



TAY VIEWS

A PUBLICATION BY THE TAY ESTUARY FORUM: PROMOTING THE WISE AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF THE TAY ESTUARY AND ITS ADJACENT COASTLINE

ISSUE 34: Autumn 2013

Hi all,

The Scottish Government have recently launched a suite of marine consultations which are open until 13th November 2013. We urge you to contribute your views, via the Forum if you wish. Item 6 breaks down the various consultations and offers links to more online information. Thanks to all who attended our Annual Conference, in April, our report can be read in Item 2. The day was well-attended and we received positive feedback from delegates, with lots of suggestions and requests for future topics. More information on featured articles will be made available on the TEF website. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to participate in any of the initiatives we support, Best wishes,
Laura Booth (Project Officer)

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1: TEF UPDATE

- Last TEF Steering Group meeting **May 30th 2013** at University of Dundee.
- Next Steering Group meeting **October 2013**
- End-of-Year Review meetings to be held with Marine Scotland shortly.
- Recent additions to the TEF Steering Group: Geoff Squire (James Hutton Institute), Shona Smith (SNH) & Claire Myles (Dundee City Council).

Squirrel Sketches © Derek Robertson



2. TAY ESTUARY FORUM ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT 2013

Turning Tides, a one day conference held at West Park Conference Centre in Dundee on Friday 19th April, by the TEF, looked at ways in which we are adapting to change at our coasts; specifically in light of future policy directions and developments; means of monitoring and recording change in the coastal and marine environments; and the ways by which we manage these changes sustainably. Over 50 delegates attended the event, along with a range of exhibitors, hearing talks on Scotland’s National Marine Plan, designation of Scottish Marine Regions, imaging our maritime heritage, Dundee’s V&A, Offshore Renewables, Angus Shoreline Management Plan, Sustainable Decision Making, and more. A synopsis booklet is available at: www.dundee.ac.uk/TEF/

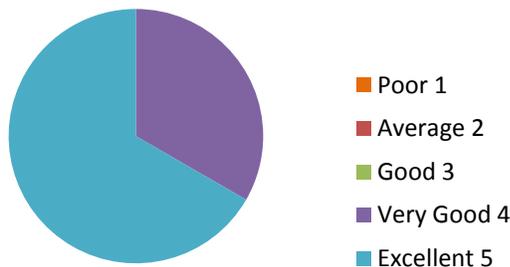


Dundee Waterfront, J. Isaacs, University of Abertay

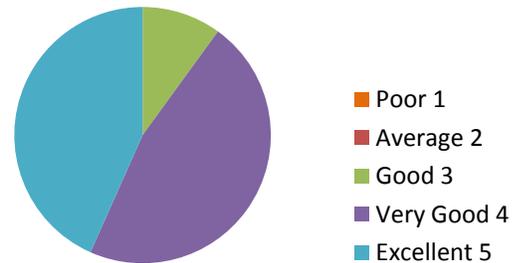
Attendees rated the conference structure, relevance of presentations and venue & catering positively with feedback reflecting the high quality presentations, delivered with enthusiasm, helping to make this year’s programme one of our best! Thanks to all who took part.

We received 30 feedback forms back and the results are as follows: Results are based on a sliding scale of 1-5 (poor to excellent)

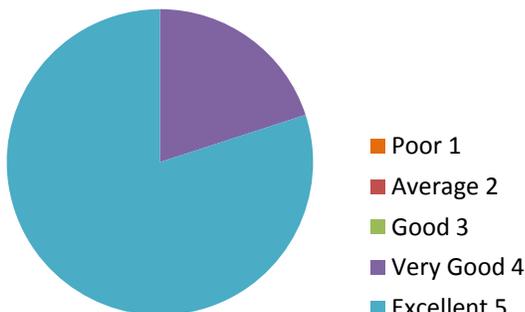
Conference Structure



Relevance of Presentations



Venue and Catering



SUMMARY
100% rated the **conference structure** "Very Good-Excellent".
90% rated the **conference presentations** "Very Good-Excellent".
100% rated the **Venue and Catering** "Very Good- Excellent"

