

Flotsam and Jetsam

June 2012

Welcome to the Argyll and Bute Beach Forum quarterly e-bulletin. The Argyll and Bute Beach Forum is a project run by The GRAB Trust (as part of our Beaches and Marine Litter Project). Our main aim is to raise awareness of the impacts of and reduce beach and marine litter and to support communities to take action by cleaning beaches.

We hope you will find our e-bulletin interesting. The bulletin is also available by post and on our website. Your contributions are always welcome. We want to make this bulletin as useful as possible. Tell us what you would like to see in the bulletin, it is your bulletin!

World Oceans Day

The GRAB Trust
GROUP FOR RECYCLING IN ARGYLL & BUTE

On June 8th Park Primary School celebrated World Oceans Day with a whole school Eco-day. Over 70 primary one and two pupils took part in the GRAB Trust's Beaches and Marine Litter Project "Seabirds Don't Like Plastic" workshops. Pupils discussed what the oceans mean to them and how their activities impact on our seabirds.



If you would to learn more about World Oceans Day and perhaps plan an event to highlight marine issues in 2013, please follow this link: <http://worldoceansday.org>.

The Green Blue

Oban Sailing Club was the focus of the ABBF outreach event on Saturday May 19th. The GRAB Trust's Beaches and Marine Litter Project promoted the Green Blue Initiative and encouraged local sailors and visitors to take part in beach cleaning activities.

The Green Blue raises awareness, conducts scientific research, identifies environmentally-friendly products and offers easy best practice advice to anyone keen to make boating in the UK as sustainable as possible <http://www.thegreenblue.org.uk>.



ABBF also took part in SAMS Festival of the Sea, by providing Marine Litter workshops to schools in the Oban & Lorn area, as well as displays and information at SAMS Open Day on May 26th and the "Waves, Wings, Spates and Coasts" Marine Biodiversity Conference held in Oban on May 22nd.



The GRAB Trust attains Machrihanish Seaside Award 2012



Those present in the photo from left to right are Craig Barrett (representing Machrihanish Golf Course), Cllr Colville, Julie Fairbrass, Cllr Semple, Angus Ward and Drumlemble PS who help keep this beach clean.

Julie stated that having successfully applied for two seaside awards in Argyll & Bute, i.e. Ganavan and Machrihanish, The GRAB Trust always take great pleasure in seeing the flags flying for another season. Thanks to all those who help keep our beaches clean.

Plastic Pollution at Loch Fyne



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The staff at Loch Fyne Oysters at the head of Loch Fyne organised a beach clean-up early in April and I went along with a volunteer to help out. I'm a regular visitor to the Loch Fyne Oysters shop and the garden centre next door, but I'd never been down onto the shore there and I was quite shocked by the state it was in! There were large items such as car tyres, long stretches of plastic piping, wire mesh and huge fishing ropes strewn along the foreshore. We collected 8 tyres and the plastic piping had to be sawn up in order to allow us to drag it up to the roadside. What was far more depressing, however, and was less obvious at first glance was that there appeared to be barely a square inch of the strandline that was not contaminated with tiny shreds of decomposing plastic, tangled up with the

seaweed and other natural debris. The sheer volume of plastic litter, coupled with the fact that most of it was in very small pieces, meant that even if we'd had a hundred people helping us it probably wouldn't have been possible to make much of an impact. Everyone worked very hard and we removed an impressive pile of rubbish from the shore, but we were barely able to make an impression on the mass of plastic litter.

John Meaney, the facilities manager at Loch Fyne Oysters, was of the opinion that getting a digger onto the beach, massing all the debris into a pile and burning it was the only solution. This option is, of course, less than ideal as it would mean a lot of habitat destruction as well as releasing toxic fumes from the burning of plastic. However, in this particular case, the shoreline is so badly polluted that there may be no other way to adequately clean it. So far no burn-up has been arranged, but John Downie from the Council's Amenity Services department has agreed that this might be necessary. John has had various meetings with local fish farms and other businesses to try to identify some of the sources of the litter and ensure that proper procedures are being followed with regards to waste disposal. A big thank you and well done to all the staff at Loch Fyne Oysters who organised and took part in the clean-up.



If any businesses would like support for a staff beach clean-up in the Cowal, Helensburgh and Lomond area, please contact Katharine Usher on 01369 700 137 or email katharine.usher@argyll-bute.gov.uk.

