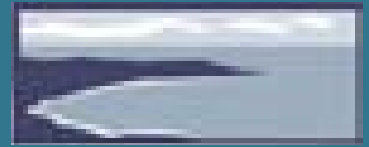




East Grampian
Coastal Partnership



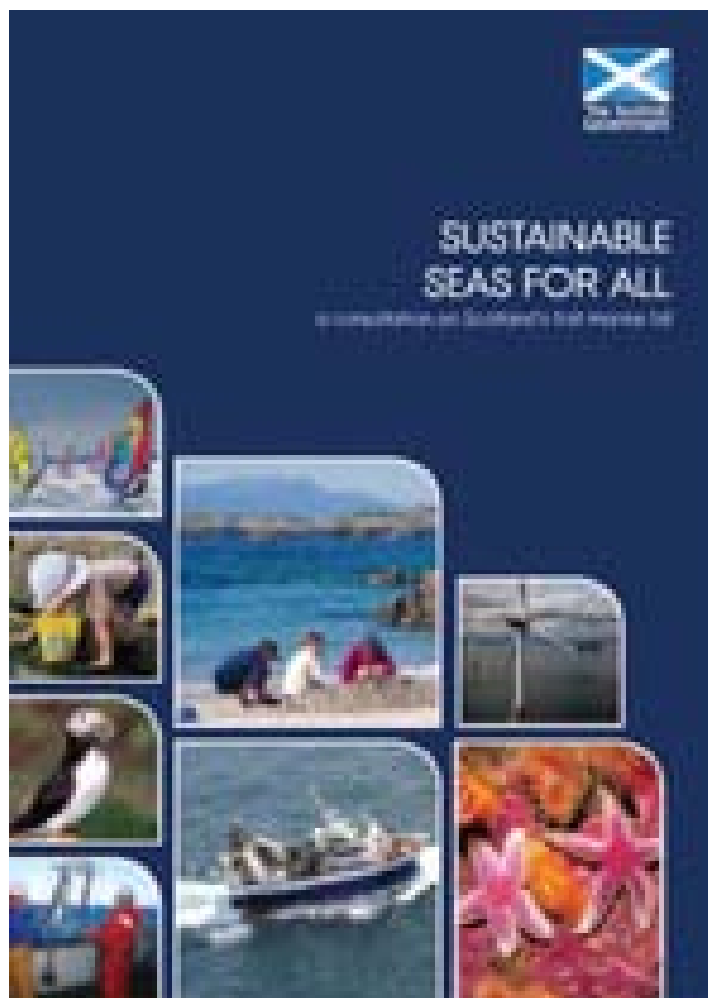
www.egcp.org.uk

Newsletter

Winter 08

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

This newsletter announces an important date for our members and for those interested in the work of the East Grampian Coastal Partnership. We have been asked by the Scottish Government to host a consultation meeting in Aberdeen to consider the fifty-seven consultation questions contained in the "Sustainable Seas for All" document issued by them in July. It will be a challenge to manage the day in a way that will allow us to give the appropriate time to each subject but we hope that we have this in hand. We will also hold an EGM and our AGM immediately prior to the consultation meeting. There will as usual be lunch for all those attending the day.

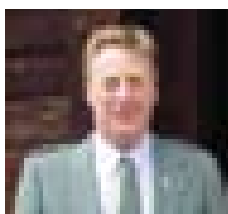


The consultation is all about the proposed Scottish Marine Bill and the document makes very interesting reading. It proposes that a new body/Government Department called Marine Scotland be established as a single gateway for all planning and licensing matters pertaining to operations in Scottish Waters. It also proposes that Marine Scotland Region offices would act as regional Marine Management Organisations implementing a Scottish Strategy Plan. The consultation runs until Monday 6th October 2008 and our meeting at the Town & County Hall in Aberdeen Town House on 17th September at 10.00am is a major chance to have your say in the response to be submitted by EGCP.

The outcome of this process will also have a major effect on the future and structure of EGCP and so it is important that as many people reading this newsletter register with us for the event.

I hope to see you there.

Robbie Middleton



Robin B Middleton
Chairman - EGCP

PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Sustainable Seas for All – and that means you

If you have a view on the running of coastal and marine waters then this September will be the best chance for a generation to influence a major piece of legislation. The Scottish Government has tasked EGCP with running a consultation workshop in Aberdeen on 17th September. For more information see 'Scotland Seas - have your say!' and www.egcp.org.uk

Got an Idea?

If you have an idea for a project in your area, why not apply for an EGCP Community Grants Scheme? The scheme offers grants of up to £1000, which are available to non profit making bodies such as community groups and schools for projects which benefit the natural environment of the coast, the local area, the community and its visitors.

We can help with the process of making an application from advice for writing the forms to setting up a group to run the project.

