

BEACON NEWSLETTER

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In this newsletter we're looking to spring, and hoping that we've seen the end of the snow! It's been a busy few months of planning, speaking to local communities and training volunteers. We also have INNS week starting at the end of this month, which is a great way to get us geared up for control work season. Read on to find out more...

RESTORE, REWILD, REALISE

BEACON has been successfully awarded a £20,000 grant from the Postcode Local Trust to carry out a habitat restoration project called 'Restore, Rewild, Realise'. We will use this grant to 'Restore' river banks using natural materials, and then 'Rewild' by planting them up with native wildflowers, plants and trees. The main event as part of this project will be a Bioblitz, held in the summer to find and identify as many different species of birds, bugs, plants and beasts as we can. By conducting simple nature surveys at this event, everyone can learn how to record and identify species, and 'Realise' the importance of local, native habitats.

To get involved with restoring habitats or our bioblitz event get in touch on the details overleaf.



BALSAM BASHING

Over the winter months we spend time planning Balsam Bashes for the summer season. Balsam bashing is not only a great, and simple way to control this invasive species, it also gets people of all ages and abilities out into nature and learning about habitats and ecosystems. We have scouts, guides, schools, churches, private organisations and friends of groups pledging to balsam bash today. If you would like to get involved in a balsam bash check out the events page on the BEACON website [here](#), or to host your own bash, download the leaders pack [here](#).

FRIENDS OF THE CARRS SPRING CLEAN

Sunday 29th April 10:30am—3pm Wilmslow Parish Hall SK9 4AA

We will be planting wildflower turf, sowing wildflower seeds and creating willow hurdles to protect seeded areas. This is alongside general clean-up activities including litter picking, and cutting back willow along the river. There is something for anyone of any age or ability to get involved in. Please bring lunch. Tea and Coffee will be provided, as will all equipment and PPE. Please wear suitable outdoor clothing and shoes with good ankle support. Let us know if you're thinking of coming [here](#).

This is the first of a number of working parties that will be held throughout the year as part of the Restore, Rewild, Realise project. Watch this space for more events coming up...

LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG) WORKSHOP

Held in Shrewsbury at the end of January, this workshop allows Local Action Groups from across the UK, of which BEACON is one, to meet up and discuss how they control invasive non-native species, share best practise and lessons learned. There were interesting updates given on ongoing projects across the UK. Of most interest is the current work Cabi is undertaking to develop biocontrols for invasive plant species by using their natural predators. You can read more about this [here](#).



INVASIVE SPECIES WEEK

The fourth Invasive Species Week is coming! 23rd - 29th March 2018. Each day there is a different theme to explore, including biosecurity, exotic pets, garden ornamental plants and of course the work of Local Action Groups such as BEACON. To get **#INNSvolved** with events near you, or to find out more about Invasive Species week as it unfolds, visit the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat website [here](#).

VOLUNTEER TRAINING



In early March 11 volunteers from various organisations and backgrounds underwent certified training to enable them to safely use herbicides near water. The fantastic news is that they all passed the training, which brings us to 26 volunteers now trained and able to use herbicides to control invasive non-native plant species.

This greatly increases the capacity of the BEACON project as there is only one Project Officer employed to look after BEACON, so if an area is being monitored and treated by volunteers, the Project Officer can move on and work downstream elsewhere. This has worked brilliantly over the past years, and we hope with 11 newly trained volunteers this way of working can continue.

Thank you to the Environment Agency for funding this brilliant opportunity for our volunteers, for rangers at Macclesfield Riverside Park for giving up their Visitor Centre for over a week, and of course thanks must go to the volunteers for dedicating their time to do this course.

CALL OF NATURE

On 19th March a community workshop was held at Marthall Hall to discuss the progress of the Call of Nature project in the area. Sally Potts, Project Officer, gave a presentation about how the project had been carried out, and through working with the local community over 100 people have been engaged. APEM Environmental Consultants also gave a short presentation highlighting much more detailed water quality tests they had done. Results show that there is an issue with nitrate across Marthall and Pedley Brooks, which can be caused by leaking or faulty septic tanks. More work will be done to connect with more people through coffee mornings and the village garden party. A leaflet has also been produced that can be requested explaining the Call of Nature project in this area. It is important for wildlife that we all do the right thing when answering the Call of Nature. For more information please visit [here](#).



CATCHMENT BASED APPROACH (CaBA)

The Catchment Based Approach website is designed to showcase the work of catchment partnerships across England and Wales and to encourage the sharing and adoption of best practice in stakeholder-led catchment management planning, delivery and evaluation. You can view maps that show environmental elements and water quality factors in your area [here](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

BEACON

Norcliffe Farm Barns, Styal Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 4HZ

Tel: 07825 115 303

Email: beacon-bollin@nationaltrust.org.uk



www.beacon-bollin.org.uk

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