Suggestions for future topics:



3. Find virtual reality with a walk at Tentsmuir

Thanks to Tentsmuir National Nature Reserve's artist in residence, Derek Robertson, the virtual and the real are about to collide for reserve visitors. Derek Robertson is an internationally recognised wildlife artist from Fife who spends much of his time sketching outdoors. This year, you can usually find him somewhere at Tentsmuir NNR where he has been appointed by Scottish Natural Heritage to be their official artist in residence to celebrate Year of Natural Scotland 2013.



Otters © Derek Robertson

Derek is spending the year completing a new series of wildlife paintings in oil and watercolour to promote and inspire the public about Scotland's nature. Paintings from the residency will go on to be exhibited in several shows around Scotland later in the year.

Derek said: "I have very fond memories of Tentsmuir. When I was about 13 or 14, I would spend entire days there sketching and painting. In fact, it was one of the first places I began to build my artistic skills, so I was absolutely delighted, and honoured, when SNH invited me to be artist in residence at the reserve."

Visitors can experience an on-line gallery as they walk around a trail on the nature reserve, stopping at marked points on the trail and using a smart-phone to scan QR codes (special bar-codes) on special signs which carry some of Derek's sketches. Visitors will also be able to call up a web page showing Derek's sketches and paintings of particular wildlife which can be seen in that part in the reserve. The page also links to video footage of wildlife filmed by Derek with remote-sensor cameras on the reserve. The web pages, paintings and video can also be viewed on-line on Derek's residency website at www.memoryoftides.com.

Derek is now working on co-ordinating an exciting cross-disciplinary project on the reserve that brings together scientists and creative practitioners to produce an arts event that bridges the fields of art and science. "The Tentsmuir Project" will culminate in an exhibition/performance event at Tentsmuir in October 2013. The whole process of collaboration, creation and performance will be documented and photographed and all the resulting work exhibited in a number of exhibitions accompanied by talks and presentations on the project.

Visit the following sites for more information:

<http://www.memoryoftides.com/> Artist residency at Tentsmuir NNR. Year of Natural Scotland 2013
<http://www.derekrobertson.com/> Derek's Paintings of Wildlife and Countryside
<http://www.creativepastures.com/> Derek's Poetic Narrative Paintings, Assemblage and Sculpture

4. A word from Derek Robertson, BA RSW SSA SAA: Tentsmuir's Artist in Residence

It has been a very busy few months for me at Tentsmuir. I have been completing a new body of work which has mostly consisted of field studies and paintings in which I have gathered material on the wildlife of the reserve. Highlights have included otters and pintail at Morton Lochs, the sea eagles, seals and long-tailed ducks at the Point and jays in the woods.

I have been using trail cameras around the reserve and have gathered some great footage of roe deer, badgers, red squirrels, otters, woodcock and more. I have been able to use this footage to produce new sketches too - especially the badgers which I hardly ever see in daylight on the reserve (opposite). The publicity attracted by the project has been enormous with articles in local press and features on STV news. BBC Radio Scotland's Out of Doors program has broadcast two interviews and BBC's *Countryfile* will screen a feature on 2nd June. Articles on international blogs, newsletters and social media sites have likewise reached tens of thousands.



Badgers © Derek Robertson

I have constructed online art trails at Morton Lochs and Kinshaldy (with thanks to the Forestry Commission). As you walk around the trail you can see plaques featuring some of my individual sketches of a species that inhabits that part of the reserve and in the corner of each one is a Quick Response code that looks like a barcode. If you scan the code it will take you to the website showing all the drawings and paintings I have done of that particular animal near that spot. There is some writing and context about the animal and a video taken with trail cameras around the reserve. This means you can see the shy, nocturnal animals that live there. The resource has been used by educational groups so children can see the recognisable, individual animals that actually live near that spot - the otter with a small scar on its nose or the red squirrel with the very dark fur.

In the winter, I had a look around the marshy dunes near the Point and discovered large numbers of woodcock - counts of up to 30 which showed that this was an important winter foraging site for these birds in Fife. It was known that woodcock were present but not in these numbers. Just recently I did the first visit of a BTO breeding woodcock survey in the nearby forest and had a huge count of 32 birds in just over an hour suggesting that it is a major habitat for breeding birds as well. In the spring I surveyed Morton Lochs for the elusive Water Rails. They are notoriously difficult to survey because they rarely leave dense cover and are almost never seen. My friend, Steve Moyes, and I developed a systematic way of surveying them in the Tay Reedbeds using audio playback. The method is now adopted as the standard survey technique for the species. At Morton, I located 3 pairs and a single female and heard the characteristic "tic-tic" call of a bird alarming to its young.



The trail camera footage has identified two cubs at the badger set and at least 5 recognisable, individual adults and also parties of at least 7 jays in the woods at Morton. Looking ahead, I will be working up some larger paintings from the sketches I have completed. A cross-disciplinary project will bring together scientists/environmental managers and artists/creative practitioners to produce collaborative work at the end of the year. Those involved, from various different fields, have been working on their own projects at Tentsmuir including dance, poetry, film, storytelling, geography, biology, conservation ecology and more. We will be working towards an event in October and a publication and exhibitions following that. I have already been working on ideas inspired by the poetry of James Stewart who is writer in residence at the reserve. It has been wonderful working on this residency and I have been struck by how much local visitors value and treasure the reserve and the forest - I have really enjoyed meeting the many people who have come up, introduced themselves and asked about the project. **May, 2013.**

*"Still Beneath The Canopy" inspired by "Squirrel"
a poem by James Stewart © Derek Robertson*

5. Himalayan Balsam Control on Montrose Basin Local Nature Reserve, Montrose Angus.

Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens Glandulifera* is a tall, attractive, annual herb with explosive seed heads and is easy to identify as a mature plant with its pink–purple flowers, fleshy stem and characteristic leaves. Found mostly on river banks and in damp woodland, it can grow in other damp habitat. It is now a widespread species in the UK, especially along urban rivers. Plants spread solely by seeds, which are small and easily carried by wind or water.

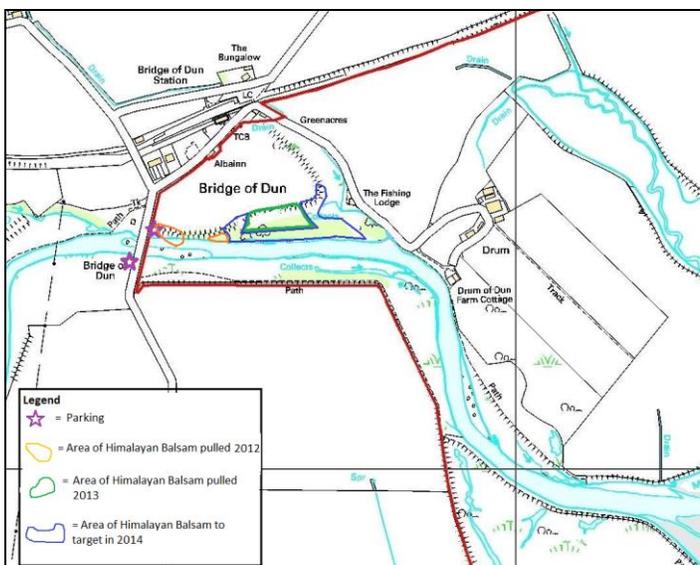
Himalayan Balsam is widespread throughout the catchment particularly in the lower and middle reaches. This species out-competes native species in ecologically sensitive areas, particularly river banks. Where it grows in dense stands along river banks it can impede flow at times of high rainfall, increasing the likelihood of flooding. Die back of extensive stands over winter can leave river banks bare and exposed to erosion.



Balsam Control at Montrose basin (SWT)

There are now large stands of Himalayan Balsam in Montrose Basin LNR and this year there has been a huge push to control the plant on the reserve near the Bridge of Dun – see the map and images below. The voluntary team has already made a huge impact in spite of heavy rainfall and thunder storms shortening planned days of pulling the invasive species. Thanks to the commitment of the impressive team of volunteers, over 130 hours has been spent so far on this task. The dedication to the project this year alone means a huge improvement should be seen, and the team will be well on the way to having the balsam under control on the north side of the river.

If you'd like to volunteer for a few hours and help out with this really worthwhile task, please contact Anna Cheshier at Montrose Basin Wildlife Centre on 01674 676 336 or at acheshier@swt.org.uk



Treatment area at Bridge of Dun. Map & Images © A Cheshier

6. Scottish Marine Consultations 2013

The Scottish Government have recently launched a suite of marine consultations. Over a 16 week consultation period (**ends 13 November 2013**) the following consultations are open. Each document has a set of questions associated with it which should help to guide your response to the document, however you are also welcome to write your response in other ways, such as a letter. The links below in the right hand column give more information. A full list of documents can be found at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/marine-consultation

<p>National Marine Plan (NMP) The National Marine Plan will set out Scottish Minister's policies for the sustainable development of Scotland's seas. The Plan will manage increasing demands for the use of our marine environment, encourage economic development of marine industries and incorporate environmental protection into marine decision making.</p>	<p>Overview Leaflet Draft National Marine Plan</p>
<p>Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Nature Conservation MPAs are being identified for species, habitats and geology that the Scottish Government believe do not have enough protection through existing protected areas. The consultation includes all of the proposed Marine Protected Areas representing additional protection for 11% of the area of Scotland's seas, increasing total protected coverage to approximately 23% of Scotland's seas.</p>	<p>Overview of all the MPAs</p>
<p>Priority Marine Features (PMF) Includes a recommended list of Priority Marine Features (PMFs) representing 80 habitats and species of marine conservation importance for which it would be appropriate to use Marine Protected Areas to achieve better protection.</p>	<p>Priority Marine Features Consultation</p>
<p>Planning Circular The Circular explains the relationship between the marine and terrestrial planning systems, including related regimes such as marine licensing and consenting for offshore energy generation, ports and harbours development, and aquaculture.</p>	<p>Planning Circular</p>
<p>Sectoral plans for Wind, Wave and Tidal Energy These plans will explore how offshore wind, wave and tidal energy can contribute to meeting Scotland's target of generating the equivalent of 100% of electricity demand from renewable sources and also seek to maximise the contribution of these technologies to achieving a low carbon economy.</p>	<p>Draft Sectoral Marine Plans for Offshore Renewable Energy in Scottish Waters: Consultation Paper</p>

Between Tides

Riddles of Tentsmuir

Kinshaldy Car Park 10 October 2013 1-3pm

A collaboration between artists, performers and scientists presenting their researches into the riddles of Tentsmuir in a series of talks, performances and displays exploring the links between their different disciplines.

Professor Robert Duck. Professor of Environmental Geoscience. Dean of the School of the Environment, Dundee University.

Sophie Eastwood. Fife Red Squirrel Officer. **Rhian Evans.** RSPB East Scotland Sea Eagle Officer.

Gerald Lincoln. Biologist and Lepidopterist.

Dr Bernie McConnell. Senior research fellow, acting deputy head of the Seal Mammal Research Unit. School of Biology. University of St Andrews.



Song, Storytelling, Dance, Poetry, Art, Fiction.
Geology, Seals, Eagles, Squirrels and Moths.

Diane Dickson, writer. **Corinne Mills,** photographer.

Derek Robertson. Artist in residence at Tentsmuir.

Dr James Stewart. Poet. Teaching fellow in creative writing at Dundee University and writer in residence at Tentsmuir. **Lea Taylor.** Storyteller and singer. **And others.**

Free events in marquees and outdoors. No tickets required. £2 parking charge for cars.