For more information please see the website or contact the partnership staff. The closing date for the applications is 19th December 2008



National Whale and Dolphin Watch

The 7th annual National Whale and Dolphin Watch, organised by the Sea Watch Foundation, took place between 21st and 29th June. When much of the UK was having bad weather, we were basking in sunshine and enjoying high numbers of sightings. This year the hot spot proved to be between Fraserburgh and St Cyrus with 20% of all the UK's sightings coming from this small stretch of coast! Several watches took place over the week, with experts on hand to help with identification and

“ When much of the UK was having bad weather, we were basking in sunshine ”

spotting them in the first place! Harbour porpoise, bottlenose dolphins, white beaked dolphins and minke whales were all recorded during the week itself with rissos dolphins, common dolphins and killer whales spotted in the fortnight beforehand, highlighting what a fantastic place the local coast is-these amazing creatures are literally on our doorstep.



Cutter and friends

Record Summer for Whale and Dolphin Surveys

This year more people than ever have taken part in the Northern North Sea Cetacean Ferry Surveys (NORCET). The surveys are part of a joint project between researchers at the University

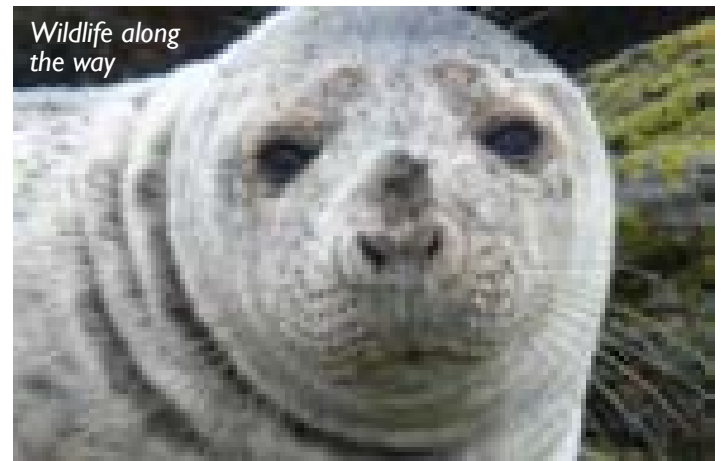


A puffin at Sumburgh Head

of Aberdeen, the East Grampian Coastal Partnership and the South Grampian Seawatch Group. The project was set up to collect data on cetacean occurrence and distribution in the northern North Sea between Aberdeen, Orkney and Shetland

“ ... has expanded greatly with this year having one of the best summers of coverage yet ... ”

in summer 2002. Since then the project has expanded greatly, with this year having one of the best summers of coverage yet, thanks to a growing team of volunteers. We have had some great sightings this year including bottlenose dolphins, porpoise, minke whale, white beaked dolphin, killer whales and rissos dolphins as well as lots of birds and other wildlife. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the volunteers for all their hard work this year; it is much appreciated and without you the project would not be able to continue-thank you!



Wildlife along the way

Photograph of the Month Competition

If you love taking snaps whilst at the coast why not send your best into EGCP? Each month we will be selecting the best images sent in (via e-mail if possible please) and posting them on the EGCP website in a new gallery. So not only do you (and the rest of the world) get to see to your pictures online, it also gives us the chance to showcase what a lovely place the East Grampian coast is!

Beach Officer

This year, EGCP employed a seasonal member of staff, Ruth as a beach officer down at Aberdeen Beach. Ruth helped the beach keep its seaside award by ensuring all of the award criteria were met and providing a point of contact for beach users.



Aberdeen Beach

Website Changes

The new EGCP website is proving a great success with hits going from 200 per month to over 10000! As always we are trying to keep our website up to date with new things added

“ Recent additions include more activities for kids to do ... ”

all of the time. Recent additions include more activities for kids to do including ones for rainy days as well as a new news page featuring national coastal and marine updates to keep you in the loop. If you haven't had chance to have a look at our site before please do (www.egcp.org.uk) - it has loads of information about the local area, activities and things to do, information on up and coming events and a forum where you can discuss any thing coastal with like minded folk!

A UNESCO GEOPARK FOR THE EAST COAST?

NE Scotland may host a European Geopark in the near future. This exciting development is in the early stages with a feasibility study currently being carried out by Elma McMenemy, a consultant working with the Stonehaven Tourist Group and Bob Needham, a recent graduate working with EGCP as part of a placement with the Business Environment Partnership.

This study is currently investigating the Geopark criteria, park boundaries, and benefits to local communities and natural heritage of the area.

“ This area also boasts an array of excellent wildlife and beautiful scenery ”

A geopark encompasses the natural and local heritage, biodiversity designations, historical and social progression of the area, as well as focusing on the local geology.

The Highland Boundary Fault which separates the highlands and lowlands of Scotland is likely to be the focus of the Geopark. In particular how it has influenced the area from the formation of coastal features and the Angus Glens, to the siting of castles and local defences. This area also boasts an array of excellent wildlife and beautiful scenery which has evolved as a direct result of the geological changes in this area over the last 420 million years.

Lochaber and the North West Highlands Geoparks, Scotland's two existing parks, boast popular tourist attractions of Glen Coe, Loch Ness and Ben Nevis and reached Geopark Status in 2007. The North West Highlands was the first Scottish Geopark and has some of the finest scenery on the west coast as well as famous sites such as Knockan Crag and the Smoo

caves. Their help and expertise have proved invaluable during the initial stages of the NE Scotland Geopark feasibility study.

This initial study is progressing well with results being presented to the Stonehaven Tourist Group in September.