National Spring Clean in Cowal and Helensburgh



There has been absolutely fantastic support for Keep Scotland Beautiful's National Spring Clean campaign in the Cowal, Lomond and Helensburgh area this year. Since the Spring Clean season opened on 1st April, the following schools and community groups have all carried out beach clean-ups with support from GRAB: Strachur Primary, EnviroKirn, Helensburgh Eco Churches group, the East Esplanade Protection Group, Clyde Cottage Nursery, Arrochar Primary, Innellan Primary, St Andrew's Primary, Kirn Primary, Dunoon Grammar, Toward Primary and Strone Primary (along with the local Community Council). Many other schools

and groups carried out clean-ups using their own equipment, and all of this adds up to a huge amount of litter removed from our beaches, towns and villages. Well done and thank you to everyone who took part this year.



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Marine Litter Workshops at Helensburgh schools



As well as taking part in the National Spring Clean, several schools in the Helensburgh area opted to help raise awareness amongst pupils of the problems caused by marine litter via the GRAB Trust's marine litter workshops. Colgrain and Cardross Primaries incorporated marine litter workshops into their respective 'eco days', while Hermitage Primary had a whole 'eco week'!

'Fishing for Litter' was the most popular activity. This is a team quiz game where children fish for items of litter and then answer a related question such as 'Which would take longer to break down in the sea: an aluminium can or a steel can?' (The answer is that the aluminium can would take longer – around 450 years compared with 50 for a steel can – as aluminium doesn't rust!) Another popular workshop was 'Seabirds Don't Like Plastic', where children learn about the impacts on animals of plastic ingestion.

If you would like to book a marine litter workshop for your school (Cowal, Lomond and Helensburgh area), please contact Katharine on 01369 700 137 or email katharine.usher@argyll-bute.gov.uk



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Waves, Wings, Spates and Coasts- Marine Biodiversity Conference



Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Partnership hosted a Marine Biodiversity Conference in Oban on 22 May 2012 as part of the Festival of the Sea, Scottish National Biodiversity Week and International Day of Biodiversity. Fergus Murray- a member of the Executive Committee chaired the morning session and Dr. Janet Khan-Marnie chaired the afternoon session. The diverse and varied programme on Marine Aliens, the Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Action Plan progress, Shark Tagging Project, Marine Designations, Renewables, Coastal Development, Seaweed as Bio-fuel, Marine Surveys, Whales, Dolphins, Porpoises, Birds, Butterflies and informed delegates about some of the wide range of projects that are currently being carried out in Argyll and Bute. The speakers were congratulated on their presentations which were informative, engaging and inspiring.

Festival of the Sea

Festival of the Sea - Oban, Lorn and the Isles was once more a resounding success with over 70 events taking place around the region. The event was opened at the Argyllshire Gathering with the World of Algae Day, which included an exhibition of algal images from the British Phycological Society, storyteller Patsy Dyer told seaweed tales from around the world and scientists from SAMS showcased the latest research into biofuels from algae. The hot sunny weather throughout the Festival resulted in large audiences to outdoor events such as the open day at SAMS, the Northern Lighthouse Board and the Sailing Club.



For the first time, a mini Festival of the Sea was held in North Uist, co-ordinated by Comann Na Mara in partnership with the community of the Uists, Berneray and Harris. Visitors to events were treated to boat trips to the Monarch Islands, talks about the Vikings and St Kilda, sea rescues and open days. On other islands, Canna House opened its doors to the public, there was an RSPB walk on Islay and a significant seabed mapping event at Tobermory, attracting many members of the public as well as school children on board SAMS research vessel Calanus to find out about the INIS Hydro project.

Education events included a visit from the Virtual Landscape Theatre (Hutton Institute) and Lab in a Lorry (Institute of Physics), a seabirds and marine litter workshop (Argyll & Bute Beach Forum), marine pollution workshop and beach clean (Re-JIG, Islay), Primary 7 Public Speaking Competition (Oban Rotary Club) and Jane Rose Beach litter workshop on Colonsay.



There were also author presentations, conferences, marine sports training sessions, guided walks, a cookery event, ceilidhs and historical reenactments and exhibitions during the Festival period.

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List of acronyms used in the bulletin:

KSB: Keep Scotland Beautiful

SAMS: Scottish Association for Marine Science

HWDT: Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust

SNH: Scottish Natural Heritage

FoCF: Firth of Clyde Forum

MCS: Marine Conservation Society

SEPA: Scottish Environmental Protection Agency

TEAR: Tیره Environmental Action and Recycling

Disclaimer

Thanks for reading. Please note that all views expressed are not necessarily the views of the GRAB Trust or the Argyll and Bute Beach Forum. We hope that you have enjoyed our e-bulletin. We would like to hear from you and would appreciate any comments you may have about it.

The Argyll and Bute Beach Forum,

The Argyll and Bute Beach Forum is funded by the following Organisations:

