

BEACON NEWSLETTER

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This newsletter at the end of summer tends to be reflective, looking at the balsam bashes and community events that have taken place in the sunshine. It usually gives us chance to breathe and take stock before leaping into the change of season and the different work that means for us. No rest this year however as you can see if you read on...

DISABILITIES TASTER DAY

The Bollin Valley Partnership once again held an incredibly successful taster day for children and young people with disabilities at Macclesfield Riverside Park. BEACON was very pleased to be invited to participate for the first time this year, and we had a blast! There were arts and crafts, face painting, games, falconry, a climbing wall and exotic animals there that children could interact with. Attendees could do environmental crafts at the BEACON stall, which was very busy for the whole day. BEACON's environmental education activities can be tailored to all needs and abilities, both outside and in the classroom. For more information please contact us on the details overleaf.



BALSAM BASHING



This year we have had over 1,000 volunteer hours dedicated to balsam bashing, the removal of invasive Himalayan Balsam by pulling it up by hand. People of all ages can get involved, and this year was no exception. The last bashes of the season were with staff from the Environment Agency who got stuck in at Mottram Hall. In one day they made a huge difference to balsam that was creeping into a woodland and onto the golf course green. It will now give the golf course the ability to keep on top of that section of balsam. Scouts from Bollington also got balsam bashing at Bollington Rec. This bash was rather more wet in nature, as the only way to get to the balsam was to wade down the river, but, again, the difference they made here was fantastic

AMERICAN MINK

American mink is an invasive non-native species that is a voracious predator. Mink can occupy both salt and freshwater habitats, and are living and breeding very successfully in the Bollin catchment. Impact on native species can occur through predation, competition and potentially passing on disease. Mink prey on small mammals, such as Water Vole, many fish species and ground-nesting birds, and is thought to be the major reason for decline of certain bird species. BEACON is starting to work on trapping mink to try and control this species, and would welcome any records you have of mink in the area, either sightings or signs. To send in a record please contact us.

GIANT HOGWEED

Giant Hogweed is another invasive non-native species which causes problems, for people as well as native plants and animals. The sap of Giant Hogweed, when in contact with the skin can cause very painful burns and blisters. This year the Giant Hogweed populations in Lymm and Heatley have got out of control, and we intend to train volunteers to be able to control this plant using herbicides. If you have Giant Hogweed on your land and would like to be involved in this programme please get in touch.



PARTNERSHIP WORKING

As you know, BEACON is now hosted by Mersey Rivers Trust, who host other Rivers Trusts in the area, including one that covers Cheshire. BEACON hopes to be closely involved in the development of Cheshire Rivers Trust over the next few years. We are also working more closely with the Weaver-Gowy Catchment Partnership, in the catchment adjacent to the Bollin. We have started to develop ideas and share best practise, and will continue this over the coming months.

TESCO BAGS OF HELP



TESCO Bags of Help



BEACON is bidding to bag a massive cash boost from the Tesco Bags of Help initiative. Tesco teamed up with Groundwork to launch its community funding scheme, which sees grants of £4,000, £2,000 and £1,000 – raised from carrier bag sales in Tesco stores – being awarded to local community projects. ‘Love Your River Bollin’, is our project that aims to highlight the impact people have on the water environment in a positive way to inspire people to change their behaviour, and become guardians of their local river. We aim to train more River Guardian volunteers to monitor water quality at their own ‘Adopt-A-Spot’ location along a stretch of river near them. Voting is open in all Tesco stores throughout September and October. Customers will cast their vote using a token given to them at the check-out in store each time they shop. To vote for ‘Love Your River Bollin’, shop in stores in Wilmslow, Alderley Edge, Handforth Dean and Bramhall and ask for a token at the checkout. Be sure to put your token in the ‘Love Your River Bollin’ box!

HONOLULU CHALLENGE

The UK Government has committed to spending £2.75 million on assisting its Overseas Territories to develop comprehensive biosecurity for invasive non-native species, as well as making a substantial contribution to the eradication of mice from Gough Island to save the critically endangered Tristan albatross and Gough bunting, as well as other threatened species on the island. Specifically, this involves a commitment to developing comprehensive biosecurity for Overseas Territories by providing them with access to UK expertise on risk analysis, pathway management, pest identification, horizon scanning, contingency planning, rapid response capability and species management.

Read more about the Honolulu challenge here: <https://www.iucn.org/theme/species/our-work/invasive-species/honolulu-challenge-invasive-alien-species>



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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