SCOTLAND SEAS – HAVE YOUR SAY!

Scotland's marine area is of great environmental, social and economic value both nationally and internationally. As a way of protecting this important resource and ensuring its sustainable use, the Scottish Government have produced 'Sustainable Seas For All', a consultation on Scotland's first marine bill. The consultation runs until Monday 6th October 2008 and members of the public are encouraged to make their own submission to the exercise and consider how the questions posed relate to your own interests.

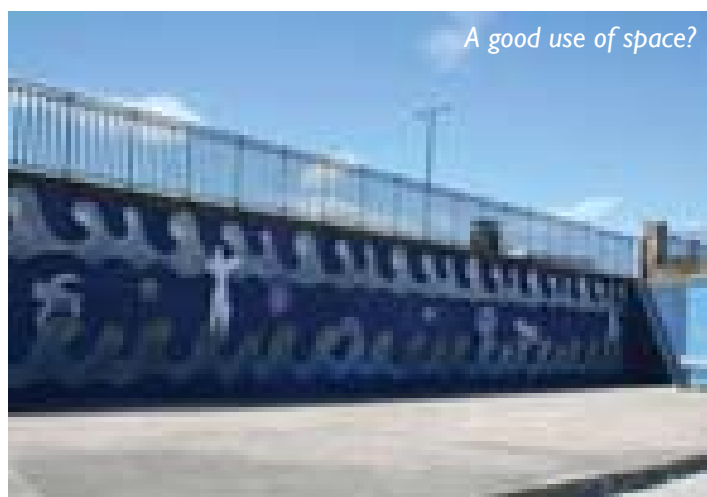
The bill proposes a new legislative and management framework as a way of sustainably managing the coast and marine areas in Scotland, including a new system of planning; a modernised licensing and consents system; increasing opportunities for the use of resources such as energy and fisheries; and improved conservation based on species and habitat protection. In addition it is proposed one organisation called Marine Scotland will be in place to deliver these changes.

“ ... the Marine Bill has the potential to have a major impact on anyone with an interest in the coast and sea. ”

EGCP will be holding an event to allow local coastal and marine stakeholders the opportunity to consider the proposals and their effects on the local area. EGCP has been asked by the Scottish Government to run two consultation events in our area. The major event will be held along with our AGM and EGM in the Town and County Hall in Aberdeen on 17th September. It is important that as many of you as possible attend, as the Marine Bill has the potential to have a major impact on anyone with an interest in the coast and sea. So please take advantage of the opportunity to speak to the representatives from the Scottish Government on issues of particular interest to your own organisations.

GOT AN IDEA?

Aberdeen beach front is a draw for thousands of people each year but unfortunately parts of it are looking a bit tired. There is one area in particular that we would like to see given a new lease of life; however we need your help. We would like your ideas of what the area pictured, could be used for including the floor space and on the walls. So if you have any great ideas please let us know. Further to improving the space we need to find ways of funding the works so if you as an individual or organisation feel you would like to help please contact Emily Hastings or e-mail e.hastings@macaulay.ac.uk



COASTAL PEOPLE

Patrick Jordan

Age; 29

Occupation; Environmental Advisor, Aberdeen Harbour Board



Main Duties; Maritime activity has had a profound effect on the estuary of the River Dee - Aberdeen Harbour is now one of Britain's busiest ports (we have up to 25,000 vessel movements a year) and our business history spans eight centuries (we're the UK's oldest company). My duty is to monitor and minimise the environmental impact of our past and present operations.

A Typical Day; In a place as busy as the Harbour there's no such thing as a typical day! At the moment I am mostly office based and concentrating on two things: a total overhaul of the waste management systems for our rubbish and the garbage

from ships, and the Environmental Impact Assessment for the reconstruction of the quays on the Torry side of the river.

Employment History; I worked at the Harbour on two temporary assignments after completing my BSc - monitoring the use of the ship's waste disposal facilities and introducing a Tidy Business Standards scheme. Shortly afterwards I was offered the post of Environmental Advisor.

Connection to the Sea; I've lived, studied and worked within fifteen minutes walk of the sea since I moved to Aberdeen a decade ago. The city's coastal location was a big tick in its favour when I was deciding where to come to university.

Interests; I am an unashamed transport geek - especially since I started working here!

Favourite Place on the East Grampian Coast; The Ythan estuary on a howling midwinter's day.

Describe the Coast in 2026; The East Grampian coast is hailed as a world-class example of successful Marine Spatial Planning with shipping, offshore industries, fisheries, energy generation and coastal recreation intermingling in seamless, sustainable harmony.

LIVING HISTORY OF THE MEARN'S COAST – PART 2

by Elma McMenemy, a local tourist guide.

Dunnottar Castle is perhaps the most spectacular feature along this coast; whether seen from the sea, the land or even the air. Stories about it could, and do, fill books but perhaps the best known are those about William Wallace climbing into

“ Stories about it could, and do, fill books. ”

the castle under cover of darkness and burning the English soldiers whilst at prayer in the Chapel; the imprisonment of 167 Covenanters in the cellar called the Whig's Vault; and the siege by Cromwell's troops when the Honours of Scotland, the country's Crown Jewels were taken there for safety before being smuggled out and taken a few miles down the coast to the Old Church, Kinneff where they were buried under the church floor.



