Balsam Bash Leaders Pack, with everything you need including posters and risk assessments, here: <http://beacon-bollin.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/>

If you'd like to get involved in a balsam bash without leading one, check our events page to find out where your nearest balsam bash is. You can find this here: <http://beacon-bollin.org.uk/events/>

## CALL OF NATURE PROJECT

BEACON will soon start this new project that focusses on septic tanks in the catchment. There will be a survey to find out where the septic tanks are and how well they are working, and then we will engage with the householders to make sure they know how best to maintain the tank, and what they can and can't put down the drains. If you know of any issues with a septic tank local to you please get in touch on the details overleaf.



### CO-OP LOCAL COMMUNITY FUND

BEACON is very pleased to have been chosen as one of the Co-op's Local Community Fund causes. Every time Co-op members buy Co-op branded products and services, from buying a loaf of bread to planning a funeral, 1% of their spend goes to a local cause. For the six months that BEACON is part of the fund, the money builds up. Members can choose which cause their contribution goes to, and we hope you will choose BEACON.

BEACON's fund will be used to support the work of our River Rangers, and extend this scheme into other areas of the Bollin catchment. We will be able to train up volunteers, provide equipment to carry out simple water tests, speak to landowners about land management where there are problems identified, and also provide some Project Officer support.

To find out more about this, and to select BEACON as your Co-op local cause please visit: <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/6901>



### GIANT HOGWEED

Giant Hogweed is something that affects the downstream end of the Bollin catchment; from Manchester Airport to the Manchester Ship Canal. BEACON is working to eradicate it completely at its upstream reaches, and control it further downstream. Staff and volunteers have already dedicated over ten days to controlling hogweed as it not only out-competes native plants, it is also a danger to people as the sap can burn and blister skin. It is an invasive plant listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and therefore landowners are obliged to control this species where it is on their land. For help with this please contact us on the details below.

You can find out more about Giant Hogweed here: <http://beacon-bollin.org.uk/species/giant-hogweed/>



### VOLUNTEER WITH BEACON

If you would like to get involved with the BEACON project, from getting out and about water quality surveying or controlling invasive species, to more gentle aspects of fundraising and admin, please get in touch on the details below and we will help you find rewarding and enjoyable work.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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