“... although Catterline, perched on the clifftop above its harbour is picturesque from any angle ”

The stretch of coast from Dunnottar Castle to Kinneff is stunning, particularly when seen from the sea – although Catterline, perched on the clifftop above its harbour, is picturesque from any angle. Coastal wildlife is usually very easy to see here, with grey seals always around Catterline, dolphins often seen from the shore, occasional propoises and minke whale and of course countless seabirds, particularly during the breeding season from February to July. “The Heugh”, or Fowlsheugh is home to hundreds of thousands of seabirds at this time of year, and owe their breeding sites to the geology



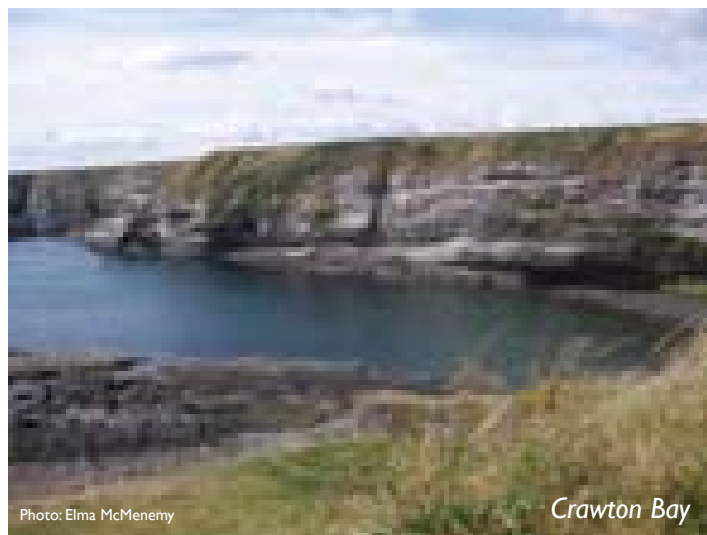
The cliffs at Fowlsheugh

– where the boulders and stones have popped from the rock there are niches, just the right size for nesting kittiwakes, fulmars, guillemots, razorbills, cormorants, shags and gulls, while the puffins take over rabbit burrows in the sandy clifftop. Many of the caves, particularly those with a supply of fresh water, are also used by seals which come ashore to have their pups in the autumn and early winter.

There are caves in abundance here, and it’s not surprising that this coast was renowned for smuggling. After the Act of Union in 1707, many Jacobite Lairds objected to paying taxes to the “English” Government and would recruit fishermen from villages like Crawton to rendezvous with merchant ships carrying wines, silk and other luxury goods. The caves were safe places to store the goods, and in at least one an iron mooring ring can still be seen, along with steps cut into the rear of the cave itself. There was also opportunist smuggling: the headland at Todhead – at that point with no lighthouse, was the first landfall for ships sailing from Northern Europe. Many captains were caught out by the back-wash from The Heugh, and valuable deck cargo would be washed overboard, to be collected by locals who knew exactly where it would wash up.

Life was hard for the fisherfolk, not least the women, and Crawton was fairly typical of a harbourless village. Here everyone would lend a hand to drag the boats up the beach, especially if a storm was imminent. The men were carried on

the back of their wives, who waded into the sea and delivered them, dry-footed, to their boat. This was really important at a time when no one had waterproof rubber boots and to go to sea with wet feet meant infections like trench foot. Line-caught fish commanded a higher price, as it was not bruised or damaged by the nets. Women and children would “redd” the lines – clean and repair them, using horsehair tippets to replace the hooks. Cleaned lines were dipped in a preserving



Crawton Bay

solution made from cutch, a dark messy substance made from the bark of the tropical acacia tree – from this we get the word “barkit” (filthy). Baiting the hooks was a boring, repetitive task, and would take 4 – 5 hours, with as many as 1,400 hooks on one line and usually around 3,000 hooks per boat. With 2-3 mussels per hook, it was hard to make sure the bait stayed on and was often bound to the hook with “oo” – the wool found on hedges and fences around sheep fields. The line would be laid very carefully in a “scull” (basket) so that it could be cast into the sea without snagging.



Fowlsheugh from Todhead

Superstition was part of life. No one would dream of turning a boat against the sun, as this was against Nature, and no one would put to sea if they saw a minister, a person with red hair, or a hare or a dog on the way to their boat, and a rabbit, pig or pigeon on board was also very unlucky and would cause a trip to be cancelled. Fishermen from Gourdon would not have ham or cheese on board, and always referred to salmon as “cauld

iron” otherwise it would bring them bad luck. The curlew’s cry foretold of a death or shipwreck, and wild geese foretold the weather by their flight pattern. Protection from bad luck could be got from a horseshoe nailed to the mast and rowan twigs on the lines. And a baby’s cowl – the skin which covers some babies’ heads at birth – was very lucky, but only if it was intact. Some herring fishermen claimed they could smell the herring, while others would string piano wire around their boats – when the wire hummed, they knew the herring were there.

The herring fishery took off towards the end of the 1700s, when Dutch fishermen showed those from Caithness how to fish for herring. This was important not only in Caithness and Grampian, but right around the coast. By 1820, 1,000 boats sailed for the season, starting in Great Yarmouth in the spring, arriving in the ports of Grampian in June and July, and finishing in Ireland in late autumn. The herring boom lasted until the First World War; at the start of the War, there were 10,000 boats landing 2.5 million tons of herring each year. Much was exported to Russia and Eastern Europe, a trade which was not sustainable in wartime. The herring boats were followed round the coast by the fisher lassies, who worked in teams of three. Two would gut the fish and the third would pack it in salt in barrels made by skilled coopers. The girls gutting the fish would bind their fingers with strips of sacking to prevent cuts from their sharp knives – any cuts went septic very quickly, and a girl not fit to work got no pay. The packers used to claim that if the barrel staves were removed, the fish were so tightly packed, they would stand on their own! And it’s said that a team of three girls could process 70 fish per minute – more than one every second!



Dunnottar Castle

Photo: Elma McMenemy

This just gives a flavour of how I interpret the coast for the visitors and locals I guide, and try to bring the past – and the present – alive for them.

COASTAL HISTORY – FORVIE

Forvie National Nature Reserve, just north of Newburgh, near Ellon is a large area of sand dunes next to the Ythan estuary. The reserve has one of the largest and untouched dune systems in the UK and some nationally important bird colonies. The area around the reserve was farmed until the advancing sand buried the area in the Middle Ages and forced the community to leave the land. The dunes began to form over 2000 years ago and have continued to this day.



The dunes at Forvie NNR

Flint flakes have been found at the reserve and date back to the earliest inhabitants of Grampian, who lived by the coast and along rivers such as the Dee and the River Ythan approximately 8000 years ago. Some flint relics and tools from the area can be seen on display at the Stevenson Centre at Forvie National Nature Reserve. Later evidence came from when the land was farmed and as a result of the community burying their dead.

Near to Rockend are the remains of a medieval settlement, where the ruins of Forvie’s 12th century kirk can be still be seen. It is understood the kirk was built on the site of a previous chapel that possibly dated back to the 8th century. Not long after, Forvie was blanketed in sand which, according to local legend, was as a result of three sisters who placed a curse on it. They’re said to have been cast adrift in a leaky boat to deny them their inheritance, as heirs to the land. In a fit of rage, they screamed: “Let nocht bee funde in Furvye’s glebes /



Forvie Kirk

Bot thystl, bente and sande” (roughly translated into “Forvie should only be covered by thistle and sand”). When the sisters eventually reached dry land, the curse whipped up a storm that continued for nine days and nights. By the time it ended, sand had buried the village.



Other finds on the reserve include: kerb-cairns which have been dated late bronze to early Iron Age (3000 years ago); charred earth and bone; pottery fragments were found in the cairns which indicate they were cremation sites; hut circles, 19 domestic circles were found altogether; and middens.

STATE OF THE COAST

This year, much of the EGCP Project Officer's time has been spent working on a State of the Coast report for the EGCP area. The report aims to gather, for the first time, information on social, economic and environmental issues along the East Grampian coast. The information collected will be compared to the Scottish average to give an indication of whether each of the issues highlighted for this area are good, satisfactory or poor and in need of improvement at the local level. Where improvement is needed, we have tried to identify ways and people who can help to do this. It is hoped any trends will be highlighted from looking at past data and where there are no existing data, the report aims to gather initial data sets to let us make comparisons in future editions. It is hoped the findings of this report will be of interest to local stakeholders and decision makers as well as people that live here or have an interest in the area.

“ ... to gather, for the first time, information on social, economic and environmental issues ... ”

EGCP decided to write the report as the marine and coastal environment plays a fundamental role in all of our lives and as such, its health is important to everyone who lives in, works in or visits the north east. A healthy marine and coastal environment is not only important for maintaining ecosystems but it is also central to and essential for; numerous everyday activities including employment opportunities; climate control; low input food production; pharmaceuticals; leisure, recreation

“ ... the marine and coastal environment plays a fundamental role in all our lives ... ”

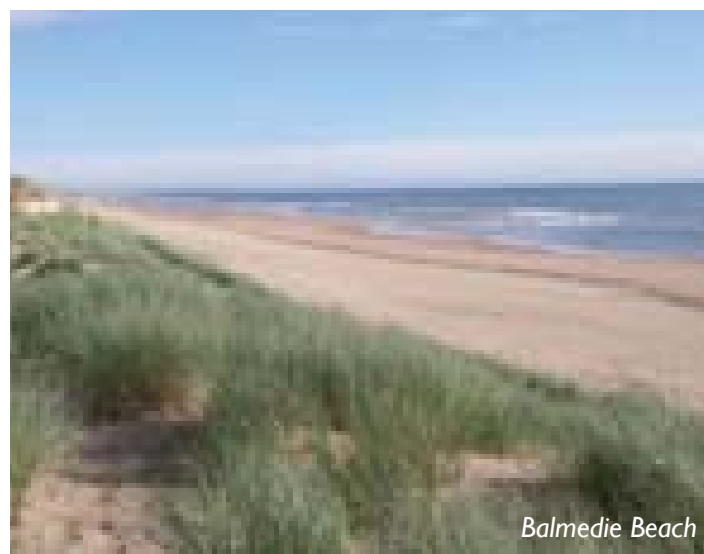
and tourism; transportation of goods and people; sources of energy; carbon storage; research and education resource; a natural sea defence; sustaining biodiversity; preserving examples of our history and heritage and acting as a method for waste disposal for example sewage, cooling waters and run off. However, many of these services are at risk from all of the factors and demands which affect the state of the East Grampian coast. Generally these pressures will vary over time and as such, the coast is subject to continuous change. Many changes are due to a combination of natural forces, a changing climate and human related demands, which can include increasing population in the coastal zone who create further waste and sewage which then requires disposal. In addition, there are increased requirements for food, oil, gas, aggregates, transport of people and products along with increasing industry, tourism and recreation.

The report will be available in hard copy and online on the EGCP website in the autumn as well as the main findings in the next EGCP newsletter available in the spring.

LOCAL BATHING WATER QUALITY

The summer of 2008 was not a great year for the area's bathing waters with the loss of a seaside award at Cruden Bay and a failure for the usually reliable Aberdeen beach.

The East Grampian coast currently has six bathing waters including Fraserburgh at Tiger Hill and Waters of Philorth, Peterhead Lido, Balmedie, Aberdeen and Stonehaven. These designated areas are required to meet European standards for water quality, to protect public health and the environment from faecal pollution.



During the bathing season (1st June–Mid September), water quality must comply with the standards specified in the bathing waters legislation. Since the introduction of this, water quality at the designated sites has improved dramatically with significant

investment from water companies to improve sewage screening and treatment. The bathing waters are designated as excellent, good or poor depending on the levels of coliform and faecal coliforms (bacteria found in sewage and animal excrement). The areas are sampled at least once per fortnight during the bathing season.

During 2008 we have seen a number of periods of very wet weather which has had two main effects. Firstly the normal systems for dealing with sewage may be bypassed in periods of very wet weather as the system simply cannot cope. Secondly, the wet weather will wash animal waste off of fields into near by rivers and ultimately the sea, which can lead to failures in the local water quality tests. Farming practices have been changing over the years but some run off is inevitable in an area with such high levels of agriculture.

However when the weather is bright hot and sunny and people are most likely to be swimming, the bathing waters are generally at their cleanest and during or just after heavy rain they are at their worst. So please do not let it put you off visiting our local beaches as they are still some of the best managed in the country. Visitors to Aberdeen Beach also have the advantage of the real time water quality sign that gives up to the hour predictions.

GET OUT AND TRY.....

Strand Line Art

When you are next walking along the beach why not take a look at the strand line and turn your finds into art? It's amazing what some artists are doing with the litter they find on beaches. Not only are they doing something fun and useful with all the litter we have become so used to seeing, but they are cleaning the beaches at the same time and it is hoped their work will help to put the message across about the levels of rubbish which are littering our beaches. One such artist Steve McPherson collects litter and turns it into colourful pictures.

Words by Steve McPherson

As a child I loved the idea of treasure hunting during the school holidays and weekends; with miles of beaches to wander on, play turned into hunts for lost treasures! At that time the



smugglers caves in the white chalk cliffs had yet to be filled by our worried council and amongst them were abandoned rusting cars and items uncovered by winter cliff falls.

One day a hole in the chalk reef would reveal a musket ball, another day winter storms would raise ghostly gas masks from a 1940's bomber stuck in the sands out in the depths. Iron pyrite stained the chalk red, and flints were Stone Age axes, fossils and fire making tools. Old pottery, pipes and glass bottle tops were collected for their interest, and out of what are probably thousands of searches, on only three occasions did I ever find jewellery, nothing of real value but true treasure to this child hunter.

“ Alas, I could fill several buckets on each trip with plastic and rubbish ... ”

My obsession to collect has never ceased - but as an adult and an artist, the subject matter has. I started to question what I would choose to pick up from the thousands of possibilities of litter and rubbish that was churned up every day. I valued some more than others, and then made a conscious decision not to. This meant that now I would have to take a small bag to the beach each time I went - eventually the small bag turned into a carrier bag - and now I take a bucket. Alas, I could fill several buckets on each trip with plastic and rubbish, but my primary aim is to collect and make art, and the ecological impact I have on the beach is secondary, but still important.



I now collect all types of marine plastic; toys, souvenirs, bottle tops, ice cream spoons, chip forks, broken pieces and whole objects, floats from the fishing industry, tags and ties, plastic money, beads, hair grips, clothes pegs, the list goes on. I do not filter out the objects that I feel are useless as all are actually the opposite.

I always wash the items at home, and leave them to soak in fresh water, as you have no idea what sits on the objects you collect, so you have to be careful of oil, and other pollutants. I

never pick up unidentifiable canisters as you don't know what could be in them. It's always best to be prepared - gloves - bags - and knowledge of the tide.

When making a piece of art any item can work, it depends on the subject matter. If there is no subject matter and the colour and design are all important then I use what fits to acquire the desired effect; you are then only limited by the objects you collect not by your imagination.



Marine plastic and beach litter are ugly things and damaging to the fragile ecosystems of both sea and coast. Finding and using them as a material in art is exciting, satisfying and good for both artist and environment!

Steve McPherson is an artist and lecturer who lives and works on the north coast of Kent, England.

Autumn and winter are particularly good times to go beach combing as the fierce storms often throw material up on the beaches which have been at sea for a long time-and a lot more of it than during the summer time. So why not get down to your local beach and get creating. We will be setting up a gallery on the EGCP website, so send in photos of your work and we will put them online for everyone to see.

EVENTS

TIME TREKS

Sunday 14th September, 11:00am - 4:00pm

Visit the Forvie National Nature Reserve's ancient monuments – from prehistoric places for the living and the dead to the mediaeval kirk – and hear the terrible tale of the wicked priest of Forvie!

MEET: Forvie NNR car park at Waterside bridge. Newburgh

CONTACT: Formartine Ranger 01358 726417

BEACHWATCH

Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st September

On the weekend when beach litter surveys are happening all over the world, why not come along and do your bit for your local beach. Organised by the Marine Conservation Society, this annual event monitors the litter found on beaches and uses the information collected to try and reduce litter levels. Join us in the UK's biggest beach clean and help to remove and record the rubbish from a beach near you. A fun and rewarding day for all the family! Gloves and rubbish bags will be provided.

Saturday 20th

EGCP Beach clean. Come and join EGCP in a clean up around the coast by Torry Battery. Contact Emily Hastings, EGCP Project Officer for more information 01224 395150

Aberdeen City Beach Clean. Meet at the northern end of the beach at 10 am. For more information contact Iain House ijhouse@btinternet.com

Sunday 21st, 10.00am start:

STONEHAVEN

Meet at the Beach Pavilion next to Molly Gunnings

CONTACT: the Kincardine and Mearns Ranger on 01569 768292

DON-YTHAN COAST

MEET: at the Balmedie Country Park Visitor Centre (car park charges apply)

CONTACT: the Coastal Ranger on 01358 742396

EAST GRAMPIAN SEAWATCH SURVEY

28th September

Muchalls

The East Grampian coast is one of the best areas in Britain to spot whales and dolphins from the land, so why not come and join the experts to find out more and see our local wildlife. Meet at the small car park by the railway bridge at 1pm.

GOOSEFEST!

Sunday 28 September

Join the staff at Loch of Strathbeg from 10 am til 4 pm for their annual open day to celebrate the return of the Pink-footed

Geese, with stalls and activities for all the family. This event is free. For more information please call 01346 532017 or e-mail: david.parnaby@rspb.org.uk



150TH LIFEBOAT STATION ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

22nd October 3 pm

Service at Fraserburgh Old Parish Church

WEAR IT PINK DAY BREAST CANCER CAMPAIGN

31st October

Museum of Scottish Lighthouses, Fraserburgh

Support Breast Cancer Campaign by wearing pink at the Museum. Kids in pink visit for free. 01346 511022 www.lighthousemuseum.org.uk

GOOSEWATCH

October-November

See one of the most spectacular wildlife spectacles in Scotland - the dawn flight of thousands of pink-footed geese. The atmosphere created by such a large number of birds taking to the air at once is unforgettable.

The comfort of the Visitor Centre provides a wonderful base for enjoying this sight and the whole experience is well worth the early start! **Booking essential.**

Meet at the Visitor Centre car park at RSPB Loch of Strathbeg half an hour before sunrise - check for details. Adult non-members £3 (children £1), members free. For more information please call 01346 532017 or e-mail: david.parnaby@rspb.org.uk

MUSEUM OF SCOTTISH LIGHTHOUSES, FRASERBURGH HALLOWEEN EVENT

1st November

Come to the museum for a spooky event for Halloween. 01346 511022 www.lighthousemuseum.org.uk

EAST GRAMPIAN SEAWATCH SURVEY

8th November

Torry Battery

RSPB CHRISTMAS FAIR

30th November

RSPB Loch of Strathbeg

MUD GLORIOUS MUD

Saturday 4th October, 11:00am to 15:00pm

Come to the Waulkmill bird hide at 11am or 1pm and find out why the Ythan estuary is so important for wildlife. We will be looking at the life to be found in the mud and identifying some of the birds that use the estuary as an important feeding ground. Please phone to book a place on either the 11am or 1pm session.

Meet at Waulkmill bird hide, on the Ellon to Collieston road. Grid ref NK004 289 OS map 38.

Car parking space is limited so booking is essential. The bird hide is accessible for wheelchair users. Contact Coastal Ranger on 01358 742396 or coastal.ranger@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

YTHAN ESTUARY WALK

Sunday 9th November, 12:00am to 15:00pm

Adults and older children (12+), Booking essential. Moderate walk 3-4 miles over dunes, beach and muddy tracks. Meet at Newburgh beach car park and enjoy a walk to the beach and along the Ythan estuary. Bring a packed lunch and binoculars as we will be looking at the bird life of the estuary and we may be lucky enough to see seals. Stout footwear and waterproofs are required.

Meet at the Beach car park in Newburgh, grid ref: NK003 246 OS map 38. Contact Coastal Ranger on 01358 742396 or coastal.ranger@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

FORVIE LOST VILLAGE AND YTHAN ESTUARY

Sunday 15th February, 12:00am to 15:00pm

Adults and older children (12+), Booking essential, moderate walk (4 miles) over rough tracks, dunes and beach.

Meet at Waterside car park and enjoy a 4 mile walk over the coastal heath to the lost settlement of Forvie, where we will discover how the sands buried this lost village hundreds of years ago. From there we will walk down the beach and over the dunes to return along the Ythan estuary where we will discover the birds that use this place as an important winter feeding ground. Bring a packed lunch, waterproofs and stout footwear.

Meet at Waterside car park in Newburgh, grid ref: NK003 270 OS map 38. Contact Coastal Ranger on 01358 742396 or coastal.ranger@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

MUD GLORIOUS MUD

Sunday 15th March, 11:00am to 15:00pm

Family event, Children Welcome, Booking essential, easy access.

(See Saturday 4th October for details)

WALK THE EAST GRAMPIAN COAST

Ratray Head-linear walk



Excelsior of Laurwig

Ratray Head, between Fraserburgh and Peterhead is a fantastic place to be on a stormy day in mid winter! Due to the shape of the coast and the rocky outcrop on which Ratray Head lighthouse is built, the waves can be pretty impressive on a stormy day, as they come together from opposite directions and break up and around the lighthouse. The light house was engineered by David Alan Stevenson in 1895 to protect vessels from this dangerous stretch of coast.

“ ... the waves can be pretty impressive on a stormy day ... ”

The dunes in the area are some of the most important in the UK and contain dune slacks filled with wild flowers, most

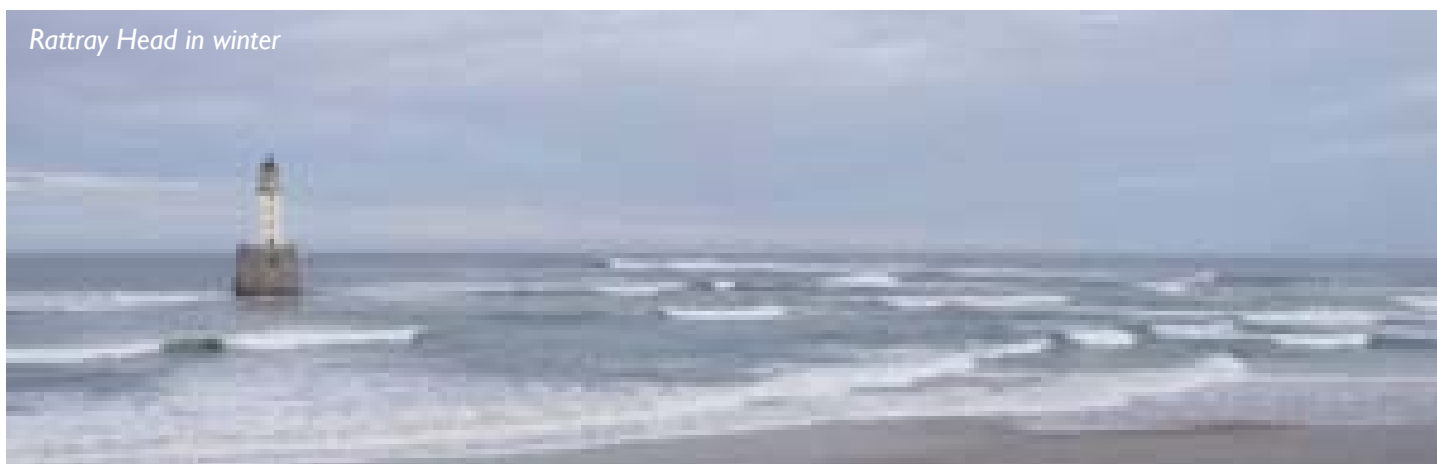
notably a diverse array of orchids-but you will have to go back in spring to see that! On walking south along the shore from the lighthouse towards the gas terminal at St Fergus you may see the four wrecks within one mile of the light house, if you are there on a low tide. The last of the wrecks has been identified as the Excelsior of Laurwig, a 462 tonnage Norwegian barque built in 1869. She ran aground between Scotstown Head and Ratray Head on 22nd November 1881.



Ratray wreck

To get to Ratray Head go to the villages of Crimmond and St Fergus and between the two you will see signs for Ratray. Follow the road until you get to the hostel at the road end-the tarmac stops part way but carries on a stone track. Parking for the walk is at the car park at Old Ratray just past the hostel and B&B. From here follow the path out of the car park over the dunes and onto the beach. This stretch of coast can be very exposed in the winter so please dress warmly.

Ratray Head in winter



BECOME AN AFFILIATE MEMBER

If you would like to receive regular information on the Partnership's activities and invitations to events please become an affiliate member. This is completely free of charge. You can register online at www.egcp.org.uk/membership or call 01224 395151 for an application. Contact EGCP, Project Officer, East Grampian Coastal Partnership, c/o The Macaulay Institute, Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen, AB15 8QH
Tel: 01224 395151 • Email: egcp@macaulay.ac.uk • Website: www.egcp.org.uk

The East Grampian Coastal Partnership would like to thank the following Partners for their support



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